

Updating API's Strategic Objectives + Initiatives for 2022-2025



API Board Memo: 273

10 Nov 2021, David Pointing

Paper type: For review and approval by the Board

Sponsor: David Pointing

Related papers: Memos 270 (API Work Plan and Budget 2022-2023) and 271 (API Board's 5 Key Themes for 2022).

1. Draft Resolution

The Board notes the update on the Horizon 1 actions and proposed Horizon 2 Strategic Objectives, Initiatives and Work Plan Actions and commits to further review in early 2022 following feedback from the API's member organisations and development of our Horizon 3 stage of the Plan.

2. Executive Summary

The API is developing a 3-horizon Strategic Plan in response to the significant changes occurring internal and external to the API and the expiration of our current 2017-2021 plan. Our new Strategic Plan covers short, medium and long term actions that support achieving the API's mission¹. This memo provides the first compilation of all 3 elements in one document. It includes an update on progress with the Horizon 1 objectives defined in September 2020 (mostly completed), introduces updated Horizon 2 objectives that are being proposed for feedback from the Board and members for confirmation in 2022, and details the initial stages of our new Horizon 3 objectives being developed by the Board.

3. Background

Horizon 1 objectives (immediate term), as defined in September 2020, are focused on transformation of the API's operations and processes to increase impact and value for members. Part 1 below details the current status of these actions (mostly completed).

Refreshed *Horizon 2* Strategic Objectives, Initiatives and Work Plan Actions are proposed for 2022-2025 – refer to Part 2 below. They are based on the expiring 2017-2021 Strategic Plan (view in Appendix 1) with adaptations in response to strategic threats and opportunities and progress achieved with Horizon 1 objectives. The proposed Work Plan and Budget for 2022-2023 (Board Memo 270) is aligned to this strategy. It is proposed we review these at the February 2022 Board meeting following feedback from members and the Board.

Horizon 3 strategic objectives (part 3 below) – the Board's recently identified 5 Key Themes will explore strategic challenges and opportunities facing the API and will progress with input from sub-committees with expected completion in mid 2022. Outcomes will influence the next Horizon 1 part of the Strategic Plan and potentially change the Horizon 2 plan.

¹ To add value to our member organisations by supplying a sustainable level of innovative and agile industry professionals with contemporary skills to transform and sustain Australia's energy future

Part 1: Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025 (as approved in September 2020):

Our Role:

The API is the lead organisation for members and stakeholders in the Australian power sector (*electricity distribution focus*) for:

1. Information and strategic leadership on the power sector workforce
2. Promoting careers in the power sector to a diverse community of young Australians who will take up technical roles in the sector
3. Building relationships with the future power sector workforce (*university educated*) and strengthening retention and development
4. Connecting, supporting and influencing the tertiary sector and their development of future power sector professionals
5. Supporting and developing early career professionals in the power sector (particularly the Summer School and mentoring)
6. Leading development of a diverse power sector workforce

Horizon 1 Goals (short-term strategic focus areas for 2020-2022)

Goal	Status / progress to completion
1. Provide more direct support to members for their priority needs (relationships with future graduates and workforce diversity)	70%; enhancements to bursary program and Summer School, new Powerful Women program. Action needed on connecting bursary students to industry and employment opportunities.
2. Strengthen performance in sector leadership roles of promoting power sector careers to inspire the future workforce, and leadership in workforce development for the sector	60%; progress with new member forums, RACE project and CEC diversity survey. Action needed on API member workforce survey and in promoting power sector careers. Grant application for \$500K career project not successful so re-positioning.
3. Focus our existing partnerships and activities to better support our direct role in developing the power sector's workforce	90% reconfigured relationships with GO Foundation, UQ Women in Engineering, Transformer Innovation Centre, ATSE, and ENA. Clarifying with CIGRE and EESA. Action needed to identify next steps as we all emerge from disruption of COVID on BAU.
4. Adapt our operating and membership model to support strategic change of more direct services to members (membership structure, staffing, financial management)	75%; significant progress with changes to staffing, operating processes, and financial management. Action needed with membership structure and identifying new BAU after disruption of COVID.
5. Increase effective engagement with our members, stakeholders and the public about our activities and issues and opportunities associated with power sector careers and the workforce	70%; significant progress with engagement with social media, new web site, and emails and Member Activity Plans. Action needed with CRM management and next generation of marketing and engagement. Web site for public content needs to be redeveloped.

Part 2: API's Strategic Objectives 2022 – 2025 (Horizon 2)

Proposed November 2021, following expiry of 2017-2021 Strategic Plan (see below in Appendix 1)

Strategic Objectives	Initiatives	Work Plan Actions
<p>1. Provide a sustainable supply of quality power engineering graduates to API member organisations and broader energy industry</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively promoting engineering in schools and building a pipeline of future technically-oriented students for the power sector • Delivery of programs that enhance the development, capabilities and career paths of university students entering technically oriented roles in the power sector • Coordination of networking and engagement between industry, university students and academia • Increasing inclusion and diversity in power engineering (elevated to separate Strategic Objective) • Matching supply of high quality graduates with industry demand in the longer term • Promotion of career pathways and specific employment opportunities within the API member community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day in the Life STEM outreach • API STELR Solar Car Challenge • Powerful Women profiles • Empowering Careers forum in National Science Week • Power Engineering Careers web site • API member profiles and employment opportunities promoted to undergrad community • Student in Power online summit • Forecasting of bursary student demand by API members • API Bursary program • Learning Journal for summer placements • Industry Insight webinars • Sparking Connections live and online events • API 'industry ready' micro credential for undergrads supporting relevant learning outcomes • Student in Power community to include bursary students, direct scholarship students, Career Tracker interns and general undergrad students • Powerful Women Early Career program students and grads
<p>2. Facilitate a strong power engineering education platform (focused on technical and leadership capabilities)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and inform power engineering curriculum to position graduates for future career success and industry benefit • Support development of early career academics • Bridging industry and academia to align common understanding of industry skills and priorities • Offering a suite of professional development training courses relevant to industry • Supporting industry events/conferences and related forums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • API Summer School • API Powerful Women program • PowerChem conference (online) • Support for Transformer Innovation Centre at UQ • Support AUPEC annual conference • Survey of member needs of graduates and share with university community • Input to relevant university sector forums eg ACED or Go8 • Support for EECON, ENA, TechCon + other industry events (linking students) • Connect student, industry and academic teams to ASTP innovation project knowledge sharing activities • Maintain API resources for university academics (needs re-launch)
<p>3. Increase workforce capabilities for innovation (university and industry)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the development of innovation projects in the power sector (focusing on ASTP innovation collaboration with ENA and the RACE for 2030 CRC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for ENA ASTP Innovation projects • Active facilitation of knowledge sharing from innovation projects • Summer School to include Innovation focus

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead sharing of expertise and innovation challenges between university and industry partners • Lead sharing of knowledge from innovation projects • Contribute funding and expertise to selected innovation priority projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for RACE CRC projects • Support for ARC Industry Transformation Training Centre • Support for other innovation projects as appropriate (eg Microgrids in Tasmania)
4. Strategic workforce development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership of efforts across the sector to understand and address strategic workforce development challenges • Capture and interpret data relating to current and future power sector workforce • Facilitate collaborations and interactions between API members to improve strategic management of the workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member forums • Surveys of API members and universities on workforce • Actively share information and key messages on power sector workforce in relevant forums eg All Energy and Tasmanian Energy Development Conference panel sessions • Contribute to RACE 2030 CRC workforce projects • Contribute to 3rd party surveys eg CEC diversity survey with API and ETU
5. Increase diversity & inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership role in increasing diversity and inclusion in technical roles in the power sector • Capture and interpret data relating to diversity • Practical initiatives to increase the diversity of individuals participating in the API's portfolio of activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Powerful women project activities • Targets for diversity in API activities • INWED public forum • Actively share information in relevant forums on diversity in the power sector • Support for UQ WIE program (focus on national collaboration workshop) • Career Trackers collaboration into bursary program • Regional relocation grants for bursary placements • Diversity survey with CEC • STEM outreach programs focused on diversity • Batchelor Institute research project on Indigenous perspectives on STEM
6. Strengthen sustainability of the API	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding API membership aligned to the energy transformation road map • Strengthen overall value of membership through focus on member needs • Communicating API as value for money by supporting collaborative efforts to achieve skills objectives • Enhance Governance and membership community • Optimisation of utilisation of staffing and operational and strategic financial resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Activity Plans with all members and regular meetings to increase participation and engagement • Member survey and feedback • Improve communication with members (email, social media) • Improve management of engagement with individual stakeholders with CRM • Plan for engagement with new members in line with Horizon 3 strategic plan developed by Board • API Board sub committees and connection to member organisations and stakeholders • Horizon 1 transformation plan of activities and resourcing including step change in online service delivery

Part 3: Key themes for the API Board (part of Horizon 3 strategic planning):

The API Board identified the following key themes as an outcome of a 2-stage strategic review undertaken in mid 2021 (2x online forums). Smaller working groups involving groups of Directors will further develop the API's understanding of an response to these themes during the 2022 calendar year to then define an updated set of Horizon 1 and Horizon 2 strategic objectives.

Theme #1 - Defining API boundary – power sector or beyond?

The API has been focused on power engineering, with increasing interest as energy sector transforms, does API need to revisit the boundary of where it operates?

Theme #2 - Workforce development/skills for the future

The skills needed for the future of the power industry will be different to today, how do we get ahead and be prepared for what industry needs? With other organisations more active in this space (RACE for 2030 CRC), what is the API's unique contribution?

Theme #3 – War on talent

There is a shortage of resources, and a war on talent which is going to grow, how do we help address the shortage and support our members during this time.

Theme #4 – Diversity

There is a lack of diversity, and we can expect organisations to be demanding greater diversity from the API and support for attracting and retaining a diverse workforce

Theme #5 - Members, how many, levels and benefits to align with Theme #1

No clarity on optimum portfolio of members and challenges in lack of differentiation between membership levels and long standing vs new members accessing API resources (link to theme #3).

Appendix 1: API Strategic Plan 2017 – 2021

Objectives Initiatives	
PROVIDE A SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY OF QUALITY POWER ENGINEERING GRADUATES TO ENERGY INDUSTRY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively promoting engineering in schools • Delivery of a successful bursary program to promote and market API and powerengineering • Coordination of networking between industry, students and academia • Increasing inclusion and diversity in power engineering • Matching supply of high quality graduates with industry demand in the longer term • Expanding API membership aligned to the energy transformation road map • Communicating API as value for money by supporting collaborative efforts to achieve power engineering skills objectives
FACILITATE A STRONG POWER ENGINEERING EDUCATION PLATFORM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligning power engineering curriculum to position graduates for future career success and industry benefit • Supporting early career academics • Bridgingindustry and academia to align common understanding of industry skills and priorities • Offering a suite of professional development trainingcourses relevant to industry • Extending reach of training into the Asia Pacific region • Supportingindustry events/conferences and related forums
COORDINATION OF INDUSTRY AND UNIVERSITY INNOVATION INITIATIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing ar2D framework in collaboration with the energy networks association • Accessing university and industry partnerscapability to enable r2D framework • Delivering agreed innovation priority projects