



ANNUAL REPORT

2005 / 2006



Back (l to r): Don Plowman, Paul Turner (Eastern EP), Lawrie Merrett (Upper SE), Andrew Hansen (Murraylands), Bill Davies

Middle (l to r): Rob Lewis, Vic Walter (Fleurieu / Murray Plains), Mark Dennis (, James McDonald, Richard Konzag (Lower North), Trevor Wilksch (Barossa Valley)

Front (l to r): Shirley Pledge (KI), Lyn Teakle (WAB and Mid and Lower SE), Anne Madden, Allen Meissner (Adelaide Hills), Michael Richards (YP / Hummocks), Neville Ferme (Upper North)

Absent: Peter Rayner (Riverland) and Tony Rathjen

INTRODUCTION

The ABA is a ministerially appointed group representing 14 Agricultural Bureau regions in South Australia. In addition to these 14 representatives of the SA Agricultural Bureau regions the ABA also includes the Executive level officers of PIRSA (including SARDI), and DWLBC and a representative of the University of Adelaide Agricultural Faculty and WAB [Women in Agriculture & Business].

Excellent working relationships have been established with Minister Rory McEwen, and the Board was pleased he was able to attend the June meeting. It is also important to maintain the relationships with other Government Ministers, now Cabinet placements are decided.

ABA BUSINESS

The ABA's strategic plan (see appendix 1) was formulated following a review in 2004. All ABA members agreed on major issues and priorities to link strongly with relevant targets in South Australia's Strategic Plan. Activities are allocated to specific individuals to be achieved, and have timelines and expected outcomes. Where there are budgetary implications, plans may need to be modified. The primary purpose is to assist the ABA to align ongoing and new activities with strategic outputs and outcomes. This planning focus's the ABA on its core business as outlined below:

- Priority 1: Improve the internal business systems and corporate governance of the Advisory Board of Agriculture and the Agricultural Bureau network.
- Priority 2: Initiate and deliver targeted programs for Bureau and farmer groups.
- Priority 3: Seek out relevant Ministers and Chief Executives to develop relationships and provide grass roots, friendly counsel.

The successful ABA working groups that focus on core ABA business have been further refined by merging the Bureau Network Group and the Promotion Group into one proactive working group.

Innovation and Adoption of Best Practice group has:

- continued to investigate how the Bureau can be involved in Environmental Management Systems;
- planned for how the Bureau can help roll out programs such as [Look@wool](#) and Edge Network, Top Active, FarmBis and how to support the State Food Plan;
- secured funding in partnership with Rural Solutions SA from the National Landcare Program for a project to develop sustainable management of Sandy Soils;
- continued the Sandy Soils Program and supported the "Growing Agricultural Excellence" project.

Combined Bureau Network / Partnerships and Promotions group has:

- continued to streamline administrative processes;
- together with Rural Solutions SA developed an electronic communications system proposal;
- strong presence with displays at field days around the State;

- continued to support Branches through the allocation of around \$10 000 to Bureau projects.

Achieving an Informed and Supportive Government group has:

- supported and continued meetings with Minister McEwen;
- provided feedback on various issues including the State NRM Plan consultation document, and Grains Industry Development Paper;
- Advisory Board of Agriculture has maintained funding from PIRSA.

I acknowledge the dedication Board members have given to the working groups. I am grateful for the commitment from Rural Solutions SA with support to these groups through the services of Jay Cummins, Locky McLaren and Michy Kris. Ian Pickett (FarmBis) and Mark Stanley (Landcare) are also both valuable contributors to these working groups. I thank you all.

2005 - 06 was a year of achievement and continuous improvement for the Ag Bureau and the Advisory Board of Agriculture.

We welcomed five new enthusiastic Board members at the AGM in 2005 – Richard Konzag (Lower North), Andrew Hansen (Murraylands), Allen Meissner (Adelaide Hills), Shirley Pledge (KI) and Vic Walter (Fleurieu / Murray Plains). Lyn Teakle, representing WAB, was welcomed to the Board in August. Many thanks for her efforts in maintaining our links with WAB, and also for her excellent efforts in representing the Mid and Lower SE in the absence of a representative from that important region.

There was a resurgence of interest in the Bureau Project Fund, with eight new projects being approved by the ABA. It was pleasing to see several of the projects were joint efforts between several Branches and projects initiated by women working with Ag Bureau Branches to deliver timely practical information on subjects such as Biofuel. Many thanks to ABA members who have assisted branches with project applications.

The ABA also allocated funding to assist with delivery of GMO information working with RIRDC Rural Woman of the Year, Heather Baldock.

ABA once again also supported the 2006 Rural Women's Gathering, to be held in Goolwa in August, and the WAB State Conference in Wudinna.

The Agricultural Bureau allocated funds to the Trevor Dillon Roseworthy Agronomy Scholarship at the Roseworthy Campus of the University of Adelaide. This award not only highlights the important role agronomy plays in our economy and community, but also recognized the contribution of previous Service to Primary Production winner, Trevor Dillon, to our industry and state. It is with sadness we note Trevor's recent passing.

During the last few months I attended farewells for Roger Wickes and Dennis Hopkins. Both spoke of the enjoyment and value of their involvement with farmers and Ag Bureaus and the importance of the Bureau in involving farmers in policy issues and new practices.

Rogers Wickes' contribution in providing support for development of the Precision Ag project was vital. The ABA needs to continue to develop strong working relationships with key Department staff to best meet grower and government needs.

I would like to thank Mark Stanley, State NLP Coordinator, for his belief and support for the Ag Bureau network. The Bureau currently has three NLP projects addressing members' needs. These include the Barossa Sodcity Under Irrigation project, Mallee Precision Agriculture Project and The Statewide Sandy Soils Project. The Ag Bureau is also a key participant in the Ag Excellence Alliance NLP funded project. Ian Pickett, through FarmBis has also provided valued assistance throughout the year.

We need to continue to develop and maintain linkages with community leaders through PING and like-minded community and industry groups to maintain our relevance and best meet our members' needs.

Within PIRSA, Ben Bruce (in the role of Director, Sustainable Systems, working with Don Plowman) has replaced Peter Carr. Ben has discussed how ABA can best work with other groups under his direction and what resources are required to best deliver members' needs. Jim Hallion has taken another government role. We thank him for his support and look forward to working with and maintaining the relationship with acting PIRSA Chief Executive Geoff Knight.

It has been a busy period with five Board meetings and displays at the Riverland and Paskeville Field Days and the Karoonda Farm Fair. We have updated the Ag Bureau audio visual and promotional equipment, which makes it easier and cost efficient to better display current information on Bureau activities and projects at field days.

The Waite visit held in October 2005 was excellent with good presenters and provided the opportunity to improve linkages with SARDI and Adelaide University. We need to give more thought how we can best promote this to members.

ABA members have also been active in responding industry papers and attending various feedback sessions and consultative activities and also identifying and researching issues to be raised with the ministers in particular regular meetings with Minister McEwen.

Our Executive Officer James McDonald has provided great support for these activities and also assistance with regional meetings with members in the Upper and Lower SE and the Mallee. It is vital ABA makes face-to-face contact with active members around the State. James has also assisted with getting our new upgraded website on air and operational, with improving communication with members and our business management.

I would also like to thank Anne Madden for her enthusiasm and work in assisting ABA members and Branch office-bearers with day-to-day duties and activities.

I would especially like to thank Mark Dennis and the Executive members for their support during the year and all members for their contribution in Board meetings, working groups and on project management duties. The ABA provides us with great opportunities to meet new people, improve our industry knowledge and develop valuable industry networks.

I encourage members to make best use of the support available to them as ABA members. Be willing to share your ideas and seek advice and assistance from those involved with the Ag Bureau Network and follow through on issues you are passion about.

Ag Bureau awards continue to reward exceptional people in agriculture. Rodney Bell from KI received the ABB Grains Agricultural Bureau Services to Primary Production Award in 2005. The participation of youth in agriculture continues to be encouraged. The Bell family received

double acknowledgement with Lachie Bell winning the Peter Olsen Fellowship in 2005, and the winner of the Lois Harris Scholarship this year is Frances Bowley. I congratulate them all.

Peter Olsen Fellowship

- Winner - \$5,000 bursary – Lachie Bell from KI. Using the bursary to further the development of the Apiary industry on KI and fund bee AI equipment for his bee keeping enterprise and the training to use it. I would like to thank Primary Industries & Resources SA for their continued generous support for this award.
- 2006 Award nominations promotion has begun.
- The Fellowship has been boosted by the Chief Executive’s Achievement Award, won by the EP Bushfire Rescue and Recovery Team. We acknowledge the team’s efforts and achievement and are most grateful they have seen fit to donate the \$5 000 to the Fellowship. The Board has endorsed that the funds be split into \$2 000 each for the first two years (bringing the Fellowship to a total of \$7 000) and the remaining \$1 000 in the third year.

Lois Harris Agricultural Bureau Scholarship winner

- Winner - \$1,000 bursary - Frances was awarded the bursary for the highest TER entering the Bachelor of Agriculture Course at Adelaide University. Presented with the first part of her award at the Board’s meeting in June and at a University awards night in June.

Agricultural Bureau Services to Primary Production Award

- 2005 ABB Grains Service to Primary Production Award – winner – Rodney Bell
- 2006 Award nomination promotions has begun

In addition, during the past year, nearly \$10 000 has been approved to individual Branches for various projects through the Bureau Project Fund. Congratulations to those Branches who applied for and gained funding for their projects. The following were funded through the ABA Bureau Project Fund in 2005 – 06:

Applicant	Title	Amount approved
Paskeville	Deep ripping and placement of nutrition of heavy soils at Paskeville	\$1 200
Mt. Barker	1 000 th meeting celebrations	\$1 042
BOAB (Organic Branch)	Field Day at Delamere on 2 nd April 06	\$849.50
Nelshaby	Calcium application on Sodic Soils in the Pt. Pirie / Pt. Broughton Region	\$1 254
Booloroo Centre	Super Trials	\$1 000
Franklin Harbour	Target Profit from Teamwork	\$2 800
Mount Hope	Machinery Ownership Workshop	\$1 000

I would like to thank the many individuals, businesses and organisations that have provided valuable support for our aims during the past year.

INDUSTRY LINKS

A key to the ABA’s influence on industry is through its involvement with relevant consultation processes and delegations to other bodies.

The ABA identified critical consultation processes for the ABA and Agricultural Bureau members to be involved with. ABA and Agricultural Bureau members provided feedback and formulated responses both to the EPA draft Pesticide Code of Practice Consultation and the Natural Resources Management (NRM) Council's SA Natural Resources Management Plan 2005-2010 consultation document, i.e. Towards SA's State NRM Plan.

Those industry bodies and the ABA delegates are:

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| • Bureau of Meteorology Agricultural Consultative Committee | Neville Ferme |
| • ChemCert SA Board | Trevor Wilksch |
| • FarmSafe South Australia | Trevor Wilksch |
| • National Livestock Identification Scheme | Andrew Hansen |
| • State Landcare Committee | Mark Dennis |
| • Wooltag | Adrian Smith |

BOARD MEMBER ACTIVITIES

In addition to the work during meetings, and projects listed above, the individual Board members spend a great amount of time out of session in establishing relationships in their region, gathering information and participating in other Boards and Committees on behalf of the ABA. Each ABA member attends as many local Branch meetings as possible, to pass information from the ABA and to gather intelligence about local issues to feedback to the ABA. Activities organised or instigated by Board members because of their awareness have the potential to prevent or minimise major issues that could cost farmers many thousands of dollars.

Further examples of ABA member activities are:

- Gathering information about risk, succession planning with feedback to ABA;
- Arranging regional meetings to develop closer links between Branches;
- Planning and delivering promotional activities at the Riverland, Yorke Peninsula Field Days and Karoonda Farm Fair
- Continued to pursue industry issues and opportunities to improve research and adoption of best practice.
- Developing a knowledge base on the emerging issues in relation to Environmental Management Systems
- Encouraging participation in the SA Rural Leadership Program: a total of 6 days training and development for leaders in regional SA
- Membership of organisations such as Crop Science Society, SA No Till Farming Association, Regional Farming Systems Groups, Benchmarking groups
- Continuation of local trials on a seeding system for sticky clay soils, adapting work done in another Bureau region.
- National Livestock Identification Scheme Implementation Committee, providing a conduit for information to and from producers
- State Farmsafe Committee and ChemCert Board membership
- State Landcare Review Committee membership
- Developing funding applications for local groups, with Ag Bureau/ABA support components, such as Barossa Sodification project, YP Alkaline Soils group production groups coordination and delivery of sustainable practices project
- Developing stronger relationships with relevant public sector areas in relation to NRM and sustainable farming practices

- Liaison with NRM Boards.

The number of volunteer hours estimated by each ABA member in addition to meeting times is considerable and I thank them all for their time and efforts.

Retiring Board members are Lawrie Merret representing the Upper South East, Paul Turner representing Eastern Eyre Peninsula, Peter Rayner representing the Riverland. I thank you all for your service not only to the Board, but also your communities. I thank all past Board members for their untiring services and dedication to agriculture and wish them well with their future. I am also stepping down from the Board after eight years and I wish Richard Murdoch well and am sure he will represent the Yorke Peninsula / Hummocks Branches extremely well.

The other incoming Board members are Janette Ridgway representing the Upper South East, Tony Loffler representing the Murraylands, and Heather Baldock representing Eastern Eyre Peninsula. Welcome all and I trust your time on the Board will be enjoyable and challenging.

There have also been numerous awards to long serving Bureau members.

20 year awards

Max C Kroehn Angaston
 Trevor R Kroehn..... Angaston
 Kevin Preiss..... Arno Bay
 Robert Preiss..... Arno Bay
 Malcolm Adams Arthurton
 Graham Colliver Arthurton
 Peter Kleinig Koonunga
 Kris Boehm..... Light Pass
 Mervyn John Light Pass
 Bruce Tonkin Loxton
 Irrigation

Ashley P WakefieldSth Kilkerran
 Peter GloverYeelanna
 Terry JollyYeelanna

40 year awards

Ray L KlemmAngaston
 Les R SteickeAngaston
 Ron GrosserArno Bay
 Philip GeorgGreenock
 Gordon Hoffmann.....Koonunga
 Leon NietschkeKoonunga

50 year awards

Allen Campbell Day.....Bangham /
 Western Flat

Daryl Frahm..... Mobilong
 Hadyn Hein Mobilong
 Robert Humphrey Mobilong
 Darryl Pahl..... Mobilong
 Brian Pfeiffer Mobilong
 Grant Wagenknecht Mobilong
 Wayne Altman Mt. Barker
 Martin Liebelt Mt. Barker
 Eric Moule Mt. Barker
 Robert Klopp Sth Kilkerran

Ivan FrahnMobilong
 Gordon Kuchel.....Mobilong
 Neville RathjenMobilong
 Ray AltmanMt. Barker
 Rex WJ Kakoschke.....Sth Kilkerran
 Hartley M LinkeSth Kilkerran

John Kurtz.....Light Pass

A new Branch, **BOAB** (Biodynamic and Organic Agricultural Bureau) was formed and is now under the Bureau’s umbrella. They have a large active State-wide membership and have already hosted field days and information sessions.

CLOSING REMARKS

Finally I encourage members to make best use of the support available to them as ABA members. Be willing to share your ideas and seek advice and assistance from those involved with the Ag Bureau Network and follow through on issues you are passion about.

Many Thanks

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Richards". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "R".

Michael Richards
STATE PRESIDENT: S.A. Agricultural Bureau
CHAIRMAN: Advisory Board of Agriculture

APPENDIX 1:

ABA STRATEGIC PLAN

ABA VISION

The South Australian agricultural sector has a well-developed capacity to be prosperous and sustainable

ABA MISSION

The Advisory Board of Agriculture will provide a pathway to creating and maintaining a prosperous and sustainable agricultural sector through a strong regional Bureau network in partnership with Government, education and research providers, agribusiness, community and industry.

ABA CORE BUSINESS

- Priority 1:** Improve the internal business systems and corporate governance of the Advisory Board of Agriculture and the Agricultural Bureau network.
- Priority 2:** Initiate and deliver targeted programs for Bureau and farmer groups.
- Priority 3:** Seek out relevant Ministers and Chief Executives to develop relationships and provide grass roots, friendly counsel.

Priority 1
Improve the internal business systems and corporate governance of the Advisory Board of Agriculture and the Agricultural Bureau network.

Outcomes

- ▶ Understand the Agricultural Bureau membership, including participation and demographic profile
- ▶ Effective communication within ABA and the Bureau network
- ▶ Engage younger people and women in the Bureau movement

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE ABOVE	BY WHOM	HOW	BUDGET	WHEN	PROGRESS
Analyse and use data from Think Tank and survey to achieve better outcomes	Exec Officer, ABA	Use data in planning processes, and to inform ongoing planning and decision making		Ongoing	Complete
Provide overview information & training for ABA Members re Governance, Board Roles & responsibilities, and risk management	Exec Officer	Source and engage trainer	\$150	Nov Board meeting	Exec Officer completed 2005/6 & continuing
More in depth training on corporate governance and responsibilities	Exec Officer	Source, brief and engage trainer	\$1,000 (to be sourced)	Post Nov Board meeting	Exec Officer organised program 2005/6 & continuing
Update Member Database to include membership history and email contacts	Admin Officer, Exec Officer, ABA for follow up with Branches	Data entry, monitor responses, contact non responsive Branches		October 2004	Updated & progressively updating
Instigate improved budget planning, financial recording & management and develop Standard Operating Procedures	Treasurer, Exec Officer	Establish sound practices, document and maintain		Ongoing. SOP developed by end	Complete & continuing

for ABA financial practices				November 2004	
Establish effective communication with Branches & Members (including effective inter branch networks)	ABA, Exec Officer	Develop plan of regional visits, increase ABA involvement with local Branches	\$6,000	Monthly – between meetings	Program for visits developed & continuing
Board Bis monthly newsletter	ABA, Exec Officer	Input from ABA to enable collation by Exec Officer/Admin Officer		Monthly, email reminders sent seeking contributions	Ongoing
Develop Bureau members newsletter	Exec Officer	Seek articles from ABA, Branches, diary dates	\$1500 (project with Rural Solutions)	First edition October 2004. Posted 10/04	Ongoing
Develop an effective hybrid distribution of newsletter, using email and post	Exec Office, Admin Officer	Investigate database and ensure all members are targeted		December 2004, then quarterly	Program of communication of updates & news organised 2006
Convene regular regional executive meetings	ABA members	Coordinate branches in own region		Minimum one per year per region	Program for visits developed & continuing
Encourage branches to welcome new participants. Plan activities which meet the needs of young people & women	ABA, Working grp	Personal approaches, newsletter		Commence October 2004, ongoing	
Develop a more aggressive program of fostering women to consider ABA nomination	ABA, Exec Officer, Local ABA Reps, Branches	Personal approaches, workshops in regions	Part of regional visit program	November 2004 to commence State Strat Plan T5.1	4 out of 6 new nominees female in 2006
Make branch activities more attractive to prospective members	ABA, Working grp	Summarise key findings of survey, send to all branches to		November 2004	

		support programming and planning			
Maintain and grow interest and uptake of Awards program	ABA, Exec Officer	Media releases, editorial, information to Branches and regional press		Ongoing	Ongoing

Priority 2
Initiate and deliver targeted programs for Bureau and farmer groups.

Outcomes

- ▶ Improved adoption of practices
- ▶ Increased business opportunities through diversification
- ▶ Raised awareness and acceptance of rural issues – stretching the vision
- ▶ Healthy rural communities

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE ABOVE	BY WHOM	HOW	BUDGET	WHEN	PROGRESS
Develop appropriate relationships to enable joint projects.	ABA, Exec Officer	Monitor activities in various sectors, initiate meetings where appropriate		Ongoing	SARDI, Ag Excellence, Healthy Soils, AgB branches, MacKillop Grp, NRM Boards, local Prod. groups (eg Sodicity)
Develop system for identifying grant opportunities.	ABA, Exec Officer, Branches	All ABA gather info from Branches, Exec Officer to compile a central register		October 2004 and Ongoing	Exec Officer has information of a number of funding sources.
Roll out Sandy Soils Project (clear role for ABA S.S. reps, clear expectations of RS)	ABA, Exec Officer, Branches	SS Committee to meet and oversight project, feed back progress to ABA	\$228,000	Ongoing	Project extended, & new projects (i.e. Sodicity, WDF, Precision Ag) Results & Program developed & continuing
Increase level of awareness and use of Internet by Ag Bureau members	Working Grp, ABA, Exec Officer	Introduction of E-com project and new website	To be determined	Commence October 2004.	Executive Officer completed E-com project 2006 for new AgB

				State Strat Plan T 4.7	website
Actively encourage involvement in the implementation of NRM process	Chairman, Exec Officer, Branches, members	Establish alliance with NRM area, plan support of implementation		Met Sept 04, begin info dissemination Oct 04. State Strat Plan T 3.6 & 3.7	NRM funded projects extended, (i.e. Sandy Soils, Sodcity, WDF, Precision Ag) Program developed & continuing
Develop a high level strategic alliance with the Landcare movement to build on the initiative of the joint conference in Sept 2004	Chairman, ABA, Exec Officer	Initiate meeting, establish process for regular contact and discussions. Future joint activity plans & conferences to be developed		November 2004 and ongoing State Strat Plan T 3.6 & 3.7	
Develop broader understanding of issues impacting on agriculture, such as the National Competition Policy, Free Trade agreement	Exec Officer	Source and arrange presenters for ABA meetings		Nov 04 and Jan 05 meetings	Session held on NCP Nov 04. Ongoing info as it comes available sent to update ABA.
Actively promote Bureau membership and community involvement	ABA, Branches Exec Officer	Support Branches to develop innovative programming, ways of inviting and engaging with new people		November 04 and ongoing State Strat Plan T 5.6 & 5.11	Ongoing. BOAB. Struggling & recessed branches stimulated via BPF (eg Booleroo Centre, & others)
Develop alliance with the Office for Volunteers to gain recognition of the Agricultural Bureau network	Exec Officer	Meet with OFV, establish the process and gain appropriate recognition		November 04 State Strat Plan T 5.6	Met with Director and registered network Nov 04. Updates to Exec Off ongoing in 2006

Priority 3:

Seek out relevant Ministers and Chief Executives to develop relationships and provide grass roots, friendly counsel.

<p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ We want them to want us ▶ We want them to value the information that is provided ▶ We want to influence policy

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE ABOVE	BY WHOM	HOW	BUDGET	WHEN	PROGRESS
Meet with Minister for Ag, Food and Fisheries, deliver plan & seek information re priority issues. Feed back from recent ABA meetings.	Chairman, Exec Officer	Meeting Follow up with appropriate activity		Monday 11 October 2004, then quarterly	Program for visits developed & ongoing
Meet with Exec Director, NRM Services DWLBC to establish parameters of relationship and formulate the way ahead	Chairman, Exec Officer	Meeting Follow up in working groups		Tuesday 28 September 2004, then quarterly State Strat Plan T 3.6 & 3.7	Relationship established. Initial meeting held & ongoing via ABA & projects (i.e. Sandy Soils, Precision Ag) Program developed & continuing
Meet with senior PIRSA staff to deliver plan & seek information re priority issues	Chairman, Exec Officer	Meeting Follow up where required		Thursday 14 October 2004 then 6 monthly	Program for raising issues with PIRSA visits developed via Ministerial & ABA meetings & ongoing

Key

Shaded activities are those that feed directly into achieving targets in the State Strategic Plan.

While there are a number that have a connection with activities of the ABA and Agricultural Bureau, those listed can be influenced directly.

Targets referred to are:

Incorporate biodiversity values into rural businesses operated by landholders

Primary responsibility: Landholders

3.6 Any clearance of native vegetation being offset by significant biodiversity benefit by 2005

3.7 Integrate native vegetation/biodiversity management in South Australia's eight natural Resource Management Plans

4.7 Increase the level of internet use in metropolitan and regional SA by 20% within 10 years

5.1 Increase the number of women on all state and government boards and committees

5.6 Increase the level of volunteerism in South Australia from 38% in 2000 to 50% within 10 years

Work together to build social capacity, improve access to education and training, and support business development

Primary responsibility: State government, local government and local communities

5.11 Build and maintain infrastructure to develop and support sustainable communities in regions
