



The West Australian Social Worker

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By now you would all be aware that the Machinery of Government Taskforce Report has been tabled with Government. This report, available on the Web (<http://www.mpc.wa.gov.au>) has far reaching implications for the how social work and other human services will be conceptualised and delivered in Western Australia.

There will no doubt be a range of discussions and agency based work now in regards to implementing the recommendations of the report. I would urge you to go to the website and read through the report and to become an active participant in shaping the work that will go in to the process from here out. That way, as a professional social worker, you can have a role in shaping this new vision for Western Australia.

The Branch Committee of Management has been seeking appointments with Government Ministers who have human service portfolios to discuss issues that impact on clients and on the profession. The first of these meetings is scheduled for August with the Hon Sheila McHale. It is my intention to ask that the Taskforce Report and its implications for services be a key agenda item of that meeting.

If, after reading the report, you have issues you wish to have raised, can you please contact me? These should not only be limited to the Community Development portfolio which encompasses Family and Children's Services, Youth, Seniors, Disabilities and Women's Interests, but across all fields of practice as it is our intention to meet with all the relevant Ministers.

On the horizon on August 21 - 23 at the Novetal Langley is the Branch's state conference, *Social Work in the Market Place*. The program is extremely relevant in light of the task force report and I would urge you to register now if you haven't already done so. Early registration will secure your place in the sessions of your choice.

The other key event that I want to draw to your attention is the recent National Board Meeting. It was, as always, packed with key decisions concerning the Association. Of significance to WA and to all members were discussions concerning the Association's Green Paper regarding how the Association will manage its funding arrangements. Also significant were decisions around issues such as the budget for 2001-2002.

In terms of response to the Green Paper, 97 responses have been received in National Office. Of those, seven were group submissions and 90 were individual responses. For those of

you who have been following the debate by email you would be aware that the New South Wales, Victorian and WA Branches have rejected the funding model. I estimate that would represent in excess of 60 percent of the membership.

It was noted in the Board meeting that a wide range of responses have been received from "strongly supporting the Green paper to those who appear to be appalled by the paper and who see it as centralist." In order to ensure independent analysis of these submissions, they will be pulled together by David Sinclair Voight, a long standing consultant to the Association concerning the Association's computer services, rather than by the Executive as had been originally intended. Once this analysis has been completed, the Association will decide how to progress the matter

In terms of the budget, I am pleased to report to you that the WA Branch has been given permission by the Board of Directors to access the WA Branch's own reserves to pilot having a part time Branch social policy officer. Bringing a social policy officer on board will mark a new era in services to members in the WA Branch and the clients we serve as professional social workers.

I envisage that the Social Policy Officer will help the Branch respond in a more timely manner and in greater depth to social policy initiatives at the State level. The timing couldn't be better in light of the Machinery of Government Taskforce Report. It

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An online version of this newsletter can be found at <http://westausaasw.highway1.com.au/>

THE WEST AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL WORKER

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will also complement National's plans to increase social policy support at the National level to a full time equivalent. To date that position has only been a part time one. With the quarantining of funds prior to figuring capitation for use at a National level, the Association is now able, among other things, to prioritise full time support to social policy.

I note however that this quarantining will result in the WA Branch receiving approximately \$8,000 less in capitation funds for the coming financial year than we did last year.

Unfortunately, the Board voted not to allow the Branch to access its reserves in terms of funding the chair persons of our four regional subcommittee to attend the WA Committee of Management Meeting once this financial year. This decision was disappointing to the Branch as supporting regional subcommittees is one of the Branch's priorities identified at the Branch strategic planning meeting in February.

The Board also voted not to allow us to further access those reserves to support the student representative from Edith Cowan University to the COM to travel from Bunbury to attend the COM rather than to be telelinked in. The ECU students argued, and the Branch supported, that attending the COM was part of their entry into the profession and a way to model professional endeavours in their journey as an emerging professional social worker.

Edith Cowan University was unable to support the Branch's request to share the expenses of this travel with the COM. I do note that at this point in time we will telelink the student in so that they can participate in the COM. Student representatives from Curtin and UWA also participate in the COM.

Another important decision taken by the National Board meeting was to look at how CPE activities could be supported more directly at a National level. The Board will look forward to receiving the report of the National CPE Committee in regards to this initiative, presumably at its next Board teleconference.

Another decision by the Board was not to support the WA Branch's request to incorporate a Friends of the AASW/WA Branch. This initiative was supported by the Branch to try to model on the National initiative that has created a Friends of the AASW.

The Board also confirmed plans to progress training for all Branch Ethics Committees in terms of the new bi laws. I would think that I reflect the feeling of the entire Board when I say how pleased all Directors were to learn that this key training was near fruition.

Another decision that was taken was to abandon having a National Registration Committee in favour of having a member of the Education Committee as a resource to Branch Registration Committees. Given that Registration must be at the State level, this seems like a strategic way to go.

Also at the National level, a Mental Health Special Interest Group has been formed. I would anticipate that the WA Branch with its active Mental Health Sub Committee would want to be involved. Also with our part time social policy officer, there will be a mechanism for interface with that special interest group. Another key special interest group was also created. The Clinical Practice Special Interest Group was endorsed by the Board. Details will appear in the August National Bulletin. I would anticipate that this interest group will have significant input into Branch work around Registration.

Another very important document tabled at the National Board Meeting was the draft of the Associations first two practice standards. As you may recall, when I was National

Team Leaders/Managers/Employers!

Do you need Social Workers in a hurry in your agency?

LOCUM REGISTER

The AASW WA Branch provides a locum register service free to members and employers.

If you need staff or you want to go on the locum register contact Meredith at the Branch Office. Tel 9420 7240 Fax 9310 3936 or email aaswwa@highway1.com.au

Vice President, I suggested that the Association develop practice standards. Recognition and thanks to our own Virginia Scott who has put a lot of hard work into developing the document that you will have the opportunity in the forthcoming future to comment on.

In closing let me once again remind you that now is the time to register for the State Conference. Looking forward to seeing you there.

DR. BARBARA J. MEDDIN

PRESIDENT

Letters

The Editor

I wish to respond to the correspondence of P. Meemeduma, in *The West Australian Social Worker* (June 2001 issue) re the general meeting of WA Branch members on 4 May 2001.

The National Vice president may have felt less "othered" if she had chosen to be at one with her WA colleagues and had, in fact, taken account of the actual processes which occurred during the meeting.

I would suggest that the opportunities that the National Vice President expected to occur, did in fact, happen.

Firstly, to provide the "thinking" of the Board, the members had already had access to seven pages of the Board's and the National President's 'thinking', through the green paper and the letter which was read in its entirety to the meeting. More than enough opportunity to outline their ideas, if the Board was unable to convey a clear message in seven pages, that sends a message in itself.

Secondly, the National Vice President expected the opportunity to discuss a possible alternative financial structure. The wording the Board used to describe its model was "the Framework of the Funding Model that the Board has **decided** on is as follows". Those words do not suggest or invite discussion about alternatives.

As a long standing WA branch member I take umbrage at the suggestion that the members present were not cognisant of the needs of the smaller Branches. Just because the members present were greatly distressed (to use the "in" word) at the

Continued on page 7

Social Work Awards for Excellence 2001 & Student Awards 2000

Social Work Awards for Excellence

1998

Professional Practice & Innovation/Pioneering –
Jan Roberts
Leadership – *Brian Wooller*
Management and Innovation/Pioneering –
Warwick Smith
Innovation/Pioneering – *Greg Swensen*
Professional Practice – *Dr Pauline Meemeduma*
Innovation/Pioneering – *Steve Edwards*

1999

Leadership – *Maureen Jewell*
Research – *Deborah Brill*
Management – *Diane Fergusson- Stewart*

2000

Management – *Joe Calleja*

2001

Management, Professional Practice, Ethics –
Elizabeth Retamal
Innovation/Pioneering, Policy Development -
Kylie Laughton
Innovation/Pioneering – *Kanthi Perera*
Professional Practice – *John de Jongh*

Margaret Stockbridge Memorial Prize for Social Work (UWA)

1998

Frances Britton

1998

Margaret Prentice

1999

Sara Terry

2000

Tracey Crawcour

Barbara Kinna Award (Curtin)

1997

Karen Grove

1998

Wendy Krievis

1999

Gabrielle Payne

2000

Angela Barnes

Regional and Rural Social Work Student Award

1998, 1999, 2000

Graduating cohort of the Edith Cowan University
social work program

Awards for Excellence

The Awards for Excellence event on 10 April 2001 was a fitting time in the Western Australian social work calendar to acknowledge the achievements and merits of our social work colleagues who have exceeded the usual standards of professional practice. (Details of individual recipients of Awards for Excellence will be published in next newsletter.)

Social Work Student Awards

Social work graduates were there who were joining our profession and were in the early stages of their professional development after accomplishments in their social work student courses. To these students and to their graduand colleagues the AASW extends our congratulations on their achievements and welcome them as colleagues into the social work profession.

It was also a time to acknowledge the efforts and achievements of the teaching staff at the Schools of Social Work at Curtin University, the University of Western Australia, and Edith Cowan University, Bunbury. The Schools of Social Work provide the formation for aspiring social workers and in collaboration with social workers in the workforce, the teaching staff design courses which prepare students to respond to the challenges and needs in Australian society and launch the students into their new professional careers.

The WA Branch of the AASW, and in particular the Branch Continuing Education Committee, appreciate the presence and contribution of the University teaching staff for their contribution to our profession and to student and continuing education of social workers.

As we celebrated the achievements of our new social workers from the three schools of social work in Western Australia we also acknowledged the social workers who are remembered because their names are associated with social work awards and this is because they reached greatness as individuals and as professional social workers in their lifetimes. Those social workers are, of course, Barbara Kinna and Margaret Stockbridge.

Barbara Kinna Award

The Barbara Kinna Award is presented to a social work student at Curtin University for outstanding performance throughout the social work course.

Barbara Kinna was outstanding in her contribution to social work in the United Kingdom, Singapore and Australia. Barbara was the first professional trained social worker in the Western Australian Child Welfare Department in 1964 and she became Senior Social Worker in the first migrant grant in aid service in this State. Barbara was respected for the professionalism she inspired among the people with whom she worked and the agencies in which she made a notable contribution. She was admired for her personal qualities and social work skills by people within and beyond the social work profession.

The winner of the Barbara Kinna Award was Angela Barnes

Angela's earlier employment in the mental health field complemented her learning at Curtin and with a practicum at Killara Youth Support service and another in adolescent health

services under her belt, her performance in the social work course was acknowledged as outstanding. Angela graduated from the Curtin University School of Social Work in February this year, with 1st Class Honours.

Angela told me she is now headed for a PhD and will be undertaking research in the social policy area. Please join me with me in acknowledging Angela's achievements as we welcome her into the social work profession and wish her well in her career.

Margaret Stockbridge Memorial Award

The Margaret Stockbridge Memorial Award is presented for outstanding academic performance whilst undertaking a degree in social work at the University of Western Australia.

Dr. Margaret Stockbridge, or Teddy Stockbridge as she was usually called, came from England in 1958 to be the first social worker in Western Australia's psychiatric services. She was instrumental in setting up the social work course at the University of Western Australia and she was a lecturer there when the course began in 1965. Teddy Stockbridge's past students remember her fondly for her strong professional identity and her willingness to stand up and be counted in public debate about social and other issues - she believed that social work is a "public" not a "private" activity.

With the memory of such a teacher and practitioner, the Margaret Stockbridge Memorial Award was presented to Tracey Crawcour.

Tracey Crawcour completed a Bachelor of Media Studies degree and started an honours degree at Murdoch University but she found the research at Murdoch was not practice oriented so she embarked on a two year Honours degree course at the University of Western Australia's School of Social Work.

Tracey spoke to me with some delight about her enjoyment of the social work course at UWA and how it has been spurred on to continuing research at the University of New South Wales into the social policy topics of unemployment and mutual obligation.

The gathering of social work colleagues congratulated Tracey for her achievements as a student, welcoming her to the social work profession and wishing her well in her social work career.

ANNE PICKARD

VICE PRESIDENT (EDUCATION)

Regional and Rural Social Work Student Award

This was the third year that the AASW WA Regional and Rural Social Work Award had been presented. It has become a tradition at the Edith Cowan University School of Social Work to present the award to all members of the final graduating year of the Bachelor of Social Work course. The decision to do this was made by the student bodies of the graduating years, in consultation with the staff at the School of Social Work

Each year the student body identified aspects of their social work education which they wanted to highlight as reflecting the spirit of the Award. In 1998, the students identified the collegial and development base of their social work education as a critical aspect, whereas in 1999 expertise in working across race, ethnic and the differences in health well-being were considered critical to their education. This year the final year graduating students identified the critical aspect of their course to be the support given to each other while recognising the uniqueness of themselves as individuals and social workers.

It may have seemed disappointing to announce that the graduating students who had earned this Award were not present that evening, but when it was known that their absence was because they were all working and employed in organisations located in regional or rural areas, then it was acknowledged that the ECU School of Social Work had achieved one of its goals to prepare students for work in challenging areas away from the facilities of a city.

While the presence of the new social workers from the Bunbury School of Social Work was missed, they were congratulated on identifying essential qualities for the social work profession to emulate, and their colleagues wished them well in their social work careers.

Building on Strong Foundations Conference

Friday 3rd August 2001 Novotel Langley Perth

Hear two world renowned speakers discuss practical applications of current research about brain development and the early years, Mary Gordon & Erica D'Ath.

Brought to you by NIFTeY, National Investment for the Early Years

For further information and registration contact Meerilinga
Phone: 9424 5210 Fax: 9424 5236. Email: mycf@meerilinga.org.au

"The Art of Social Work" – ART EXHIBITION

The 2001 State Conference in August will host an exhibition of art works produced by West Australian social workers. It will also be an opportunity for social workers who use art therapy in their intervention to inform others of the work they do.

If you feel you may have something to contribute by way of paintings, photography, ceramics, prints, textiles etc. or if you wish to be involved as an art therapist, please contact Adam Johnson immediately on 0411 307 640 or email: adamjohnson@one.net.au

Note: Closing date for submitting art works for consideration is 1 August 2001. A careful process of selection will be necessary, but at least one artwork from each artist will be accepted.

Net Watch

<http://westausaasw.highway1.com.au/>

The WA Branch has operated its own web site for a number of years. Initially the web site was formatted as a text based layout and then underwent a major revamp just over two years ago, to take advantage of the evolving capabilities of version 4 browsers. The web site is hosted by Highway1, which includes the capacity to produce web server statistics.

A study was undertaken to identify patterns of usage from the beginning of the year 2000 up to the present, by analysis of the monthly counts of:

- successful requests for pages;
- distinct files requested; and
- distinct hosts served.

Trends in requests for pages, files and the number of distinct hosts served are provided in the two figures below.

Successful requests for pages

Over the 17 month period the number of successful requests per month for pages has steadily increased, from 313 in January 2000 to 433 in May 2001, an overall increase of 38%. Over the 17 month period surveyed monthly requests ranged from 234 (in February 2000) to 876 (in June 2000).

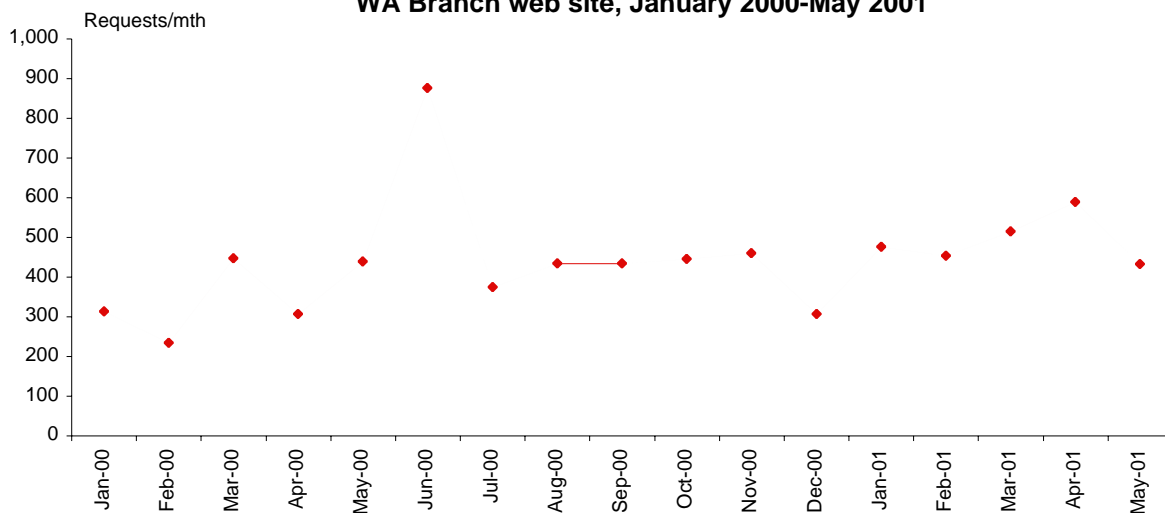
Distinct files requested

The number of requests for distinct files has more than trebled from January 2000 (50 files) to May 2001 (158 files). There was a relatively static number of requests from January 2000 to November 2000 with the exception of June (391 files). From December 2000 up to the present there has been a higher level of requests, with between about 130 and 160 requests per month.

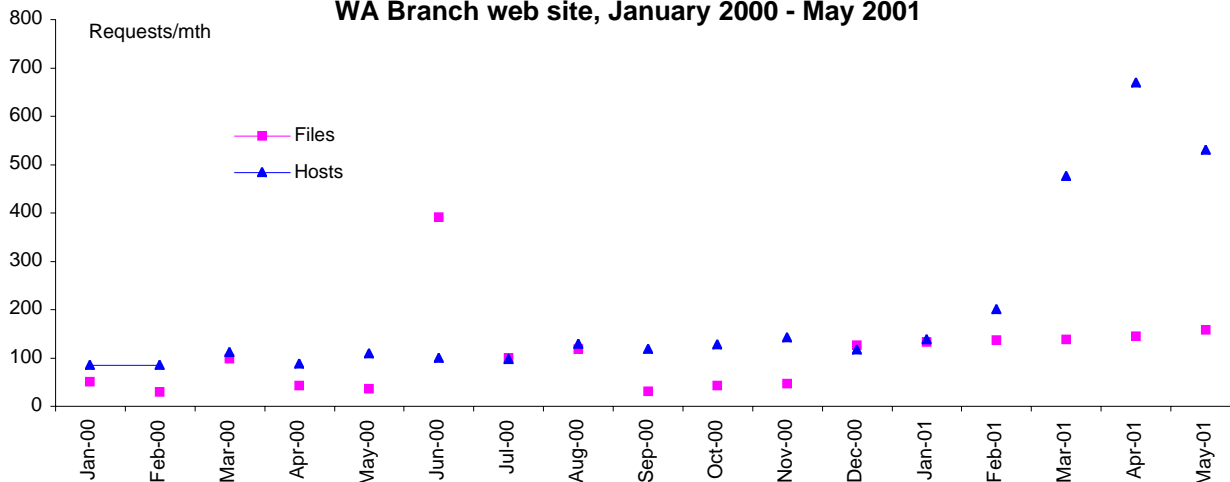
Distinct hosts served

Consistent with the pattern of increased usage reflected in the requests for distinct files and pages, the number of hosts served has also grown. There has been a remarkable increase in the number of distinct hosts served since the beginning of the year 2001, with the number increasing nearly four fold, from 138 in January 2001 to 530 in May 2001.

**Number of monthly successful requests for pages,
WA Branch web site, January 2000-May 2001**



**Number of monthly distinct files requested & distinct hosts served,
WA Branch web site, January 2000 - May 2001**



OPEN INVITATION

For all country and metro members to observe Branch Committee of Management Meetings.

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- Networking
- Professional Development
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Domains of originating requests

The domain generated by originating requests can help to measure the breadth of usage of the website, as this tracks the country of any computer requesting files. It should be noted that there were 472 requests, 19.8% of total bytes, for which the domain could not be determined, with a further 221 requests (10.7% of total bytes) using the .net domain. This means that for about 30% of all requests the country cannot be clearly identified.

The breakdown of the listing for May 2001 (below) identifies that 454 requests (29.6% of total bytes) had originated from users with Australian domains (ie .au).

There were five countries which accounted for 169 requests (8.5% of total bytes), these were New Zealand, USA (educational), United Kingdom, Canada and South Africa. The low level of requests from a range of other countries indicates that West Australian social work issues are of interest to a diversified, though small audience.

Breakdown of originating requests by domain WA Branch website, May 2001

No. of requests	Domain
816:	.au (Australia)
479:	.com (Commercial)
480:	[unresolved numerical addresses]
224:	.net (Network)
30:	.nz (New Zealand)
41:	.edu (USA Educational)
61:	.uk (United Kingdom)
19:	.ca (Canada)
18:	.za (South Africa)
5:	.my (Malaysia)
5:	.fr (France)
2:	.us (United States)
3:	.ie (Ireland)
1:	.ch (Switzerland)
8:	.mil (USA Military)
5:	.dk (Denmark)
1:	.arpa (Old style Arpanet)
1:	.es (Spain)
4:	.be (Belgium)
3:	[unknown domain]
1:	.ba (Bosnia-Herzegovina)
2:	.gov (USA Government)
1:	.br (Brazil)
3:	.se (Sweden)
4:	.is (Iceland)
5:	.pt (Portugal)
1:	.de (Germany)
1:	.pl (Poland)
1:	.sg (Singapore)

methods which emanated from National Office including the lack of choice, consultation and a reasonable time frame, is not to say that WA members do not espouse equity and access. It is to say, there may be more effective ways to go about it.

Equity and access are not new words in WA. There are many long standing WA Branch members who have grappled for years with the equity issues to be addressed when trying to provide services for members of the largest geographical branch in Australia.

If it is perceived that social workers around Australia are not in fellowship through their association, that may say more about the current management of the association than it does about how members relate to each other. In view of the negative responses to the model from New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia perhaps the Board is out of step with many members.

Finally, if it is incumbent on WA Branch members to engage in the consultation process, it is equally incumbent on the Board and its individual members to be respectful and understanding of other's viewpoints - the processes and the decision making in the presentation of the model left a great deal to be desired.

Marian Maughan

Call for Nominations Branch Ethics Committee

In accordance with the Australian Association of Social Workers By-Laws on Ethics, nominations are being called for 4 positions on the Branch Ethics Committee.

The Committee contributes to discussions, debate and policy surrounding ethical practice of social workers as well as responding to concerns expressed, and mediating resolutions of complaints, about the ethical practice and conduct of social workers in relation to the code of ethics. The nominee must be:

- a member of the AASW of good standing within the profession; and
- have not less than 7 years practice experience in the profession; and
- provide a curriculum vitae to the Committee of Management.

Appointments to the Ethics Committee are made, from the nominations received, by the Branch Committee of Management. Appointment is for a two year period (with a right of renewal totalling not more than three consecutive terms)

If you would like further information about the work of the committee or the role of a Branch Ethics Committee member then contact John de Jongh Convenor of the BEC (Tel 9313 4080 after 6pm weekdays).

If you are interested in nominating for one of these positions contact Meredith Doyle Branch Executive Officer (Tel: 9332 0019 business hours.) Closing date for nominations will be 5 pm Friday 31st August 2001