

National Newsletter

THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS INC.

Volume 11, Number 3, September 2003.

ANNUAL REPORT AGM EDITION

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President's Foreword

At the 2002 Annual General Meeting in Perth AUSIT agreed on the following set of objectives:

- To carry out a Survey of Membership Needs – the survey (which has grown to become an Industry Survey) is in the design stage and now before the National Council for consideration.
- To deliver thousands of AUSIT brochures - AUSIT prints as many brochures as needed without hesitation and floods the market at every opportunity it gets.
- Promote professional development in the branches as the single most important branch activity – close to 500 AUSIT members have attended AUSIT-run workshops nationally.
- Go again with the AUSIT and Members Yellow Pages cooperative advertising campaign – done.
- Continue to develop the website – at the time of writing the latest update is about to be uploaded.
- Constitutional change: - at the 2003 AGM the members will be able to vote on a proposal to hold democratic elections for the Presidency instead of having the Vice-President accede to the position automatically.
- Membership category reform: after discussions with every branch I have found there is a general consensus in AUSIT on the three following principles:
 - that there should be a link between membership and professional development
 - that there should be a link between membership and the need to practise



- that there should be an initial period of training or mentorship for new members over and above their NAATI accreditation

2003 Annual Report

Like last year, rather than present branch and national reports “live” at the Annual General Meeting itself when few people have an opportunity to read them and come to an informed judgment about issues affecting them, members will have the opportunity to read detailed reports now, in this newsletter, and reflect on them before the AGM itself (this year to be held in Canberra). As my Presidency comes to an end I extend a special nostalgic thank you to Silke, Ilke and David, who formed the very first AUSIT team that I was privileged to be a part of. Thank you also to Barbara, the keeper of the AUSIT flame, and Vince who did so much work (including overseeing the preparation of this report) you wouldn't believe it if I told you, and Uli, who is flat out running a business but still finds time to dedicate to AUSIT. Thank you to Tineke for looking after the northern region,

Continued on page 3

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS NOTICE OF SIXTEENTH NATIONAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

1. All members of the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT) are hereby notified that pursuant to provisions of section 8.2 of the Constitution, the Institute's sixteenth National Annual General Meeting will be conducted according to the Association's Standing Orders (by-law C) and held in Canberra as follows:

DATE: Saturday, 25 October 2003
TIME: 10 a.m.
VENUE: University House
 "The Hotel at the ANU"
 1 Balmain Crescent
 ACTON ACT 2601

REGISTRATION: 9 a.m. on the day of the meeting

The retiring Council will meet on Friday, 24 October 2003, at 6 p.m. at the same location.

2. PROXIES

Pursuant to provisions of section 8.5 of the Constitution, it will be possible for proxies to be appointed. We urge members who are unable to attend the National AGM to use the attached **FORM FOR APPOINTMENT OF PROXY**.

No member may hold more than 25 proxies (item 8.4.6 of the Constitution).

A member or proxy is not entitled to vote at any general meeting of the Institute unless all money due and payable by any member or proxy to the Institute has been paid (item 8.4.6 of the Constitution).

Proxy votes should be mailed to AUSIT ACT, GPO Box 1732, Canberra ACT 2601, or handed in to the Secretary by the named proxy on the day of the meeting.

3. THE WEEKEND PROGRAMME

After the conclusion of the AGM a Smorgasbord luncheon will be served at 12:30 p.m.. The cost of \$38.00 is payable at the venue. The JBML lecture will be presented during the lunch.

At 3 p.m, the Post-AGM National Council meeting and a "Future Visions" session will take place, to consider and prepare a road map for the ensuing year. The session will conclude not later than 6 p.m.

On Sunday morning, depending on the weather, the members will either be welcome at an AUSIT picnic, or attend a demonstration and comparison of Computer Assisted Translation software.

4. TRAVEL / ACCOMMODATION

Make your own travel arrangements to Canberra. Members may wish to book accommodation on their own account at the University House, where single rooms are available at \$99 per night (or \$108 with breakfast) and doubles at \$120 (\$129 with breakfast for two). The phone is (02) 6249 5211, and the fax (02) 6249 5252, but make sure to state that your booking is in addition to the block booking for the National Council members.

For those driving to the location, the best parking area is at the rear of the buildings, accessible only from Garran Road just after the intersection with Liversidge Street. The best access from the highway (named Northbourne Avenue in the city area) is via London Circuit.

Remember: the National AGM is a perfect opportunity to meet your interstate colleagues and to have an active voice in the development of your professional organisation.

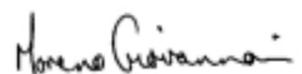
Looking forward to seeing you there.

ILKE BRUECKNER-KLEIN
National Council Secretary

President's Foreword

Continued from page 1

Anne and Niki for the new Newsletter, Annamaria Arnall for helping us develop our professional development department, Eva Hussain for doing new and revolutionary things in professional development and John Crone for organising our collective advertising in the Yellow Pages. These are just some of the people I have personally worked with closely. Most of all however I thank the AUSIT National Council, the branch committees and chairpersons, and the ordinary members in all the branches all over Australia who over the past two years have done the work that was needed to revitalise the organisation. I think we have done a phenomenal job. A forty-two percent increase in membership with an accompanying significant boost to fee income is just one indication of that. Financially we are in good shape, as you will see from the Treasurer's report. Some people think Presidents make a difference. In this case the President thinks people make all the difference and AUSIT is lucky to have so many willing and talented contributors. I commend the Annual Report to the membership.



Moreno Giovannoni
President

APPOINTMENT OF PROXY FORM

I,..... (full name)
 of (residential
 address), being a financial member of AUSIT, hereby appoint: -
 (full name of
 proxy) of (address of
 proxy) being a full financial member of AUSIT to vote for me on my
 behalf at the National Annual General Meeting of AUSIT being held
 on Saturday, 25 October 2003 at Acton, ACT and at any adjournment
 of that meeting.

Signature of member appointing proxy:

Date: / / 2003

Mail to AUSIT ACT, GPO Box 1732, Canberra ACT 2601, or
 hand in at the meeting.

*If you wish to preserve your copy of this newsletter,
 you are welcome to submit a photocopy of this form.*

How to contact AUSIT

National Telephone Number: **1800 284 181**

Website: **www.ausit.org**

Northern Region (ACT, NSW, QLD)

PO Box 5108

Turrumurra South NSW 2074

E-mail: nsw@ausit.org

Southern Region (NT, SA, Tas., Vic., WA):

PO Box 1070

Blackburn North VIC 3130

E-mail: victas@ausit.org

The regional administrators, Tineke Millard (Northern Region) and David Connor (Southern Region), will be happy to assist you with membership inquiries / renewals and all other administrative matters.

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS, INC.
SIXTEENTH NATIONAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
IN CANBERRA

DATE: Saturday, 25 October 2003
TIME: 10 a.m.
VENUE: University House
 "The Hotel at the ANU"
 1 Balmain Crescent
 ACTON ACT 2601
REGISTRATION: 9 a.m. on the day of the meeting

A G E N D A

1. Confirmation of the Minutes of the fifteenth National AGM (2002).
2. Presentation of the Report by the President of the National Council for the year 2002/2003.
3. Presentation of the AUSIT Statement of Financial Performance and the Statement of Financial Position for the Financial Year 2002/2003 by the General Treasurer.
4. Presentation of State Branches' Reports.
5. Amendment to the Constitution by passing as a special resolution the following motion:
 To consider and if seen fit to amend the Constitution by deleting existing Sections 7.3.1 Office Bearers; 7.3.2 President; and 7.3.3 Vice-President, and in their place substitute new Sections 7.3.1 Office Bearers; 7.3.2 President; and 7.3.3 Vice-President reading as in the Appendix and for reasons set out in the Appendix.
6. Election of National Office Bearers and declaration of non-contested positions to the National Council.
7. Other Business
 To consider as an ordinary resolution a motion to set a Pay and Conditions Subcommittee of the National Council to implement relevant provisions of Section 4 Objects of the Constitution.
8. Date and venue for seventeenth National AGM.

ILKE BRUECKNER-KLEIN
 National Council Secretary

See page 5 of this newsletter for details on Item 5. CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS, INC.
Appendix to the Notice of the Annual General Meeting to be held
in Canberra on Saturday, 25 October 2003.
Ad Agenda Item 5

CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT

NEW SECTIONS

7.3.1 Office Bearers

All office bearers shall be financial Ordinary Members or Fellows. Each office bearer except the Immediate Past President, who is subject to separate rules as set out in Section 7.3.4 below, shall be elected at an Annual General Meeting. Office bearers shall hold office until the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting following the date of the member election, such period not being longer than fifteen months, and shall be eligible for re-election subject to other provisions in this Constitution. If insufficient nominations are received to fill all vacancies on the Council, the candidates nominated shall be deemed to be elected and further nominations shall be received at the Annual General Meeting. If insufficient further nominations are received, any vacant positions remaining shall be deemed to be casual vacancies. If the number of nominations received equals the number of vacancies to be filled, the persons nominated shall be deemed to be elected. If more than one nomination has been received for any position, a ballot shall be held for that position.

7.3.2 President

The President shall be a financial Ordinary Member or Fellow and shall be elected at an Annual General Meeting. The President shall hold office until the completion of the next Annual General Meeting of the Institute. In the event of a President failing for any reason to complete his term of office, the National Council

shall appoint a successor to serve the unexpired portion of the term. Such an appointed President shall succeed to the office of Immediate Past President only with the consent of the Annual General Meeting following the appointment. No President shall hold office for more than two consecutive complete terms. The incoming President shall be installed at the conclusion of each Annual General Meeting of the Institute.

7.3.3 Vice-President

The Vice-President shall be a financial Ordinary Member or Fellow. The Vice-President shall be elected at an Annual General Meeting. The Vice-President shall hold office until the completion of the next Annual General Meeting of the Institute. In the event of a Vice-President failing for any reason to complete his term of office, the National Council shall appoint a successor to serve the unexpired portion of the term. Such an appointed Vice-President shall succeed to the office of President only with the consent of the Annual General Meeting following the appointment. No Vice-President shall hold office for more than two consecutive complete terms. The incoming Vice-President shall be installed at the conclusion of each Annual General Meeting of the Institute.

REASONS FOR CHANGE

The original provisions of the Constitution for succession to the office of President by a Vice-President elected up to two years previously from the Branch due to be

hosting the next National Council were meant to assure rotation and maintenance of continuity in an era when the means of communication between urban centres were few and expensive.

In the event the provisions became unnecessary and impractical for several reasons:

The effectiveness of rotation was nullified by the large differences in membership of various Branches, itself a function of differences in general population.

Technical developments in the media of communication of various kinds ensured that the cost and effectiveness of contacts was able to be met both more economically and more equitably than by mechanical rotation.

With the effective term of each office holder becoming two years, it was difficult to find Vice-Presidents prepared for a commitment of four years of demanding voluntary work. The unsustainability of these Sections was stressed by one of the present candidates for the office of President, although on the face of it, the candidate, being the current Vice-President, would have had the appointment assured by the Sections proposed to be deleted.

Finally, as a matter of record, at least three of the immediately past presidents, Mrs Marta Barany and Messrs Skender Bregu and Moreno Giovannoni, have not been Vice-Presidents when they were elected Presidents.

All members of the National Council support the motion.

**AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS, INC.
NOMINATION FORM**

This is to nominate Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss/Dr (*) _____ for election as President/Vice-President/General Secretary/General Treasurer (*) of the AUSIT National Council for the ensuing year.

Proposer's Name and Signature _____

Nominated Member's Assenting Signature _____

(*) Please, cross out the inapplicable.

NOTE: Nomination Forms can be mailed to the Chair, the AUSIT ACT Branch, GPO Box 1732, Canberra ACT 2601 or handed in at the meeting. Nominations may be made orally at the meeting.

If you wish to preserve your copy of this newsletter, you are welcome to submit a photocopy of this form.

2003 AGM Agenda Item 7

Moved by Pavlinka Georgiev, Vic/Tas Member
Seconded by Moreno Giovannoni, Vic/Tas Member

To Establish a National Pay And Conditions Review Subcommittee

The Objectives of the National Pay And Conditions Review Subcommittee shall be:

- a) To carry out an ongoing annual review of pay and conditions for Interpreters and Translators in each state and territory of Australia and report to the Annual General Meeting of each Branch and to the National Annual General Meeting with recommendations for action.
- b) As a result of the annual review, to negotiate appropriate working conditions and fair remuneration for members with with key service users and service provider organisations in each state and territory an annual basis.

The National Pay And Conditions Review Subcommittee shall be chaired by the National President and shall include the National Secretary plus two members from each branch.

The National Pay And Conditions Review Subcommittee may request funds be allocated to fulfill its tasks through the regular AUSIT budgetary process.

Dear colleagues,

I've just heard from the British Centre for Literary Translation in Norwich that my entry to their 2003 translation competition run conjointly with the British Comparative Literature Association has been given a commendation by the judges. (See www.bcla.org, John Dryden Translation Competition, 2003 Results.)

I entered an as yet unpublished short novel (140 pages) which I translated from Russian to English in 2001-2 in my free time 'on spec' ('Lend the King a Hand' by Igor Hergenröther). Winning one of the three prizes would have been better, but a commendation is a nice little ego boost nevertheless. It may help find an English publisher for this particular piece and, in the long run, get me more Russian->English work in general. That would be grand.

On that point, does anyone know literature publishers needing Russian->English translators? With the feather of this commendation in my cap I will have good chances of applying for and receiving a month-long residency at Norwich which would mean I could offer a potential publisher relatively favourable conditions for the translation of another piece.

Greetings to all,

*Will Firth
Berlin, Germany
will.firth@t-online.de*

GENERAL TREASURER'S REPORT

1. I have pleasure in submitting the General Treasurer's Report for the financial year 2002-2003. Accompanying this report are the Management Report, showing details of the Institute's operations during the year for each of its components, as well as the Institute Statement of Financial Performance, Statement of Financial Position and the Auditor's Report, as required for statutory purposes. The information for last year has been included on that basis and will therefore differ from last year's published figures which were based only on National Office results. In this context it is worth noting that last year's figures, including the "loss", were distorted for technical reasons, which I will be happy to explain at the meeting.
2. The year has seen a substantial change in administration. Membership fees, and occasionally income from other activities, are being paid directly into the national bank account, through the two administrators, and projects of national significance are funded through the national account.
3. In terms of finance operations, Branches are involved in local activities, whether they are locally conceived or undertaken as a result of national initiatives. Due to the integrated nature of the National Treasury operations, revenues generated by Branch activities, even when proceeds are paid into the national account, are credited to the appropriate Branch. This is clearly apparent in the Management Report, where all the membership fees paid into the national account are shown as originating in the Branch. As with revenues, so with expenditure. Whatever their source of payment, the charge is allocated to the beneficiary of the expenditure.
4. The installation of the new system has not been without its teething difficulties, but it is operating satisfactorily now, with new improvements due to be introduced imminently. One of the teething problems has had the unfortunate effect of delaying some information reaching the National Office in time to be included in the final year figures. As a consequence the income and the expense of Professional Development are understated, but the net result (a small gain in profit) is immaterial.
5. The Management Report shows that the Victoria/Tasmania Branch, due to its highest membership number, enjoyed the biggest membership fee income, as it did in Net Contribution, but by a lesser margin. It shows also that NSW has collected the highest joining fees, testifying to its success in increasing membership.
6. Sundry income items consist mainly of money received after balance date, but applying to the prior financial year. Due to the change in the system, it was segregated to that account. Sundry Expense items in the case of Western Australia represent a membership in AUSIT gifted to Aboriginal interpreters; in Queensland it was mainly farewell presents to two long-serving members departing; and in Victoria/Tasmania they were spent on entertainment of overseas visitors, a gesture that raised not only questions of correct procedure but also of possible conflicts of interest. Due to inadequate response to questions raised it was impossible to reach sound conclusions on these matters, and further enquiries were abandoned in view of the relative insignificance of the amount involved.
7. At the end of this meeting I will have reached the end of my term of just over two years, and wish to express my thanks to our President Moreno Giovannoni, members of the National Council and last, but by no means least, the Branch Treasurers for their support throughout, but especially at times when my insinuations must have been on the edge of [mutual] exasperation.

**Vincent J Danilo
General Treasurer**

Annamaria Arnall, Vice-Chairperson of the W.A. branch, advises that the University of Minnesota recently requested permission to copy the AUSIT Code of Ethics (30 copies) for the purpose of using it in their 15-week 'Introduction to Interpreting' course. A cause for pride, surely.

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS, INC.

ABN No 64 855 620 166

Statement of Financial Performance for the Year ending 30 June 2003

2001-2002		2002-2003
\$	\$	
	INCOME	
	Renewal Subscriptions	43330.00
	Joining Fees	2250.00
	New Member Subscriptions	16035.00
47667.79	Total Membership Fees	61615.00
15120.01	Other Income	34757.97
332.50	Sundries	488.84
63120.18	TOTAL INCOME	96861.81
	EXPENSE	
25462.95	Administration	30683.25
6876.03	A G M	6646.00
3148.63	Professional Development	7597.03
4958.30	Networking	18372.11
2076.12	Membership Services	2911.61
3254.90	Website	1597.00
31272.57	Promotions	2283.00
1839.54	International Activities	3691.96
78889.04	Support Expense	73781.96
256.35	Sundries	1216.16
79145.39	TOTAL EXPENSE	74998.12
(16025.21)	PROFIT	21863.69
Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2003		
81215.49	MEMBERSHIP FUNDS AT START	65190.28
-16025.21	The Year's Results	21863.69
65190.28	MEMBERSHIP FUNDS AT END	87053.97
101672.12	Bank Accounts	85085.26
	Cash on Hand	250.00
101693.28	TOTAL ASSETS	85335.26
34148.00	YP Cooperative Advertising	(1718.71)
2355.00	Deferred Income	
36503.00	TOTAL LIABILITIES	(1718.71)
65190.28	NET ASSETS	87053.97

MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR THE YEAR TO 30 JUNE 2003

Period Ending June	Total AUSIT	National Office	National Conference	Branches					
				Qld	NSW	ACT	Vic/Tas	SA/NT	WA
INCOME									
Renewed Subscriptions	43330			3465	14360	2360	17755	1620	3770
Joining Fee	2250			310	820	110	560	250	200
New Subscriptions	16035			1650	6640	730	4375	1550	1090
Total Membership Fees	61615			5425	21820	3200	22690	3420	5060
ODE	2330			150	900	60	1040	60	120
Certificates	872			120	416	72	176	40	48
AGM/JBML	1396								1396
Professional Development	11375	787		430	3860	140	5702	249	207
Networking/Conference	9335		6924		739		1673		
Sponsorship	8680		8680						
Website									
Interest	770	594		51	9	1	104	0	10
Total Other Income	34758	1381	15604	751	5924	273	8695	349	1781
Sundries	489			20			416		53
TOTAL INCOME	96862	1381	15604	6196	27744	3473	31800	3769	6894
EXPENSE									
Administrators	20228	20228							
Administrative Expenses	5302	2260		143	690	504	519	69	1117
Communications	4126	3770		52				300	4
Bank Fees	1027	873		27	7	11	3	5	101
Total Administration	30683	27131		221	697	514	522	374	1223
AGM Venue & Facilities									
AGM Content Cost									
AGM Ancillary Costs	28	28							
AGM Travel & Accommdtn	6619	6619							
Total AGM/JBML	6646	6646							
PD Publishing									
PD Venue & Facilities	806				583	32			191
PD Content Cost	5370				1018	94	3938	22	298
PD Ancillary Costs	1421			251	410		61	445	254
Total Professional Dvlpt	7597			251	2011	126	3999	467	743
NW Venue & Facilities	1736		1050		286		400		
NW Content Cost	941		1075	220			70	451	-875
NW Ancillary Costs	15561		12235		580		1672	114	960
NW Branch Newsletter	133						133		
Total Network	18372		14360	220	866		2276	565	85
MS Journal									
MS Newsletter	2912	2912							
Website Development	660	660							
Website Management	937	937							
Total Members Services	4509	4509							
Advertising									
Printed Material	2283	2283							
Displays									
Total Promotions	2283	2283							
FIT Membership	1562	1562							
FIT Associated Costs	2130	2130							
Total FIT	3692	3692							
Sundries	1216	672		113	35		295		100
TOTAL EXPENSES	74998	44933	14360	806	3609	640	7093	1406	2151
NET CONTRIBUTION	21864	-45835	1243	5390	24136	2833	24707	2363	4743

ROBERT HORDER ACCOUNTANTS

Suite 140, 365 Kent Street Sydney NSW 2000
GPO Box 4114 Sydney NSW 2001

Independent Audit Report to the members of Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators Inc.

Scope

I have audited the Statement of Financial Performance and Statement of Financial Position (The Financial Report) of the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators Inc. for the year ended 30 June 2003. The Association's committee members are responsible for the financial statements. I have conducted an independent audit of these financial statements in order to express an opinion on them to the members of the Association.

My audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. My procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial statements. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements so as to present a view that is consistent with my understanding of the Association's financial position and the results of its operations.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Audit opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements present fairly in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements the financial position of Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators Inc. as at 30 June 2003 and the results of its operations for the year then ended.

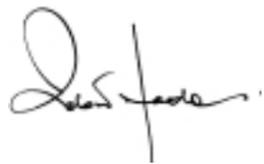
Inherent uncertainty regarding completeness of income

As is common for organisations of this type, it is not practicable for the Association to maintain an effective system of internal control over all income raised from its activities and other fundraising prior to its initial entry in the accounting records. Accordingly, my audit in relation to the income of the Association was limited to the amounts recorded.

Dated the 6th day of September 2003

ROBERT HORDER ACCOUNTANTS

Chartered Accountants



Robert Horder, FCA, ASIA, MICA

Principal

State & Territory Branch Annual Reports

Branch Chairpersons' Annual Reports presented here have been edited where necessary for reasons of space. Members are invited to refer to the original unedited reports which are available on the AUSIT website or may be obtained from the Regional Administrators.

Australian Capital Territory Branch

Michael Ovington, Incoming Chairperson

AGM

The ACT Branch's Annual General Meeting was held on 12 July and was attended by 15 members (with four formal apologies).

Total membership of the branch is now 40.

The three PD activities conducted during 2002/3, the first in several years, ended up making a small profit of approx. \$25-00.

The meeting warmly thanked Anatolij Onishko and Ursula Hoffman, as the outgoing Chair and Deputy Chair, for their enthusiastic contribution to the branch's activities over the years.

The AGM concluded with a dinner at a local Vietnamese restaurant.

The new Committee is now preparing a draft program of PD activities for the next year and will welcome suggestions/comments from branch members.

Incoming Committee:

Michael Ovington, Chairperson
Carole Aubury, Minute Secretary
Tarja Karjalainen, Treasurer
Russell Bielenberg, Point of Contact for PD Activities

Committee Members: Karmenu Attard, Sylvia Jamieson

New South Wales Branch

Terry Chesher, Retiring Chairperson

The new committee was elected in August 2002, and it has been a busy year. This year there have been very few of us, and if the branch is to continue to meet its goals in the coming year, more members and a larger committee will make all the difference. Since the last NSW AGM, 85 new members have joined up, making a total of over 250 members

of the NSW Branch. We look forward to further increases as a result of a proposed membership drive.

In the last 12 months, each Committee member took on specific tasks as well as participating in general committee work, and contributing to discussion at a national level.

Terry Chesher agreed to act as Interim Chair but in the event she continued in the position all year, and took on some secretarial roles as well. She also continued on the PD Committee and liaised with the Health Care Interpreter Service on indemnity insurance, cancellation fees and rates for interpreters.

Uli Priester undertook the office of Treasurer following the resignation in September of the nominee elected at the AGM. Uli has been involved in several major projects, including investigation into the RTA policy on translation of driving licences, a presentation on business practice to the National AGM via a video conference hook-up, and a substantial contribution to the national membership reform planning.

Christian Houlemare continued for his second year on the committee, coordinated the NSW participation in the National AGM video hook-up, and developed a questionnaire with Riham Youssef on members' opinions on professional development and networking. He has been involved inter alia in PD and networking sessions and liaison with TAFE on a future course.

Yveline Piller, who also worked last year for NSW committee, was co-opted onto this year's Committee following her resignation from the National Administrator job. Yveline has been contributing her management skills in streamlining Branch procedures, and has put forward a promotional plan for recruiting more members, which will be further implemented in the

coming year. She has just returned from overseas, where she met with two sister organisations, ITI in the UK and SFT in France. Whilst they are vastly different, useful contacts were established and interesting information collected.

Riham Youssef was co-opted to the committee and worked with Christian on arranging networking sessions.

Barbara McGilvray took on the Principal Delegate job, liaising between the NSW branch and the National Council, and continued to contribute her invaluable support and editorial and writing skills from behind the scenes both at NSW and national level. Barbara worked as a member of the PD Committee, and also organised our first St Jerome's Day picnic at North Sydney in October, celebrating the patron saint of translators and interpreters.

The branch's very active PD Committee, convened by Felicity Mueller, organised a number of talks and workshops:

- Advanced Word Processing/Internet workshop for translators organised at Macquarie University with Helen Slatyer's assistance.
- Medical translation (Peter Boyle and David Playfair)
- Interpreting practices at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (Ludmila Stern).
- Advanced notetaking skills course for interpreters (Felicity Mueller and Andrea Oettinger)
- Interruptions in court in cases involving interpreters (Sandra Hale).

Committee members Riham Youssef and Christian Houlemare organised two networking sessions with a mixture of existing and potential members and more such informal sessions are planned for next year.

A Wordfast workshop with Ian McAllister was held in September, and our first "Small Business for Translators and Interpreters" course at Petersham TAFE is expected to be held in November. Ignacio Garcia will be presenting a Déjà Vu workshop early in the new year and it is hoped there will also be a seminar on translation in 2004.

NSW's considerable contribution to the NAATI Translator and Interpreter Awareness Day (TIAD) in May included a substantial advance contribution by Barbara McGilvray to planning by the NAATI Regional Advisory Committee. Terry Chesher coordinated a two-hour session entitled *"Can or should interpreters be accurate and impartial at all times"*. Yveline Piller prepared laptop replicas of the website and the e-Bulletin which were on display all day at the AUSIT display table.

As a result of our representation on the NAATI RAC, the long-term problem of the lack of training for interpreters in emerging community and other limited diffusion languages is being addressed with a pilot course in basic skills and orientation to be offered at Macquarie University. Following on the recommendations from the AUSIT panel session, the Bar Association has approached AUSIT about a possible workshop for barristers later in the year. Panel members have also since been involved with education sessions for Members of the Refugee Review Tribunal.

Uli Priester reports that centralisation of the finances of AUSIT means that, as a branch committee, we have no direct access to membership fees any more. However, the branch can apply for funds from the national organisation for any projects it wants to undertake. During the past year we have not asked for any funds from National. Entry fees charged for four major PD events held throughout the year, sales of videos and interest from the bank covered the cost of holding the events, and one major event was free to members and visitors. The branch made some use of paid work

for coordinating PD events. A professional trainer was used in the Advanced Word Processing/ Internet workshop at Macquarie University.

I would like to thank all office-bearers for the hard work they have contributed during the year. We would also all like to thank Tineke Millard for her help during the year, and the extra work handling membership applications and her assistance at TIAD. Thanks also to volunteer Maurice Thibaux, who provided crucial computer skills to the membership drive project, and to a number of volunteers who assisted in various ways.

I am sure the branch will continue to make great progress on behalf of the translating and interpreting profession in the coming year.

Incoming Committee:

Uli Priester, Christian Houlemare, Paul Sinclair, Bess Wang, Andrew Bean, Rossana Di Giorgio (Office bearers to be decided at first meeting of new committee).

Queensland Branch

Mira Chapman, Chairperson

The year to date, since the last AGM, has been a busy and interesting one. I would like to acknowledge the hard work and very real contributions of each member of the committee: Merie Spring who proudly stood at the helm through thick and thin for the previous four years, Dr Judy Wakabayashi who acted in the position of chairperson when Merie had to leave (she has now accepted a teaching position in the USA) and Annick and Julie who shared the position of Treasurer during the previous year and remain on the committee.

Current committee members Eva and Patricia who have worked hard to deliver the workshops and Derek who has been the mainstay of Qld branch for many years and was our secretary this past year, have made invaluable contributions and personal sacrifices for the good of AUSIT. Not forgetting the rest of the committee: Caroline, Rita, Nada and Teresa

without whose input and assistance we would not have been able to function to our full potential, and everyone else who gave of their time to make the branch run smoothly.

This past financial year in Queensland we have had several professional development sessions:

- Information session on the FIT Congress held in Canada, presented by Annick Bouchet.
- Ethics workshop. Guest speaker: Paula Petersen, Director of the Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASST). Patricia Avila then led a discussion based on the slide presentation "Professional Ethics for Interpreters".
- Workshop: how to make more money as a freelance T/I. Presenters: Mira Chapman and Eva Prekel.
- Workshop: legal and court interpreting. This popular workshop was oversubscribed so the committee has decided to organise a repeat in August.

Other developments of note in Queensland during my chairmanship is the PAH tender at the beginning of the year to engage their own interpreters by offering contracts to individual practitioners. One of the requirements was that contractors who are members of AUSIT would be given preference over others. I am particularly excited about the fact that AUSIT is finally getting recognition as a Professional Body and AUSIT members as the preferred service providers. Needless to say, our membership numbers have increased somewhat, partly but not entirely due to employers of T/Is giving preference to AUSIT members. This is also due to the hard work of this committee to get recognition for its members.

Also, AUSIT Qld is now working more closely with NAATI. One major project we are collaborating on with NAATI and TIS is the NAATI Interpreter/Translator Awareness Day (ITAD). The steering committee is

working on radio interviews with T/Is in community languages to be broadcast on Radio 4EB later this year as part of the activities of the ITAD.

Although working with a small committee this year, we have managed to achieve some major improvements in the way we do business in providing service to the members and particularly in the way we communicate with each other. Naturally, practitioners see a benefit to themselves in the outcomes of this committee's work and desire to be a part of such an organisation. We currently have a total of 80 members (accounting for approximately 11% of the total national figure) and I believe this is the highest number of members for the AUSIT Qld branch since its formation.

Once again, a big thank you to the committee for your hard work and also to the members for your support over the past year.

I am sure the next committee will work even harder to achieve outcomes for members and recognition for AUSIT, and am looking forward to a fruitful and productive year ahead.

Incoming Committee:

Mira Chapman, Chairperson
Julie Segal, Assistant Chairperson/Secretary
Patricia Avila, Secretary
Yvonne Galan, Treasurer
Eva Prekel, Professional Development Officer
Winnie Scheelings, Assistant PD Officer
Caroline Spencer, Student Representative
Vadim Doubine, North Queensland Regional Coordinator
Committee Members: Roland Meier and Annick Bouchet

South Australia and Northern Territory Branch

Andrea Hoffmann, Chairperson

The 2002-2003 committee members were:

Andrea Hoffmann, Chair
Margit Pehrsson, Vice-chair

Dick Speekman, Secretary
John Hallett, National Delegate
Thomas Kruckemeyer, Treasurer
Daniela Kautsky, Member
Nella Schulz, Member
Kayoko Todd, Member
Carmine Piantedosi, Member
Nella Schulz resigned in March 2003 and I would like to express the committee's thanks again for all her work and dedication over the years. Nella also undertook the gargantuan task of getting AUSIT SA/NT involved in the Enterprise Bargaining process to represent all Translators & Interpreters working for ITC.

Our secretary, Dick Speekman, resigned in July 2003. I would like to thank him on behalf of the committee for his dedication and commitment over the years.

Seminars

We were able to organise 4 seminars and 2 social events.

- "Working for yourself" with Moreno Giovannoni, AUSIT's national president, as speaker.
- "Australians working together – a Centrelink initiative. A role for interpreters" with Mark Cronshaw from Centrelink as speaker.
- End-of-year gathering at The Director's Hotel in Gouger Street.
- "Go global – Getting translation work from overseas". Presenters: Margit Pehrsson (Vice-Chair) and Andrea Hoffmann (Chair).
- "Police, Interpreters and the Law – the working relationship between SAPOL and interpreters" (organised as part of Law Week Program). Speaker: John DeCandia from SAPOL.
- Social event at The Director's Hotel in Gouger Street.

NT Branch

We have written to all members in the Northern Territory and Alice Springs to encourage them to re-establish the NT branch. We had one response from a colleague in Alice Springs, Maya Cifali, who will try to revive with the NTITS their monthly reunion of T/Is.

Membership

AUSIT membership has increased significantly during the year. We had 35 AUSIT SA/NT members in August 2002. By July 2003 the number had jumped to 47 members. Some of these new members joined due to our EB mailout via ITC in May 2003.

Enterprise Bargaining

Nella Schulz, the AUSIT SA/NT Enterprise Bargaining Representative, has done an amazing job trying to unravel the intricacies of EB for T/Is working for ITC.

Plans for AUSIT SA/NT

- To continue organising Professional Development seminars. This will be made easier due to AUSIT's national Professional Development Coordinator, Annamaria Arnall, who regularly sends out PD News in which she lists seminars held in other branches. I would like to see a Professional Development Coordinator on our committee who would be responsible for organising these events.
- To continue our efforts with membership recruitment.
- To keep our members informed as to what is going on in the industry, latest developments, etc. and what the committee has planned. A Newsletter Editor on our committee who would be responsible for sending out notices and news to our members would preferably carry out this job.
- To support our colleagues in the Northern Territory to get T/Is organised. Look into ways to make Professional Development seminars available to them as well.

I would like to thank Magdalena Rowan from TAFE for all her support and cooperation throughout the year. Her cooperation enables AUSIT SA/NT to hold our seminars at TAFE in Currie Street.

I would also like to thank Erricos Neophytou, the manager of the Interpreting and Translating Centre,

for distributing our notices to their translators and interpreters.

On a final note I would like to thank all committee members; without their support the functioning of AUSIT SA/NT would have been very hard. I thank them for their contributions over the year and for taking time from their busy lives to attend our monthly meetings.

Incoming Committee:

John Hallett, Andrea Hoffmann, Daniela Kautsky, Thomas Kruckemeyer, Marina Morgan, Kayoko Todd (office bearers to be decided at first meeting of new committee).

Victoria and Tasmania Branch

Sarina Phan, Chairperson

It is again time for me to report to you on our achievements and challenges. Whatever we have achieved, we couldn't have done so without the support of our valued members. As Chairperson I am proud to proclaim how wonderful my committee members are, for they are the engine driving the Victorian/Tasmanian branch to new heights.

Some highlights:

Networking Sessions

- Laurie Robson, Barrister in criminal law & Consultant to the Leo Cussen Institute; Chris Poole (Vice President) on the AUSIT National Conference in Perth.
- An insight into linguistic issues relevant to the work of T/Is (Meredith Bartlett)
- Mr George Szlowski, practitioner of industrial & employment law, on the legal principles that govern whether a person is an employee or an independent contractor.
- Dr. Duncan Markham, phonetician and psycholinguist, on "Voice Intelligibility; Age & Aptitude in Language Learning; Development & Cautions in Forensic Linguistic/Phonetics".

A very special thank you to Ilke Brueckner-Klein who has been the co-ordinator for these sessions over the last two years. Ilke will be greatly missed but we wish her all the

best for her new life in Queensland.

Professional Development (headed by Eva Hussain)

Course: Planning for Success
Trainer/Facilitator: Czesia Chwasta, Chessa Consulting

Aimed at expanding the business skills of T/Is interested in building an awareness of themselves as self-employed professionals.

Workshop: Note taking

Trainer/Facilitator: Czesia Chwasta, Chessa Consulting

Specifically targeted at practitioners with no formal training or practice in the area of note taking. Theoretical topics, plus a number of practical exercises in note taking and memory retention.

Future events

- Developing a relationship with ASLIA, with a view to combining PD and debriefing resources.
- Meetings with Dr Duncan Markham, Psycholinguist, with a view to creating a 4-hour workshop later in the year
- Meetings with Ms Annette Markson of Voice Dynamics, a voice coach and group facilitator re possible workshops
- Discussions with Czesia Chwasta of Chessa Consulting re possible other workshops, including stress management, time management and communication skills for interpreters.

The AUSIT Advanced Legal Interpreting Course

This is the most ambitious and far-reaching project that AUSIT has ever attempted. During 2002 – 2003 Christoula Nicolaou, Chris Poole and Sarina Phan met regularly to discuss the development of a course for interpreters working in the area of law. As a result of these discussions a detailed framework for the course has been developed. A description of this framework, including details of proposed course structure and content, assessment, schedule, course materials, staffing, cost, ownership and eligibility criteria can be viewed in the unedited Vic/Tas branch annual report (see preface to Branch Annual

Reports).

A Course Planning Manual will be compiled with the specific intent of ensuring that the course may be run by other AUSIT branches.

Interpreters Group Session

This year we had a number of speakers from a variety of areas including marketing, banking and finance and at our last session we had a panel of speakers comprised of T&I industry stakeholders discussing pay and conditions for interpreters.

Social Night 2003

Nelida Gambetta-Perillo organised a dinner for members at a Spanish restaurant. The atmosphere was great and those members who attended thoroughly enjoyed the evening. The feedback received was that we should perhaps organise such an event twice a year, so we will certainly look into that in our planning.

External Committees

In the last few years, the committee has been working with other organisations within our industry, with the aim of not only extending AUSIT's profile, but also addressing relevant industry issues and furthering the profession. These bodies include:

- Court Users' Forum
- DIMIA Language Services Project Group
- RMIT Course Advisory Committee

National Matters – Membership Reform

This year, our President Moreno Giovannoni announced AUSIT's Membership Reform Proposal. In 2001 a paper was presented at the Vic/Tas AGM by Chris Poole proposing a model of Membership Categories substantially different from the current structure and therefore requiring amendment to the Constitution.

This initial idea has undergone considerable discussion and development, in terms of both detail and the rationale for implementing these changes and Chris Poole is currently working on detailed proposals that may further promote discussion of the issues.

An account of the Branch's position on membership reform can be read in the unedited Vic/Tas annual report (see preface to Branch Annual Reports).

Financial Matters

By way of review of the new financial arrangements implemented by National Council after one year, the Vic/Tas branch had little difficulty in completing the quarterly Reimbursement Requests and submitting them to National. However there are some drawbacks of the new system whereby it has been difficult to obtain a true picture of the branch's financial position, since a minimum balance of money to be held by the branch was never set. In addition, the task of monitoring the financial position of the branch on a day-to-day basis was made more difficult by the involvement of the Administrator Southern Region in the collection of monies destined for the Vic/Tas branch into the national account. We will be working with National Council to address these issues.

Conclusion

On a final note, we are not here to please everyone. We are here to promote the profession, and to assist professionals in the states of Victoria and Tasmania. We have achieved a membership level of 283 members for Victoria and Tasmania (273 & 10 respectively), making us the largest branch. Our objective is to make AUSIT relevant to the profession and the members. Although the largest branch, AUSIT Vic/Tas will not be resting on our laurels because although we have done much, there is so much more to be done. There are still more than 700 professionals out there yet to see our relevance and yet to join our organisation!

Incoming Committee:

Sarina Phan, Chairperson
Eva Hussain, Vice-Chairperson
John Crone, Treasurer
Committee Members: Louis Vorstermans, Zdenka Karakas, Nelida Gambetta-Perillo, Chris Poole, Silke Gebauer, Maya Coltman, Talma Yeart, Isabel Castro.

Western Australia Branch

Younghi Newman, Chairperson

After the last AGM on 14 December 2002, a brand new WA Committee was born with enthusiasm in an attempt to make some difference for our profession. With that enthusiasm came the hard work of many which led to a very successful year, considering the short term of eight months instead of a year. We staged three professional development (PD) and networking sessions, and a Forum which resulted in a ten-page report.

After a couple of committee meetings, we established PD workshops and courses as our top priority, as there is a great need and demand for them. Then came a PD Committee, whose members have been working tirelessly ever since, followed by a survey involving all members to determine what sort of PD courses the members want. PD sessions were conducted according to the survey results and availability of presenters, etc.

- Translation in Medicine, presented by Advanced Medical /Pharmaceutical Specialist Translator in Japanese/English, Tony Atkinson
- HypoEthicals, an Ethics workshop with a panel and role play, modelled loosely on the BBC Hypotheticals program by Geoffrey Robertson
- Tax and Law Experts, on all tax and law matters for practitioners, obligations and priorities for freelance/contractor T/Is for private and/or government agencies.

In May, we invited a wide cross section of interested stakeholders and staged the AUSIT Forum on the Needs Analysis of WA State Language Services in collaboration with the Office of Multicultural Interests. It was an overwhelming success, attended by approximately 80 participants. A further 21 practitioners who were unable to attend participated in a telephone survey. The Forum report is available on the AUSIT website.

In between the PD sessions and committee meetings, I was involved

in the Needs Analysis Advisory Committee as a member representing AUSIT WA and have written a few letters as required in addition to attending meetings and seminars as invited eg: Royal Perth Hospital and Princess Margaret Hospital.

I believe it has been a successful year despite it being a very short term. The success is most apparent in the growth of the WA Branch membership which has increased by 11 members this year, and we now boast 79 members. I sincerely thank our Committee and everyone including National Council members and our Administrator for their contribution to WA Branch this year. A special mention must go to Annamaria Arnall and Dr Yutaka Kawasaki for their outstanding commitment. I would also like to thank our President, Moreno Giovannoni, who has always been available for us. Well done, everyone!

Incoming Committee:

Younghi Newman, Chairperson
Annamaria Arnall, Vice-Chairperson
Dr Yutaka Kawasaki, Secretary
Barbara Delevoy, Treasurer
Committee Members: Michela Clavenzani-Wilkins, Catherine Fontvieille, Diana Rodriguez-Losada, Judy Zhao.

The Editor would like to thank everyone who wrote in during this last quarter.

Unfortunately, we are unable to publish the letters in this special AGM/Annual Report Edition.

Your letters will be published in our "Letters to the Editor" section which will appear in the next edition scheduled for December.

We welcome feedback from all members and readers, so please keep the letters coming!!

Feature

What does AUSIT actually do?

by Dick W. Speekman

There is no question that the current AUSIT national office has during its past year in office managed to rack up some impressive achievements, from a quite phenomenal increase in membership numbers, to a very effective website, a well-functioning and patronised bulletin board, not to mention a much more efficient centralised administration. In other words, the organisation has been placed in a position where it might be said to be poised to begin achieving bigger and better things. No longer would we be asked by new members or those contemplating taking up membership: "But what does AUSIT actually do?"

The debate about social and regulatory aspects of professional organisations such as AUSIT, the Bar Association, the Housing Industry Association and the Australian Medical Association has been going on for decades. It will continue to do so. In the process, there has been some lively discussion amongst the AUSIT membership at large in relation to fee structures, the vexed question of working for an agency or as an independent entrepreneur and even whether or not AUSIT should be acting much more like a trade union, rather than a professional organisation.

Although I recognise there is more to life than money and that there is a real role for AUSIT in respect to soirées, social functions, training, education and networking – to mention just a few – whichever way we look at it, it cannot be denied that another way of making AUSIT more relevant is to finally grab the bull by the horns and to at least attempt to tackle the matter of

INCOME, whenever an opportunity presents itself.

Just a few weeks ago, I thought such a moment was upon us here in South Australia, where the local T&I market for more than a decade has been dominated by just one government agency. Moreover, this agency chooses to treat those who want to work for it as "employees", by getting them to sign a Contract for Casual Employment. Having signed this contract, one becomes a fully-fledged member of the South Australian Public Service, with all its advantages and disadvantages, like long service leave, superannuation and any indemnity that all public servants enjoy. As for the disadvantages, one might list typical public service attitudes, inflexible work practices, PAYG tax deductions and a very low pay, especially where it concerns interpreting assignments.

As for the latter, payment to casual employees for interpreting assignments is based on the hourly rate enjoyed by full-time public servants at a certain level, increased by a percentage in lieu of holiday pay. The agency in turn charges its clients this rate, increased by a 100% gross profit margin. It is able to do so, not only because it is the largest agency by far in the State, but also because it gets a significant – if not the major part – of its business from other state-owned or operated agencies. The three or four privately operated T&I agencies, in order to compete, simply ensure that their fees and charges remain marginally below those of the behemoth. Interestingly enough, the privately operating agencies pay their interpreters

considerably better. Presumably, their overheads are also a lot lower than are those of the State-owned operator. The private agencies do not have to contend with expensive and elaborate work practices, one of which would be that of Enterprise Bargaining.

This article does not seek to investigate the pros and cons of enterprise bargaining. We are simply assuming that the average reader is familiar with the general principles of this process, one of which is that, periodically, employers and employees meet for the purpose of agreeing on pay and conditions that will prevail during a subsequent fixed period. There may be something to be said in favour of this kind of arrangement, especially where such enterprise bargaining concerns a stable and salaried workforce. It clearly does not work so well in the case of a group of casual employees, who for the sake of employer convenience – as well as the law as it currently stands – are treated in exactly the same way as tenured public servants are.

That it clearly does not work well is evidenced by the fact that the interpreters working for this agency have actually seen their income reduced – also in real terms – since 1992. Enterprise bargaining is not working well, because when the full-time public servants negotiate their agreement to cover the next period, they might get themselves a 4% increase per year, succeed in getting more favourable flexi-time or more generous maternity leave. All very well if one is getting a full-time salary. In the case of the hapless interpreters, 4% adds up to an extra couple of dollars for a two-

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hour assignment. I am not even talking about parking one's car in town for \$10 or so, nor am I thinking about having to drive anything up to 60 km before a travel allowance kicks in. Under this system, not even an 8% increase would make much of a difference, nor would some fiddling in the margin, like the upgrading of interpreters to some higher public service classification.

When it became apparent that – after what must have been yet another hugely expensive public service restructure – the long-suffering interpreters were once again going to miss out under the currently prevailing system of enterprise bargaining, I considered that AUSIT SA/NT was finally in a position to show that it was going to be relevant and – if unsuccessful – at least let it be known that it

might before too much longer prove to be a force to be reckoned with by representing the interpreters during forthcoming enterprise bargaining sessions. Unfortunately, it was not to be. The committee decided that it was all too difficult, instead deciding to opt for allowing it to surrender even before the battle had begun and to be represented by the quite ineffectual Public Service Association. Ineffectual, if not for the full-time public servants in South Australia, then for in particular the much-neglected interpreters. Once again, AUSIT had let slip through its fingers an all too rare opportunity to make itself relevant and make a real contribution to the profession. This has happened, due to the AUSIT committee simply being too timid and too afraid of "rocking the boat" by being controversial.

Of course there would have been no guarantee of success. At least, we would have been able to look our membership in the face and say that we had gone down while fighting the good fight.

I still think that we ought to have tried and represented ourselves, instead of calling it all "too hard" and dumping it into the lap of the PSA. I am not talking about banner-waving demonstrations in the street here but I do think that – in the longer term – we ought to at least work towards privatising this state-owned and operated service, that simply does not and cannot work in the interests of the interpreters but that is just perpetuating some public service bureaucracy. No wonder that people keep asking us: "What does AUSIT actually do?"

*Dick W. Speekman
Former Secretary – AUSIT SA/NT*

Candidates for National Council

At the time of going to press, the following candidates for office bearer positions on the National Council have notified their intention to stand for election. Nominations will remain open up to and including the day of the Annual General Meeting, 25 October 2003 (see Nomination Form in this Newsletter).

President: Yveline Piller, Chris Poole

Secretary: Annamaria Arnall

Annamaria Arnall has been very active in the committee of the successful WA branch, of which she is Vice-Chairperson, and has recently been coordinating professional development at the national level. She has the full endorsement of outgoing President, Moreno Giovannoni, who believes that with her management, computer and people skills she will make an excellent Secretary.

The following items have been contributed by the two Presidential candidates. The order of inclusion is alphabetical by surname.

Yveline Piller

Dear colleagues,

As an active member of the AUSIT NSW committee for the last two years and a former administrator for the Northern Region, it has been clear to me that our members would like an extensive range of services from their professional association.

Despite recent progress and some key assets, such as a few dedicated volunteers and a solid reputation, AUSIT has not yet got the means to provide even a fraction of the expected services.

Pay conditions in Victoria, the RTA issue in NSW, the isolation felt in WA, in Queensland or in the Northern Territory, are some of the issues we could do more about with greater financial and human resources.

Many members are interested in upgrading their professional standing, through membership reform, professional development, and with an updated constitution. I support their gradual implementation, to give everyone the opportunity to discover, comment on and adjust to the new requirements.

As I stand for the position of National President, with support and assistance from Moreno Giovannoni as Immediate Past President, Annamaria Arnall as National Secretary and other key members of AUSIT, I would like to direct some of our efforts towards finding the resources we need, through a national membership drive, appropriate corporate support and by raising AUSIT's profile in all relevant circles.

Members' concerns and wishes should be heard. With greater resources, we will be in a better position to build on what has been achieved so far and attend to those requirements.

Chris Poole

As I have recently confessed to political aspirations, I feel it is important to share with the members as much of the thinking that goes into my vision for the industry. Lord knows there are many different visions for this industry that get argued about in AUSIT, which is one of the most enjoyable aspects of being a member. But in all the debates that rage, whether over rates, ethics, practice, the word "profession" features regularly. Being a pedantic curmudgeon (read translator), I've had a go at finding out what this word might mean. I entreat my erstwhile colleagues to read the following and ask yourself: "which bit do I disagree with?"

What is a Profession?

The existence of a profession assumes a society in which there is both a government and a degree of free association amongst the members of the society. A profession is a group of individuals in such a society of which the following things are true:

1. The members of it possess a set of skills, and theoretical and practical expertise (the "skill set") that are necessary to manage and resolve problems that are of a nature critical to basic human activities. Not trivial.
2. The services based on this skill set are considered essential to any society as defined above, and therefore will be found in most if not all modern states. Not cultural.
3. Because of this, the offer of services based on this skill set will necessarily result in some actual provision. Therefore a profession must come under the purview of a government as part of the economy over which they preside. It is therefore naturally a candidate for regulation. Not optional.
4. The skill set will require considerable innate intelligence as a pre-requisite, and hard work, determination and extensive study to master and then apply. Not easy.
5. The application of the skill set however will then also include a significant proportion of creative thinking. In

other words, not every set of circumstances confronted by a professional in the line of their business can be anticipated and trained for. Although based on their training, a significant part of a professional person's work will consist of developing novel solutions to unforeseen problems. Not learnt by rote.

6. The skill set will be based on and refer to a body of knowledge that represents all the available wisdom that has accumulated over the years of other people working

expertise sufficient to practise, but also includes a grasp of theory sufficient to explain and defend every decision made in the course of their work, in a way that is completely transparent and accessible to people outside the profession. The nature of this accountability might best be illustrated by reference to the following diagram. (Please refer to figure 1).

This diagram may apply to any instance of the application of the skill set, no matter how specific or general. It may

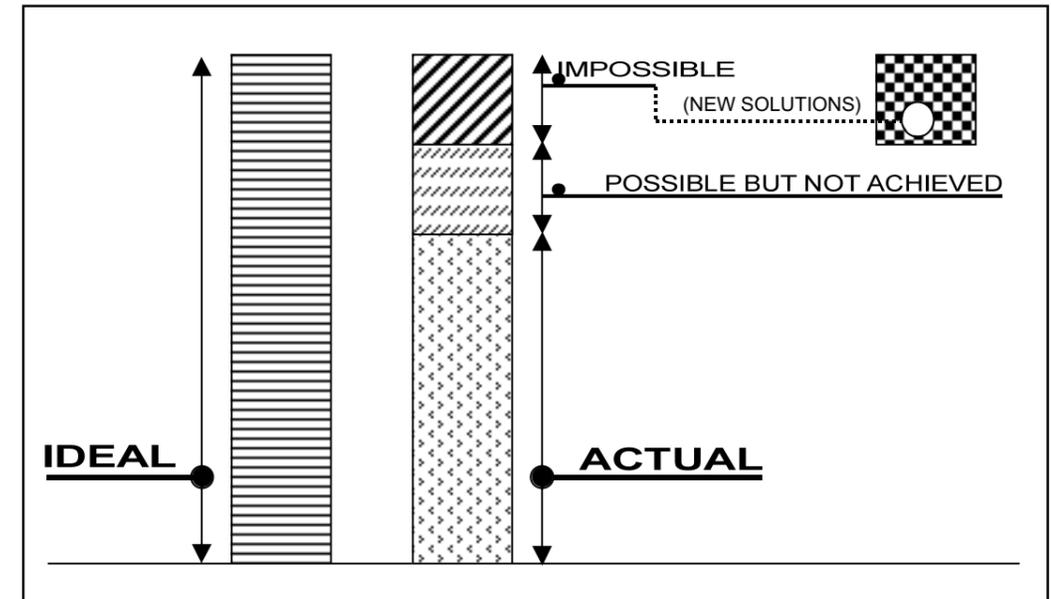


Figure 1.

in the same field. It will be a body of knowledge far greater than any one person could accumulate within their lifetime. A professional represents this body of knowledge. The public gains access to this knowledge via currently practising professionals. Not arbitrary.

7. This body of knowledge will be regarded as the highest authority on that topic, notwithstanding its ongoing development which may include challenges to certain elements within it. Best available.

8. The body of knowledge will have achieved this status as a result of the unfettered ability to challenge elements of it, and the resulting revision of those elements, according to scholarly principles (i.e. the culture and habit of research; the presentation in a public forum of the results of that research with a view to inviting complementary or contradictory arguments that are also based on empirical evidence; and the testing of various modes of application in a free market). Robust and reliable.

9. As the profession deals with matters critical to human society, as it is necessarily part of any social economy, and as it presents itself as the best available knowledge on that topic, the profession will also be publicly accountable. The definitive skill set consists not just of the skills and

be a question of the accuracy of a translation of one sentence; it may be the question of provision of interpreting service to a hospital; or it may be the experience of a witness in court whose evidence is being translated. In any qualitative judgement of the application of the skill set the profession must be able to account for the following. These are all obligations that a profession has to society. Not a hobby.

9a. The profession must be able to give the most authoritative definition of the ideal. It is not sufficient that they wait to be asked. A profession must have this knowledge.

9b. The profession must be able to give an accurate account of what actually takes place. Of all parties and groups within society, they must possess the most detailed and up-to-date information on every aspect of activity that depends on application of the skill set.

9c. They must also be able to give an accurate account of how far short of the ideal, those actual activities fall. And it must understand, before and more thoroughly than any other party or group within society, the reasons for that shortfall.

Continued on page 20

Continued from page 19

9d. Further to this last point, it must be able to show that all the resources and energy available to it for the maintenance of the culture and habit of research, are being directed efficiently towards narrowing that gap between the ideal and the actual. In other words, they must be able to show a responsible plan for achieving everything that is conceivably possible.

9e. As with any field of human endeavour, some things will simply not be possible. The profession must be the highest authority on what those are, and finally they must be able to show what other plans there are to develop new solutions that might palliate the situation.

10. In their professional capacity, a professional will necessarily have, at some point, a face-to-face relationship with their clients. They will be caught up in the cycles of action of other people, with the pace and timing of their work being dictated by the interests of others. A professional must be able to respond to this without jeopardising those interests, with which they have been entrusted. Therefore a professional must display high levels of personal organisation and management, including better than average literacy, numeracy, punctuality, interpersonal and communication skills, tidiness and well developed habits of record keeping and understanding of basic business processes.

11. In respect to all parties outside the profession, and most importantly to their clients, a professional will apply their skill set, and conduct themselves professionally, and run their own business affairs, according to their best understanding of professional standards. They will have the courage and strength of character to make themselves the final arbiter of all of these matters and will not pander to, or allow themselves to be swayed by, ideas or expectations of others that fall short of professional standards.

12. Finally a professional person will profess all of the above. They will offer (and be free to do so) their skills to the public on a commercial basis. They will issue an open invitation to any member of society to place their interests in the hands of the professional and stand fully prepared for all the responsibilities consequent upon it. By this last act a professional "practises".

"What is a Profession?" Copyright 2003

National Council

The following is a summary of resolutions passed by National Council since the last newsletter.

- That a separate bank account be opened with AUSIT's bankers for the purpose of collecting and, when required, disbursing payments for cooperative advertising (Yellow Pages).
- That AUSIT continue to provide the opportunity for members to advertise in composite advertisements in the metropolitan Yellow Pages directories.
- That expenditure for updating the AUSIT website be approved.
- That ASLIA members be allowed access to AUSIT's AON professional indemnity insurance cover.
- That the following persons be admitted to AUSIT membership or associate membership:

Micki Sirianni, Elena Prodanovic, Marie-Louise Huber, Louise Wilbraham, Dominic McCormack, Nurcan Erol, Coral Petkocich, Sanja Vuksanovic, Marianne Vandyck, Angel Bogicevic, Goran Bogicevic, Uyen Tinh Do, Matilda Loo-Bun, Alprince Antonious, Jai Heom Shim, Yani Mariyani-Squire, Carla Knox, Miria Fernandes, Ester Olivares, Ratri Kumudawati, Georege Dee, Mihoko Arimitsu, Dimitria Lagoudaki, Roque Di Biasi, Yu Shu Lipski, Daniel Vu, Rosemary Kuwahata, Sunah Sara Kim, Stephen Houston, Hua Deng, Bess Wang, Khadijeh Ishkandar, Linda Finucane, Marta Menendez, Atsuko Kamei, Nathalie Perkins, Elisabeth Friedman, Eva Van Steenwyk, Gabriela Lefevre, Yifah Hadar, Agustinus Dharmadi, Kyogo Ogawa, Samar Abdalla, Gloria Martinez, Surinder Mudher, Hazem Aboustate, Sahar Ghazy, Minh-Hua Tran, Huong Thi Thanh Nguyen, Vitalia Vega, Michael Gostich, Janice Laurie, Elinadja Fernandes Maciel, Rebecca Nadkarni, Subiaco, Billie Leung, Mohammad Bawazeer, David Huang, Natalia Andrews-Hay, Tunde Andrea Bene.

Congratulations and a warm welcome to all our new members.

Newsletter Contacts and Editorial Policy

National Newsletter Editorial Team:

Anne Richardson, Editor Niki Baras, Design and Production Louise Dyer, Proofreading

Special thanks from the Editor to all whose efforts have gone into compiling this annual report, particularly to Vince Danilo, General Treasurer, who has worked tirelessly to draw all the strings together.

Particular thanks are also due to David Connor for his ongoing assistance in proofreading and liaising with the printers.

Contributions deadline for next issue: 7 November 2003

Please send all contributions to the Editor E-mail: amric@ozemail.com.au Tel./fax: (03) 9886 5282

The AUSIT national newsletter is published four times a year. Letters to the Editor, short articles and items for the calendar of events and other sections are invited. The Editor reserves the right not to publish or to edit any item submitted for publication. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the Editor or of AUSIT or its executive.