



Yesterday evening the QSSA held a very successful inaugural networking drinks event. It was great to see so many people there with questions and to take the opportunity to catch up with their peers at a social event.

I take this opportunity to thank the event sponsors for making the evening a success. We appreciate your support at the inception of what we know will grow to be a great organisation.

It was encouraging to see some hard questions be put to the new QSSA CEO and the present Board Members. Open dialogue is one of the founding values of the QSSA.

Two questions in particular caused me to reflect while lying in bed last night. At the time I thought they were challenging to answer in a positive and meaningful way - so with the benefit of reflection I'd like to address them again with you now.

The questions were:

- 1. *Won't you just be causing a split in the Queensland Spatial and Surveying Industry? and,***
- 2. *Do you intend to integrate the QSSA into a National organisation if a viable option is available in the future?***

Both are very good and challenging questions, however neither causes me to waiver from the QSSA vision or question the necessity for starting QSSA at this moment in time.

I am drawn to two events in Australian Sporting History from which we can draw some parallels and take comfort in our actions.

### **1. World Series Cricket.**

Between 1977 and 1979, Kerry Packer backed a break away cricket competition which ran opposed by the established international cricketing bodies. Packer saw an opportunity for this as the established product was stagnant and paralysed by years of *“doing thing this way because that's the way they've always been done.”*

The established cricketing bodies were not listening to the grass roots supporter or the public in general. Opportunity was ripe.

35 years later – Can you imagine where cricket would be without someone having the courage, vision and thankfully bankroll to deliver what the majority of stakeholders actually wanted from their sport?

We are in the final throws of yet another successful One Day International World Cup and the next iteration of innovation, being twenty over cricket, is resonating with the next generation of the fans. Test cricket remains a wonderful and traditional format of the game that potentially wouldn't exist anymore had someone not had the courage of conviction to model the way.



What can QSSA learn from this? – I see it as an answer to question number 1. If we started the organisation with the intention to divide our community - we would never have started. It wasn't Packer's intention back then and it's not ours now.

The road to change is bumpy, but we are not instigating change for the sake of change. We have a steadfast vision to creating something which our community is asking loudly for. How can this not be a worthwhile pursuit?

Members of QSSA can be confident that we are part of something good. We are a listening organisation and an agile organisation. One that is inclusive and approachable and in future years, just like World Series Cricket, we can be look back and be proud of what we've achieved.

## **2. Super League (Australia)**

In 1997, a group of Rugby League clubs made the bold move to commence a breakaway professional competition in opposition to the Australian Rugby League (ARL).

The catalyst for this move was that the breakaway clubs felt the establishment were not acting on opportunities to expand their sport into new and growing markets. Again, the mantra of "doing things how they are always done" was stifling their ability to evolve the sport of Rugby League into what it needed to be for future supporters.

An expanded competition was needed to grow the supporter base and the older unsustainable clubs needed to merge and evolve and renew in order to survive financially.

The Super League ran for one season with the Brisbane Broncos taking the out the premiership. What occurred next is why I include this example, Super League and ARL then merged into the competition we now know as the National Rugby League (NRL).

Both sides of the table engaged in open and frank discussion and listened to each other. They grew the pie so they could share in the split of a family sized feast instead of fighting over slices of a party pie.

The NRL has more clubs than the ARL did - spread further across the country – and the older unsustainable clubs have merged, evolved and renewed in order to attract a new generation of loyal supporters. This is exactly what the Super League clubs were telling the ARL was possible – because their supporters had told them it was possible.

So what can QSSA learn from this example? This might be the answer to question number 2. What will we do if the opportunity presents itself in future to be part of a larger organisation in new territories and industries?

We will listen to our members. We will confirm we can maintain our core values of member services, inclusiveness and open discussion and dialogue - and then we will seek to grow the pie.

We are a listening organisation and an agile organisation. One that is inclusive and approachable and seeks to deliver what the members tell us to.



## Leadership

In any time of turmoil or change, whether it's in a new organisation such as QSSA or whether it is inside the existing organisations we currently work in -people will resist change. This is because it's how we are programmed. We are doing ok here thanks, I know the rules, I know the boundaries and I'm comfortable.

Change inevitably evokes uncertainty, unknown results and sometimes fear. That doesn't mean that we should avoid change. For that will certainly be the death knell of our professional community. You only have to look around at how we live compared to five years ago to know that change happens. To borrow a Tony Robbins quote - "*Change is inevitable. Progress is optional.*"

Don't judge or condemn anybody who resists change. They are our community and are free to make their own choices on joining a professional association. They are important and they are just as big a part of the future for our association as we are. Our role is to model the way, look for change champions in our industry and build afresh. As you see below - not a new concept.

*"The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new."*

Socrates

A few years ago I was introduced to a Leadership model called the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership. (Kouzes and Posner 1987) These five practices are designed to be read and conducted on a daily or as needs basis. It is my pleasure to share them with you.

1. Model the Way – *Set an example for others to follow.*
2. Inspire a Shared Vision – *Enlist others in their dreams and breathe life into their visions.*
3. Challenge the Process – *Search for opportunities to change the status quo. Look for innovation.*
4. Enable Others to Act – *Foster collaboration. Mutual respect sustains extraordinary efforts.*
5. Encourage the Heart – *Recognise contributions that individuals make. Share the rewards and celebrate accomplishments.*

<http://www.leadershipchallenge.com/about-section-our-approach.aspx>

I implore each and every one of us to adopt and engage with this model and to work on becoming exemplary leaders.

Whether you light a fire inside one new member or one hundred - each and every conversation you have with someone about QSSA is an opportunity to be a leader in the Spatial and Surveying community. I thank all of you for coming on this journey with us. Where it will lead us I don't know yet- but I and others share your vision.

Alasdair Begley

QSSA