



Tasmanian Agricultural Productivity Group

May 2016 Newsletter

Special Video Extracts from the Precision Agriculture EXPO

Use the instructions below to access a range of video clips of various lengths covering everything from the formal Opening Session, Keynote Presentation, Exhibitor interviews and Field Demonstrations from our second Annual PA EXPO.

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/zormdts1n4tknew/AAC6AxeVCdMgDeM1t7nt3SILa?dl=0>

-To follow link: Hold control and then left click

Board Membership Changes

It was with great regret that the Board formally accepted the resignation of Director Greg Bott at our May meeting. Greg has been a Director representing the Rural Finance sector of our Board and has served since the 2009 AGM. Chairman Jim Wilson has described Greg's service as: *"A passionate representative and champion of all things agricultural. His broad understanding of financial mechanisms and extensive personal networks were always utilised by the Board to provide depth and clarity to our discussions around furthering the business opportunities for Tasmanian individuals and companies involved in agriculture. It is typical of Greg that, in retiring after an outstanding 40 year career in banking, he should immediately accept a business development leadership role with a leading agribusiness company. We wish him well in his new career."*

In discussing the vacancy that arises from Greg's resignation the Board decided to review its structure in the light of the discussions currently underway regarding our new Strategic Plan. This process, while not yet complete, significantly informed the membership restructure debate. As a result of these deliberations the Board decided on two new "descriptors" for Directorships:

- The previous "Rural Finance" position will be advertised with a broader "Business Development" focus.
- The previous "Honorary" position will be converted to a full Directorship with a "Freight and Logistics" focus.

These two new positions will be advertised along with the normal annual "call for Director Nominations" in July this year. They will then be subject to our election protocols with successful nominees being ratified as part of our Industry Forum and AGM on Friday 28 October.

While this process plays out the Board will seek and appoint acting Directors to cover these roles over the next five months. This process is currently underway and it is hoped that these interim nominees will be in place for our June 29 Board Meeting. The Membership will be advised of these interim Directors when the names can be confirmed.

Waste Water

Members may recall that some years ago TAPG facilitated a meeting between Tas. Water and several member companies around the issue of waste water regulations. Since that time the operational procedures and attendant regulations by Tas. Water have settled into a more refined space and it has been suggested by one Member Company that it may be useful to again convene a meeting to update everyone's understanding of the current situation?

TAPG are again prepared to facilitate this process on behalf of members if there is sufficient interest. Please contact the EO directly by e-mail if your company wishes to attend such a meeting.

Bio-security

TAPG has been a long term supporter and participant in the Primary Industries Biosecurity Action Alliance (PIBAA).

This group has the widest possible representation across the agricultural community including the various sea and water based representatives along with all the land based groups.

PIBAA operates on a “needs” basis in that we only meet when a specific issue that affects Tasmanian biosecurity requires our attention. This is an effective model as past meetings and successful engagement with government have built terrific levels of understanding and trust within the membership.

As many of you are aware there is new legislation at the Federal level that has the potential to impact on Tasmania. Accordingly, PIBAA met last week in Hobart and is preparing to launch a media campaign designed to apply pressure to Tasmania’s Federal candidates as they campaign for re-election.

The main theme of the campaign is that ***“Tasmania reserves the right to manage its own biosecurity risk”***. Appropriate media material is being prepared and candidates will receive letters asking two key questions:

- ***Do you support our position that Tasmania should reserve the right to manage its own biosecurity risk?***
- ***Do you believe that maintaining our current biosecurity status is critical to protecting the Tasmanian Brand – primary industry, tourism and environment?***

It is planned that the campaign will have its media launch on the steps of Parliament House on Tuesday 14 June. TAPG will be part of the industry representation present at the launch

Strategic Plan

As mentioned in the article dealing with Director's Membership changes the Board have been working through the development of a new Strategic Plan to guide our directions over the coming five years. Directors have a second draft before them based on discussions at the meeting held on the 3 May. This version will receive "out of session" consideration before returning to the table on Wednesday 29 June.

Once the document has received whatever further consideration the Board requires it will be circulated to the full membership for further comment before being tabled for acceptance at the Industry Forum/AGM on 28 October. Your participation in this process during the coming months will be most appreciated.

Caring for Country-Innovation Grants – Project Update:

In the December edition of this Newsletter I wrote: *"A crucial part of the trial work is the follow up monitoring in the second year of planting over our soil "amendments". The longer term benefits of sub-soiling will hopefully more than justify the process."*

I now need to advise that we have received a ruling that all Innovation Projects are to be completed and reported on by 30 June this year. This is disappointing as we had hoped that our submission describing the use of the balance of project funds for this monitoring work would be approved. Accordingly, we are now finishing the required reportage to meet this instruction.

The recently re-launched TAPG Website will be further developed to include a "Projects" section. Our full report and findings will be available for scrutiny using this facility.

Importantly, the "legacy" from this project exists in a variety of forms:

- The Final Report details the processes undertaken combined with the soil and yield monitoring data as applicable to each trial site.
- The sub-soiler ripper remains in Tasmania as a proven and unique piece of machinery available for use by our farmers. Enquiries for design

details have already been received from mainland growers. (A MOU between TAPG and a member company has been signed that provides both security for the machine and access for interested users. Contact the EO for more details.)

- Our use of the machine has underscored the connections with, and importance of, other Precision Agriculture technology and practices such as EM38 mapping.
- A broad range of TAPG member companies have received financial assistance to modify their own machinery with a view to further implementation of Controlled Traffic Farming principles.

For further information, including requests for access to our sub-soil ripper for soil amendments and related CTF, please contact the Executive Officer.

[Precision Agriculture EXPO, 21 April, 2016 - Deloraine](#)

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/zormdts1n4tknew/AAC6AxeVCdMgDeM1t7nt3SILa?dl=0>

We were successful in “breaking the drought” with this year’s event.

Thankfully the rain didn’t keep people away as numbers appeared to be consistent with last year.

Our improved facilities and program for the Field Demonstrations were two of the highlights with the covered viewing area being greatly appreciated as it allowed the demonstrations to proceed regardless of the rain.

Our PA committee have already conducted an evaluation of the event and I can advise that the date for next year’s event will be **Thursday 20 April, 2017.**

Further improvements to the field demonstrations are in the planning stages and an introduction to the field of Robotics should be of interest to everybody. Our access to Keith and Brady Davis’ paddock adjacent to the complex is critical to the success of the EXPO and I would like to acknowledge their contribution on behalf of all of us.

For Comments or other feedback on this Newsletter please contact the Executive Officer:

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