

2024 – 2026



AIRAH STRATEGIC PLAN

RENEWAL TO CREATE MEANINGFUL IMPACT

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Introduction

This plan was developed using the output from workshops conducted with members and directors at the 2022 and 2023 AIRAH Conventions, as well as input from the National Reference Group, committees, and AIRAH staff.

This paper summarises the key themes identified during the planning process and their influence on the plan and outlines the goals and strategies for 2023-2025.

Directions

“One team. One dream” – Break down silos and close the knowledge gap between disciplines.

HVAC&R is a vital, integrated part of our modern world. And our modern world is undergoing a transformation caused by advances in technology, a new focus on sustainability, the impact of extreme weather, and changing societal needs.

HVAC&R is becoming more critical and increasingly connected with our built environment through IoT and smart systems that optimise operating efficiency, energy consumption, waste management, and resource allocation. At an operational level or onsite, HVAC&R systems are dependent on multiple disciplines in their design, manufacture, installation, commissioning, operation, and maintenance.

Members have said they want AIRAH to broaden its reach into disciplines interconnected with HVAC&R, to better reflect operations on the ground. This will need to be demonstrated through the communications and language we use, as well as the products and services we create and offer.

While seeking to broaden our footprint into adjacent HVAC&R disciplines and forming strategic partnerships, members want our focus to remain on qualified professionals and practitioners and recognition of qualifications and professionalism within the HVAC&R arena.

In addition to its industry-leading HVAC&R education programs, AIRAH possesses a large pool of valuable technical resources. It is arguably these resources that have historically set AIRAH apart and been at the heart of our membership value proposition.

A key component of an attractive value proposition is the provision of fit-for-purpose educational resources and technical material relevant to a multi-disciplinary HVAC&R environment, delivered in the right format and medium in an efficient and cost-effective way. And providing this in a way that generates a commercial return (whether direct or indirect) requires fresh thinking.

The success of the webinar series, which uses material developed by STGs, demonstrates the value of a “from members, for members” knowledge development and delivery model. AIRAH will need to build on this concept as it seeks to leverage its technical knowledge and delivery channels.

AIRAH can play a pivotal role in bridging knowledge gaps found in onsite multi-disciplinary HVAC&R operations, but in doing so, we must develop an IP strategy in conjunction with our digitisation strategy to ensure we develop, leverage, commercialise, and protect our IP assets.

“Same purpose. New perspective” – Refresh and modernise AIRAH’s brand to better reflect its lead role and to promote the HVAC&R industry.

Members are proud of the work they do in a field that is somewhat hidden from the community and, to varying degrees, from government and industry agencies as well. They are looking for AIRAH to be more active and resourceful in promoting their industry and the AIRAH brand.

Digitisation is influencing and changing HVAC&R operations. Increasingly, members and customers are using hand-held devices in their everyday and work lives, and to access technical resources and knowledge forums. Members, by voice and deed, have shown that their digital experiences with AIRAH must be improved.

We must focus on improving our digital capability. AIRAH must target its communications more effectively, both digital and print, to improve reach, messaging, and impact.

“Creating impact. Making a difference” – Represent the industry and present the collective voice of our members.

Our members are our knowledge experts. To be an even more effective voice for our members and industry, we must become more proficient at harnessing their expertise and managing their engagement and participation in forums and on committees.

While AIRAH will continue to be the industry voice for resilience, sustainability, safety, and innovation, it needs to establish a more efficient framework and processes for engaging with members to formulate positions and for using them to represent AIRAH and the industry.

We want our members to see the value of AIRAH's advocacy activities and how they benefit both members and the industry. We strive to achieve greater recognition for AIRAH members. We should seek to increase the impact of our policy and advocacy work and to communicate positions and brand messages more effectively to members, industry, and stakeholder audiences.

Vision

HVAC&R for a better world.

Mission

To lead an Australian HVAC&R industry that is highly skilled, safe, and sustainable.

Strategies

In the 2023–2025 strategic plan, we will pursue three goals.

1. “One team. One dream” – Break down silos and close the knowledge gap between disciplines.
2. “Same purpose. New perspective” – Refresh and modernise AIRAH’s brand to better reflect its lead role and promote the HVAC&R industry.
3. “Creating impact. Making a difference” – Represent the industry and present the collective voice of our members.

The strategies associated with the goals are outlined below.

1. Break down silos and close the knowledge gap between disciplines.

a) Define AIRAH’s position and create connections in a multi-disciplinary HVAC&R industry.

With the support of our members and industry organisations, we will research how HVAC&R interconnects with other disciplines in the broader building services environment. This includes the type of work performed in delivering HVAC&R solutions, the roles each discipline plays, the qualifications required, and the regulations and standards to be met.

b) Use AIRAH’s unique advantages to attract strategic and education partners from multiple disciplines associated with HVAC&R.

We will use our findings to help identify knowledge, education and membership offers, and communication priorities to attract strategic and education partners, customers, and new members from HVAC&R and adjacent disciplines.

c) Continue to develop professional recognition, create and deliver education programs and training, build HVAC&R career paths, and expand our range of multi-disciplinary technical tools and resources with a focus on digital, fit-for-purpose formats.

We will continue delivering professional engineer assessments for registration and lodging fresh applications as states release their schemes. We will review the current operations and costs for APER and determine a more efficient and cost-effective operating system and model.

Through our communication channels, we will increase recognition of the value of the APER designation and run campaigns to improve take-up.

We will introduce an education committee develop courses and content, and to review current offerings. We will also survey members for input and feedback.

We will continue to transition the Professional Diploma of Building Services – HVAC&R (PDBS) to a marking structure matching TEQSA standards, and update sections of the PDBS with the latest technical information, while also making changes to the way it is delivered to enhance the learning experience.

We will redevelop the Graduate Certificate in Air Conditioning Code Compliance into a five-unit online professional diploma of code compliance.

We will create fit-for-purpose digital tools and resources. We will review the way we create content and present our technical resources. We will consider what is best created by AIRAH and what is best utilised from third parties, and how this can best be packaged and delivered.

We will develop an IP strategy in conjunction with our digitisation strategy to ensure we leverage and commercialise our IP assets most effectively.

2. Refresh and modernise AIRAH brand to better reflect its lead role and to promote the HVAC&R industry.

a) Refresh and modernise the AIRAH brand.

AIRAH will undertake a complete refresh of its brand. We will modernise its look and feel and create a revitalised and distinctive brand format that supports AIRAH's future in a multi-disciplinary HVAC&R building services environment.

We will develop a more structured and integrated brand strategy for all AIRAH sub-brands and marketing assets. We will build our range of branded digital products with a greater focus on imagery and ease of use. We will create an easy-to-access, user-friendly catalogue of branded digital content to support ongoing promotional activity.

b) Implement a digital infrastructure transformation plan to improve user experiences and enhance our digital capability.

We will develop a digital transformation plan to revamp AIRAH's websites, improve user experience, broaden and enhance content accessibility, simplify member sign-up and customer interactions, and reduce operating complexity.

We will redevelop our websites to make them more visually appealing, faster, and easier to use.

We will strengthen the links between our publications and our digital properties, social media, and podcasts. We will use video clips and other digital products extensively in our promotional activities.

- c) Promote the AIRAH brand and the role and connectiveness of HVAC&R within our modern world, and provide tailored communications with greater audience segmentation and impact.**

We will develop and implement ongoing communications to better promote the AIRAH brand and the role and importance of HVAC&R. We will target key stakeholders and audiences through digital and print channels, using content with a strong visual focus. Content will be strongly branded and with a “positioning” narrative derived from outputs of the multi-disciplinary connectivity modelling.

We will integrate audience data, profile knowledge, and results tracking into all our communication plans and strategies. We will establish processes to manage the integrity of our data more effectively and to build our audience targeting capability. We will actively seek to leverage the value we obtain from our communication assets, be more cost effective, and enhance the impact our communications have on our audiences.

3. Represent the industry and present the collective voice of our members.

- a) Establish an engagement framework and processes using AIRAH’s expert members and committees.**

We will establish an overarching operating framework to guide the way we conduct our advocacy activities and to measure effectiveness. We will develop and implement a process for maintaining a relevant policy and advocacy agenda and establish mechanisms that allow members and stakeholders to easily provide feedback and input.

We will identify expert members (including STGs) who can be engaged in key policy and advocacy areas, leverage connections and expertise, and develop processes for managing their involvement.

- b) Identify and focus on key advocacy topics and implement an impactful communications plan.**

We will establish a communications strategy that reinforces the value and importance of our members, the industry, and AIRAH’s policy and advocacy work. We will establish a database of our audiences with relevant profile data to enhance the impact of communications, and we will introduce measurement methods to assess the effectiveness of advocacy activities.

- c) Continue to be a strong advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion in the HVAC&R industry.**

The Women of AIRAH committee will evolve into the People of AIRAH committee, with a broader work scope. We will use this committee to raise awareness of AIRAH’s commitment to a wider audience.