**Presidents Report - September 2017**

**WELCOME**

I welcome council to the meeting and a special hi to those who have linked into this “First time” broadcasting of AITC council meeting using Facebook. This is our third online trial.

Thanks to Robert for arranging WIFI.

Please be patient, we all learn lessons that will assist AITC use technology in the future.

We request, those online, please comment on Facebook with your name, so that we can record you as attending this historical event. “You may also “comment” with any question”

However, please be aware that council meetings are meant to be quick and effective.

We also welcome non- members as visiting guests

If this trial (and possibly and one more) works; and we receive positive feedback, council will have the evidence to explore and investing in soft and hardware to allow two-way audio.

**ACTIVITIES SINCE LAST MEETING:**

**HANDBOOK DISTRIBUTION**

The postage of handbooks (as discussed last meeting) was sent to leading chefs from major properties across all states in Australia (from lists of created by George, Ernst and Kevin N) and was posted on 5 September. We purchased 92 enveloped, and only have a few envelopes on hand for further enquiries.

**AITC BANNER IS MADE**

As seen in the background the AITC banner has been made. Thanks for all who contribute their ideas.

**WEBSITE UPDATED**

Reduced in content and updated with changes to reflect council decisions in previous meetings. Specifically:

* *Changed* ***Ordinance*** *description to* ***Education***
* *Changed* ***Innovation description*** *to* ***Branding***
* *Changed* ***Benefactors******description*** *to* ***Industry Liaison***
* Added to application form page as agreed by council of statement:

A TechnicalChef is an industry driven independent confirmation of the ability of a person to practice as a trained and experienced comprehensive and mobile professional chef in a commercial kitchen across multiple stations.

The approval process is based on evidence of individual skills, experience and fitness as a commercial chef irrespective of their ethnic foundation training. TechnicalChef does not imply to have any legal standing for any other purpose.

* **Added to applications-**  Referral *Is your application results from a referral by an AITC member?*

**VICTORIAN SKILLS COMMISSION**

From verbal understanding AITC has been accepted to be involved in the Victorian Skills Commission Committee. Robert may like to expand later.

We seek members in other states to identify their state government skills authorities involved with hospitality training.

If inform us of your willingness to represent AITC, we will than write a submission to that state authority seeking membership. If accepted and council endorsed it is important to note that you **carry the culinary training, standards and policies of AITC** and report to council.

Contact the Secretary, or Training Manager Education or myself to discuss the profile of a potential AITC representative.

We have also been informed that AITC is accepted as a “stakeholder” in an advisory role to Skills IQ, in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry. This now means that we must be very careful to ensure we put a **collective vision** when asked for opinions on any training issue. I will later expand on this good and bad news.

This may mean we need to formalise a national subcommittee that meets via the net or through emails to ensure a national AITC view. Interested parties please contact Ernst- General Manager Education

**MISSION – VISION - CATCH PHRASE**

Council in the past has expressed the need to discuss AITC statements of intent. We need to finalise this ongoing issue and from email and comments received back, I propose the following for final vote: My vote goes to no 1, in all three below. Email vote will follow

AITC Mission Statement: (What we do now)

1. ***TChef, approving socially responsible professionals***
2. ***Mapping skills, attitude, knowledge and experience to show mastery as a professional***
3. ***Distinguishing and acknowledging professionals***

AITC Vision statement: (What we are attempting to achieve)

1. ***A credential for Only legitimate Only professional***
2. ***An Institute for authentic, respectable and credible chefs***
3. ***A new age credential that acknowledges mastery in professional chefs***

AITC promotional catch phase: (A statement that captures the imagination)

1. **Let TChef do the talking**
2. **Add a public identity to industry integrity**
3. **For chefs by profession who are professions**

This has been a decision made on the run and everyone has had the opportunity to input. We need to put this to bed. In the next couple of weeks I will ask council for a final vote by email to establish the most favourable from the three “finalists” above

**VIDEO**

We have added 5 videos to the website and YouTube, however need more promotional materials especially for the AITC website.

I am seeking two - three 20 second video clips of members preferably in full uniform (head and shoulders) in a kitchen background - preferably wearing a chefs coat with the TChef logo and speaking into the camera (or suit, where not operational in a kitchen with a neutral background )

And saying EG: Why I am a registered AITC chef, or, why I believe in a AITC registration, or what a licence will do for the professional chef and the future of the industry – Or any simple honest sales pitch. Please advise if you can assist. There is the potential for thousands to watch on AITC website.

**THAILAND**

AITC members (Andrew may like to expand later) had a great trip to Thailand and following AITC has facilitated a potential teacher exchange. AITC had incredible exposure on ASIA TV , Industry magazines and our logo appeared CENTRAL to the whole exercise.

**PROPOSED “NOTE”**

**NOTE** or the “National Online TechnicalChef Exhibition” is still work in progress and members should view the development concept on the front page of the website.

We need advertisers. This is one way we can obtain the funds to sustain and grow AITC; However, we may have to outsource some of this because of the amount of work

The website front page shows our visitation is quiet incredible and will expose companies and organsations who wish sponsor/advertise. We need members to seek suitable companies willing to show their support for AITC with an advert. Lots more to be decided yet.

**457 Comment requested as stakeholder**

We were asked to comment on an application for 457 visa application. After contacts with council for opinion we replied that as the application was for pastry cooks it was outside our sphere of influence.

**ISSUES**

I have five issues that need to be explored.

**ISSUE 1:** Every worthwhile organisation has its strengths weaknesses opportunity and threats.

Without undertaking a complete SWOT analysis I table my perceptions of some.

We have much **strength,** including a good start to AITC, an excellent membership base (based on evidence) and a strong committed and very balanced council. However in my opinion the council is also a **weakness** of AITC**,** as we do not have a firm succession plan for any position.

Everyone needs to think about this; and the reasons why I requested each council member to examine their position and duties on council, and collectively develop a profile and manual of AITC administration. AITC is now very different from its start and more established and its time to rethink.

I table a document for discussion and will seek to have this locked in at next council meeting. We can also put this document onto “ private members Facebook” for comments.

Hopefully this document will after discussion, amendment and editing, appear on the website as a guiding manual.

I also see the opportunity to fill gaps in the administration of AITC and why I propose we add a council role to AITC named **Senior Vice President (SVP)**

I propose the SVP be an electable position at the approaching AGM

The concept: There will be an **unwritten expectation** that the SVP will stand for election as the next AGM following their election as the SVP. And additionally suggest the outgoing President will be automatically be seconded as President Emeritus. And so on.

Any member may stand and be elected as SVP at the AGM and will still need to stand again at the AGM to be endorsed as President, as does anyone on the council. This will add a certain amount of continuity.

**Issue 2:** Another **weakness** is AITC growth; which is slower than it should be, and why I have constantly request every member to persuade a colleague to join. Unless we grow quicker, fees at the current low rate may mean AITC is unsustainable, this is even considering potential sponsorship. In the final analysis; it’s either grow in numbers or grow in fees. Every member must understand THIS.

Growth additionally includes creditability, where everyone benefits.

Opportunities are enormous if we get it right. The industry is still basically unaware of AITC and the potential is huge. Every member needs to evaluate their own personal contribution in spreading the word, and identify to themselves who has I fact has joined because of them personally.

**ISSUE 3 : Threats**. My concern is standards. The standard of current training is still under threat (For example I have recently seen an advertised course, where cooks can graduate with a cert 111 in a 10 week course. This literally means, as long as AITC links directly with external training standards; AITC standards have the potential to be driven down by the lowest common denominator. This begs the real question, Should we require tests. Up the entry requirements, eg 10 years in a kitchen or other? This is a real dilemma. Not sure of the answer, as logically we must have a base external credible qualification.

**ISSUE 4:** Another threat is the potential for AITC to be used as a leverage by overseas students (Overseas or 457) even though this is not legally enforceable, applicants who in reality only seek to obtain residency in Australia may use AITC as a “perception” of creditability.

For example: There is a window in our system where an applicant can gain membership using our very minimum standards of association Cert 4; and 6 years kitchen experience by obtaining a cert 4 through a very quick and sometimes questionable culinary course (Often, much by RPL) and additionally use the very difficult to evaluate 5 - 6 years experience prior to coming to Australia to gain membership. We must remember AITC membership is only as strong as the weakest link. NOTE - To date we have successfully online tested unconvincing applicants.

However, I suggest we need to close this potential threat, by adding a By-law that requires an applicant to prove “**assimilation experience**”. EG A candidate must have a minimum of 4 years of the six years commercial kitchen experience in Australia. This equates to Australian Government residency requirements that require 4 years of residency to be considered an Australian resident.

The original intention was AITC is a registration process for Australians. The question is: how we protect AITC? While recognising everyone who is genuinely eligible to be called a professional chef and we did not fully define “Australian” in the context of changing industry demographics.

**ISSUE 5:** Months ago AITC applied to be members on the Industry Reference committee for both State and Federal boards. The process started seven months ago.

As informed above AITC has been verbally accepted onto the Victoria skills commission, which is great and we can start inputting our views when ever requested.

However after numerous contacts to SkillsQI (The national organisation responsible to form advisory groups to government in various disciplines), there is still no answer to a simple question. Who will be the representative organisations that will comprise the Industry Reference Committee in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry?

Frankly, the constant procrastination places the creditability of the whole training system into question. Seven months to just decide the composition of a committee that determines curriculum content is beyond imagination. No wonder culinary curriculum is criticised by some in industry and the confidence in TAFE and private training appears to be seriously waning. We should even consider contacting the Minister to raise our concerns.

George – September 2017