

AGM – Committee Report

As the ASNSW does not currently have president, I will instead provide an overview of what the committee has done over the past year.

The SPSP

Another very successful star party this year. We had to deal with a little cloud, rain and even snow. But those who stayed were rewarded with a beautifully clear Saturday night. Even with the smaller numbers, there was still a great atmosphere and the event ran as smoothly as ever.

Our thanks once again to all those who volunteered and helped to organise the start part this year.

Wiruna

Wiruna continues to see strong use by members many of whom turn up regardless of the weather forecast. Wiruna has taken up a lot of the committee's time this year as we look to bring the property into compliance with council and other government regulation. Our aim is to protect the society, members and officers for any claims that would arise out of any existing non-compliance, and to also make Wiruna a safer place for all members and visitors.

To that end, the committee has engaged Angus Witherby from Wakefield Planning to help us prepare all relevant council, fire plan and other documentation required. The advice we have received so far is that compliance can be achieved with very little change to our existing use and practices at Wiruna. We do know we will need to install additional measures to protect against bush fire, and document various procedures related to the Star Party, evacuation and similar.

I would note that there is no desire within the current committee to change the accommodation arrangements for Wiruna. We are

working to keep the use of member tents and caravans as our main source of accommodation. Ultimately though, we will have to comply with whatever restrictions the Mid-Western Regional Council may apply. We will keep the members fully informed of any changes in this area.

A major search and rescue operation was conducted at Wiruna over the Easter weekend to find a lost child. The committee's offers our thanks to everyone who supported the search and we are all grateful that the child was ultimately found unharmed. We have since implemented some restriction on the number of guests that each member can bring to the property. This was done to ensure Wiruna is preserved as a dedicated dark sky astronomy site. A place that both casual and serious observers and imagers can use without interference.

Crago

I will leave the details to the Crago report, but the short version of a very long story is that we still do not have a new lease for Crago. Several members are working to help us resolve this, but currently there is no timetable for resolution of the lease.

Other

The committee recently decided to reduce the number of Friday talks to 1 meeting per month. This decision was taken because attendance at the talks has been decreasing over the years and also because of the vacancy in the Technical Officer position. The Technical Office does not need to be a committee members, so if anyone would like to help organise the monthly talks, please contact us.

The Year Ahead

Our goals for 2019 will be to complete the Wiruna compliance project and bring the Crago lease to a conclusion. Thanks to

everyone who has helped out over the year and I look forward to another successful 2019.

Paul Hatchman

Vice President (Crago)

Astronomical Society of NSW