

PESA FEDERAL PRESIDENT REPORT

Year Ended 31 December 2024

This AGM marks my final time as President before stepping down into the Past President role. It has been a pleasure to serve in this role, and I thank you, our members, for giving me this opportunity and trusting me at the tiller of the PESA ship as we sail these uncharted waters.

The last year has continued on the path of change at no slower rate than we experienced the previous year.

2024 was a milestone year for PESA as it included the creation of a new 5 year strategy plan. The PESA Federal Board changes every two years as it rotates around State Committees which also change every two years, highlighting the importance of evergreen strategic frameworks for our society. PESA Strategic Plans enable current and future Federal Boards and State Committees to work towards achieving defined goals across the nation through each planning cycle. Not all presidents get to preside over setting the future direction on its path, and I hope that I have done this task justice.

Thanks to the membership committee we were able to be guided by the statistics and opinions from a wide range of members who completed the membership survey.

“Towards 2030” involves broadening the focus of the society to encompass the wider range of energy geoscience that makes up the work of our members. This involves more cross society collaboration and a shifting of some of our allegiances.

The plan also doubles down on an increasing trend within PESA for more online content, with the technical library, webinars and new member driven news offering of PESA Gazette. The success of this plan will rely heavily on the volunteers within our society who sit on federal and branch committees. But it will also rely on our members in general who are put more in the driving seat for generating content for our communications and helping take PESA in the technical directions they are interested in.

2024 saw the end of the PESA news magazine and the start of the monthly email PESA Gazette. We no longer have the expense of an editor on our accounts, which helps the bottom line, but it also means that we don't have a paid editor driving content and ensuring the articles get written. This comes with more pressure on our member volunteers for administering this and reaching out to our wider membership for content that will be of interest. I would encourage you all to think either write an article or think of a topic you would like to hear about, and see if you can find the appropriate person to ask to write that article. Our content will only be as interesting as our contributors.

The plan also included the reinstatement of the PESA distinguished lecturer program, and we look forward to welcoming Henry Posamentier in November 2025 to give courses in both Adelaide and Perth.

Financially 2024 was not a profit making year, but this partly comes down to the fact that we held no conferences, and so had limited chances for making that profit. The running of conferences takes a lot out of our volunteer base and can't usually be sustained every year. We are however looking forward to a successful AEGC conference in Perth in September 2025.

What really keeps PESA going is the continued efforts of our state branches and their committees, that keep the lifeblood events of PESA going. The diversification of events away from the standard technical lunch of the previous decade shows a willingness to engage in meeting the needs of our

members, and the inspiration of our branch committees to conceive new formats. Field trips, core viewings, special interest groups and social events are just a few of the things our branch committees have managed to run in addition to technical talks. I cannot stress enough how indebted we are at PESA to the hard work of the volunteers at the branch level who make this possible, and I encourage all members to consider how they can contribute, whether that is joining your branch committee, offering to give a talk, or writing an article for publication, or even as little as taking the time to thank the people who organised an event you attended and enjoyed. Unlike several other industry societies PESA is fully volunteer run, and in a time where finding volunteers is harder than ever, we must cherish the effort they put in to keep this society running.

Our membership is staying fairly steady year on year with only very marginal decline. This should be seen as a big achievement given the contraction of our industry as a whole over recent years. Perhaps in these more uncertain times, people are seeing the value in remaining connected and continuing to learn and upskill.

As I step down from this role I would like to thank the people who have made my time in the presidency much easier to manage, and who have gone that extra mile to keep PESA running for all of us. Special thanks go to Chris Watts, our outgoing treasurer who has kept the financials on a firm keel, as well as impeccably organised.

While the WA executive is on the way out, we are handing over to a wonderfully capable team, some who will be new to the board, but some who have been preparing for this challenge for some time. Elinor Alexander was appointed to the board in 2024 as the chairman, and she will continue on to provide continuity through the change, and Janny Spilsbury Schakel has been getting more and more involved through the two years she has been Vice President ready to take over the presidency. Handing over the reins will not be difficult knowing what safe hands they are going to. I look forward to working with Janny and the incoming Treasurer and Secretary and hope to keep building towards the goals we have set.

Helen Debenham
Federal President