

NULCA complaints

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Lambert Locations

NULCA National Vice President

I am penning this response to all NULCA members that have any issue about any subject at this moment.

We are members of an organization that is a national body. It is hard for members to attend meetings and to dedicate time to raise the standard of locators as a profession, but it is also hard for the committee. All members are invited to attend all committee meetings whether or not a general meeting follows an executive meeting, but rarely does anyone attend, therefore leaving all decisions to the committee which you elected and then members questioning decisions made in a roundabout way. Ask any ex committee member how much money, time and effort they have committed (where the word comes from) and why they stand down.

From my point of view, we need to set standards for all Locators to follow. To do this we need a course we can deliver to lead to accreditation and levels for members and with the help of asset owners (as they are the people we need to satisfy as they are the owners of the assets we locate for our income) we may achieve this. Please do not take this the wrong way as they need our services as well but we need to prove this. Also keep in mind, most professional locators have been engaged to locate assets on the owners behalf which proves some of our worth. Until we have the approval of all asset owners we will not have any recognition. This is what members fail to understand at the moment. We need to work with these entities and follow their requests to continue a relationship to keep cowboys out or we will fall back to their level. At this point of time we cannot achieve this as almost anyone is accepted into NULCA but this is the whole point of standards.

At this stage there is no such thing as NULCA accredited.

We have been given information that the NULCA locating course will not be accredited as a standalone course, but on the up side it meets the criteria of an existing course. Our idea at this stage therefore is that as this is an existing module we will still supply our course with the result being NULCA accredited with a statement of attainment as our course is superior to any available comparative delivered.

On behalf of NULCA I have personally attended a DBYD managers meeting in Melbourne to seek their permission to attend state meetings to ask what asset owners may require of us to carry out locations on all assets. I am awaiting invitations from all states as all they agreed this would be beneficial to all parties. South Australia have acknowledged with the possibility of attending their June meeting. I will attend any

meeting in the country to achieve the results we require. Please send any comments you would like passed on as I will be glad to table at any of these meetings including gas plan issues.

I have heard complaints about meetings being too far away from airports although very few members attend anyway and in the last year this has not been the case. Four of the last six meetings have been held as close as possible to the local airport since I have been involved. They were Coolangatta in February, Newcastle in July, The Melbourne AGM in September and Sydney Executive in October. Sydney in May coincides with CivEnEx at Eastern Creek and cannot be moved, Therefore this meeting in Melbourne has been the first not to be held near an airport recently although it was held in the middle of the two airports.

Please note: Matt Keppich from Victoria, Allan Hunter and his daughter Natalie from Newcastle and Kim Simpson from Tweed Heads were the only ones outside of the committee to attend the last meeting in Melbourne and many thanks to them for their attendance. It would have been good if any more members from Melbourne or anywhere else had attended as many hands make light work.

I have heard members complain about Telstra's conditions they wish to place on APL's although locators make a living on locating Telstra's assets and wanting NULCA to do something about it. Every locator has a choice whether they wish to locate Telstra or not as they do any other service.

I have heard members complain about the lack of notice of meetings although every meeting has been advertised. Steve Wood has mentioned that while he was on the committee it was passed that a general meeting be held after all committee meetings and I agree. As you are all aware the new committee was only elected in September. We had our first meeting in Sydney in October (committee only as it was only to arrange dates of future meetings). We then had a teleconference in December and our first meeting of the year the first week in February which was advertised three weeks before this date as an open meeting because of the working party gathering in the afternoon. Civenex being the next meeting, both general and committee in May, then back to an AGM in July on the Gold Coast. A very short year for a committee.

I also plan to propose at the next committee meeting that five meetings be held every two months in most capital cities or surrounding areas with one meeting to be held in a regional area giving six meetings per year until we have enough members to hold state meetings. This will be hard to get accepted. Please keep in mind all committee members pay their own fares and have to take time off for every meeting for this to happen with little attendance from ordinary members. The full committee may not be able to attend all meetings but on the up side this would give members at least one chance to attend a meeting in their state area to voice their ideas in person with questions and answers rather than pass on comments by email etc whether positive or not.

I have heard members complain about Gas plans in Newcastle and want NULCA do to something about it. Jemena's plans are equivalent to any other gas plan supplied. They are indicative as are all other asset owners. When we can guarantee that members will follow their guidelines professionally and are experienced enough to follow guidelines like potholing we may have some line of communication available.

NULCA is an organization that may have some influence if all members rally together and work as a team, not whinge about what hasn't been yet done. We encourage support but little is forthcoming therefore we can only vote as a committee on what is the best decision we believe at the time. If we are to operate as a professional organisation we must act like one. If there are guidelines to follow we must abide by them. If we lose members because locators cannot follow duty of care then so be it. In future, I believe all new and existing members will have to agree to locate to the highest possible standard which would agree to attempt to follow all asset owner's guidelines and all duties of care or we are wasting our time trying to gain approval from asset owners.

Telstra Accreditation ended in December 2008. They have granted temporary accreditation on numerous occasions since. Why are APL's concerned all of a sudden. NULCA are neither APL's nor a direct line to Telstra. We are a locating association and pass on all information we receive through to a member or as an organization. Nothing has changed since you signed your temporary agreement with Telstra which is due

to expire at the end of this month. Telstra have not supplied any information to us as an organisation. As they are only concerned with APL's therefore you will probably receive any information supplied at the same time I will as an APL. This information may not be passed on to NULCA as an organisation. I believe Telstra have awarded the contract to Coates to deliver a refresher course only at this stage. Please see their web site for all information including courses and prices as I would only be passing on second hand information.

I also believe that if we are locating assets whether they are Telstra or any other asset that we must abide by their guidelines as they are the asset owner.

Every APL would also be aware that under their old agreement they were obligated to keep and supply a record of all locations they have carried out on Telstra assets. They changed their wording in the last temporary contract to "supply upon request" all records, still meaning to keep all records.

I cannot see a reason where at worst we could supply a copy of hire dockets only if requested and if forced by Telstra.

I personally will struggle to keep the records of every location we supply that they require without asking for remuneration of some kind.

Wishful thinking.

Regards

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