

OAIA is 11 years old this year. It began in Ottawa as a group of interested and enthusiastic impact assessment practitioners who were members of the IAIA – our parent organization. Since 1990 our membership has grown; it has exceeded 175 people and now stands at about 100.

Over the last 11 years the focus and the major thrust of the OAIA has continued to change. This has been in response to both issues that were before us at any given time, and the interest of the Board of Directors and its members. Presently, we have just completed a written presentation to the Ministers of the Environment for Ontario and Canada on the impacts of electricity generation, and specifically coal generation, on the environment and human health. This initiative, sponsored by several Board members, reinforces our desire, as a professional organization, to directly influence both the process and practice of impact assessment. As a group, and as individuals we share a common concern for the application of good impact assessment in decision making. This is the role of the OAIA and its members and why we choose to become and remain involved.

As an impact assessment practitioner for over 25 years, I have continued to see a need for an association that plays the role of OAIA. Practitioners in government, industry, the private sector, the education sector, non-government and others involved in impact assessment need to work together, share views and learn from each other in such an organization, in order to improve both the process and practice of impact assessment.

What do I see for the future of the OAIA? I see a role for us in providing strategic support and direction as was recently done in the provision of comments on electricity generation. Similar initiatives have been taken in the past on monitoring and follow-up, health impacts and other topics.

We must strengthen the numbers and participation of our membership. It has fallen in recent years and we need to focus on this. I have agreed to continue to work in this area with the Board and others.

We need to remain visible in the marketplace – our stated goal is to be a “Meeting Place”. We need to ensure that local and provincial programming is consistent and visible. This can be done in co-operation with other Associations such as the AQEI, educational institutions or even governments.

We must continue to provide services to our members. This includes the recently created website, newsletter and directory to name a few.

Last year we implemented a new Board structure. We have incorporated the Past President/President and President Elect in the structure of the Board and

the election process. I see this as a very positive move. I have been involved in the Board for 11 years. This structure ensures that new blood and ideas are brought into the Board. It also attracts strong talent to the Board and our membership.

I would like to thank the Board and all members who have supported the OAIA during my term as President. I encourage everyone involved in Impact Assessment to take a more active role, even if it is to just become a member.

On that note, I would like to introduce our new President. Lee Doran has been in the President Elect position for the last year. He has taken a leadership role on the Board. Lee is a senior consultant in the Ecological Services Group in Guelph. He works both nationally and internationally in impact assessment. He has about 25 years of experience and will represent the private sector/consulting role well on the Board.

Your President for 2001-02, Mr. Lee Doran