



Precision Agriculture Australia
Strategic Directions and Plan
2013/14 to 2016/17

March 2014

SPAA - Profile

The **Precision Agriculture Australia** 'SPAA' Strategic Plan provides with a resource to develop and implement its plans and actions toward the achievement of its vision and key directions.

SPAA is an organisation that provides a range of programs and services to its members through the promotion, development and adoption of precision agriculture technologies as a means of enhancing the profitability and sustainability of crop production systems.

Current members of SPAA include people involved in the production of grains, wane grapes and horticulture crops, such as growers, consultants and researchers. The membership reflects the SPAA's view that the management of all crop production systems is subject to the inherent variability of the land.

Precision Agriculture provides the means for measuring the variability observed in crop yield and quality parameters. Precision agriculture tools also provide the means for site-specific crop management and when combined with traditional agronomy tools, can lead to improved crop yields, quality and efficiency of crop production.

Precision Agriculture will be an important innovation on Australian farms in the future, with potential for quantum increases in production efficiency.

In the grains industry, Australia has experienced a rapid rate of adoption of guidance and autosteer systems for machinery; however the adoption of variable rate technology has been much slower. Similar trends are observed in other parts of the world, including the USA and Europe. Improving technology and continued research will improve the adoption of variable rate technology both in Australia and overseas.

Precision Agriculture technologies within the grape and wine industry is commonly referred to as precision viticulture. Following the introduction of precision viticulture tools such as global positioning systems, grape yield monitors, airborne remote sensing, and soil sensing instrumentation to the industry in the late 1990's and associated research during the intervening years, grape growers and winemakers are now recognising the magnitude of within-vineyard differences and the causes of that variation.

SPAA also sees opportunities for precision agriculture technologies in a number of industries in the future.

SPAA publishes a regular newsletter for its members, holds field days and seminars, and is active in the promotion and conduct of demonstration and experimentation on members' properties.

SPAA – *Statements and Commitments*

Vision

[SPAA's future plan and overall goal]

To be recognised as the leading advocate for precision agriculture in Australia.

SPAA will be a broad based organisation that covers a range of primary industries. It will act as an umbrella group, supporting precision agriculture initiatives within industries that have the funding and capabilities to explore and adopt new technologies. The grains industry will be the springboard for adoption and expansion, with viticulture, horticulture and sugar continuing as areas for further expansion.

The organisation will have an Australia-wide focus, achieved by partnering with other organisations and becoming part of national and industry alliances.

SPAA's activities will include a triple bottom line emphasis on sustainability. It will provide an independent source of advice on new concepts and equipment, recommend equipment manufacturers for greater compatibility between systems and components and encourage adoption in innovative areas such as variable rate technologies.

Training will be organised for researchers, growers and advisors, and information will be shared through communication channels, field days, demonstrations and the Internet.

Mission

[How SPAA is going to achieve its vision]

SPAA will be a facilitator for increased research, extension and adoption of precision agriculture.

Values

[What SPAA is committed to]

SPAA is committed to the following values:

- Independence;
- Credibility;
- Member focus;
- Collaboration, and
- Financial responsibility.

Goals/Objectives

[SPAA's goals and objectives]

SPAA is seeking to achieve the following goals and objections over the next 4 years (2013/14 to 2016/17):

- Nurture precision agriculture businesses;
- Contribute to the achievement of financial sustainability and productivity (for farmers and agriculture businesses);
- Identify and support SPAA's key clients;
- Identify and reward industry participants to establish a wider network of precision agriculture advocates;
- Facilitate increased intergroup collaboration and effectiveness;

- Identify new/existing technology opportunities;
- Facilitate Agronomist training workshops;
- Identify new skilled programme presenters;
- Facilitate the establishment of a true national presence for precision agriculture, and
- Facilitate the establishment of strategic alliances and opportunities.

Strategic Directions

[SPAA's short and long term strategies and actions – to achieve its Vision and Mission]

SPAA's key directions for the organisation (and actions to achieve them identified in the Strategic Plan) during the period **2013/14 to 2016/17** include:

- 1. SPAA to be a Relevant Organisation**
- 2. Establish Better Recognition of SPAA**
- 3. Identify Gaps in Precision Agriculture**
- 4. Increase the Collaboration and Skills of the PA Support Industry**
- 5. Maintain Quality Face-to-face Events**
- 6. Maintain an Up to Date Website**
- 7. Facilitate International Information Sharing**
- 8. Increase Focus and Partnerships with Research and New Technology Providers to Act as an Information Delivery Vehicle**
- 9. Improved Mediums for Communication with Members, Growers, Sponsors, Researchers, Grower Groups and Industry**
- 10. Review Precision Agriculture Help Desk**
- 11. Increase Perception of SPAA Value**
- 12. Maintain a process for reviewing the member satisfaction of SPAA newsletters, magazines and Website**
- 13. Establish Better Web Committee Meetings**
- 14. Establish Better Web Presence and Information Search**
- 15. Facilitate Training in Social Media**
- 16. Establish a Precision Agriculture Extension Officer Role**
- 17. Regularly Measure the Uptake of Precision Agriculture Information**
- 18. Maintain an Effective Planning Framework**
- 19. Enhance Financial Viability**
- 20. Develop Project Blueprints**
- 21. Implement Corporate Governance Processes**

SPAA – Strategic Directions

Strategic Plan 2013/14 – 2016/17

Strategic Direction <i>(Aim and Why)</i> Actions <i>(What and How)</i>	Responsibility <i>Driver</i>	Timeline <i>Start/End</i>
1. SPAA to be a Relevant Organisation	SPAA Extension Officer Grower Groups Ag Bureau / Agronomy Groups Regional Discussion Groups	6 months to 3 years
1.1. Facilitate growing SPAA's brand, attracting membership and increasing grower adoption through the demonstration of value and legacy for its members. Considerations including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise that SPAA is not going to attract every farmer to be a member but can seek to influence every farmer to increase adoption across Australia (Further consider how SPAA can benefit and grow from this) 		
1.2. Facilitate a focus on farms		
1.3. Identify what pressures exist that will cause farmers to change then target these		
2. Establish Better Recognition of SPAA		
2.1. Further enhance knowledge and adoption of precision driving; More emphasis on Agronomic Precision (Including through the use of Social Media/Magazine articles). Considerations including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building SPAA brand ensuring it is consistent with SPAA's vision (i.e. leading advocate in PA) Exploring what PA really is (e.g. not just VR technology; review the definition of PA) 	SPAA Extension Officer (0.5 part-time)	18-24 months
3. Identify Gaps in Precision Agriculture	Link with SANTFA/VNTFA/Others Research Organisations	12 to 36 months
3.1. Get practical in-paddock research happening (around Regional Discussion Groups)		
3.2. Survey a group of leading farmers, mid farmers and beginners to identify gaps / perceived gaps - conducted via a survey company		

Strategic Direction (<i>Aim and Why</i>) <i>Actions (What and How)</i>	Responsibility <i>Driver</i>	Timeline <i>Start/End</i>
3.3. Put in a research proposal to find the gaps, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain grower feedback (based on SPAA members) • Review of survey to identify trends (e.g. Llewellyn results) Other considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore what opportunities are open to SPAA • Target key players in other sectors to be involved at SPAA Committee level to identify gaps 		
4. Increase the collaboration and Skills of the Precision Agriculture Support Industry		2013-2017
4.1. Targeted training, extension courses and follow-up support - focus on Agronomists (e.g. software training) [One course per year and telephone follow-up]		
4.2. Facilitate visiting PA experts [One per year]		
4.3. Investigate collaboration opportunities for mutual benefit with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grower groups • Commercial industry • Research providers [Conduct feasibility review of opportunities identifying priorities for each target group]		
5. Maintain Quality Face-to-face Events (expanding number to provide national coverage)	SPAA Executive Officer / SPAA Events Sub- Committee Outsourced Trainers/Facilitators (Smaller Group Events) Self Funded for large events (SPAA support for smaller groups/ meetings/ facilitators)	On-going
5.1. Facilitate Conferences and Expos annually (National Conference; Regional Expos): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run at least two (2) major forums per year for the promotion and application of new technologies [SPAA Annual Conference and Expo rotating through regions each year; incorporate demonstrations into every Grower Group Schedule] 		
5.2. Facilitate group-training events (consider in conjunction with Conferences/Expos)		
5.3. Facilitate localised Grower Group meetings (when topical event is appropriate)		
5.4. Increase precision agriculture group facilitators (including sugar and dairy industries -		

Strategic Direction <i>(Aim and Why)</i> <i>Actions (What and How)</i>	Responsibility <i>Driver</i>	Timeline <i>Start/End</i>
require location based facilitator)		
6. Maintain an Up-to-date Website with Links to and from other Appropriate Sites		
6.1. Post e-versions of SPAA publications [One issue in arrears always available]	Executive and Extension Officer	
6.2. Committee review of website effectiveness [Regular reports to the SPAA Committee]	Executive Officer	
7. Facilitate International Information Sharing	PAN Journalist SPAA Communications/ Extension/Marketing Role Various contributions – SPAA Committee Other PA Groups: (Precision Agriculture / PARG / Precision Ag Lab / PCT)	Now - Ongoing
7.1. Source stories for publications/communications		
7.2. Facilitate links with international groups i.e. PAANZ via Twitter, Nuffield, American eNews?		
7.3. Facilitate the attraction of speakers and experts to attend SPAA events, conferences, expos and local events		
8. Increase Focus and Partnerships with Research and New Technology Providers to Act as an Information Delivery Vehicle		
8.1. Identify partners as regular contributors of material [Regular providers of articles submitted to SPAA Publications] including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles) • Drones • Soil moisture probes, etc 	Executive Officer Publishing Coordinator and Editorial Panel	
8.2. Hold SPAA events (value add) with other groups (as identified)		
9. Improved Mediums for Communication with Members/ Growers, Sponsors, Researchers, Grower Groups and Industry	SPAA Communications/ Extension/Marketing Role Existing Funded Role \$70K: Travel / Overheads (Car-phone, Computer,	12 months

Strategic Direction <i>(Aim and Why)</i> <i>Actions (What and How)</i>	Responsibility <i>Driver</i>	Timeline <i>Start/End</i>
	etc)	
9.1. Promote SPAA's existing mediums – providing increased access; more optimised search results when looking for SPAA, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry publications • Other FSG newsletters • Media 	Executive and Extension Officer	
9.2. New social media – Twitter and YouTube [Target of 3 posts per week and a minimum of 2 videos produced annually]		
9.3. E-news design and content [Target of 6 issues produced annually]		
10. Review Precision Agriculture Help Desk	Out-sourced – either on our own or in partnership with GRDC funded or sponsored	12 months to 3 years longer term
10.1. SPAA to determine the scope and funding of a PA Help Desk; considerations include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining the optimum scope of the service (e.g. Phone helpdesk; Web based support service; PA forum for Self-help; Hub of information [i.e. 'precisionag.com'], etc) • Reviewing how effective the PA Help Desk is currently • Reviewing potential for SPAA's existing website to fill the gap • Expanding the existing PA Help Desk or the creation of a new solution or joining another established provider/solution 		
11. Increase Perception of SPAA Value		
11.1. Develop incentives for members (e.g. Dual membership opportunities with discount subscriptions and/or Members Only sections on website, timeliness of information provision, etc) in order to improve the perceived value from their membership 11.2. Increase fees and charges for Non Members e.g. Attendance at Conferences, Grower Groups, etc [Target: Increase admission charges by min 25% to 50%]		
12. Maintain a Process for Reviewing the Member Satisfaction of SPAA Newsletters, Magazines and Website		
12.1. Once every two (2) years implement a survey process to follow newsletter release i.e. random telephone call from SPAA Committee to members [Outsource to a Survey Company]: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a brief report to each SPAA Committee meeting 	Executive Officer (through Survey Company)	
13. Establish Better Web Committee Meetings	Extension Officer	6 months

Strategic Direction <i>(Aim and Why)</i> <i>Actions (What and How)</i>	Responsibility <i>Driver</i>	Timeline <i>Start/End</i>
	\$1-3K (Training Events / Info Sessions / Pay - Presenter)	
13.1. Invest in new meeting software: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate an improved host platform with voting and video conferencing capabilities 	Extension Officer	
13.2. Facilitate the introduction of more functional meetings that run more smoothly; consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shorter more targeted meetings (i.e. 45minutes-1hour in length) 	Extension Officer	
14. Establish Better Web Presence and Information Search	In-house or Outsourced (Dependant on Cost/Benefit) Sponsor driven? Tendered out to web designers? Need to budget for upgrades and reviews; should be part of core business – needs to be funded even if sponsorship is not available	Next 2 years; Ongoing Review
14.1. Facilitate a review and further development of the SPAA Website; considerations including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobile and iPad friendly formats More searchable older publications (i.e. Archive) Better hit rate More relevant links to PA Help Desk Increased international presence Links to Social Media [All SPAA staff to source material] Level of external information placed on the SPAA website 		On-going
15. Facilitate Training in Social Media	DAFF Horsham (Prue Cooke to assist with options)	Next 12 months (possibly around Expo time while Committee is all together)
15.1. Need to bring SPAA Committee up to speed on latest in Social Media and potential use of this tool for spreading PA information [considerations including Agriculture Excellence Alliance; Government programs, etc]		
16. Establish a Precision Agriculture Extension Officer Role		ASAP (to cover Expos)

Strategic Direction (<i>Aim and Why</i>) <i>Actions (What and How)</i>	Responsibility <i>Driver</i>	Timeline <i>Start/End</i>
16.1. Establish a PA Extension Officer Role that focuses on generating income (sales role) – selling SPAA and what it stands for; considerations including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self funded technical practitioner (with some seed money to start) that is sub-contracted and not necessarily a full time position • Outcome is to not replicate existing PA business (validated via the interview process – e.g. determine what are their funding goals) • Role aim is to expand SPAA’s organisational capacity through either generating additional income, projects, events and articles that have a ROI 		
16.2. Maximise use of Social Media e.g. Website; Twitter and Apps (Use ‘Decision Tree’ method to identify what SPAA can produce e.g. new apps from projects)		
16.3. Facilitate Regional Expos including maximising exposure of SPAA at each event, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering a presentation on SPAA activities • SPAA Website update and Twitter activity to demonstrate that SPAA is engaged with ‘smart tools’ • Conduct a demonstration [i.e. Facilitate an exercise with the audience e.g. How to do ‘x’ on the Web; saving in ‘Cloud’ management, etc] 		
17. Regularly Measure the Uptake of Precision Agriculture Information		
17.1. Monitor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website hits • Expo / Conference attendance • E-News subscription • Membership • Grower Group attendance [Regular reports to the SPAA Committee]		On-going
18. Maintain an Effective Planning Framework		
18.1. Develop an annual Operational Plan that is fully budgeted and communicated [Present plan with budget to 30 June each year; include budget versus actual costs]		
18.2. Conduct annual and quarterly review of the outcomes from the Operational Plan [Operational Plan adjusted on a quarterly basis]		
18.3. Conduct three yearly review of the SPAA Strategic Plan [New Strategic Plan developed and approved every 3 years]		
19. Enhance Financial Viability		

Strategic Direction (<i>Aim and Why</i>) <i>Actions (What and How)</i>	Responsibility <i>Driver</i>	Timeline <i>Start/End</i>
19.1. Ensure all SPAA Committee members have comprehensive data and information on the financial position of SPAA – prepare annual budget, track YTD and present quarterly updates [SPAA Committee members have a complete understanding of the financial position of SPAA]]		
19.2. Increase corporate sponsorship [Sponsorship contributing 30% overall revenue]	Executive Officer	
19.3. Increase SPAA membership 20% per year [SPAA membership increased by 20% per year]		
19.4. Maintain SPAA existing members [Target: annually maintain ..% of current members] – validate via Phone call or Online surveys		
20. Develop Project Blueprints	SPAA Projects Sub-Committee / Executive Industry Partners / Collaborators	6 months Ongoing
20.1. Document priority areas that require funding to get initiated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a range of 'ideas' blueprints in preparation for funding opportunities as they arise [to contribute to shorter response times for funding applications] 		
21. Implement Corporate Governance Processes		
21.1. Adhere to and annually review SPAA policies and procedures [Relevant and appropriate policies and procedures maintained]		
21.2. All SPAA Committee members actively participating in sub-committees [maintenance of effective SPAA sub-committees]		
21.3. Review of required positions and paid instructors [Effective roles and performance assessments]		On-going and Annual
21.4. Seek independent advice on SPAA's performance [Validation of SPAA's performance and areas of improvement highlighted]		

SPAA – Risk & Issue Management

[List the potential risks and issues (in order of likelihood) that could impact SPAA's programs, operations and/or projects]

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Strategy
<i>[Description of the risk and the potential impact to the branch/operations]</i>	<i>[Highly Unlikely, Unlikely; Likely; Highly Likely]</i>	<i>[High; Medium, Low]</i>	<i>[Actions to minimise/mitigate the potential risk to the branch/operations]</i>
1. Administration – need increased paid job/s within SPAA's administration to effectively achieve vision and objectives (finding the right person/s is a challenge)	Highly Likely	High	To be facilitated by SPAA PR / Extension Officer
2. Distance – accessibility of members (large footprint/coverage) and the time and costs needed to travel to connect with each other is a challenge	Highly Likely	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the range of media used to maximise information dissemination e.g. Mini Expos - provide reimbursement for SPAA Committee Members to attend Gain additional commitment from SPAA Committee Members (i.e. seek increased participation) Review adequate RSVP timeline and potential sitting fees
3. Internet reliability is poor for some Members	Highly Likely	Medium	NBN Roll-out is seen as a potential solution to address Internet performance
4. Need stronger alliances with other Members/Groups in other Regions and States e.g. Agriculture Excellence Alliance	Highly Likely	Medium	Facilitate alliances with Agriculture Excellence Alliance and GGA
5. Seasonal impacts on availability of Members (e.g. Harvesting)	Highly Likely	Medium	Establish as a priority an increase in committee members from different industries and localities
6. Ability for SPAA to be dynamic (rapid) in order to meet its current and future aims and objectives	Likely	Medium	Expand industry presence through proposed new PR Extension Officer to raise brand awareness so stakeholders want to be part of SPAA (e.g. Project partners, Sponsors, Members, etc)
7. Communication – need most effective method (teleconferences versus webinars versus videoconferences?)	Likely	Medium	