



President's Report

12th November 2010

Last year in my Presidents' report I described the year as being one of change, inspiration and anxiety. This year I could also include the adjective 'frustration', and 'fun'. The executive

collectively made some big plans last year about establishing strategic partnerships with other networks and associations so that we could better promote institutional research outside the confines of our institutional Planning, Quality and IR offices. However what we didn't know at the time was that there were some fundamental foundational issues that needed to be addressed before we could brave that larger world. And these would take some time, all valuable and necessary. They included the revamping of our logo, and website, the establishment and documentation of processes related to our committee workings, and membership procedures, and a refining of our budget and financial processes. I believe we have made some incredible leaps in establishing foundation processes and procedures that are sustainable and transferable from one executive committee to the next. I would sincerely like to thank the Executive Committee for their dedication to this task and their ongoing persistence in finding solutions to some of our administrative problems. I would also like to thank Liesha Northover whom we have this year contracted in the role of secretarial support to the committee and who has been pivotal in the website redevelopment. This initiative is one that we will continue with as the investment in a professional secretariat has been invaluable and enabled much of our streamlining of processes and procedures.

So now that we have cleaned up our back yard so to speak, I feel confident that we can move into the next year with some of the plans that I started my term with. In particular, with the assistance of the Executive Committee we aim to focus on:

1. Providing leadership in the sector on hot topics / issues through sharing information in our online knowledge Forum (a feature of the new website).
2. Establishing a stronger professional identity for institutional research as a profession via the development of a professional development framework and program that brings together our analytic / statistical capabilities with those related to education management theory, practice and implementation.
3. Establishing partnerships with other agencies and associations (e.g. AUQA, ALTC, ACER, ATEM) to:
 - provide professional development to our membership; and

- in the development of joint research projects related to issues that help shape the sector.

I believe in the leadership capability that our association can bring to the sector through the special combination of unique and in demand capabilities we bring to the current problems of the day. AAIR members are solutions orientated and passionate about education. We know the data and we know how to change people and systems. It's time we brought those two sides of that coin together and stepped up to leading change within the sector. With the regime changes currently in train, there is no better time.

The following achievements and progress towards them are a summary of the work that has been conducted by the Executive Committee with a lot of help from many AAIR friends. I would like to again formally thank them for their continued commitment and passion for AAIR and its members.

Achievements to Date:

AAIR Website Redevelopment

The website and its services, including the databases within it, are considered to be the backbone of the Association's future capacity building efforts. An upgrade (redevelopment) to the AAIR website was endorsed by the Executive at a meeting held on 13 March 2009. AAIR contracted Dilution Graphic to redesign the website which includes features such as a Knowledge Forum whereby members can share knowledge around hot topics and develop a repository from which others will benefit. The redevelopment is at completion stages and we in fact launched the website yesterday, however it may take us a little while longer to migrate content completely from the old website. I would like to thank Liesha Northover and Dave Marr for their work on the redevelopment as well as the entire Executive Team who were pivotal in all the design and functionality decisions along the way. It's been a bigger job than we expected but I believe that the website will provide a dynamic environment where AAIR members can discuss and dispute issues and have a repository of the latest news about institutional research in Australasia.

Load Management (LM) Special Interest Group (SIG) - Report from Jeff Holmes, SIG Convener and Manager, Load Forecasting, QUT

- LM SIG has 88 members from 36 universities across Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific.
- Southern Cross Uni hosted the Load Management SIG in conjunction with the Data Warehousing SIG in August at their Gold Coast campus.
- The August SIG included presentations on:
 - Load planning at RMIT
 - A panel session with staff from SCU, JCU, RMIT and USQ
 - A UniSA presentation on Low SES and First in Family
- The SIG meets again at the AAIR forum in Geelong.
- Discussions on going about meetings for 2010.



The email list loadmsig-l@qut.edu.au is a closed list, so only members can send emails to it. If you know of someone who would like to be added, ask them to email me with their details. If you would like to be removed from this email list please let me know.

Data Warehousing (DW) Special Interest Group (SIG) - Report from Andrea Matulick, University of South Australia.

The 2010 AAIR Data Warehouse Special Interest Group Forum was hosted by Southern Cross University at their new Gold Coast Beachside Campus in August, 2010.

The theme of the Forum was **WEARING MANY HATS**.

The event was well attended with over 70 delegates from 25 different universities. There were 4 sponsors (mostly high calibre DW/BI consultants keen to make (and keep) good relationships with Uni clients).

Four Planning Directors in a 'panel discussion' indicated they would most like to discard the 'Planning and Review' function from the unit as they would prefer to spend the time on getting BI right to be able to make better decisions.

The winner of the 'best presentation' prize went to Ken Diefenbach (CQU) for "Location, Location, Location - Does it matter in BI/DW?" He is presenting this again at the AAIR Forum in Geelong in November.

The session on "Low SES and First in Family" promoted lively discussion about DEEWR changes to guidelines and criteria.

Universities most advanced in Data Warehousing were now using BI to improve business processes related to strategy - not just reports and dashboards.

It is now more likely that Data Warehousing projects will be successful than it was 5 years ago.

One of the sponsors, Catapult BI is offering a \$2,000 prize at next year's SIG forum for the 'most innovative' BI project presented by a university.

Streamlined Processes: Membership

The Executive Committee has worked to streamline our processes for membership renewal and updating membership details. This has been achieved through the assistance of our secretariat and Memberships officer Bruce Guthrie. In early 2011 we will be communicating with AAIR members who haven't renewed their membership or did not attend this forum, by sending them a renewal form and asking them to renew their membership.

Journal of Institutional Research

JIR is available on the website within a week after the Forum so please do avail yourselves of the articles in this issue. We have an issue in press now and envisage that some of the best papers of this forum will make up the second issue of JIR in 2010.

Recently a call was issued by JIR seeking additional reviewers interested in serving on our volunteer Editorial Review Board. Peer reviewers are asked to provide feedback to JIR editors about the merits of submissions in terms of quality and contribution to the field. Peer review is very valuable and important in the overall publication process, not only by its ability to enhance individual manuscripts, but also because it can improve the journal's credibility and reputation. I am very grateful for those of you who volunteered and hope that it will be a rewarding role for you. I would be very interested to hear from members about other potential reviewers to ensure we maintain the quality of the journal into the future.

Coming of age? 2011 will be a year for building on our strengths

I am looking forward to increasing our understanding in the sector of the professional roles institutional researchers play in institutions. We will be working on a professional development framework that will a) assist us in communicating with others about who we are, and b) develop pathways for career development opportunities for new IRs and established members who want to continue to develop relevant capabilities in institutional research. We have been collecting your coming of age stories to assist us in this process, and in fact many of you contributed your stories and were also filmed in our vox pop sessions at this forum. What that activity cemented for me, was a more clear understanding that professional development for institutional researchers really needs to maximise our analytical capabilities with education management capabilities. Some of us are technical experts however perhaps lack influencing capabilities required for educational management and driving change, while others of us are change experts who lack technical capabilities. Moving forward, AAIR can assist members in bringing together this unique set of capabilities so that our membership can more readily lead in the sector, and influence its outcomes. As our keynote Carol Nicoll raised the challenge yesterday...we need to be telling DEEWR or ALTC or TEQSA how to do things rather than just waiting to be asked. I tend to agree and for me it's about "stepping up", and that I believe is our coming of age challenge.



Josephine Palermo

President

