



**17th Annual General Meeting of ASLIA
Sunday 28 August 2011, Sydney, New South Wales**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Revised Strategic Plan 2011-2016

In October 2010 the ASLIA Executive met together to begin revising the ASLIA Strategic Plan. A summary of the 2011-2016 Strategic Plan is available to ASLIA members on the ASLIA website. The plan has been itemised and its strategies have been costed, allowing ASLIA to develop a budget to achieve these goals. The Strategic Plan will guide ASLIA's work over the next five years. State branches are encouraged to refer to the ASLIA Strategic Plan when developing their own Strategic Plans, and consider what strategies they may be able to include or adapt for their region.

First year of annual membership restructure

At the 2010 AGM the ASLIA membership agreed to adopt the national ASLIA membership restructure. This meant that all members would join ASLIA through the one website portal and ASLIA would send 80% of the membership fee to State Branches, with the details of their state members. Note: this is the same percentage of membership fees that states maintained prior to the membership restructure.

This has been the first year under this new structure and it has resulted in some important lessons being learnt and we have been able to identify some issues with the current system. The aim is to make the process as automated as possible to reduce the workload on ASLIA volunteers, but this has not been the case. As such, we continue to explore options to address these issues and streamline the processes. We are grateful for the feedback from members and for your patience during this first year under this new structure.

Submissions to NDIS and DEEWR Review of Disability Standards for Education

In the past year ASLIA made a submission to the Federal Government's Productivity Commission enquiry into the National Disability Insurance Scheme and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations' Review of the Disability Standards for Education.

Investigation of Professional Indemnity insurance

ASLIA has done a great deal of work in negotiating with Aon Insurance regarding Professional Indemnity and Public Liability Insurance for interpreters. We have signed an agreement with Aon which allows interpreters to secure discounted policies. The policies provide a great deal of benefit to members and members are encouraged to consider the benefit of having such insurance. Aon gave a presentation to the ASLIA Executive and State Branch representatives at a joint

meeting, prior to ANC 2011. The participants at that presentation provided feedback and comment, and more information regarding the insurance policies will be released in the near future.

Plans to restructure Creating Opportunities Fund (COF)

One strategy outlined in the revised Strategic Plan is to restructure the COF from its current narrow focus of only supporting interpreters from developing countries in our region to attend the ANC and ITNS. The plan is to expand the scope of the COF to support interpreter trainers to travel to developing countries in our region and deliver training to local interpreters. This extension of the COF would be achieved in liaison with the ASLIA Interpreter Trainers' Network (ITN) sub-committee. The plan also hopes to liaise with other Deaf community stakeholders to support Deaf community leaders/trainers to travel with the interpreter trainer, so that support can be given to both interpreters and Deaf communities within our region. Finally, the ASLIA Bursary, a fund which has existed for several years but is underutilised, will also be incorporated into the COF. The Bursary is intended to support ASLIA members from Australia to participate in training and professional development opportunities.

ANC 2011

The ANC and Interpreter Trainers' Workshop (ITW) in Brisbane in 2010 was a great success. Although the 2010 ANC & ITW fell within the previous twelve months, the feedback from those events and profits have supported hosting ANC2011 and the 2011 Interpreter Trainers' Network Symposium (ITNS) in Sydney. We need to also acknowledge the members of the Organising Committees and volunteers for both events.

Membership

Since NAATI has decided to postpone NAATI Revalidation of Accreditation, we have seen a small decline in membership numbers. In addition, the membership restructure may also have contributed to the decline in membership due to the increased membership fee for some states, and the changes of the membership year from different periods for each State Branch to now being based on the financial year. ASLIA continues to work to increase the level of memberships and is keen to work with State Branches so that we may be able to collaborate on achieving greater membership. We feel there is great potential for growth in this area. We currently have 302 members.

'Interpret-ED'

The online professional development project, 'Interpret-ED' was launched last year. This initiative was undertaken primarily to provide equitable professional development opportunities for ASLIA members all across the country, and particularly to ensure that rural and regional interpreters were able to access PD

workshops. To date this resource has been under-utilised, indicating that there is more work for ASLIA to do to promote 'Interpret-ED'.

ASLIA members can access the 'Interpret-ED' workshops via the ASLIA website. There are currently six workshops, all accessible to deaf interpreters, with five presented in Auslan and one in spoken English, with English captions. The 30-minute workshops are edited into short five-minute videos meaning, that people are able to watch it at their convenience. After watching the videos, you then complete a short quiz. The quiz is developed in such a way that it informs you which questions you answered incorrectly, so you are then able to re-attempt the quiz as many times as necessary. Once you have successfully completed the quiz, then you will receive a certificate, which can be used as evidence of professional development for NAATI Revalidation, or for other requirements.

New WASLI Rep

For the past four years we have been fortunate to have George Major as our WASLI Representative. George has been an energetic and passionate representative, working closely with ASLIA, SLIANZ (the Sign Language Interpreters' Association of New Zealand) and WASLI to represent our region. She has supported and achieved many great outcomes over her term.

ASLIA has an agreement with SLIANZ that we take turns in selecting a regional representative. After calling for expressions of interest, we are thrilled to have Sheena Walters (from NSW) as our new WASLI Representative. ASLIA looks forward to working closely with Sheena in support of interpreters across our region.

Changes to ASLIA Exec

Over the past twelve months we have seen a few people step down from the ASLIA Executive: Pip Cody (SA), Janine Kirkup (WA) and Leanne Beer (QLD). We thank them for their work in the ASLIA Exec, and for their commitment and passion to the Auslan/English interpreting profession.

End of Project Officer & workload

In early 2011 our ASLIA Project Officer, Kylie Scott, vacated that position because we had not been able to secure additional funding to maintain that position. Over the previous two years Kylie had been an incredible asset and had worked tirelessly to support ASLIA, particularly in helping us to redesign the website, develop 'Interpret-ED' and work on the membership restructure. In addition, she responded to email correspondence, researched funding opportunities, etc. In short, her efforts were invaluable to ASLIA. Therefore, her departure resulted in a significantly increased workload for Executive Committee members – see the following point.

Potential review of Exec composition

Over the past few years we have seen ASLIA grow in terms of the amount of work it undertakes. As a result we have seen a huge increase in the workload placed on the members of the ASLIA Executive Committee. While we recognise that State Branch Committees also have a significant workload, the additional challenge for the ASLIA Executive is that they are spread across the country, and are not able to draw on a pool of local members to do work for them. With the development of the ASLIA 2011-2016 Strategic Plan, we can see that this workload will continue to increase.

This constantly increasing workload has led us to consider how the Executive Committee might be restructured in the future. One option that has been considered is to identify specific skills sets needed within the Executive and specifically recruit people who have those skills. One challenge is that the current Constitution stipulates that the Executive can only be comprised of Auslan/English Interpreters with NAATI Interpreter accreditation (and two years experience at that level of accreditation). However, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find practitioners who have this level of NAATI accreditation and who have the necessary time and skills to contribute to ASLIA. As a result, we see scope to revise the Constitution so that office-bearers in the Executive must have NAATI Auslan/English Interpreter accreditation, but that other positions could be filled by others who have desirable skills (e.g., fundraising, sponsorship, promotions, event management, governance, book-keeping, policy development, etc.). Such changes would need to be discussed with and approved by the membership.

New policies: Educational Interpreting & Mental Health Interpreting guidelines

ASLIA has developed draft guidelines for interpreting in educational and mental health settings. These draft policies have been distributed to members for feedback. We have received some valuable feedback, which is currently being incorporated into the policies. The revised policies will be released at the end of September 2011.

Pending projects: Review of Code of Ethics and ASLIA Roadshow

ASLIA has two significant pending projects: 1) a review of the ASLIA Code of Ethics; and, 2) an ASLIA Roadshow. The first is based on feedback from the NAATI Auslan panel and interpreter trainers who have indicated that the current Code is difficult for NAATI test candidates to remember and apply in tests and training situations. In particular, thanks to Della Goswell for offering to contribute to a sub-committee to work on a review of the Code of Ethics.

The second project, the ASLIA Roadshow, is an initiative which has been discussed with ASLIA State Branches. The Roadshow will be a chance to promote ASLIA membership, for members to have direct interaction with ASLIA Executive members, for ASLIA to provide direct PD and to gain feedback from members.

Both of these projects are in development and more information will be released when available.

ATB

The 'Across The Board' magazine is one of the key benefits of ASLIA membership. The past twelve months has resulted in more fantastic editions of the ATB. ASLIA would like to acknowledge the efforts of two key members of the ATB sub-committee, Susan Emerson and Cindy Cave, for their tireless efforts and passion in producing the ATB.

It is important that members realise the 20% of membership fees that ASLIA retains (after sending 80% to State Branches) is not sufficient to cover the cost of producing the ATB. As such, even without contributing funds to any other ASLIA project, relying solely on membership fees to produce the ATB would mean ASLIA would run at a loss. This underscores the value of sponsorship for the ATB, but also highlights the precarious position that ASLIA is in with producing the ATB.

Deaf Interpreter accreditation

A recent edition of the ATB contained an update on developments regarding NAATI accreditation for Deaf Interpreters. This short article outlined some of the key challenges that need to be resolved so that this goal can be progressed. ASLIA will establish a sub-committee to help to work towards resolving these challenges.

Maintain a strong relationship with industry partners

Over the past twelve months ASLIA has continued to maintain a very close relationship with other industry stakeholders, including: Deaf Australia, the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI), The Australian Communication Exchange (ACE), Sign Language Communications (SLC), The National Auslan Interpreter Booking & Payment Service (NABS) and other interpreting service providers who have sponsored ASLIA events and support ASLIA projects (e.g., the ANC, ATB, etc.) – such as Auslan Services, Echo Interpreting and Macquarie University.

Personal vote of thanks to Executive Committee members

Finally, as this will be my final report as President, I would like to express my personal thanks to all the members of ASLIA that I have worked with since joining the Executive Committee in 2004. I have learnt an incredible amount and feel honoured to have served in the national Executive Committee. I have some wonderful memories that I will cherish. I thank all the past Presidents I have worked with, Mandy Dolejsi, Karen Bontempo and Jemina Napier. All other Committee members at both the national and state levels that I have worked with and who have supported me as President – thank you. In particular, I want to acknowledge Karin O'Reilly who I have worked closely with in many capacities in the Executive – from being co-convenors of the Winter School in Cairns in 2005, until being my Vice-President for the past two years. Karin's support, flexibility, energy, sense of humour and eye for detail has been invaluable and I couldn't have survived without her. To

the current Executive Committee members, Paul Heuston, Teresa Cumpston Bird, Viona Woodroffe, Dani Fried and Bev Sloan – thank you all for the amazing people you are and for your contributions to the past twelve months. To all ASLIA members, thank you for your support, friendship and collegiality – it has been an honour to work with you and to serve as your President. It is with a mix of sadness and relief that I end my term in the ASLIA Executive, and I wish the new ASLIA Executive all the best, and offer my support in any way I can.

Marcel Leneham
President, ASLIA
28 August, 2011