



ERIC ANDERSON
FEIANZ
HONORARY LIFE
MEMBER

Founding member

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Environment Institute
of Australia and
New Zealand Inc.

I had met Tor Hundloe while he was at the Industry Commission (a token greeny!) and I was in the Federal Environment department. The idea of a professional body embracing environmental practitioners was appealing and I offered my support to Tor in its creation.

I made a valiant attempt to attend the first AGM in Sydney, but was frustrated by my superiors in the department, one of whom declared that there was no money in the kitty for such "junkets" and the idea of the EIA was ridiculous and it would never succeed!

Later I helped set up formally the ACT Branch which was (reluctantly) launched by then Senator Graeme Richardson, the Environment Minister on the proviso that it was done in Parliament House (PH). The sting in the tail here was that the PH officials insisted (despite my noisy protests) that the EIA carry public liability insurance - which was neither cheap nor easy to obtain.

I left the public service in 1988 and set up as an environmental consultant, took on a role as ACT Councillor, made an unsuccessful attempt as EIA President before tackling the AJEM in the early 1990s. Some colleagues (notably Tor and Steve Dovers at the ANU) and I thought there was room for an EIA sponsored journal to "enhance communications and understanding across a wide spectrum of (environmental) resource and management issues, and to contribute to improved environmental practice".

Its birth was long and not without pain. I contacted some 15 or so publishers and received only three positive responses as I recall. Eventually, a deal was signed with the Law Book Company and the AJEM was formally launched by George Negus in 1994 with Mary Lou Morris as President and myself as first editor in the wings.

The marriage was not a particularly happy one (the LBC gave the impression that they were doing the embryonic EIA a great favour in publishing the Journal and insisted on imposing their standards on its format) and eventually foundered on financial rocks.

Happier days followed. I served eleven years as editor before handing over to Helen Ross and her colleagues what I felt to be a reasonably healthy product.