

President's Report AGM 2010

Dr Russell Smith

In this, my first report to an ANZSOC Annual General Meeting as President of the Society, I am very pleased to say that the Society has had a highly successful year, administratively, financially and in relation to its principal activities. This is, to a substantial extent, due to the fine state in which I found the Society following the end of Kathleen Daly's term as President last year. I am grateful to her for her help with transitional arrangements, and for being so meticulous in recording the previous activities of the Society during her four-year term as President.

The Society's Committee of Management has worked consistently well this year and, in addition to the annual planning meeting held during the Perth conference, we have conducted five teleconferences and many more telephone calls and emails between Office Bearers and Committee members to organise our activities – details of which are set out in the Minutes of these meetings. I would like to thank all of those involved in the administration of the Society, and particularly the Office Bearers (Vice-Presidents, Rick Sarre and Jan Jordan, Treasurer, Fiona Dowsley and Secretary, Signe Dalsgaard) for their willingness to devote time and effort to managing the affairs of the Society. Having a part-time, paid Secretary, has been important in ensuring that the day-to-day administrative tasks are dealt with promptly, and the Committee has decided to continue this position for the forthcoming year. Signe's work in attracting new members, in addition to increased royalties from the Journal, has meant that the Society is still able to cover the costs associated with having a paid part-time Secretary, and hopefully this will continue in the years ahead.

The Society's Website is now functioning well and the online payment facility has not only made membership renewal more efficient, but has also reduced the administrative burden associated with managing membership applications, renewals and processing payments. There are plans to enhance the content of the Website, but of course, this is dependent on members and others providing suitable material. Any suggestions for improving the Website would be welcomed and can be given to the Secretary at any time.

One of the more effective ways in which the Society communicates with its members and others is through the Newsletter, which is now a polished and professional publication, thanks to the efforts of its editor, Jacqui Joudo-Larsen, as well as the production editor, Brigitte Bouhours and the Secretary. The Society devotes considerable resources to producing printed copies of the Newsletter which can be used for promoting our work and activities. I would encourage all members who attend conferences and events to obtain copies of the Newsletter from the Secretary and to distribute them widely. For example, copies of the Newsletter will be distributed at the American Society of Criminology meeting in San Francisco in November 2010, at a reception organised by Sharon Pickering to promote the Society and the Journal.

In July this year, I accepted an invitation from AUT University in New Zealand to travel to Auckland to present a number of lectures and seminars and to meet with other criminologists working there. The fully-funded visit was coordinated by Dr John Buttle who provided wonderful hospitality and arranged a series of events including a large public lecture at which I spoke about some of my own research, while also promoting the Society in New Zealand. In addition, I was able to reach an agreement for the University of Auckland and AUT University to host the ANZSOC conference in 2012. Having seen the elaborate conference facilities at the University of Auckland, I am sure that it will be highly successful and I'd encourage everyone to travel to New Zealand for this conference which will be held from 27 to 29 November 2012. The Conference Committee in Auckland includes John

Buttle, Robert Webb, James Oleson, William Wood, Bruce Cohen and Tracey McIntosh, and I'd like to thank them all for their willingness to take on this task.

Part of the reason for visiting New Zealand was to encourage new members to join the Society, and I'm pleased to say that this worked well – indeed, our membership has been steadily increasing throughout this year, in part due to the ANZSOC Secretary's hard work. At present the Society has over 600 members in its database, although many are still to pay their membership fees. I would encourage everyone to make sure that they remain financial members, as membership income is of great importance in ensuring that the Society can meet its ongoing commitments. We have also established some formal ties with other criminology societies overseas, including the Pakistan Society and the South Asian Society, and are continuing to work with others. These reciprocal arrangements allow members of ANZSOC to attend the conferences and meetings of other Societies at their members' rates, as long as they are currently financial members of ANZSOC. Similarly, members of other Societies can attend our conference at members' rates, and already this has occurred.

In August this year, I contacted the President of the Pakistan Society of Criminology, Mr Fasihuddin, to congratulate him on organising the First International Conference on Criminology in Pakistan to be held from 16 to 19 March 2010, but also to express my great sadness at the tragic floods that have so badly affected his country. I passed on the very best wishes of all members of ANZSOC at this tragic time in Pakistan's history.

The Society's conferences continue to be our principal professional activity, and following the successful conference in Perth, hosted by the Crime Research Centre at the University of Western Australia and convened skilfully by Frank Morgan, this year's conference is being held for the first time in Alice Springs. The conference has been developed with expert guidance of Allan Van Zyl, Chair of the Conference Committee, and Rick Sarre who worked with me in preparing the conference program. The conference theme is cross-border domestic and transnational crime and, as is appropriate for its location, it focuses on a range of crime and justice issues affecting Australia's indigenous population. The Abstracts submitted fell quite well into a series of other themes relating to violence against women, policing, corrections and range of other criminological issues. Topics of transnational crime, particularly people trafficking and international financial crime, were also represented. I would particularly like to thank Allan for his personal effort in organising the conference – very much a single person undertaking – although supported by Dream Media, the conference organisers. Next year's conference in Geelong, hosted by Deakin University and convened by Darren Palmer, will also be innovative as it is the first time that the ANZSOC conference has been held in a regional centre. This will provide an important theme for the conference in addressing the many regional and rural crime problems that often receive less attention than conventional urban criminal justice concerns.

In conjunction with our annual conferences, the Society also conducts a satellite event for post-graduate and early career researchers in criminology. As is widely known, some of the most innovative and in-depth research is conducted by such scholars who often have more time available in which to pursue research than their supervisors. The Post-graduate and Early Career Researcher Conference is a chance for presentations to be given that not only enable new research to be shared, but also which provide an opportunity for less-experienced speakers to present their research in a slightly less-intimidating forum than a large-scale international conference. This is an important educational activity and a useful way of enhancing one's academic record. I would like to thank Roberta Julian and Lorana Bartels for their effort and enthusiasm in organising this year's event at Alice Springs.

The other main activity of the Society, and one that contributes significantly to our income each year, is the publication of the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology. As Kathleen Daly reported last year, a contract has been negotiated with Sage Publications Ltd

in London to publish the journal from January 2011. Sharon Pickering, as Editor and other Committee of Management members, have worked closely with Sage to prepare for the transition from Australian Academic Press which has produced our excellent journal over the last ten years. Sage, however, will return a much higher financial benefit to the Society as well as increasing the standing and rating of the Journal internationally. Sage has also agreed to make back-issues of the journal available electronically to subscribers, which will provide benefits to all authors and readers and increase citations, especially for some of the leading articles that have been published in previous volumes that have only been available in hard copy. Members of ANZSOC are also entitled to a 25 per cent discount on all Sage books, and a 25 per cent discount on individual subscriptions to Sage journals.

In addition to other benefits, Sage has also agreed to provide £100 worth of Sage books to the winner of the Allen Austin Bartholomew Award each year from 2011. This year, we continued to provide three Awards of the Society, the Bartholomew Award for the best article published in the last volume of the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology; the New Scholar Prize, for the best publication in criminology or a related area written by a member of the Society, and the Student Paper Prize for the best paper in criminology or a related area written by a student member of the Society.

This year, I would like to offer my congratulations to the winner of the Bartholomew Award, Andrew McGrath, of Charles Sturt University, for his article on offenders' perceptions of the sentencing process, and also to those who received commendations, Samantha Jeffries of QUT and Christine Bond of the University of Queensland, who wrote on sentencing indigenous offenders in South Australia, and Dominic Doyle and James Ogloff of Monash University for their paper which entailed a psycho-legal analysis of Australia's post-sentence legislation. I would like to thank the Judges, Rick Sarre, Jane Goodman-Delahunty, and Elizabeth Stanley for their work in reading and assessing all of the articles in the Journal this year.

Julie Ayling of ARC Centre of Excellence in Policing and Security, won the New Scholar Prize for her article on criminal organizations and resilience, published in the International Journal of Crime and Justice, and, in addition to offering my congratulations to Julie, I would also like to thank the judges of this Prize, Rod Broadhurst, Jan Jordan and Fiona Haines who read all four entries. Finally, the 2010 winner of the Student Paper Prize was Caitlin Maling, Research Officer at Kurungkurl Katitjin Centre for Indigenous Australian Education and Research at Edith Cowan University for her paper on whether sexual offenders are treated differently from other offenders by the criminal justice system. The judges for this prize were Andrew Goldsmith, Roberta Julian and Lorana Bartels, who I would also like to thank. Over the forthcoming year, the Committee of Management plans to review the Society's Awards with a view to creating some new categories and improving their eligibility criteria.

Finally, I would like to express my thanks for the in-kind support provided by the Australian Institute of Criminology, which allows a number of its staff, including myself, to be involved in Society activities. Although almost all Society business is conducted in our spare time, the flexibility offered by the Institute and its Director, Dr Adam Tomison, is greatly appreciated. Similar support is also provided by the many other Universities and government agencies throughout Australia and New Zealand that employ other members of the Committee of Management, particularly Griffith University and Monash University where the Secretary and Editor are employed, respectively. Of course there are benefits for these institutions that association with ANZSOC also brings, and in the years ahead I hope that ANZSOC will continue to be a respected and useful partner to the higher education and criminal justice policy sectors in Australia, New Zealand and beyond.

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