Introductory Paper

**Proposed changes to the SIA By-laws and Policy
regarding the SIA College of Fellows**

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1. Introduction and Background

In 2002 the SIA National Board of Management created the College of Fellows within the Institute following feedback through the late 1990's from Government and industry leaders that the SIA needed to change its image, improve its approaches to lobbying for change and raise the calibre of input to peak safety decision-making forums. The College provided an opportunity to establish a credible pool of expertise, at the peak of the health and safety profession, that could be called upon to assist the Institute provide not only input to regulatory development and industry policy setting activities, but also provide advice and guidance to the Institute on its programs and activities.

Since that time the role and potential of the College has only been partially realised. After significant reforms with the introduction of certification and other large-scale management changes, the decision was made to retain the College, and to re-calibrate its entry points and functional processes of support to the work of the Institute.

Historically, entry to the College has been automatic upon obtaining the member grading of Fellow or Chartered Fellow or alternatively via an Honorary Fellowship award. With the introduction of the SIA's certification program, the previous member grading process ceased and therefore the entry pathway for the College also ceased, at least temporarily. The College of Fellows has since undergone an extensive review undertaken jointly by the SIA Board and the College of Fellows Executives, including a survey of the College of Fellows members in late 2015. Part of the review included considering a new entry criteria and application process for the College.

This paper presents a summary of the review and reasoning behind the suggested changes.

2. Summary of Findings from the joint Board / College of Fellows Executive Review relating to Entry Criteria and Process

The College Executive Committee believe that members of the College are those health and safety professionals who display a range of the following characteristics:
- Experienced
- Qualified
- Highly capable
- Thought leaders
- Influential
- Health and safety leaders
- Ongoing contribution to the SIA
- Outstanding contribution to industry and/or the health and safety profession

The College Executive had originally recommended:
- That the entry criteria for the College going forward be the obtainment of Chartered OHS Generalist Professional certification, which would mean the College would include all current Fellows and Chartered Fellows in addition to any certified Chartered OHS Generalist Professionals who do not hold Fellow or Chartered Fellow membership.

- That there continue to be an Honorary Fellow membership for those who perhaps do not meet the criteria for Chartered OHS Professional but who have demonstrated leadership, significant contribution or a high-level of excellence in the field of health and safety.

However, after exploring and considering the above option it was noted that:
- Obtainment of Chartered OHS professional status should not in itself solely be an automatic qualification for entry to the College.
- Grading was (and certification is) a process to measure capability based on the combination of education and experience. Those who seek grading or certification are not necessarily the matching cohort to those who the Board and Executive have identified as being suited to being Fellows of the Institute. This is well evidenced by the fact that many industry health and safety leaders are not currently members of the College.
- The College Executive has identified a series of criteria, and certification does not measure these, nor guarantee them.
- While certification of all types do measure capability (one of the criteria), there is a need to examine entry to the College through the other criteria as well. – i.e. thought leader, influential, health and safety leader, and also contribution to SIA and contribution to the broader field of health and safety.

The Board and the College Executives believe that fellowships should be offered to people who meet this range of criteria, and so it was decided to establish these formally.

3.   Review of Like Organisations with Fellow Members / Fellowship Programs

As part of considering some suitable criteria for membership of the College, the College Executive undertook a review of Fellowships in like organisations (conducted in 2016). The below is a summary of the findings of this review.

3.1   Engineers Australia
When accessed the Engineers Australia website stated there are three member grades associated with a Fellow status of their association, including: Fellow (FIEAust); Technologist Fellow (TFIEAust); and Associate Fellow (AFIEAust). They state that as a Fellow of Engineers Australia the person would be recognised as being amongst the "true leaders of the industry and profession".

The criteria for the three Fellow member grades are as follows:
Fellow Professional Engineer (FIEAust)
To qualify, the applicant must have followed or be currently following the profession of engineering and either:
- Be eligible for the Member Grade of Professional Engineer (MIEAust)
- Held a sustained major responsibility in the design or execution of important engineering work; or
- Have high education qualifications, held a prominent position in the profession and made a major contribution to the science or practice of engineering; or
- Have had suitable engineering education/training, extensive responsibility in the design/execution of important engineering work and achieved exceptional eminence in the profession.

Fellow Engineering Technologist (TFIEAust)
To qualify, the applicant must:
- Be eligible for member Grade of Engineering Technologist (TMIEAust)
- Have extensive experience and responsibility as an engineering technologist
- Be recognised as having achieved eminence.

Fellow Engineering Associate (AFIEAust)
To qualify, the applicant must:
- Be eligible for the Member Grade of Engineering Associate (AMIEAust)
- Have extensive experience and responsibility as an engineering officer
- Be recognised as having eminence.

The application process involves completing an online application form available only through password protected access.

Engineers Australia has a separate certification process to the above Fellow member levels.

3.2   Australian Institute of Occupational Hygienists (AIOH)

When accessed the AIOH website stated that the hygienist's association has a member grading of Fellow Membership (FAIOH), which is separate to their certification process.

Entry criteria is as follows:
- Fellow Members must have been a Full Member of the Institute for at least five years; and
- Have worked for more than fifteen years in a professional capacity in the field of occupational hygiene or one of its specialist branches; and
- Have made a distinguished contribution to the advancement of the profession of occupational hygiene.

Fellow Members are nominated by a Full or Fellow member of the Institute and are seconded by a Full or Fellow member of the Institute. There is no direct application for the Fellow membership.

The AIOH also has an Honorary Fellow Membership, which is by invitation only from the AIOH Council and is in recognition of a person's distinguished contribution to the advancement of the profession of occupational hygiene.

3.3   Australian Institute of Management (AIM)

When accessed the Australian Institute of Management website stated that it had an Associate Fellow and Fellow member grading, which are both open to applications from eligible persons via the online form. The AIM does not have a separate certification process only a member grading system.

Criteria is as follows:

Associate Fellow (ARAIM) criteria:
- Record of proven management achievement over five (5) years or more; and

- In a position that requires delegation of authority to others; and/or
- In a specialist position that has a substantial impact on the company's overall operations; or
- A consultant who has previously operated at a senior executive management capacity; and
- A university degree, diploma in management or business studies or a diploma in a discipline appropriate to the person's work;
- Postgraduate qualifications in management or business studies

Fellow (FAIM) criteria:
- A record of business and/or organisational leadership over a period of six (6) years or more (e.g. For example: CEO, Director or Owner Manager)
- In a position that involves the delegation of authority to staff at Associate Fellow and Member level
- Making decisions that affect the ultimate strategic direction or bottom line performance of a company; or
- In a specialist position that has a substantial impact on the company's overall operations
- Report to a board
- A business owner employing ten people or more
- Possess a university degree, diploma in management or business studies or a diploma in a discipline appropriate to the person's work
- Possess a post graduate qualification in management or business studies

3.4   Australasian College of Health Service Management (ACHSM)

When accessed the Australasian College of Health Service Management had two Fellow member grades, as follows:

Associate Fellow. The applicant must have either satisfactorily completed a recognized qualification in health management or another tertiary qualification approved by the Board and have been in a senior health management position for **three (3) years** or have been a full time health management academic for at least three (3) years. Members in the Associate Fellow category have ACHSM voting rights and can use the Post-Nominals AFCHSM.

A person who has the required level of senior management experience in health management (over 3 years) but does not have a Health Management qualification may apply for special consideration for decision by the College Board based on extensive health management experience or another qualification they wish considered by the Board.

Fellow. This is the highest membership category awarded in their College.
To be eligible to enter the Fellowship program the member must score at least 25 points on the eligibility scoring chart provided on their website and in the Fellowship Manual.

Candidates are expected to participate in study groups as part of the Fellowship program. Members in the Fellow category have ACHSM voting rights and can use the Post-Nominals FCHSM.

The ACHSM does not have a separate certification process only a member grading system.

3.5 Australian Human Resources Institute (AHRI)

When accessed the Australian Human Resources Institute (AHRI) had a Fellow member grade. The AHRI has a linked but separate National certification process.

AHRI Fellows (FAHRI) are senior-level practicing HR professionals. FAHRIs must hold an AHRI-accredited or relevant postgraduate qualification or can demonstrate equivalent knowledge, skills and experience in HR of 10 years or more, and also have a minimum of five years of experience in a strategic management or leadership position. In addition, FAHRIs must demonstrate a substantial contribution to the HR industry.

FAHRI applications are assessed and approved by the AHRI National President, and AHRI state council president. Prospective members interested in applying for Fellow membership and current members wishing to upgrade to Fellow membership must read the application guidelines specific to this membership type.

3.6 Summary of Findings

Of the five like organisations reviewed, the following similarities were observed:
- Four of the five organisations had an application process for Fellowship status/membership level (via an online form)
- Three of the five organisations also had separate certification processes (either internal or external)
- Four of the five organisations had multiple Fellow grades/levels
- In all five organisations the Fellow status was the highest level of membership within the organisation
- The Fellow status came with the use of post-nominals
- Entry criteria / application criteria had the following similarities across the organisations:
  - University level qualifications
  - Extensive experience in the profession, including a minimum number of years' experience (this ranged from 3 to 15 years depending on the organisation)
  - Hold or have held leadership positions
  - Substantial / distinguished contribution to the industry / profession

4. Recommendations provided to the SIA Board

Based on the review of the College of Fellows and on the examination of the Fellowship programs of other like Australian organisations, the College of Fellows Executives made the following recommendations to the SIA Board and these were subsequently approved as draft changes to the By-Laws for member feedback:

1. Entry to the SIA College of Fellows (Fellow membership status) should be via application to the sub-committee of the College of Fellows Executive Committee – "SIA Awards and College Membership Committee".

2. Entry to the SIA College of Fellows through an award of Honorary Fellow should be via invitation from the SIA Board based on established criteria and as recommended by the SIA Awards and College Membership Committee.

3. Given the role of certification, the Fellow categories should be simplified going forward to include – Fellow and Honorary Fellow only. Those members holding Chartered Fellow membership could continue to hold this membership and continue to use the post-nominals (CFSIA) but there would be no new Chartered Fellows. This will aid with the distinction between member categories and certification levels, which include the Chartered title.

4. The recommended criteria for entry to the SIA College of Fellows, including Honorary Fellow is contained within the draft SIA Policy document: "SIA College of Fellows - Entry Criteria and Application Process"

5. Proposed new documentation

Within the related paperwork, members will note that in the past the material relating to the College has been all contained in the By-Laws. In re-designing the terms of reference (TOR) and entry criteria, we have split the documentation as follows:

(a) A re-written section in the By-laws which outlines the conditions of establishment of the College and its core role

(b) A Board Policy document which establishes TOR for the College and its Executive Committee and outlines its structural workings including sub-committees and working groups; and

(c) A second Board policy which establishes Entry Criteria.

These documents – including the existing By-laws prior to any changes - are all available on the website for comment by members.

6.   Invitation to comment

I invite all members who wish to comment on the College of Fellows' By-laws section, Terms of Reference, and Entry Criteria, to do so by COB Friday 15 March, by emailing your comments to admin@sia.org.au.

The Board and College Executives will consider all comments before making any formal changes to the By-laws.

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