

APVI Strategic Planning Workshop

Held at CSIRO, North Ryde

Friday 11th July 2014

Agenda and Notes

ADENDEES:

1. Lisa Miller, APVI CEO
2. Steve Blume – No Carbon, Australian Solar Council
3. Nicole Ghiotto – First Solar
4. Rob Passey – UNSW, IT Power
5. Igor Skryabin - ANU
6. Anna Bruce - UNSW
7. David Jordan, Australian PV Consulting
8. Alison Benton, SMA
9. Paul Meredith, UQ
10. Simon Troman – IT Power
11. Renate Egan, Suntech R&D New APVI Chair
12. Muriel Watt – APVI Outgoing Chair, UNSW, IT Power
13. Greg Watt – CoB Consulting
14. Linda Koshier, UNSW, Trina Solar
15. Mark Kibby, Yingli Solar
16. CSIRO
17. Roland Kiel,
18. Lyndon Frearson, CAT Projects (Skype)
19. Richard Corkish, UNSW
20. Rowan Huxtable Wollongong Climate Action Network
21. Warwick Johnson- Sunwiz
22. Ken Guthrie
23. Suzie Goldsmith
24. Simon Troman, IT Power
25. Sharon Young, Student UNSW
26. Graeme Bell,
27. Mark Snow UNSW

APOLOGIES

Iain MacGill, UNSW

ARENA Andrea Gaffney, Alison Johnson, Demir

MINUTES:

Agenda 1. Welcome – Lisa/Renate

Lisa Miller welcomed everyone and introduced herself as the new CEO. She highlighted the successful launch the previous evening of the *PV in Australia 2013* report and presentation by Muriel Watt. Around 35 members attended the launch.

Muriel

Muriel

- The board has elected Renate Egan as Chair. Muriel looks forward to taking a back seat.
- The role of APVI has been updated by the board. There is now an increased emphasis on looking outward to stakeholders beyond the PV sector
- There has been a lot of administrative work in relation to restructuring the organisation this year. We have a new constitution, board and CEO.
- We are still developing strategies in the strategic areas – events, reports, website, research, education etc.

Activities

- There have been less activities this year due to the restructuring. We have had some events, e.g. a storage workshop in Brisbane – can be re-run in other states to make better use of the materials developed.

Presentations, submissions

- Have been made to ARENA, RET Review, Energy White Paper

Membership

- Has stabilised – there are more individuals and small organisations

Muriel welcomed the new CEO Lisa Miller, and encouraged members to take the opportunity to get to know Lisa, interact with her and work with her today. In particular we need to need to develop income-generating activities

Muriel thanked Greg Watt, who has been working with APVI on a range of communications activities and events. Lisa has now come on board to do much of that, but we hope to keep working with Greg.

We now have some funding from ARENA for a conference organiser, which will help with momentum.

Rob Passey is coordinating projects. We have done a few education/professional development activities. There are more opportunities to do this, especially to build on the research and reports we have done. We should be building events and training around those.

Muriel thanked the room for the privilege of representing the organisation. She highlighted the significant change and transition during the time she has been leading APVI and its predecessors. She has found it great fun and exhausting, and is now pleased to be leaving it in the capable hands of Renate and Lisa.

Member Value – Lisa

We want to keep growing membership and increasing it's value. Lisa led a discussion on the value of APVI to members:

Value of APVI

- Source of knowledge – reputable quality info
- UK PV association is run like a business
- Could e.g charge for info coming out of survey
- Free or reduced cost access to info – e.g. report a few months early
- Need to grow membership base, not only get money in – provide value
- APVI also provides prestige – could mention members in the report
- Tried selling PV in Aust – sold 3 @\$55. When free 1500 copies
- Networking events at charge – of great value to people – members discount or something extra beforehand
- 'As a result of your support...' NGO approach publicity to emphasise the work is worthwhile
- Value in the submissions – carries more weight
- Sponsorship of events – a lot of scope – Need to remain independent
- 2 conferences coming up at the end of the year – possibility of consolidating
- Sponsorship opportunities – membership advantages – membership drive
- Member value – stuff from IEA – make it available at back end of website
- Look specifically at challenges of members – e.g. local govt workshops
- Opportunity in podcasts
- UQ on science show podcast – huge publicity – ask Robin Williams to introduce it
- Value in being able to be involved in what we will do
- Communications – e.g. value of a PV system – an area of value for the industry – effective means to market solar -> brand promotion
- Could offer discounts if member of both ASC and APVI
- Offer members credits towards workshops
- ISES – we did offer discount
- APVI most influencing distributors, high penetration PV etc. Lots of players that want to install PV. With problems with DNSP, where do you go? APVI is influencing the regulator – events for distributors – show potential members that we are influencing decision makers – this is the body you need to get behind
- Member-based organisations struggling. Wholesale vs retail allow retail activities to be done by other member-based organisations

PVPS and SHC Programs

Muriel Watt and Ken Guthrie presented the status of the IEA PVPS and SHC programs (presentations attached)

APVI Research Projects

Anna Bruce presented a summary of research projects (presentation attached)

Treasurers Report

Rob presented the budget and finances (presentation attached)

- The organisation has been operating at a loss for the past three years, and has been running down reserve funding.
- Rob noted that conference and ARENA project money is separate from operating funds. This can only be used for project-specific management, not for APVI operating, salaries etc.
- It was noted that while consultancy projects generate income for operating, our work should add value to members, beyond confidential reports, so the publically funded projects and IEA task participation are very important.
- There is also a role for consultancies to keep us solvent in order to do the public-benefit work.
- It was noted that some other groups – e.g. ATA – sometimes overlap in terms of consultancy services, although APVI is doing something different. Is there a benefit in talking to other groups about rationalisation/competition?

Members Survey

Rob Passey presented the results of the members survey

Present facts, remain independent

Reach out to local governments and broader audience

During the ensuing discussion, Extension T13 & solar map – how does my PV system performance compare with others in my area?

Discussion about international speakers at conference

Business Plan

Renate Egan on behalf of the board

There is value in the data APVI has.

There is also value in the submissions we make. We need to communicate to members where we are advocating, and the value we are contributing here.

Events are important outreach – we need to leverage that. Workshop feedback has always been positive – we need to leverage this by repeating once content is established.

Projects and workshops rely on membership participating

We need to deliver on ARENA projects – but also need to look outside ARENA

Map Launch (possibly at CEW) will be a way to communicate value.

Lisa Miller led a discussion generating a SWOT table

Strengths

Independent information
Reputation, credibility
Quality of people, resources
Diversity
Connections/relationships, esp international, regulators, universities etc.
Large amounts of activity
Capacity for foresight
Accessible – cheap to be part of

Weaknesses

Need to diversify more
Promotion
Public good nature of work
Not news-worthy
Quality info takes time
No 3 word slogans
More influence than is apparent

Opportunities

Crowd-funding
Leveraging IEA work
Local govt, state govt
Community RE
Pace of change – potential for PV
Data and analysis that we have
Links to Asia & Asia-Pacific
Relationships with sister orgs – sharing research/data
Engage better with DNSPs, regulators etc. on behalf of PV industry
Being in contact with the right people in the organisation
Philanthropic grants
Policy regulatory expertise – now key for industry

Threats

Balance sheet
Less funding for R&D in Aust
Falling power prices
Not getting funding for IEA participation (or base funding after 2017)
Bad information
Bad publicity/ruin reputation
Industry threats – safety

Meeting close

Lisa thanked participants for their work and closed the workshop at 3:30pm.