

## Mark Dods

**Subject:** WIA/RAVEN  
**From:** Mark Dods <madods@optusnet.com.au>  
**Date:** 10/05/2011 12:50 PM  
**To:** WICEN EMail List <wicenvic@vic.wicen.org.au>

Dear WICEN Members,

A number of people have suggested that the WICEN Committee of Management should meet with the WIA so they can brief us on their intentions with regard to the RAVEN program. Now that Monday's possible WIA announcement has not been made (at least, I cannot see one on the WIA website), I must tell you more of my conversations with Peter Young and Michael Owen.

I did in fact suggest to both Peter, and then Michael, that WICEN meet with the WIA so they could brief us on their intentions. The response was that this would not be possible. Nor was it necessary, because all the relevant information was contained in the WIA's public announcements, and because they were willing to go through it again with me by phone. As I said in my last email, both Peter and Michael stressed that their current focus was on training and accreditation, although Peter did say they were considering approaching Emergency Management Australia and some non government organisations at a national level.

If the WIA have any plans beyond what they have announced, then they are clearly not willing to divulge them. While we may not like this, it is their prerogative to make such decisions. The WIA are in no way answerable to WICEN. We certainly have no right to demand a meeting or that they reveal any of their intentions. The WIA are however answerable to their members. If WIA members have questions regarding the WIA's announcements, then they should be put to the WIA. WICEN have NO additional information beyond that contained in the announcements.

I would stress however that any contact you make with the WIA should be as a MEMBER of WICEN, and perhaps as a member of the WIA as well. Your views are your own - not WICEN's. In writing this email I am myself being careful to report facts, not communicate opinions.

A number of members have pointed out that the WIA weekly broadcast announcement by Phil Wait appears to indicate that a lot more has been decided than just focusing on training and accreditation, and a general intent to approach EMA and NGOs. I can only re-state; I asked both Peter and Michael what the WIA's intentions were regarding establishing RAVEN in Victoria, and the response was that they were currently focusing on training and accreditation.

I have also been repeatedly asked why the WIA are making decisions and announcements about emergency communications by Amateurs without actively seeking to make use of the experience and knowledge within WICEN Vic. of such operations. Especially considering the number and scale of our activations since 1999/2000. Michael Owen did say to me on Sunday that WICEN and individual members are welcome to submit suggestions regarding emergency communications at any time. At this point I'm forced to offer a personal opinion: I think its very difficult to make relevant comments and suggestions when what is proposed has either not been decided or not been revealed. Consultation is a two way, not a one way process.

Michael also told me that the WICENs may if necessary be gathered for consultation some time in the future, but that this was a longer rather than shorter term possibility.

So far this email has been pretty negative in that I've had to focus on what WICEN can't do - demand the WIA satisfy our desire for information. Its time to

turn to what we can do to try to ensure WICEN continues to move forward. Here are some suggestions:

- Continue to practice our skills to ensure we are the best operators we can be
- Continue to seek to develop contacts with other Emergency Response Plan agencies at all levels
- Embrace the revised training scheme which will be available by the end of this month

Really, all we can do is strive to be as effective as we can individually, and as an organisation. If we can effectively meet a need, and those with the need know we can, then we will be activated.

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Regards,

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