



New Zealand Association for Impact Assessment

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A little history

The New Zealand Association for Impact Assessment was first formed as the Association for Social Assessment (Inc.) (ASA) in mid 1990. In 1998, ASA revised its constitution and changed its name to the New Zealand Association for Impact Assessment, reflecting a decision to widen the scope of the Association from primarily social considerations to a concern with all forms of impact assessment. This change coincided with the IAIA'98 meeting in Christchurch, New Zealand. Our current membership varies year by year, but with about 80-100 longer term members. The Association's activities are managed by a Core Group of 6-10 people, mainly through Skype conferencing every 4-6 weeks.

2014 Conference



Joining the dots: assessing and managing the impacts of transport infrastructure development

We held the conference in Auckland, a city and region undergoing significant transport infrastructure development. The New Zealand Transport Agency provided sponsorship which enabled us to develop a very good programme of invited speakers. Our sessions moved from an initial consideration of current practice with major road and rail projects, as a foundation for more specific exploration of ecological, sediment and noise issues, followed by visual, social and health issues. This year we included a session that looked at similar issues in the Pacific region, as part of our ongoing commitment to building understanding and capacity for impact assessment in the Pacific region. Then the last two sessions addressed community and stakeholder engagement, and monitoring and impact management. This allowed us to devote the last part of the second day to the indaba session, the open space discussions that allow participants to focus on specific issues stimulated by the conference and organise discussion groups to explore them.

With about 60 attendees, the conference once again proved a very worthwhile experience: we are reaching new communities of interest each year, learning more about their ways of working, helping them reflect on their impact assessment practices and pointing them where relevant to possible solutions to problems they identify.

NZAIA management

NZAIA has been making changes to its management systems over the last 18 months, but on a rather ad hoc basis. Towards the end of the 2014, one of our Core Group members suggested a more coherent set of aims:

- A website platform that supports links to the NZAIA membership and mailing database, and supports conference/workshop logistics.
- A communications platform that accurately maintains databases, allows NZAIA to easily prepare and send professional-looking targeted communication, and allows people to opt-in and opt-out of NZAIA communications.
- An email communications platform that allows NZAIA members easily and accurately to track and respond to communications with NZAIA.
- A database that hosts all important NZAIA documents and files securely, allows easy access and editing from multiple members and will be supported long-term.
- Systems and processes to ensure continuity and stability when NZAIA experiences turnover of core group members.

We still need to make final decisions, but it is likely we will follow this framework, making better use of MailChimp, switching to Gmail, utilising GoogleDocs, and exploring decision-support tools such as Loomio. These changes will allow us to make more of our slender resources, especially the voluntary time and effort of the core group members.

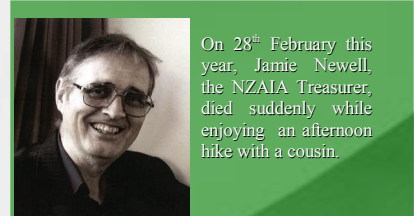
Recent conference themes:

- Assessing the impacts of energy development: regional and local perspectives (2006)*
- Assessing the impacts of growth on our urban areas (2007)*
- Assessing impacts in coastal and lake front environments (2008)*
- Changing landscapes: impacts of regional economic development (2009)*
- [2010: NZAIA supported the 3rd Asia Pacific regional HIA Conference]*
- Natural disasters: impact assessment for sustainable recovery (2011)*
- Assessing the impacts of petroleum and mineral extraction in New Zealand (2012)*
- Freshwater, fresh thinking: the role of impact assessment in freshwater management (2013)*
- Joining the dots - assessing and managing the impacts of transport infrastructure development (2014)*



Our aims

1. To promote the practice of impact assessment (including social and environmental assessment) in the formulation and implementation of development and policy proposals.
2. To promote research and consultation practices which identify the full social and environmental effects of policies & projects and the measures required to address these.
3. To promote the development of impact assessment theory and methods.
4. To promote impact assessment that recognises and accommodates different social and cultural values, including those of indigenous peoples.
5. To promote and encourage a high standard of practice amongst members of the Association and others using impact assessment methods, in accordance with the Code of Ethics.
6. To recognise and consider the Treaty of Waitangi.
7. To undertake or encourage initiatives, consistent with the other objects, powers and resources of the Association, to promote or advance the protection of the environment.



On 28th February this year, Jamie Newell, the NZAIA Treasurer, died suddenly while enjoying an afternoon hike with a cousin.

Jamie was a long standing member of NZAIA, having been associated with the original social impact groups that preceded the formation of NZAIA. But he was also very much the central figure in our core group, providing energy, enthusiasm, and effort, cajoling and encouraging the rest of us, year by year, as we organised annual conferences, made submission on proposed legislation, and re-launched our electronic newsletter. He provided IT support, took care of conference logistics, and was very much our "go to" man in the organisation. He was perhaps more interested in demography and population data than impact assessment, but he was even more interested in enabling a group he cherished to pursue their passion and make a difference to the world around them. Jamie, our friend and colleague, will very much be missed.

