

# geographia



AGTA News  
August 2013

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*check out the new site...*
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*see what's happening  
around the country...*

## Welcome to the new look AGTA News!

*Australian Geography Teachers Association is the peak body representing the interests of Geography Teacher Associations (GTA) across the country.*



*Sunset over Flinders Ranges, SA*

If you are a member of your state association you have representation through AGTA. Each association pays a small fee for each of their members which enables AGTA to lobby the government, produce resources and further the

cause of Geography teachers across the nation.

The AGTA Board is made up of the president of each of the state Associations and representatives from those states. All members of the AGTA Board are volunteers. In 2012 the constitution was changed to ensure that there were two representatives from each state on the Board.

The AGTA Board meets twice a year in May and October. The meetings take place in different states and are hosted by the GTA of that state. The last two meetings have been held in Brisbane and Perth. In recent years the ACT has been invited to Board meetings as a sub branch of the NSW Association and in May 2013 the Northern Territory Association was granted membership of AGTA.

## About the AGTA board.

Up until recently there have been 14 members of the board made up of the presidents of each of the GTAs and 8 elected directors who may have come from a range of locations.

At the AGM in October 2013 the new Board will be made up of 2 representatives from each state. It is not compulsory for a state to send 2 people. In addition other people can be co-opted onto the board for specific reasons. There are some specialist roles on the board that require considerable commitment such as Secretary, Treasurer and Chairperson.

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## The role of AGTA

The Australian Geography Teachers' Association seeks to:

- foster the teaching and learning of geography in Australian schools and enhance awareness of its applications in society
- promote and circulate the results of research into geography education
- maintain a professional network through which teachers of geography in Australia may express opinions on educational matters
- represent the interests of its member affiliates on national education decision making bodies.

As such the Association exists to bring together the GTAs from around the country in order to work collaboratively to achieve this mission.

Over the last few years AGTA has been a consistent voice for Geography teachers in the development of the new Australian Curriculum: Geography. In the initial phase of development AGTA funded a research paper reviewing different Geography Curricula from around the world and running state based consultation sessions to gather feedback from teachers. The final document was used by ACARA as they moved through the process. At all stages of the curriculum development AGTA represented the needs of geography teachers to ACARA and was involved in consultation and feedback sessions.

AGTA also funds resource development for classroom teachers in the form of text books, conferences and excitingly in 2013 the online

environment. (See Geogspace section). The Biennial conference is a must attend event for many Australian geography teachers and is always a place to catch-up with old friends and make new connections, as well as update your knowledge or learn a new skill. The most recent one was held in Perth in January 2013 and the next one is going to be in New Zealand in January 2015.

AGTA represents the interests of Australian geography teachers.

AGTA works hard at a national level representing the interests of classroom geography teachers in a variety of national bodies and committees as well as directly to the federal government and its agencies. If you are interested in getting involved then your first stop is your state association, take up membership, get involved on the state committee and see what you can offer.

You can access all the AGTA information from the [website](#).



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## GEOGSPACE goes live!

*AGTA is proud and excited to announce the release of the Geogspace project.*

GeogSpace is an online support tool for the implementation and delivery of the Australian Curriculum: Geography.

This was collaboratively developed by AGTA and Education Services Australia (ESA) and provides a “one stop shop” for teachers who need to deliver the new curriculum. The resources were written by current geography teachers and the aim has been to provide stand-alone units ready to go. The resource will continue to be developed and new materials added.



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## State Associations reports:

### Geography Teachers Association of New South Wales (351 members)

A range of Professional Learning opportunities have already been delivered and more are in planning mode. The annual conference will be in Sydney on August 30 along with 3 regional conferences in various locations.

The Institute of Education in London is developing an online Master's program in geographical education. The University of New England is developing a Graduate Certificate in Geography Curriculum to help new and more experienced teachers come to grips with the new Australian Curriculum.

### Geography Teachers Association of Queensland (109 members)

On May 10 our first Professional Development (PD) was held with 35 teachers. Positive testimonials from attendees are available on the GTAQ website, along with power point presentations from the day for regional members in our new "Members only" section.

New website is channelling information well with Facebook and twitter feeds alongside an electronic newsletter. The print journal "Queensland Geographer" is published at the end of each term.

Check out the GTAQ web site for planned PD opportunities including:

- June 1 Skills workshop for primary/middle school teachers (registration now available),
- 27th July Annual Conference with field workshops available on 26th; and
- 19th October implementing the Australian Curriculum.

### Geography teachers Association of Tasmania (22 members)

Members have been collaborating and developing new units of work based on the Australian Curriculum draft. These will support the further teaching of the subject across the state. Participation in the Australian Geography Competition was widely encouraged. There has been a slight rise in the numbers of student taking geography at senior secondary level.

The TGTA is continuing to develop links with the School of Geography and Environmental Studies at UTAS.

The GTAQ web site is a great information source including information for the planned PD opportunities

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## Geography Teachers Association of South Australia (112 members)

The pending release of AC Geography has stimulated significant interest in the Learning Area and GTASA has been invited to participate in a number of combined association Australian Curriculum Conferences this year.

The May 30/31 GTASA Conference “Reflecting on the Past – Looking to the

Future” was a great success. Australian Curriculum: Geography was a key focus of many of the workshops and field trips. Feedback has been extremely positive. There was a wide range of Publishers displays this year and both Jacaranda/Wiley and Pearson also presented workshops showcasing resources.

SA Geographer has moved to electronic form with Roger Smith continuing as editor.

GTASA in association with The School of Social Sciences will host a Year 12 Geography Night at Adelaide University in August. More than 200 students and teachers are expected to attend.

## Geography Teachers Association of Victoria (490 members)

Seven Professional Development activities have been held this year with good numbers attending. Annual Conference to be held Sunday 25-Tuesday 27 August. In addition to use of Facebook (over 500 members) and Twitter (@GeographyVic), the GTAV Scoop.it site has been developed. This is a curated social media site with pages relevant to units in the Australian Curriculum: Geography. The GTAV continues to operate the AusAID funded Global Education Project in Victoria. A resource currently in production using GEP funds includes “Geographies of global well-being” - a resource for Year 10, Unit 2 in the Australian Curriculum. GEP also has a Scoop.it site. Our highly successful Geography and Careers brochure is being updated. In addition, in order

to promote the relevance of Geography and endeavour to attract more senior students, GTAV co-branding with Careers Education Victoria the June edition of our journal Interaction which will focus on Careers. GTAV continues to have an active involvement with Destination Spatial – the Education Committee which includes representatives from the spatial industries, tertiary institutions and education – to promote career pathways into the spatial industry.

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## Geographical Association of Western Australia (236 members)

Hosted the AGTA 2013 Biennial Conference has come with 204 delegates –feedback formal and informal has been extremely positive. PD events so far include a new teacher's day and a presentation on Climate Change.

There has been considerable interest in the Annual GAWA conference to be held in August with an Australian Curriculum Focus. Our WACE revision seminars were sold out once more last year. In 2013 we are moving to a larger theatre at UWA and holding a regional seminar in Bunbury.

The GAWA Stage 2 and Stage 3 WACE Exam papers and answer guides continue to sell very well. We continue to sell more copies than there are students studying the

subjects! We have committed to publishing some larger posters and student flyers aimed particularly at Year 10 students and teachers.

Information on careers and all the tertiary courses linked to geography in Western Australia will be highlighted. Letters have also been written and sent to every primary and secondary Principal in Western Australia to remind them of the Australian Curriculum: Geography timeline, services and resources provided by GAWA and offering our support in the implementation process.

GAWA is also surveying primary schools to ascertain what support mechanisms they believe they will be requiring as they implement the new curriculum.

A new student competition has been launched, The GAWA Geographical Inquiry Fieldwork Competition which will align the activities of the competition with content areas in the Australian Curriculum: Geography, with a focus on Excellence in Inquiry and Field Work.

Senior School Australian Curriculum courses will be introduced to Year 11 students in 2015 and Year 12 in 2016 in WA.

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## Pop the champagne!

*The Australian Curriculum: Geography is published!*

After a considerable journey and a few bumps in the road, the Australian Curriculum: Geography (F-10) was approved by the ACARA board on 10 May 2013 and you can [view it online here](#).

As this version is expected

to be updated and revised regularly, there won't be a hard copy version. We encourage you to [visit the site](#) and use the interactive version to assist with your planning.

Each page shows the links to the general capabilities as icons underneath the content descriptors. This will assist teachers to make explicit links to these and embed them in their teaching. In addition there are elaborations available that can assist teacher to

understand how the content can be delivered. However these are not compulsory and the idea is that teachers will adapt the curriculum to their own specific location to make it most relevant to their students.

The screenshot shows the ACARA website. The top navigation bar includes 'ACARA Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority' and links for 'Contact us', 'Feedback', 'Technical', 'User guide', and 'Site map'. Below this is a search bar and the ACARA logo. The main content area features a large blue banner with the text 'Welcome to the Foundation to Year 12 Australian Curriculum online' and an image of two children. Underneath the banner, there are sections for 'The Australian Curriculum' and 'Guided tour'. The 'The Australian Curriculum' section includes text about the Melbourne Declaration and the role of ACARA. The 'Guided tour' section features a video player and a 'Digital resources supporting the Australian Curriculum' section.

*The new online curriculum*

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