

As we move quickly into a new year, it is a good time to review the year ahead and reflect on the year just gone. The office of the AGCSA has undergone some significant changes since November 2006 and 2007 was full of new ideas and initiatives.

Looking back on 2007, the AGCSA has worked hard at responding to member needs and to position itself in such a manner that golf course superintendents can have their say on a range of emerging issues that are challenging the golf industry.

Over the past 12 months the AGCSA has continued to play a key role within the recently formed Australian Golf Industry Council (AGIC), while the Environmental Initiative gained further momentum. The year also saw the establishment of an HR and best practice service, which is headed by former AGCSA Excellence in Golf Course Management award winner Daryl Sellar, while the Water Management Initiative was also launched. On top of this the association's Australian Turfgrass Management magazine continued to go from strength to strength and there was the highly successful annual conference which went to Cairns for the first time.

In addition, the AGCSA has been represented at the Golf Course Superintendents and Managers Association of India conference, attended the Asia-Pacific Golf Summit and attended a seminar conducted by the Thai Golf Course Superintendents Association. As a result of such activities, there has been increased interest from the South East Asia region in what we do and how we may be able to assist these burgeoning organisations.

Much of the interest is in the area of education and the need for such developing regions to improve the education of local superintendents and greenkeepers.

While there are many activities that the AGCSA can become involved in, it still remains a relatively small organisation albeit one that has grown significantly in size since its inception in 1981. As demands for our time increase we need to reassess our priorities and consequently we will be undertaking a strategic review in the first half of 2008.

Because of the potential opportunities, we need to assess where we commit our resources and what additional resources may be required to undertake new activities. The strategic review will set the platform for the AGCSA for the next three to five years, with the underlying priority always being our members and their needs.

As an adjunct, AGCSA staff Scott Petersen and Andrew Peart recently attended the GCSAA conference in Orlando, gaining knowledge and sharing ideas with other international superintendent associations. The theme for the week was environmental management and it was quickly realised that Australia is not only leading the Asian region but the world in this area. These international associations are watching Australia closely and if we succeed with the likes of the Environmental Initiative it could become a blueprint for golf courses worldwide.

Relating to this, the February 2008 edition of 'Marketing' magazine highlighted a survey which found that 64 per cent of the population would not invest in a company that damaged



the environment. Such a figure shows that if the Australian golf industry does not place a significant commitment to environmental management within the next couple of years, we will have a serious problem attracting future generations to 'invest' their time in the game of golf based on environmental principles alone.

The survey also indicated that 53 per cent of the population would pay up to five per cent more for a product that did good things for the environment, as long as the quality was the same. The industry therefore has a challenge in maintaining high quality turf conditions in an environmentally-friendly manner with the potential of having a five per cent increase in budgets to support such changes.

So as we set about our strategic planning, the AGCSA will concentrate on providing whatever is required to assist the industry achieve its corporate and environmental responsibilities.

The only assistance the AGCSA needs to achieve these goals is from you and your commitment to make it happen. 🙏