

BITS & PIECES

ICPA WA Newsletter



*Working together to ensure access
to appropriate education for all
regional Western Australians.*

From Your President's Desk

It has now been more than eighteen months that our lives have been impacted as a result of COVID-19. Just when it looks like COVID-19 is becoming controlled it rears its head just to remind us it is still very much a part of our lives. Over the course of the next few months, it would appear that as a nation, we should be able to re-open; until COVID-19 has other ideas. This will be great news for families that have been isolated from one another.

Within the ICPA family the biggest impact has most definitely been on our boarding students. While WA has not endured the long closure of schools and increased duration of online learning from home that has occurred in some Eastern States, there have been families in WA and Australia wide that have endured the anxiety of when, and if, children boarding away from home will be able to return. For some students, it has been many months. Parents have had to make the agonising decision of whether to keep children home or return them to boarding not knowing when they may be able to see them again.

Throughout this period ICPA has been lobbying State and Federal Governments for a consistent approach enabling boarding students to cross interstate borders to access their education: #nobordersforboarders. ICPA (Aust) together with all ICPA States and Territories presented a Joint Submission on the 'Development of a National Framework for Students who attend Boarding School across State and Territory borders.' As a result, the National Cabinet endorsed the National Code for Boarding School Students to deliver a national approach to support the travel needs of boarding school students during COVID-19 lockdowns.

It has taken a long time to get to this point. It has also taken a lot of perseverance and collaboration across all facets of ICPA. It is an example of what can be achieved when an organisation communicates and works together.

As a State Council that same collaboration and communication between the members and Branches is integral for State Council to be able to address issues that members may be experiencing. Each State Council member has a Branch to mentor and at our three face-to-face meetings each Councillor is required to provide an update on the Branch they mentor. At different times, all Branches have different levels of activity, however, in spite of how active your Branch has been it is integral that when



you are contacted by a State Councillor you provide them with an update. Even if it is just to say everything is okay and at present there are not really any member issues. That communication is vitally important.

2022 marks the 50th ICPA WA State Conference 'A long way down the track' to be held on Friday 18th March 2022 at The Pagoda Spa and Resort, Como. Conference is being convened by the Midwest Branch and will be followed by a banquet dinner in the historic Pagoda Ballroom. It will be a very nostalgic day as we look at how far we have come 'a long way down the track.'

ICPA WA have been invited by the Department of Education to be a part of the System Alliance Education Conversation together with a number of other stakeholders. This will be a most valuable opportunity to be a voice for ICPA and its members amongst other education associations.

As State President I was invited to attend the 100-year celebration of WACSSO (WA Council of State School Organisations) at Parliament House. WACSSO are the peak body representing parents (P & Cs) of public-school students in WA and work tirelessly to advance public education in WA so that every student has the best chance to realise their potential. So, in many ways WACSSO offer a voice for parents and their children similar to ICPA. In his address, Premier Mark McGowan commented how amazing it was that a largely volunteer not-for-profit organisation can celebrate 100 years, and how many not-for-profits do not experience longevity. So, to this end ICPA can be very proud of reaching the 50-year milestone.

It is most disappointing, especially in its 50th year, that for a second year in a row the Federal Conference had to be postponed and a hybrid event held in its place. Hopefully, by August 2022 all interstate borders will be open, and everyone will have the freedom to attend the 2022 Federal Conference in Perth.

The whole education sector has faced many challenges as a result of COVID-19, however the exposure to online learning and difficulties faced by families, both urban and rural, can only aid the understanding of ICPAs advocacy for regional, rural and remote families and rural schools in the future. The experience has also presented many opportunities and abilities for the education sector to continue to look at new ways for children to be able to

access a quality education, no matter their location or situation. ICPA WA will continue discussions with the Department of Education in this area.

ICPA WA is still looking for an editor of the 'Bits & Pieces' magazine as Raelene Hall is stepping down. 'Bits & Pieces' is an important source for getting information and stories out to our members. I encourage all Branches and members to help contribute to this publication by way of branch news, photos, member's news, accomplishments or any information that you would like to share with the rest of ICPA WA, even holiday destinations, especially in WA.

If anyone is interested in becoming the next Editor, please contact WA Secretary, Kym Ross. WASecretary@icpa.com.au No previous experience is necessary. If you think you may be interested, but are not sure what is involved, we can put

you in contact with Raelene to find out more information. There are only two editions per year and Raelene is only too willing to offer her assistance.

By the time you receive this edition the Year 12 students will be in the final days of their school years. I would like to congratulate the Class of 2021 and wish them well for their future and whichever career pathway they chose.

Best wishes to all, enjoy the festive season and we look forward to seeing you at our 2022 50th State Conference.

Sally Brindal
State President

SAVE THE DATE

2022 State Conference:

The Midwest Branch are convening the 50th Annual ICPA WA State Conference 'A long way down the track', to be held on Friday 18th March at the Pagoda Spa and Resort, Como. Preparations have now commenced with the Midwest Branch busy with the organising and fundraising.

A banquet dinner will be held post Conference in the Historic Ballroom, Pagoda Spa and Resort. Dress code will be cocktail attire and it will have a black and gold theme.



EDITOR'S MUSINGS



Hello everyone and welcome to your final edition of Bits & Pieces for 2021

It's such a cliched expression but... 'where did this year go?' I don't think it's just my age either as I've heard many young people ask the same question.

Whatever the year has been like for you and

your family I hope that you have some time over the next few months to relax, breathe and spend a little time doing all the things that bring you joy and happiness.

It's wonderful to have an article featuring some of our small rural schools who combined together to allow their students to enjoy a fun filled camp in Perth. What a great idea.

Our State President Sally Brindal had an interesting time whilst trying to get out of Longreach after Federal Conference as she explains on page 19.

Councillors have been busy spreading the word across the state about ICPA WA from field days in the Midwest to the 100th Anniversary races at Landor, as well as meeting face to face in Perth.

Don't forget to mark your calendar for our 50th anniversary conference on FRIDAY 18th MARCH 2022. What a milestone celebration it will be. I recall how amazing it was to celebrate the 40th and here we are another ten years down the track. The theme is 'A Long Way Down the Track'

Next year will be my last as Editor. It's time for me to move on and open the door for someone else to have the wonderful opportunities I have had through ICPA over many years. Please feel free to contact me if you think you might like to take on the role in 2023. I'm more than happy to help.

I wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and may good things come your way in 2022.

Raelene Hall
Editor

Cover image: Penny Johns, Meekatharra Air Branch Treasurer and Chandra Ridley, Meekatharra Air Branch, and State Councillor, in their 1920's themed outfits at the 100th anniversary of Landor Races

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Cold Weather Didn't Deter Visitors

On the first Wednesday and Thursday of September each year, the town of Newdegate hosts one of the state's premier agricultural events. The Newdegate Field Day has grown to become one of the most renowned and recognised in the Wheatbelt.

Machinery, technology and research, animals and livestock and family interest exhibits make this two-day event one not to be missed, promoting and celebrating agriculture.

The prediction of cold weather unfortunately held true but, this did not deter visitors from attending and with, no field day in 2020, it was exciting to once again be back at this annual event with a stand inside the family interest pavilion manned by two State Councillors in Sam Greay and Kym Ross and the much-loved and iconic ICPA donut stand run by members of the Lakes District branch and a team of approximately 40 volunteers.

This well-known stand is often the first stop for many visitors on arrival and their last before heading home.



Claire Walter (President ICPA Lakes Branch), Tim Walter (Lakes Branch) and Lynette Gittos, (Lakes Branch) busy at the ever popular donut stall

This has been a profitable fundraiser for the branch for many years and 2021 has been the most successful yet, with thousands of donuts sold and all funds raised going to support the work of ICPA.

Visitors must have missed their treat with no field day in 2020 and, as a result, these sugar-coated delights were fully sold out by 2.00pm on day 2 of the event – something that has never happened in the past. This equates to the sale of over 6000 donuts; a huge achievement.

This year the Lakes District branch also hopes to raise additional funds with the raffle of a beautiful quilt kindly donated by the Pingrup Patchwork Group.

Inside the pavilion, and out of the cold, it was wonderful to catch up with members, answer a variety of questions on topics such as accessing distance education and the review into the orange school bus services as well as to welcome new families. We thank the many visitors who stopped by.



Soil: A Book Review



Matthew Evans

'Soil – The incredible story of what keeps the earth, and us, healthy' by Matthew Evans, AKA The Gourmet Farmer

Soil provides the foundation of our existence and yet, for far too long, we have treated it like dirt.

Unlike dirt, soil is full of microbial, bacterial and fungal life and, just as our own gut microbes affect our health, a thriving population of diverse microbes are what makes

the difference between healthy, living soil and dirt.

Evans takes a deep dive into the research and interprets in a very readable way, the science of what healthy soil is; the interplay between soil life, plants and animals and the utmost importance of preserving and creating healthy soils for the future of our planet.

Evans explains why if, on a global scale, we could improve the health of our soils, and thus capture more carbon, even by just a few percent, it would make an enormous positive impact on climate change.

I acknowledge that the topics he discusses and the changes he is advocating for will challenge the thinking of many people, especially farmers and pastoralists (of which I am one) but, to quote Charles Darwin, "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change."

I think this book is a must-read for everyone, but especially for anyone who eats.

Emma Foulkes-Taylor
Yuin Station
Midwest ICPA Branch



PHOTO COMPETITION



Get those cameras and shutters moving!
ICPA WA are running a photo competition, for members,
at the 50th ICPA State Conference, 18th March 2022

Theme: 'OUR TRACKS AND THE PLACES THEY LEAD'

CATEGORIES

Primary school age
Secondary school age
Adult

Maximum 3 entries per person. Entries to be sent to: WASecretary@icpa.com.au.

Name, address and category to be included. **Closing date 4th March 2022**

Entries will be displayed at State Conference

Winner from each category will be announced on the day.

100 Years of Red Dust Racing

100 years of Red Dust Racing was celebrated at Landor on the first weekend of October.

In 1921 stockmen from nearby stations were having a day off and began a debate about whose horse was the fastest. From there the Eastern Gascoyne Race Club was formed. This turned into an annual event only ever stopping during WW2 and in 2020 for the pandemic.

An estimated 2000 people, the largest crowd ever recorded, came through the gates, some travelling huge distances to get there.

For the first time there were market stalls on the Saturday and Monday mornings. In amongst the amazing goods, including leather work and hand made trinkets from local artists, ICPA WA had an information table telling people of the fantastic work ICPA does for rural and remote families.

It was fantastic to have Chandra Ridley, one of our awesome state councillors and the wonderful Claire Mahony, Meekatharra Air Branch President there to help spread the word about ICPA.

While the adults caught up with old mates over a frosty beverage and watched the horses trackside, the kids all had a great time with pony rides, the bouncy castle and swimming and playing in the creek with new and old friends.

Everyone got into the 1920s theme for the weekend. The kids all looked gorgeous at the Friday night disco in the beautifully decorated hall. Saturday was 1920s race day fashion followed by the Landor ball and it was great to see so many people dressed up.

The Committee and volunteers put so much into making this a fantastic weekend for everyone. So many people work quietly behind the scenes to make Landor as special as it is. One of these is the amazing Lindsay Newland, whose art is on all the merchandise and she works tirelessly every year to decorate the hall to make it magical for all. This year she also painted a very special panorama of Landor race course and the camp grounds to commemorate the 100 years.

There really are a lot of very special people in the bush. What a great community of people we have out here.



New and old friends: Cassandra Moody, Elle Newland and Isla Ford at Landor Races

**Louise Ford
Paroo Station
ICPA State Councillor**

Carla Hyde, (Eastern Districts Branch ICPA), Lachlan Hall (Bulloo Downs Station) and Chandra Ridley (Meekatharra Air Branch and WA State Councillor) with the ICPA promotion at Landor Races



Maureen Woods (Mandurah), Meg Forrester (Meekatharra) and baby Emily



WA State Council Meeting

ICPA WA State Council came together at SIDE, (School of Isolated and Distance Education), Leederville for two days of face-to-face meetings on 13th and 14th October. The agenda outlined a very full programme.

State Councillors took the opportunity to update their fellow Councillors on the progress of their Portfolios providing updates on motions from the 2021 WA State Conference. As a mentor to a branch, each Councillor also provided an update on Branch happenings across our State and brought any member issues to State Council.

On Wednesday State Council met with Martin White, Executive Director Transperth System, Regional and School Bus Services to discuss a number of school bus issues that have been raised by members including the Road Travel Subsidy, bus routes and eligible and complimentary passengers. Unfortunately, Patrick Abromeit, Senior Policy Advisor at Department of Premier and Cabinet was unable to attend. ICPA WA will be making a submission on the Student Transport Assistance Policy Framework Review to the Public Accounts Committee.

Planning for the 2022 ICPA WA 50th State Conference 'A Long Way Down the Track' and banquet dinner is well underway and will be held at the Pagoda Resort and Spa, March 18th. Sam Messina, Midwest Branch, State Conference convenor, presented an update on the convening committee's progress. Cont. overleaf



Left to right: Naomi Obst, Vice President, Jane Cunningham, Chandra Ridley, Michelle Abbott, Treasurer, Martin White, PTA, Sam Gray and Sally Brindal (President)



It's time to
**RENEW YOUR
MEMBERSHIP**

2022 Membership Year Open

ICPA annual membership subscription opens on 15th November for the membership year 1st January to 31st December.

A renewing member can pay their annual membership through the online payment method. Log in to the website www.icpa.com.au using your username or email and the password (Note: If you have forgotten your password use the 'Forgot your Password' function – please **do not** setup a new user) click on **Renew Now** and select your state. <https://icpa.com.au/wa/membership/renewal>

New members click on **Join Now** and follow the prompts. <https://icpa.com.au/au/membership>

Online payment is preferred though manual payments are accepted by contacting your Branch Treasurer. Branch information can be found on the ICPA WA website.

On Thursday State Council met with Lisa Rodgers, Director General of Education and Jim Bell, Deputy Director General of Student Achievement. Increasing awareness and access to the School of Special Educational Needs (SSEN) program for both parents and teachers was discussed. SSEN is an extremely valuable resource, however State Council expressed concerns that families in need were either unaware of the program or were not being offered information about SSEN.

As a result of field day enquiries, the promotion of access to SIDE (School of Isolated and Distance Education) as an alternative choice to sending children away for boarding, especially for Year 7, was identified as an area requiring improvement.

Questions regarding the frequency and timing of school reviews for both primary and SOTA schools, public school review report availability and expectations of staff during school reviews at rural schools were raised with Lisa and Jim.

State Council were provided with an update on the 2021 Federal Conference, with agenda motion and supplementary motion voting determined. An update was also provided on the initial planning for Federal Conference 2022, which is to be convened by WA State Council in Perth.

Reviews of areas of the ICPA WA Constitution were discussed as well as updates and changes to State Councillor profiles and Portfolio profiles on the website.

Eva Colic, Regional Community Engagement Manager joined us on Thursday afternoon and provided an update on Telstra developments and discussed concerns raised by members.

Thank you to all our members for your continued support this year. As always, despite the challenges, ICPA WA State Council are working hard to ensure appropriate access to education for all regional and remote families.

Jane Hughes
WA ICPA Publicity Officer



Eva Colic, Regional Community Engagement Manager Telstra. Sally Brindal, WA State President with Lone Members Officer, Sam Greay at State Council's Face to Face meeting in October

Pilbara Branch News

by Karen Watherston

The Pilbara Branch has one fundraising event a year and it is the Marble Bar races held in July in Marble Bar.

The date this year coincided with the 3-day lock down in Perth so due to the security being unable to come from the metropolitan area the races were cancelled at the last minute. Some of our members have eaten many sausages over the last few months!

The Rodeo fundraiser is usually completed by the Port Hedland SOTA P&C but they were unable to do it this year so they kindly offered it to us. Rio Tinto were very helpful and allowed us to hold our raffle on the day which was fabulous.

There were lots of people and Pol Edmonds and I had a great day catching up with people as we mingled, selling tickets (probably more talking than selling to be honest!)

We raised over \$900 and would have sold more but people did not have cash. Note to others in the future there is an app you can get on your phone that means it is turned into an eftpos facility and there is no need to handle cash.

It was really pleasing that, this year, the prize winners were predominately long term supporters of ICPA. Thank you for your support.

First prize of a sway donated by Smirkeys sports went to Darren Clark of Karratha.

Second prize of an Icebox donated by Yalleen Pastoral Company went to Emma Spong from Sponghaul Transport

Third prize was camping chairs donated by 80 Mile Beach Caravan park and won by Chris Paterson who is presently at Meedo station but has been on many pastoral properties in the Pilbara.

Fourth prize was a very generous BK8 Outfitters voucher donated by the lovely Katie. This was won by Alex from Roy Hill Station. Thanks to Katie and BK8 also for the shade they provided us with on the day.

Fifth prize was a voucher from Kimberley Country donated by Anna Mahoney and Lance Coppin from Muccan Station and won by Zac from Karratha.

Thanks to all those who helped, especially my family who were amazing.

As always many hands make light work and, if ICPA is to survive, the load needs to be shared and not fall on the shoulders of the few.



Darren Clark of Karratha was the lucky winner of the first prize in the Pilbara Branch's raffle



Chris Paterson took home the third prize in the Pilbara Branch raffle

FIELD DAY BACK IN 2021

It was great that the Mingenew Midwest Expo was able to proceed in 2021 having been postponed last year due to COVID-19. After a very wet July and start to August the sun shone brightly for the two day Expo on 11th and 12th August.

Mingenew is situated one hour south of Geraldton and is one of the largest inland grain receival points in the Southern Hemisphere. Mingenew Expo is the largest agricultural show in the Midwest with both agricultural and lifestyle exhibitors. Businesses from all over the State showcase their latest and greatest products. There were machinery displays, a livestock arena, working dog displays, children's entertainment, showbags plus many more.

It was the perfect opportunity to expose the local rural community to the great work that ICPA WA does in

lobbying for equity of access to education for all regional, rural and remote families.

ICPA WA were located in the Home and Living Pavillion, along with schools, home and lifestyle products, wineries, fashion and numerous other small stall holders. Midwest Branch members were rostered throughout the two days, providing a local point of contact for current members, as well as talking to potential new members about all the areas that ICPA WA is involved with.

The Midwest Branch are convening the 50th Annual State Conference on 18th March 2022 and look forward to both members old and new joining ICPA WA as we celebrate 50 years with a banquet dinner after conference.

Kim Batten (Midwest Branch), Sally Brindal (Midwest Branch and ICPA WA State President), Emma Foulkes-Taylor (Midwest Branch)



Combined Small Schools Camp

Recently the Year 5 and Year 6 students from Dumbleyung, Kukerin, Nyabing and Pingrup primary schools all went on a week long camp to Perth. The students made their base at Bickley Outdoor Camp School, but then travelled to different venues around Perth and Fremantle.

The camp was filled with visits to venues that many of the students had not been to before. The students were lucky enough to visit The Perth Mint, Fremantle Prison and Roundhouse, Parliament House, WA Museum Boola Bardip, Cicerello's Sea Critters Tour, SciTech (including the Omni Theatre) and Araluen Botanic Park.

The students also had opportunities to visit the Dinosaur Park in Kings Park, the Wellington Street Playground, have fun bouncing around and climbing walls at Latitude Perth

in Edgewater and also canoeing and flying on the zip line across the Bickley Brook Reservoir.

Though the camp was extremely busy and tiring the students all had so much fun and are still talking about it now. Despite being from four different schools all the students mixed with each other respectfully and responsibly and I am sure that new friendships have been created.

Special mention must go to the three teachers who gave up their own family lives for five days to look after all the students and help make the camp fun and enjoyable.

Karl Moll
Camp Coordinator

All ready for some zip lining



Wall Climbing at Latitude Perth





Is there any fish in there?



Cicerellos Sea Creatures Tour



Some safety instructions before trying canoeing



REVISE WA

Retired Educator Volunteers for Isolated Students Education
In conjunction with Isolated childrens Parents Association Inc WA

REVISE (Retired Educator Volunteers for Isolated Students Education) is a voluntary organisation that assists rural and remote children with their educational needs. The scheme provides tutors and retired teachers who volunteer their time to go bush to assist parents of rural and remote children in the supervision of their children's education received through the School of Isolated and Distant Education (SIDE) and regional Schools of the Air (SOTA). REVISE offers much needed relief at times when parents may find it difficult to adequately supervise their education.

Where help is needed REVISE will be sure to assist if there is a volunteer available. If you are a parent requiring help and would like more information please contact Sue Potter REVISE co-ordinator revisewa@gmail.com



Gordon Homewood is in pre-primary at Kalgoorlie School of the Air. Hailing from Wandinong Station, Mt Magnet, Gordon is a seasoned hand at what goes on at mustering time as seen by his fabulous drawing.

I Bought a Bus



At the start of October I went home for the end of term expecting a perfectly normal school holiday. Instead, halfway through the first week, I came across an auction which held a bargain I couldn't turn down. It was on this day Mum purchased a full size, completely stripped out, ex-Transperth bus, on my behalf, for the sum of \$250. I found out it had a new motor and gearbox worth \$10,000!

I'm going to deck it out with a kitchen, shower, toilet, bed and a few couches so the boys and I can chill on my bus. I can't wait.

**Lachlan Hall
Bulloo Downs Station
Newman**



Reward ICPA With Your Recyclable Containers

Are you saving all your containers that can now be recycled for 10c per item?

Did you know you can donate the proceeds to ICPA WA?

ICPA WA has signed up to the Containers for Change program. So while you are being kind to the environment you can donate to ICPA WA. What a bonus!





Department of
Education

GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

INFORMATION

The Western Australian Department of Education makes available a student Boarding Away from Home Allowance (BAHA) to families with children who are attending primary and/or secondary school.

The allowance for 2021 for the full year is \$1 477 subject to confirmation that you have received the Commonwealth Government Services Australia (Centrelink) Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Boarding Allowance or Second Home Allowance for the whole of the year.

The payment is available on a pro-rata basis for those who have only received the AIC allowance for part of the year, but will not be paid for boarding periods covering less than one month.

Applications must be completed annually.

ELIGIBILITY

The BAHA allowance is only available to parents/guardians who permanently reside in Western Australia, and have qualified for the Centrelink AIC Boarding Allowance or Second Home Allowance and have children who attend a primary and/or secondary school located in Western Australia and is living away from the primary family residence. Students enrolled full time at a tertiary institution (e.g. TAFE) are not eligible.

To be eligible to receive the BAHA payment, you must supply proof with your application that you have prior approval from Centrelink to receive the AIC Boarding Allowance or Second Home Allowance.

Confirmation of Eligibility (Important)

The applicant is required to provide a photocopy of a statement/letter for the AIC Boarding Allowance or Second Home Allowance that you will have received from Centrelink with the application.

The applicant must be the parent/guardian who is legally responsible for the student's care, welfare and development and whose name appears on the AIC advice received from Centrelink.

Applications that do not comply with these requirements will be returned for correction.

From time to time, the Department will conduct random audits to ensure applicants meet the eligibility guidelines.

2021 BOARDING AWAY FROM HOME ALLOWANCE

APPLYING

Please complete the attached application form and return it to the Department of Education as soon as possible along with the supporting documentation which shows your Centrelink AIC Boarding Allowance or Second Home Allowance entitlement.

Please use a separate application form for each student.

PROCESSING

In early Term 4, we will verify AIC payments for the remainder of the year through the enrolment status of the student with their relevant boarding provider. When this is acknowledged, the payment process commences.

Should your details change at any time during the year, please notify the Department of Education.

PAYMENTS

Although applications may be submitted earlier in the year please be aware that payments are not made until the fourth term of each year.

In cases where a student attends a Residential College (i.e. Albany, Broome, City Beach, Esperance, Geraldton, Merredin, Moora, Narrogin, Northam); or where a student attends a public WA College of Agriculture (i.e. Cunderdin, Denmark, Harvey, Morawa, Narrogin), the payment will be sent directly to the boarding provider.

Where the student attends another boarding facility, the payment may be sent to either the boarding provider or directly to the parent.

Please indicate your payment preference on the application form. Payment is made subject to all application requirements being met.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Financial Planning and Resourcing Directorate
Department of Education
151 Royal Street
EAST PERTH WA 6004

Telephone: (08) 9264 4516
Facsimile: (08) 9264 5162
Email: student.allowances@education.wa.edu.au

**The closing date for applications is
Friday, 26 November 2021.**

Quarantined in a Taxi!

The 50th ICPA (Aust) Federal Conference was held in the beautiful town of Longreach, Queensland on 3rd and 4th November. It still feels surreal to think that I was able to attend in person. It was an absolute miracle that all five State Presidents were physically present. The extraordinary lengths that some delegates went to, in order to attend, highlights the significance of such a milestone event.

The pre-conference function at the Qantas Museum was a great setting to commence the Federal Conference celebrations. Attendees were treated to an ICPA historical slide show celebrating 50 years of ICPA, projected onto the side of a Qantas Aircraft.

Conference was held in the Longreach Civic and Cultural Centre and was attended by delegates both face to face and online. The hybrid event did create a few technical challenges which Federal Council took in their stride; for voting "REFRESH" was the word of the day! The Australian

Pre-conference Light Show at the Qantas Museum



Boarding Schools Association (ABSA) provided immeasurable technical support and assistance. Motion presentations were timetabled for sessions two and three each day, to help combat the five different time zones of attending members. Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions many guest speakers were unable to attend in person, so delivered a video message instead. Rupert McCall, an Australian Poet of international renown addressed Conference and recited a poem penned specifically for ICPA. Over the course of the two days 65 motions were passed. Comment was made that it has been a very long time, if ever, that all motions have been passed at a Conference.

The Conference dinner was held on the banks of the Thompson River at Smithy's Outback Dinner and Show supporting the theme of 'Fifty and Fabulous with a touch of Gold.' It was the perfect evening: clear skies, warm weather and great company.

After two full days of Conference, it was great to unwind at The Branch, in Longreach where everyone could relax after the formalities.

At the time of travel there were no border restrictions for Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia (WA) delegates however, it was only due to the New South Wales (NSW) State President, Kate Warby, living in a Queensland Government declared border bubble, Moree, and chartering a flight to Longreach, that she was able to attend.

It is well known that circumstances surrounding COVID-19 can

Members and guest enjoying conference dinner on the banks of the Thompson River





Sally Brindal, WA State President, and Kate Warby, NSW State President, quarantining in their taxi

change rapidly, and I nearly did not make it back to Western Australia without the need to self-isolate for 14 days. Brisbane Airport was declared a hotspot by the WA Government due to COVID-19 cases in South Goondiwindi, from residents who had transitioned through Brisbane Airport. Fortunately, that transition was the day before I flew into Brisbane on the way to Longreach; that was a bit too close for comfort!

Then, on Thursday 4th November, the day before we left the Queensland Government declared the border bubble of Moree withdrawn due to an outbreak of 59 COVID-19 cases being declared in a Moree aboriginal community. Despite the charter flight having all the necessary paperwork, when it left from

the outskirts of Moree, an overzealous airport official notified Longreach of an Outback Emergency! Kate and I shared a taxi to the airport and were promptly greeted by the Police and the Queensland Emergency Disaster Recovery Response Officer (QEDRRO), the local physiotherapist. Kate, myself and the taxi driver were immediately ordered to put on masks. We had to provide evidence of our Queensland travel passes, provide a detailed itinerary of our travel movements for the past seven days, including all sites visited in Longreach.

Kate lives to the east of Moree in Gravesend and, despite having not been in Moree for at least 14 days, Kate and the pilot were a major concern to the QEDRRO, and because we were in the taxi, so too was the taxi driver and myself! The charter aircraft pilot did not alight the aircraft in Longreach, he was quarantined in the plane, and Kate, myself and the taxi driver were quarantined in the taxi, while the Queensland Government Health were notified and a decision to be made on future developments. Our taxi was the only one in Longreach and the only flight for the day due to leave in a short while. Long story short, after an hour and a half quarantined in the taxi the decision was made to COVID test Kate and the pilot and then everyone could go their merry way, thankfully. Oh, and the COVID tests did come back negative!

On reflection the whole situation was quite comical. One could say a comedy of errors. However, it does demonstrate the systems that are in place to keep Australians safe during these uncertain times are effective.

The Federal Conference was a great success in trying circumstances. Congratulations to Naomi Obst, WA State Vice President and Midwest Branch Secretary, on being nominated onto Federal Council. The 2022 Federal Conference is to be held in Perth on the 3rd and 4th August and I look forward to seeing you all there.

**Sally Brindal
WA State President**

Busting myths about the 3G closure in June 2024

To make sure our customers fully understand what the closure of our 3G network in 2024 means, here's the answers to some of the most common questions.

When will Telstra's 3G network close?

We'll close the network in June 2024 and not before. All of our 3G mobile base stations will remain in use and 3G coverage will remain unchanged until this date.

When Telstra upgrades an area, will they shut down 3G?

No, 3G will remain available even after an area is upgraded to 4G or 5G. Our 3G network will keep running until June 2024.

Will the coverage be the same on 4G as it is on 3G?

We're extending our 4G coverage to be equivalent to our current 3G coverage. We're also working to repurpose the spectrum that is used for our 3G services and reallocate it to 5G to meet future data needs.

Which new phones will work on 3G and 4G, and 5G when it comes to town?

Our website has a range of phones and devices that can cover all budgets and needs. Take a look at <https://www.telstra.com.au/mobile-phones> or visit your closest Telstra store for advice.

What upgrades do I need to make to my modems and farm equipment that has a SIM card? How do I know if it only works on 3G?

We expect typical internet of things (IoT) devices will have a 4G LTE or LPWAN migration solution within the next 24 months – well before the 3G closure date. Where deployed devices are 3G only and have an expected lifetime beyond our June 2024 3G closure, we'll work with you to plan for the replacement of your devices and in a manner consistent with any specific contractual obligations we have with you and in line with Australian Consumer Law.

Why does my new 4G phone have less bars of coverage than my 3G phone?

Fewer signal bars doesn't indicate less service. There are no standards for signal bars – the way they display on your device reflects vendor manufacturing decisions. Signal bars also vary between mobile technologies. For example, 4G is a more advanced technology than 3G, meaning 4G can operate effectively at lower signals. [source]

Why do you need to close 3G when it works just fine?

Telstra is committed to building a connected future so everyone can thrive and by upgrading our network right across Australia we are ensuring that regional Australia doesn't fall behind the city experience. 4G and 5G deliver a vastly superior experience to 3G, delivering faster speeds and the ability to do things like stream faster or make video calls.

I live on the edge of coverage for 3G. What will this mean when 4G is rolled out?

Generally, you'll receive coverage, data speeds and calling capability equivalent to, or better than your 3G service today. In many cases, 4G will improve speeds substantially but in some very remote areas this improvement may only be slight.

How long will my 3G handset be supported?

A 3G only handset will work where there is 3G coverage available until the network is switched off in June 2024, but as we continue to upgrade 3G only areas to 4G, it may be time to consider an upgrade. Similarly, there are some older 4G devices that are not enabled with 4G voice capability (VoLTE). While these 4G non-VoLTE devices would still work for data, they will not be able to make voice calls once 3G is closed in June 2024 so these too will need to be upgraded. If you are unsure about what this means for your device visit one of the Telstra stores or contact our team.

Can I use a 3G only handset on the 4G network?

No, you'll need a 4G VoLTE compatible handset.

When will 5G be available in my area?

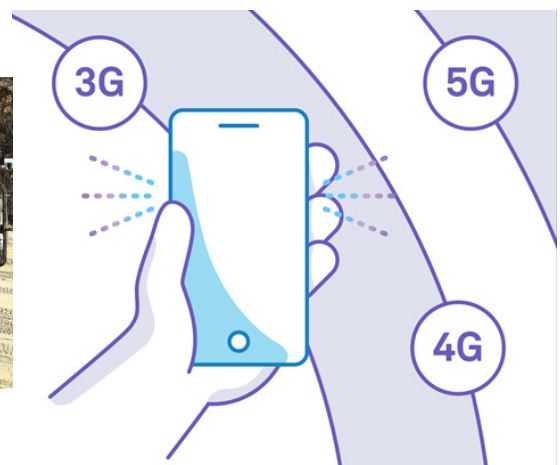
We now have more than 3,900 5G sites on-air in more than 240 cities and towns across Australia. More than 75% of Australia's population now has access to our 5G network where they live. We're continuing to roll out 5G to more parts of our cities, suburbs, regional and rural areas. For more information go to our coverage maps or Get the facts on 5G.

I run my business EFPTOS over 3G – will my equipment work on 4G?

No, but we've got a range of 4G devices already certified and available. We suggest you speak to your Telstra representative to discuss what's right for you.

Will 3G be switched off at individual towers or all at once?

We'll switch-off our 3G sites simultaneously in June 2024. There won't be any sites closed before this date and 3G coverage won't be impacted as we upgrade our network.



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Working together to ensure access to appropriate education for all regional Western Australians.

