

**A Better Future for AIDA:
Some Further Thoughts About the Short
Term Challenges and Principal Objectives**

Michael Gill
9 May 2008

1 Introduction

In my paper of 6 August 2007 I dealt in detail with a number of issues which I and others have identified as being relevant to securing a better future for AIDA.

Although I was not able to be present at the meeting of the Presidential Council in Vina del Mar on 7 November 2007, I have read the minutes.

I have also read the subsequent email exchanges dealing with various topics.

2 Immediate challenge

It is clear that our immediate challenge is, within the context of the very limited financial and other resources available to AIDA, to find a way for the Executive to consider the key issues and produce recommendations for approval by the Presidential Council.

I accept that for the time being at least, the only way that we can do that is by exchanging paper. The opportunities for discussion are limited by our finances as well as, to some extent, the challenge of the language barrier.

3 The objectives of AIDA

Whilst I accept what was said at Vina del Mar, namely that Paragraph 2 of Article 1 was an appropriate description of AIDA's objectives, its language is very broad and probably calls for a statement about more immediate objectives (consistent with what is said in Paragraph 2 of Article 1) to achieve our aim of strengthening AIDA and providing it with a useful future.

To that end, it seems to me that our immediate objectives must be:

- To generate more enthusiasm and activity from and for:
 - National Chapters.
 - Working Parties.
- To obtain significantly more industry involvement in the work of AIDA.
- For AIDA to gain a reputation as being one of the world's leading insurance law organisations.

I think it is important for us to have some specific short term objectives. We can then have a plan for achieving each of them and some benchmarks so we can measure progress against that plan.

4 Strengthening AIDA – how to do it?

As AIDA is presently constituted (and is likely to be for the foreseeable future), in my opinion the test of AIDA's strength will be determined by the strength of:

- Its National Chapters.
- Its Working Parties.

It should be comparatively easy to significantly strengthen (ie, improve the performance of) both the key National Chapters and Working Parties. The key to both is the same – it is the

willingness of the members of the Presidential Council to take responsibility for both National Chapters and Working Parties and to commit the time necessary to play a role with both.

IF EACH MEMBER OF THE PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL TOOK RESPONSIBILITY FOR TWO NATIONAL CHAPTERS AND AGREED TO BE AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT IN TWO WORKING PARTIES, AND WORKED WITH THOSE NATIONAL CHAPTERS TO ASSIST BUILDING THEIR STRENGTH AND PARTICIPATED IN THE WORK OF THE WORKING PARTIES TO HELP THEM ACHIEVE THEIR OBJECTIVES, I BELIEVE THAT WE WOULD BE A LONG WAY DOWN THE PATH TOWARDS RE-BUILDING A STRONG AIDA.

Indeed, in the two major geographical regions of AIDA (South America and Europe) the structures now in place should make it comparatively easy for this to be achieved.

CILA and AIDA Europe already provide the infrastructure to assist members of the Presidential Council to work with the National Chapter represented by those bodies.

In a less structured way, the ASPAC Regional Relationships Committee of AILA works with the regional chapters in Indonesia, Singapore and New Zealand, as well as endeavouring to establish new chapters in other countries in that region.

As phase one of this exercise, 20 active and committed members of the Presidential Council could take responsibility for working with 40 National Chapters. Many of them are strong already so it is not as though the task would be onerous.

The members of the Presidential Council (five or six) on each of the Working Parties would go a long way to assisting the Chairman of those Working Parties in identifying their scientific programs and carrying them out. The direct link of responsibility from the Presidential Council into the National Chapters would also be an additional way of helping the Chairman of the Working Parties obtain broader support from the National Chapters.

In parallel with the strengthening of the National Chapters and Working Parties, AIDA needs to provide additional value for membership. In my opinion, the next most important point of value should be the website. I commend Rob Merkin and those who have assisted him for the excellent paper which has been produced setting the vision and plan for AIDA's website. I cannot think of a better use for AIDA's current finances and those that will accrue in the immediate future, than to fund the creation and maintenance of this website.

So far as the work of the Finance Committee is concerned, I believe that strong National Chapters and Working Parties in collaboration with a best practice website will effectively solve AIDA's financial challenges. However, that is not to say that we should not continue the quest for additional sources of finance. As the Finance Committee has said in its report, until we have something better to sell, significant success cannot be anticipated in any realistic way.

5 Conclusion

So my very modest proposal for the short term objective is to do the following:

- 5.1 Set the short term objectives.
- 5.2 Identify the minimum 20 members of the Presidential Council who are prepared to take on responsibility for two Chapters and adjoin two Working Parties.

Finally, we should use the 50th anniversary congress in Paris as a renaissance for AIDA. We must be capable of making significant progress by then and a measure of that progress must be the attendance in Paris of representatives of each of the identified National Chapters, and significant and substantial programs for each of the Working Parties.

Yours sincerely



Michael Gill

Partner

Direct +61 2 9286 8419

Mobile +61 412 868 419

michael.gill@dlaphillipsfox.com