AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC ACCESS NETWORK ASSOCIATION INC

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2010 ANNUAL REPORT

October 2010

President's Report, 2009-2010

The Internet has grown much since the inception of APANA. Fifteen years ago members may well have been connecting to the Internet via a text-based terminal emulation program using a 1200bps modem. Today, access is a thousand or more times faster and the uses and services available over the Internet have also expanded a thousandfold.

APANA has grown with the Internet. Not a growth measured in membership numbers, but in the expectations and opportunities for members. This will continue in the years to come as new ideas are injected into the organisation.

Ideas, direction and energy are important for an organisation such as ours. APANA exists to cater to the varied needs of its membership, and any way in which our aims can be achieved, no matter how small or large, should be considered rather than let whither on the vine. And although change can be difficult and fraught with challenges, it should be embraced if we are to keep up and remain relevant with the changing world around us.

I thank the regions, their committees and members for the time, work and dedication they have given to APANA. The changes made over the last twelve months have placed the organisation in a position from which to continue well into the second decade of this century.

Marc Walters
President, APANA

TREASURER'S REPORT:
Carolyn Baird

On paper it appears that the surplus during the 09/10 Financial Year was less than that of the previous year. However, the difference can more than be accounted for by taking into consideration the amount that was spent on capital expenditure (deducted as depreciation over a 3 year period) and on the 10 year renewal of APANA's Trademark Registration.

That these major expenditure items were able to be satisfied, while still leaving APANA with a substantial surplus indicates that APANA remains financially viable despite dwindling membership numbers.

The deficits suffered by Brisbane and Hunter regions last year were more than covered by their surpluses this financial year. While both these regions still require some delicate balancing to ensure they remain viable, their position is much better than that of Perth's. Perth was the only region to sink further into the red. Despite some cuts to expenditure, Perth's financial status is still in decline.

The Sydney region continues to reduce its long standing deficit thus bolstering the National account by the equivalent amount. Fortunately for National and APANA this is at a much faster rate than Perth is withdrawing those funds to pay its bills.

ACT's funds remain static (no income; no expenditure) while Melbourne only has a small yearly income with no expenditure. ICR's income from membership only fees feeds directly into the National account. The South Australia region still remains the most financially viable region by far - without any doubt due to the hard work and generosity of its members.

During the 09/10 Financial Year, the Treasurer donated a computer to APANA for use as the new National Database Server. This newer machine (located in the Hunter region) replaced the old National machine in Perth. At the time of that relocation, the South Australia region adopted the responsibility of providing many of the extraneous services that the National machine had accumulated over the years that were unrelated to the operation of the database and were able to be better served by South Australia's faster link and larger technical support team. The new high capacity machine that South Australia region purchased during the year, now provides not only services required by SA members but some for Brisbane, Hunter, Sydney and National as well. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my thanks on behalf of all APANA members to SA's regional committee and technical support team for their continued generosity and loyalty to the spirit of APANA.

Otherwise it was a quiet year – no billing discrepancies to sort out; only one minor problem getting a line disconnected by Telstra; only a handful of calls from members seeking assistance; 3 home visits to provide hands-on help to Hunter members and 2 at-hub computer repairs.

So, all in all, I am able to say that APANA's light hasn't dimmed in the past 12 months even though there's a bit of a flicker in the light shining from the far west.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:
Jeffrey Toll

Region	Members October 2010	Members October 2009	Change
SA	28	35	Down 7
Hunter	18	23	Down 5
Perth	11	13	Down 2
Sydney	7	11	Down 4
Brisbane	7	8	Down 1
Melbourne	6	7	Down 1
ACT	6	6	-
ICR	5	5	-
TOTAL	**88**	**108**	**Down 20**

Although APANA has lost 20 members in this report, by comparison, this loss has been much less than in previous years.

As reported at last years meeting, ACT has risen above the minimum 5 member required (as per APANA rules on region numbers), however, it now looks as if ICR has reached the minimum members required for a region, another loss would put ICR region into jeopardy.

Activity in most regions has been quiet, but South Australia in particular continues to be a hive of technical and social activity. Other regions continue on quietly.

Highlights of the year:

- Establishment of the APANA cloud computing interest group. (http://www.sky.apana.org.au). The group's aim is to explore free third party infrastructure hosting services available on the internet. At present, Sky website is being hosted by Google sites and doesn't cost APANA a cent to run. In addition to the main Sky website, members, are allocated a @sky.apana.org.au email address. Any member of APANA is welcome to join this group.
- APANA blog (http://inbox.apana.org.au) despite only myself contributing, it continues to grow and now achieves on average 300 hits per day. Though the blog content is unrelated to anything APANA does (I attend and cover car shows), we have taken advantage of the blog traffic to promote APANA's web hosting services to car clubs.
- Use of Skype at APANA monthly Management Committee meetings. Formerly, meetings were held by regular telephone conferencing, which often cost committee member's money. In addition to cost savings, use of Skype has sped up meeting procedure.

Continuing discussion over APANA's future direction has still yet not yielded any positive results. Whilst we still can survive with a smaller membership base, ideas for membership growth such as gaining web hosting members have not been fully realized.

REGION REPORTS:

ACT:
Edwin Gibbons

ACT region has experienced another quiet year with no significant hardware or link failures.

Activity continues at a low level with our small local membership looking for similar minded groups to work together with on projects of join interest.

We continue to appreciate the infrastructure build up by past members and wish to thank other regions for their continued support over this last year.

Edwin Gibbons
Regional Coordinator
ACT Region

Brisbane:
Pauline Sheppard

Brisbane has experienced a quiet year with minimum outages. This has been helped by our move from Brisbane to National and now to Adelaide. Our system remains stable and our email likewise.

Unfortunately our numbers have decreased owing to the growing popularity of other providers. Although our ADSL charges are a little higher than some commercial ISP's, ours is a business-class service that is extremely stable and reliable. We have few dialup members left now.

Brisbane region would like to thank those members of other regions who have helped them with various things throughout the year, particularly Carolyn Baird, Steve Fraser, Dean Hollister and Jeff Toll.

Although our region is now small, we are gradually managing to chip away at our debt which we hope will continue to decrease in the coming 12 months.

PAULINE SHEPPARD
Deputy Regional Coordinator and Regional Finance Officer
Brisbane APANA

Perth Region:
Jeffrey Toll

Perth APANA has had a relatively quiet year. Significant events have been:

- National Server relocation from Perth to Hunter finalised. Old National equipment has been powered down and retired with the exception of the hard drives which were sent to Hunter.
- Hosting of Brisbane email services has been transferred to SA APANA.
- Electricity running Odyssey is sourced partially or wholly from solar cells resulting a reduction of electricity expenses.

Perth still struggles with expenses, as our outgoings still exceed income. The increasingly small membership of the region and costs to maintain member services makes the financial situation difficult. In addition, Perth has also had several severe outages affecting members email due to either faulty equipment or problems with the ASDL Amnet link.

Many thanks to Dean, for maintaining Odyssey, helping out with the transfer of National to Hunter and generally assisting APANA.

South Australia Region:

Tony Bazeley

Significant events for South Australia include:

- The purchase of a new server and a system upgrade. The SA installation now runs on two physical machines and a number of virtual machines. A contribution to the migration was made by a number of members and is now complete. Nightly backups are now made to a member's server in the UK.
- The use of LDAP for all user accounts has resulted in a considerable simplification of authentication administration across the system.
- The capacity of web based community groups has increased with assistance provided to the Bicycle Institute of South Australia (BISA) to migrate their previously fragmented membership system to CIVICRM an open source customer relationship management system. BISA are now using the system to manage membership and a newsletter delivery system for ~ 200 members and a further ~300 newsletter recipients.
- We moved our meeting venue from the city to an inner suburban pub serviced by a new Adelaide tram service. The move was prompted by the difficulty in obtaining a quiet city venue to facilitate discussion.
- Twitter and Facebook accounts for APANA SA were established.
- A number of members have shown interest in APANA's new cloud computing initiative and have joined SKY.
- Membership numbers dropped marginally over the course of the year. The drop is expected top be offset by the gain of two web hosting accounts for the Adelaide Touring Cyclists and Beyond Oil South Australia in September.