



## Executive Director's Update August 2021

Greetings to you all. 2021 continues to challenge us all both personally and professionally given the ongoing health crisis, but my observation is that most Members are coping well and adapting to the regularly changing circumstances across the country. We are happy to note that Playgrounds are not being closed in the rules governing lockdowns we are experiencing around the country at the moment.

We have been busy planning our next [Online Learning Series](#), Winter Series 3, along with starting the development of our Online Training Program to be delivered in 2022, and the further development of Playground Finder app, focussing on the ACT and Victoria in stage 1.

We have listened to Members and decided we will record our [Online Learning Series](#) for Members to access via our website Play Library where presenters are agreeable for their material to be shared.

**View the Winter Online Learning Series [here](#).**

## Risk Assessors Network

We are excited to announce that Play Australia is to establish a Risk Assessors Network comprising risk assessors within our industry who are Play Australia Members and who work independently of government and industry.

The purpose is to facilitate discussion on risk management-related issues, particularly issues which arise where there is a lack of clarity, gaps, or contradictions in existing Playground Standards. The Board has invited Andrew Reedy of Play Check (WA); Justin Kaese of Playforce (QLD); and Rob Hamilton of Park and Playspace (VIC); to form a Steering Committee to work with me to create the Terms of Reference for the Network which will be circulated to all Members for feedback and input in August.

The Network will operate independently of the Playgrounds Standards Committee, and will be child-focused, meaning that it will focus on the protection of children's rights to play and support risk for benefit. We will invite Members to submit issues for consideration, particularly industry Members who frequently have to deal with the lack of policy on critical design issues.

[Full Benefits Members](#) currently have access to the online Play Australia [Risk Management Hub](#) which houses information and advice on risk management related issues. This Network will provide ongoing advice and 'best practice' support and recommendations to complement Playground Standards in the management, design, and maintenance of playgrounds in Australia.

## Insurance update

Play Australia wrote to the Federal Government expressing concerns of our industry Members, and indicating support for the proposal from AALARA for the establishment of a Mutual Benefit scheme to enable our industry Members to gain insurance cover at a reasonable cost.

The government replied stating that the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman (ASBFEO) has launched a review of the discretionary mutual fund proposed for small businesses in the amusement, leisure, and recreation sectors, and that this review will report to the government in August 2021, and secondly, the Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) has released a [consultation paper](#) that sets out options for tackling the availability and affordability of commercial lines of insurance, particularly for small and medium sized enterprises. Download the consultation paper [here](#).

We will keep industry Members updated of developments on this important issue as they hopefully develop.

## Standards update

A number of Standards concerning equipment other than play equipment increasingly being purchased by Local Government, have recently been published by Standards Australia. We thank David Eager of UTS and Chair of the Playground Standards Committee who presented on these Standards in our Autumn Series 2 Online Learning Series. David's presentation is available to in our Play Library [here](#).

Grant Humphries, of AcoustoScan, and a key member of the Playground Standards Committee will present on August 19 in the Winter Series 3 on 'all matters surfacing and AS4422 relevant to playgrounds'. ***This is a session not to be missed if you are responsible for the management and maintenance of playgrounds!*** Open to [Full Benefits Members](#) only - Register [here](#).

## State Branches activity - TAS, SA, QLD, VIC Special Events

We know that we are cooking with gas when there are three state events happening over the space of three weeks! Although COVID lockdowns have meant a rescheduling of dates, we are excited to see face-to-face events back on our radar. Details have been circulated and registrations are open.

### Click here to register for your state's Special Event:

[Brisbane Wednesday 6 October- Play on the edges – overcoming the barriers to play -](#)

AT REGISTRATION USE CODE **July2021qld** to receive your member discount - \$50 for members (\$75 non-members)

[Adelaide Friday 15 October 2021 - Inclusive Playspace Forum](#)

[Melbourne Wednesday 29 September - The Learning Garden Belongs to The Children](#)

*Please be mindful that all Play Australia events are subject to change due to the possibility of COVID-19 lockdowns. All participants will be notified if changes are required.*

We had our first meeting with Members in Hobart on Friday 16 July, which was fantastic to be there, and a plan was developed to begin the promotion of play, and the provision of support for Members in Tasmania in 2021. This is a really exciting development as we have been wanting to get to Tasmania for ages.

*Thanks to our respective State Committees for organising!*

## New policy for Playgrounds in Victorian schools

Industry Members in particular will be delighted to hear that the policies operating school playgrounds in Victoria have been dramatically rewritten. Play Australia has been advocating on this issue for many years and we are extremely happy with the result. Thanks to our Members who have contributed to this outcome. We now have an excellent framework which designers and suppliers will welcome and will lead to much greater play opportunities for kids in schools. (See pp 50-54 of the [VSBA Building Quality Standards Handbook](#))

Until next time

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barb Champion". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.