**NULCA teams up with No-Dig Down Under**

I recently returned from a trip to the US, specifically for the Common Ground Alliance (CGA) held in Tampa, Florida. I have been fortunate to attended the last five CGA conferences from 2015 to 2019.

In terms of content covered this year, I noticed a slight shift in focus at the CGA with more emphasis being placed on locating contractor topics and presentations. The first year I attended there was a sprinkling of locator topics whereas this year I actually only attended locator topics and this definitely added to the appeal of making the trip worthwhile.

The convention centre in Tampa was superb and the networking functions were an excellent addition to explore further industry contacts.

I have held the position of President for NULCA Australia for the past ten years and I have had the pleasure to meet Ron Peterson, CEO of NULCA in the US, several One call operators as well as CGA members Khrysanne Kerr and Mike Sullivan during these visits.

Our Australian Dial Before You Dig state and national representatives have been attending longer than I have and have established good networking relationships with many group as well.

After my second year of attending and brainstorming with Mr Peterson, I conceived the idea to hold a Damage Prevention Conference in Australia for NULCA members and utility location professionals. Our first conference was held in 2017 on the Gold Coast and was co-located with No-Dig Down Under, and event organised by Great Southern Press and supported by the Australasian Society for Trenchless Technology (ASTT).

We were able to attract over 125 people attendees to the conference, which compared per capita with the USA, is a good result first up. Locating contractors made up around 60 per cent of attendees; with DBYD and Utility owners making up approximately 20 per cent. The event was run over three days with two networking events which were attended in great numbers which was extremely encouraging.

This year NULCA has decided to formerly partner with Great Southern Press and the ASTT to produce a specialised two-day utility location and damage prevention conference stream that will be held as part of the larger No-Dig Down Under conference program. We are delighted to be working together and believe this will be a highly valuable event for NULCA members and utility location professional to attend.

To receive regular updates on the event, or to register your interest to attend, please contact conference@gs-press.com.au

For further information please visit [www.nodigdownunder.com](http://www.nodigdownunder.com)

I would like to warmly invite all NULCA members, utility location professionals and international visitors who might consider coming ‘down under’ to be a part of No-Dig Down Under in 2019.

I look forward to seeing you in Melbourne in September.

Ian Lambert
NULCA President