



Geological Society of Australia Inc

Intelligent Design Policy SCIENCE EDUCATION AND CREATIONISM*

The Geological Society of Australia observes a basic policy of non-discrimination and affirms the right of scientists to adhere to or associate with scientific activity without restrictions based on nationality, race, colour, age, religion, political philosophy, ethnic origin, citizenship, language or sex. The Society endorses the universality of science within the natural world.

Scientists, like many others, are touched with awe at the order and complexity of nature. Science seeks to explain natural phenomena using natural laws, verifiable and reproducible observations and logical analysis; it reaches explanations that are always subject to amendment with new evidence.

The Geological Society of Australia considers that notions such as Fundamental Creationism, including so called "Flood Geology", which disregard scientific evidence such as that based on repeatable observations in the natural world and the geological record, are not science and cannot be taught as science.

An essential element in the teaching of science is the encouragement of students and teachers to critically appraise the evidence for notions being taught as science. The Society states unequivocally that the dogmatic teaching of notions such as Creationism within a science curriculum stifles the development of critical thinking patterns in the developing mind and seriously compromises the best interests of objective public education. This could eventually hamper the advancement of science and technology as students take their places as leaders of future generations.

In some parts of Australia, the advocacy of notions like Creationism is confronting the integrity and effectiveness of our national education system and the hard-won evidence based foundations of science. The Geological Society of Australia cannot remain silent. To do so would be a dereliction of our responsibility to intellectual freedom and to the fundamental principles of scientific thought. As a consequence, the Society dissociates itself from Creationist statements made by any member.

This Policy statement sets out the views of a learned Society dedicated to scientific investigation in earth science, including research, resources exploration, and education. It is made with the agreement of the Society's Executive Committee and the below-listed Past Presidents of the Society, which are taken collectively to reasonably represent the sustaining wisdom of the Society in this matter.

Presidential Endorsements

Prof A J Gleadow (2006-2008)
Prof A J Crawford (2004-2006)
Prof J D Foden (2002-2004)
Prof E C Leitch (2000-2002)
Prof R A Henderson (1998-2000)
Dr D Denham (1996-1998)
Prof D I Groves (1994-1996)
Mr P J Legge (1992-1994)
Prof D H Green (1990-1992)
Mr I R Johnson (1988-1990)
Prof D M Boyd (1986-1988)
Dr J B Waterhouse (1984-1986)

Dr M J Rickard (1983-1984)
Dr R D Gee (1981-1983)
Dr C D Branch (1980-1981)
Prof J F Lovering AO (1978-1980)
Prof S W Carey (1977-1978)m
Dr N H Ludbrook (1968-1969)
Dr M R Banks (1966-1967)
Dr J A Dulhunty (1964-1965)
Dr N H Fisher (1959-1961)
Prof R T Prider (1958-1959)

* 'Creationism' includes Intelligent Design'.