

## Completing The Jigsaw Puzzle – Another Perspective of Extension Activity Funding in Future

*Mike Weise. Independent Extension Practitioner / Consultant. Warrnambool Victoria.*



*The way you frame your work and its impact in Question 1 will have a very marked effect on where you see the resources coming from to fund it*

The way you frame your work and its impact in Question 1 will have a very marked effect on where you see the resources coming from to fund it. The current cuts are mainly around agricultural productivity and welfare matters, however if you frame your work as “workforce development”, “natural asset enhancement” or “regional development”, the palette to paint the jigsaw picture possibly expands.

Close your eyes for a while and imagine your extension role and particularly its impact. When you’ve got a picture of it, try seeing it as a jigsaw piece and you are just putting that last piece, your piece, in place to complete a whole picture. This article asks two questions:-

1. What does the whole picture look like?
2. Is the picture getting bigger or smaller?

These two questions set up an exploration of where other sources of extension funding might be and how to access them and I tell our story in dairy in western Victoria – its one approach you may consider.

What does your jigsaw picture look like, is it?

- a) You and 15 other people working as a team to deliver a practice change project with landholders in a certain commodity across the nation?
- b) You as a single operator trying to deliver some new research out to farmers?

- c) You as part of a natural resource body and your team use facilitated group processes as an agent for change amongst the landholders?
- d) You providing material for a web site and landholders use it to improve their farms?
- e) You as a small cog in the whole Australian Agricultural system and you’re located in its’ innovation sector? or
- f) You are a member of your district’s regional development team and improving farm profitability is critical to your agriculturally dependent economy?

How did you answer the jigsaw size question? For many - smaller, resources are reducing in many places and APEN members are part of big cutbacks in NSW and Victoria. My thoughts, and many others in APEN are with you in this (in my opinion) short sighted decision. For a few though the answer is bigger, some RDC’s are increasing their extension spend to counter the state shortfalls.

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# Completing The Jigsaw Puzzle

*Funding for extension projects and others hasn't arrived by chance; the level of planning above has been a sizable investment to describe what an industry needs to develop and grow.*

With this wider view of funding the picture is looking a little better especially at the Federal level, where we have started to develop a National Food Plan [www.daff.gov.au/nationalfoodplan](http://www.daff.gov.au/nationalfoodplan) and we have the Oakeshott and Windsor deal for regional Australia. Both are targeting regional Australia and food production, the areas where nearly all APEN members see the results of their work. While we are in the early stages of developing a National Food Plan, greater human capacity at farm level and in our regions is a no brainer for the Government to help meet any food production growth targets.

As part of the Oakeshott and Windsor 'deal' there are two regionally specific federal agencies that are supporting regional development, Regional Development Australia (RDA) and Regional Australia Institute (RAI). RDA was in place before the last election but only in an advisory role, they now manage significant funds for regional development. In Western Victoria we are planning to use RDA funds to assist industry development and are talking with RAI about how they might join the team. So how did we prepare to join the regional development 'club' and attract these other funds?

Before I became an Independent Extension Practitioner / Consultant, I worked as Executive Officer of WestVic Dairy, a non for profit dairy development agency, using farmer levies and other sources of funding to advance the dairy industry in Western Victoria. The level of other funds (leverage) was important to the results we could achieve, the more the merrier as long as the work aligned with the farmer's strategic plan.

The first step in attracting other funds was to understand who our potential allies were. The starting point was a network analysis which identifies all the organisations and groups we interacted with and then some deep thinking about 'who' we should interact with. The resulting gap analysis found we did very little work with local government (LGA's) so we met

with several LGAs and found they welcomed having a single point of contact to talk to in what they imagined is an important industry. They wanted proof of our importance so we built a presentation to help them become 'dairy literate'.

We let them know that there are 1500 dairy farms in Western Victoria producing 23% of Australia's milk that's worth about \$ 1 billion at the farm gate and \$ 2 billion after value adding by the five major processors in our region. This explained the value of product but ignored completely all the other industries that are dependent on the dairy farms and milk. There were two ways we estimated the value of the dairy industry 'trinity' of stakeholders (farms, processors and service providers). We used an economic multiplier (x 3.8) for agricultural production at the farm gate to estimate our 'hoof print' in the regional economy and also built on some work our local university had done comparing the value of dairy output with Blue Gum tree plantation production. Both approaches indicated that the dairy industry contributes about \$ 4 billion, a significant 30% of the \$13.8 billion regional economy.

When we did these numbers we were blown away because although the Industry stakeholders intuitively knew dairy farming is important, the evidence hasn't been described in this way before. Those 1500 farms are dotted all over the region and are not in one large factory like say a car manufacturer and they therefore blend into the region like wallpaper. When we put together our numbers we invited ourselves to every LGA and shared the data with them and helped them become dairy literate and aware.

In a parallel project we started to work with State Government and the milk processors to build a strategic growth plan for the regions industry, called Down the Track (DTT). DTT set out to 'develop a strategic growth plan and a community ready to deliver it', the latter meaning we invested 50% of the \$100,000 project (funded by mainly by Government)



engaging the community to help build the plan and when it was finished they were ready to deliver on it. The three levels of Government were included in the 1000 people engaged in developing the plan and they now strongly advocate for DTT and resources to deliver it. The dairy industry leaders have become 'regional development' literate and can strongly deliver their messages to Government circles, because they're backed by DTT.

The reason for this story is that funding for extension projects and others hasn't arrived by chance; the level of planning above has been a sizable investment to describe what an industry needs to develop and grow. We are in a very strong position having gone through an inclusive process to plan our future. The list below provides some of the funding the industry has attracted in part because it owns a very well supported strategic plan and is an active member of the regional development community. I hope that if it's possible you can break into these other sources of funding and accelerate the development in your sector. Some extension jigsaw pictures are getting smaller but if you expand your thoughts on which picture you're in the development funds

are considerable more.

- Workforce development – meet with your RESJC Regional Education, Skills and Jobs Coordinator – Department of Education Employment & Workplace Relations
- State Small Business programs – We've managed to tap into Small Business Victoria programs and got financial management workshops specially tailored for groups of women farmers in Victoria.
- Catchment Management Authorities – Caring for your country programs
- AusIndustry funds for succession planning for farmers
- Office of Climate Change
- RDA - funding studies to inform future investments and regional industry capacity building
- Literacy programs are available from the Federal Government and these are not reading and writing they're for new understandings of say IT skills



*Background note: Mike recently stepped down as Executive officer of the regional dairy group – WestVic Dairy. He has had a long career in dairy education and extension starting in England and was working with DPI in Victoria with the dairy extension group in south western Victoria before taking up the WestVic Dairy role. He now has his own consulting business based out of Warrnambool. He is currently APEN Victorian regional coordinator and APEN Vice-President.*

## FROM THE EDITOR

APEN members provide a wide range of experience and knowledge on resourcing and implementing extension activities across mainly agricultural industries. Mike Weise in his paper on 'Completing the jigsaw puzzle' highlights opportunities to engage with local government and other Industry stakeholders to create awareness and source additional funding outside the normal government and R&D organisation extension funding processes. His case studies from the experience of the regional dairy group, WestVic Dairy, should be applicable to other industries in other parts of Australia. These case studies also highlight the significant value of primary industries to regional economies which can be further increased by sustained funding of innovative extension initiatives.

In his annual report to the recent APEN annual meeting, our president highlighted the completion of a new five year strategic plan for APEN, the launching of the new APEN website and the upcoming extension conference in NZ. Members are invited to check the APEN website to learn more about these new initiatives and how members can contribute to them and make use of them to develop their own skills.

Organisations such as APEN rely on the voluntary contributions from members. APEN provides opportunities for members to contribute, but more importantly individually benefit, through being regional or cluster coordinators. There are several vacancies for these positions are the moment as shown in the table on the last page, Austin and the MC would greatly appreciate offers from members in the relevant states to take up the challenge of filling these vacancies.

Our treasurer's report indicates that the organisation is in a very sound financial position. Some of these funds will be used to fund

APEN business development during 2013. This new activity will need support from all APEN members.

New APEN member, Anthony Kachenko, in his paper – 'Industry Development and Extension in the Australian Nursery Industry', highlights the importance of this industry in the Australian agricultural economy and how the Industry has taken up the challenge of providing extension services to its diverse group of members. This is a further example of the future of agricultural extension in Australia.

The issue of the future form, functions and funding of agricultural extension in Australia is a theme I plan to develop in future editions of ExtensionNet.

The newsletter editors rely on the valuable contributions from APEN members to provide an informative and relevant newsletter. I look forward to your ongoing assistance in generating relevant articles.

Over the past few issues, there have been articles on new technologies and approaches to extension, this newsletter continues a long tradition in extension of newsletters, in a hard (and soft) copy edition, providing concise information relevant to users.

This edition marks the transition of the editor role from Kate Charleston, after three years of valuable contributions guiding and developing ExtensionNet to your new editor Ian Teese. Thanks very much to Kate for an excellent job, well done which provides a very sound base for further development of ExtensionNet as both a professional development and support resource for APEN members and communication focus for APEN members.

*Ian Teese*



# Industry Development and Extension in the Australian Nursery Industry

**Dr Anthony Kachenko,**  
*Environmental and Technical Policy Manager, Nursery and Garden Industry Australia*



*Dr Anthony Kachenko*

The Australian nursery industry is arguably one of the largest and fastest growing industries under horticulture and employs over 45,000 people in more than 20,000 small to medium sized businesses with an annual value exceeding \$6 billion.

Australian nursery and garden businesses make up a multi-billion dollar industry that plays a vital part in the human (community and personal), environmental and economic wellbeing of Australia. The industry transcends all state borders, with nursery production spread across urban, rural and coastal environments. These areas are well established with some having been in existence and having industry representation for over 100 years.

The industry is far broader than the perceived 'ornamental' market, and supplies plant material to a wide array of end users including the forestry sector, revegetation/Landcare sector, landscapers, fruit orchardists, cut flower and vegetable growers. Indeed, over 10,000 product lines are grown across Australia in order to service these sectors to meet the needs of a growing population.

Opportunities are plentiful for the Australian nursery industry. A significant opportunity relates to the fact that all plants play a significant role in mitigating climate change through carbon sequestration and reducing the urban heat island effect in cities. In addition, the broad spread of distribution channels makes nursery products and services easily accessible to customers and consumers. The Australian way of life coupled with favourable weather further encourages an environment which is conducive to being outdoors all year.

Despite these opportunities, several challenges confront the nursery industry. For example, biosecurity policies of state and territory governments can impact on plant movement and market access. Environmental pressures such as drought, water restrictions and limitations on key resources – particularly skilled labour and efficient transport also impact on plant production. Of critical importance for the industry is the reality that government support services in the area of technical extension and research have been reduced dramatically which has placed greater emphasis on industry to undertake this role.

To address these challenges, the Industry Development Officer (IDO) network has been

a key project for the Australian industry for the past 15 years. The project is funded by the nursery pot levy which is payable on plastic bags, root control bags, degradable pots, punnets and any other container used for pots grown for resale. The broad aim of the IDO network is to enhance the ability of all nursery levy payers to remain current with industry developments, marketing activities and technical issues. The IDO network operates across all states and territories of Australia and services the key production areas.

The IDO network has been underpinned by the development and implementation of the Nursery Industry Accreditation Scheme, Australia (NIASA) which has evolved and is the foundational component to the Nursery Production Farm Management System. NIASA is an on farm industry best practice program to ensure production nurseries and growing media manufacturers maintain a benchmark standard and assist in continuous improvement. The Nursery Production Farm Management System also includes EcoHort – an Environmental Management System that demonstrates production nurseries and growing media manufacturers have sound environmental stewardship and natural resource management and BioSecure HACCP – an on-farm biosecurity program which helps production nurseries and growing media manufacturers manage biosecurity risks for both imported and exported materials. The IDO network is involved in the promotion, delivery and auditing of businesses engaged with the Nursery Production Farm Management System at a state or territory level.

Over the past decade, there have been dramatic changes to the business environment and as a result the IDO network has been required to change to ensure it is meeting the needs of levy payers. Recently, the development of the Nursery Industry Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) 2012-2016 identified the following three areas as key areas for future investment focus and industry direction:

- Grow the market for plants and vegetation in the urban environment.
- Communicate the benefit of plants to all industry sectors, influencers at all levels of government and consumers.

*Government support services in the area of technical extension and research have been reduced dramatically which has placed greater emphasis on industry to undertake this role.*

- Ensure industry has processes in place re governance and biosecurity to enable businesses to operate effectively.

Nursery and Garden Industry has the carriage of the overall management of the IDO network project. State and territory nursery industry associations are contracted to manage the on-ground activities to ensure effective and efficient delivery of outcomes. Involving state and territory based personnel to deliver key project objectives ensures that local participants value project interaction more and feel activities are consistent with priorities for their region or business.

An annual operating plan exists to guide the project and covers five key strategies:

1. Industry accreditation programs - management and auditing.
2. Improved technology adoption via training workshops.
3. Engagement with industry to facilitate program adoption and issues awareness.
4. Communications of technical developments.
5. Engagement on issues management.

Each of these strategies has a number of sub-strategies that range from the undertaking of NIASA audits annually through to annually participating in identifying priorities for nursery industry research investment. Outcomes from each of these sub strategies are reported on a quarterly basis against a set of key performance indicators which include 5% growth year on year in NIASA accredited businesses as well as the provision of an annual technical paper for summarising key industry research. The annual operating plan is reviewed annually with new targets set for the subsequent year.

Adoption of technology and outcomes from industry research is critical to the continued, sustainable development of the nursery industry. The IDO network is a fundamental and necessary resource to facilitate this across the Australian nursery industry. By 2016, NGIA has set a target that 1500 nursery levy payers will have had regular engagement with programs managed by the IDO network, and although early days, the industry is well on the way in achieving this.



*I never wear a watch, because I always know it's now -- and now is when you should do it.*

**Steve Mariucci, former coach of the San Francisco 49ers.**

## APEN 2012 Annual Report



The Eighteenth Annual General Meeting of the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network (Inc) was held by webinar/teleconference on Thursday 6th December, 2012 starting at 2.00pm eastern daylight saving time.

The AGM followed an inspiring webinar with presenter, Heather Watson, Executive Director of Farm Management Canada (FMC) speaking on "Where 'Best Practice' meets the 'Unknown Unknowns' - Changing Behaviour When You Don't Know What You Don't Know". The Power Point presentation will be featured in the next ExtensionNet and is available on the APEN website.

Austin McLennan, APEN President, welcomed everyone to the 2012 APEN AGM, speaking from a group activity in Katherine, NT where they had two local speakers as well as our webinar speaker. Twenty five people attended the AGM via their computers from Christchurch, New Zealand and across all of Australia to Perth in Western Australian. There had been 38 apologies from the almost 400 APEN members.

**Austin's report and the Treasurer's report from Greg Mills are presented on the following pages.**

### Election of APEN Management Committee members

Greg Mills and Denise Bewsell were elected for a second three year term as Regional Coordinators for NSW and NZ respectively. The WA Regional Coordinator (RC) position was not filled. A new Editor, Ian Teese was officially elected and welcomed.

The current committee is therefore:

President	Austin McLennan	Katherine, NT
Vice President	Mike Weise	Warrnambool, Vic & Victorian RC
Treasurer & NSW RC	Greg Mills	Moree, NSW
Secretary & Tasmanian RC	Sophie Folder	Dunorlan, Tas
Queensland RC	Greg Shannon	Tully, Qld
South Australian RC	Lauren Thompson	Adelaide, SA
New Zealand RC	Denise Bewsell	Christchurch, NZ
Northern Territory RC	Warren Hunt	Darwin, NT
Editor	Ian Teese	Melbourne, Vic
Western Australian RC	Vacant	

*Contact details for all committee members are included on the back page of ExtensionNet.*

The other official duty at the AGM was to appoint the Public Officer and the Auditor for 2012/2013. The APEN Public Officer is Rosemary Currie in her role as APEN Executive Secretary and the auditor is again, Bob Travers and Associates, Albury NSW.

# APEN President's Report for 2011/12

*Austin McLennan, President*

It is with pleasure that I present today the APEN President's report for 2011/12. In it, I am looking forward to outlining some of APEN's key achievements and activities over the past year, as well as some of the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead for our organisation.

From this report I hope it will be clear that APEN is realising its plan to be 'The (leading) organisation for extension professionals...' (APEN Corporate Statement) and that, importantly, we have been achieving this by providing a 'Platform for Professional Development, Networking and Representation' (APEN Mission Statement).

These three sign posts: Networking, Professional Development and Representation, remain critical indicators to me and the APEN Management Committee (MC) of where to focus our efforts as we work through how APEN can best deliver benefit to our members and the broader extension community and through that, to the industries and communities with which we work.

## **The state of extension**

I feel I cannot, however, begin this year's report without an acknowledgement that recent months have presented some very serious challenges for many of our members, especially for those working as extension professionals in the public sector in Australia.

To those Australian members who have lost their jobs (or are under threat of doing so) in the face of recent budget cuts by various governments, APEN continues to offer our support. Not only is this the time when professional networks can assist in finding new opportunities in the midst of adversity, but APEN is concerned that we, as the professional body representing extension, need to play a more active role in the public conversation.

To that end I would like to inform members that only this week APEN has written to the National Farmers' Federation outlining a raft of concerns about the current direction of public research, development and extension (RD&E) investment and its likely impacts on future productivity in the agricultural sectors within which most APEN members work. We will keep

*APEN is concerned that we, as the professional body representing extension, need to play a more active role in the public conversation.*

you informed about the outcome of this and other initiatives to highlight issues that we believe are important, not just to our members, but the industries and communities we aim to serve.

Yet, despite these challenges across significant parts of our network, or perhaps even because of them, it is important to be reminded of the vibrancy and energy, and even potential for further growth, that there still is within the extension discipline – and it is in that vein that I now wish to turn to the main areas that APEN has focussed on over the last 12 months.

## **Management Committee**

Throughout this year your MC has managed the affairs of APEN to ensure that we are indeed delivering value back to members. Within the MC, your elected Regional Coordinators, one from each state and New Zealand (NZ), have taken responsibility for managing the overall business of the organisation, including setting of strategy and the critical representation role of APEN.

## **Cluster Coordinators**

Ideally, each Regional Coordinator is supported by one or more 'cluster coordinators'. This is something we still need to work on, especially to help APEN deliver more activity on the ground in the regions. I can personally think of few better ways to develop your networks and professionalism in extension than by taking on a cluster coordinator role and doing it well.

So I wish to thank (and congratulate) those members who are our current cluster coordinators, and to particularly acknowledge those who came on board this year

- Bronwyn Walsh
- Ashley Bevan
- Aysha Fleming

We look forward to working with you and all our other cluster coordinators more next year and providing even more regional activities along the lines of the 'Farmer segmentation' workshop held in Melbourne earlier this year, the 'Project monitoring and evaluation' workshop in Tasmania and our own networking event that I am speaking from in Katherine today, in the Northern Territory.

## **Subcommittees**

Under the APEN constitution, we have the option of using subcommittees to bring in talent and energy from outside the management committee to assist with initiatives. This year the APEN MC has significantly ramped up our subcommittee structure to help us better progress work towards a number of key goals, although at the moment the majority of our subcommittee membership is still made up of elected MC members. I would like to remind all members that contributing to APEN subcommittees can be an excellent way of not just contributing to your professional organisation, but enhancing your own professional skills in areas that might be outside your main area of work.

For example, one of our most important subcommittees at the moment is the one in charge of putting together next year's APEN International Conference in New Zealand, or perhaps you are more policy-inclined and would like to get involved in some current work around postgraduate education in extension and professional accreditation schemes. There are many opportunities to help out (and help yourself in the process).

Teleconferences and strategic planning meeting, May 2012

The APEN MC conducts its formal business through teleconferences held every two months with additional meetings and correspondence as required.

This year we also invested in a major face to face MC meeting. Key outcomes of that two day meeting in Melbourne were not only a greater level of teamwork and understanding between those who attended, but a renewed strategic plan to guide the APEN MC over the next five years. I am pleased to announce the launch of APEN's new strategic plan today and it

Table 1: Record of APEN MC meetings and member participation, 2012

Y = Chairperson, - resigned, Y\* = Face to Face

Quorum: 4 Members														
Meeting	Date	Austin (President)	Tracey (Past Pres)	Kate A (WA)	Sophie (Tas)	Greg M (NSW)	Mike (Vic)	Lauren (SA)	Warren (NT)	Denise (NZ)	Greg S (Qld)	Kate C (Editor)	Roe (Secretariat)	Members
#121	02/02/12	Y		Y			Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	5
#122	29/03/12	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y	9
#122Melb	7-8/05/12	Y*	Y*		Y*	Y	Y*	Y*		Y*			Y*	6
#123	24/05/12	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	8
#124	19/07/12	Y			Y	Y	Y			Y	Y		Y	6
#125	13/09/12	Y	Y	-	Y	Y	Y	Daniel	Y	Y		Y	Y	9
#126	08/11/12	Y	Y	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	9
Total	Total	7	5	2	6	6	7	6	5	6	3	1	7	

will shortly be placed on the APEN website for all members to see.

To all MC members who have given their all throughout the year, I would like to give my personal thanks for your diligent participation and constructive contributions, both inside and outside our formal meetings.

The MC and APEN are also extremely fortunate to have the level of administration support provided by our Secretariat, Rosemary Currie. It is very clear to me that APEN would achieve little if we were not able to afford this Secretariat service, and we thank Roe for her consistency and constancy in providing it.

On the MC itself, 2011 sees us farewell Kate Ambrose from Western Australia. Unfortunately we have no replacement from WA at this time and will be looking to recruit one of our members from there to fill this role on a casual basis in the meantime. If you are interested, please let us know.

I also want to acknowledge Daniel Casement, executive director of Rural Solutions SA who filled in for our SA Regional Coordinator Lauren Thompson while she was away on leave for part of this year.

*I also look forward to the re-election today of Greg Mills (NSW) and Denise Bewsell (NZ), both of whom have been exemplary RCs over their first three-year terms.*

### Achievements

I move now to what APEN has achieved this year within our brief of 'providing a platform for networking, professional development and representation' for the extension community.

With our last major event being the 2011 APEN National Forum in 2011, we could have been expected to have a quieter year

for APEN in 2012, but it's arguable that that was the case.

To list our completed activities for 2012

- The APEN-supported 'Enabling Change and Innovation' webinars were a great success, with over 100 participants for each of these topical webinars. We look forward to this series continuing under the direction of APEN Webinar Coordinator John James, and in partnership with the Queensland Government and Citrix.
- 2012 again saw four editions of our quarterly ExtensionNet newsletter produced under the direction of editor, Kate Charleston. ExtensionNet has certainly been a flagship publication to be proud of under Kate's direction, so special thanks are due to Kate from us all for her or her work on ExtensionNet over the last few years. I would also like to thank her employer and direct managers in the Queensland Government for supporting Kate in her editor's role over that time, a progressive approach which is sadly not universal. Today we look forward to welcoming a new editor on board, Ian Teese, and hope that he will also enjoy the same level of support. Thanks again Kate.
- Throughout the year APEN regularly communicated with its members via monthly eBulletins, and occasionally via the APEN President Blog ([www.apenpresident.blogspot.com](http://www.apenpresident.blogspot.com)) but 2012 is also the year when we have started to really get our social media presence going, especially on LinkedIn (over 130 members and growing) and, more recently Twitter and Facebook. I would especially urge all APEN members (and interested non-members) to get onto LinkedIn and join our APEN group as I see it as the ideal platform for getting a lot more interaction happening between our widely spaced membership.
- At last, 2012 has seen the completion of our new and improved website which I am proud to announce is being launched today. Special thanks must go to Tasmanian member Leigh Walters who has done a tremendous amount of work in the background to get it to this stage.
- The best value mentoring scheme in extension today, the APEN mentoring scheme, was once again run with support from the DAFF 'Fast Tracking' project. Thanks to Peter Hanrahan and Roe Currie for their roles in ensuring this went ahead, and provided a very successful experience for all mentees who committed themselves to the process.
- Through 2012 APEN has continued to represent the interests of extension professionals at important national policy events and through other significant consultation processes. For example, as well as our recent letter to the NFF, APEN made a formal submission to the green paper on 'A National Food Policy for Australia'. On the international stage, APEN was present at this year's Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) meeting in the Philippines, ably represented by APEN member Roy Murray-Prior.
- It is perhaps fitting to end this roll-call of achievements with a reference to our major international conference coming up next year. While still in the planning phase, preparation for this event has certainly been a major activity for the Conference Committee over 2012, led



# APEN President's Report (Continued)

by Denise Bewsell, our NZ Regional Coordinator.

- It is important to remember that APEN is an International organisation with an international vision, and having next year's conference across the Tasman for the first time in our 18 year history is an important milestone. With the conference topic of 'Transformative change: chosen or unchosen Pathways to innovation, resilience and prosperity' we are sure there will be something there for everyone.
- Today, along with the release of our strategic plan, and website launch, I am pleased to announce that the call for papers is now open for this important conference, and I encourage you all to get your abstracts ready now. Once again, APEN will be partnering with the Extension Farming systems journal to make sure that all who want to will have the opportunity to be published in a peer-reviewed journal, another example of our ability to support you in your professional development.
- I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in Christchurch next year.

*With the conference topic of 'Transformative change: chosen or unchosen Pathways to innovation, resilience and prosperity' we are sure there will be something there for everyone.*

## Challenges and Opportunities – Building APEN's capacity

I want to conclude this year's report with a quick look into the future for APEN, and I am going to do this by looking back at the last APEN activity from 2012 I haven't yet spoken about – the 2012 APEN member's survey.

I have just received the final draft report on this year's survey from Lighthouse PD and look forward to posting it on the APEN website in the next few days for all interested members to read.

Overall I take heart from the report that those who replied are overall satisfied to very satisfied with their membership of APEN, and the results are a good indication that APEN is doing good work in its goal to provide a platform for networking, professional development and representation amongst its members and the broader extension profession.

However, as any good research does, the members' survey also highlighted some important challenges for our organisation.

- For example, the dominance of government sector employees among our membership highlights the need for APEN to become more representative of all the parties involved in the extension arena. A major part of this challenge is therefore how to better engage with extension in the private sector, especially among agribusiness and private consultants/advisors who may not have a strong connection with the term 'extension'. We know that this group is a key player in the extension landscape, so a key focus for APEN in 2013 will be for us to find the links and the value propositions that will enable this group to be more involved in our network.
- The member's survey report also identifies a role for APEN to further broaden the understanding of the meaning and value of 'extension' – something I also observed in last year's report when I concluded that 'APEN's relevance and impact should not be restricted to those who identify with the term 'extension' and with agriculture or environmental issues', noting that there is much in common between those doing work clearly labelled as 'extension' - and those working in other related fields, for example under such labels as 'health promotion' and/or 'community development'.

- However, how are we to do this? The member's survey report again highlights some of the challenges for APEN which has operated since its inception as a largely volunteer-run organisation, albeit with the assistance of a paid secretariat.
- For a group of professionals who deeply involved in building the capacity of those individuals, industries and communities with whom we work, we have arguably been slow to tackle the challenge of building the operational capacity of our own professional organisation.
- For this reason, I am excited, and I hope all members are, by the tender notice that went out in our most recent eBulletin calling for expressions of interest in the role of Business Development Officer with APEN in 2013. Enabled by a strong surplus from last year's successful forum in Armidale, and in line with our new strategic plan, the APEN MC is prepared to invest perhaps up to \$20,000 in 2013, not just in maintaining the organisation, but into growing it, and its influence. The call for tenders is still open and we are eagerly looking forward to making this key appointment early in the New Year.

## Concluding remarks

Finally, To the management committee as a whole, cluster coordinators, other dedicated members and, of course, to APEN Secretariat Roe Currie, I offer my sincere thanks. I believe we have a great team on the MC and one thing that makes it great is the balance we have between private and public sector employees. I believe this can only help APEN better represent all sides of the extension community as we move ahead.

Thank you to all our members who continue to see value in what APEN does and support the profession through your continuing membership.

Finally, on behalf of the MC, we thank our employers and families who enable us to do what we do for APEN.

I look forward to leading APEN into 2013 and thank you for your support thus far.

*Sincerely,*

**Austin McLennan, APEN President**

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# APEN Treasurer's Report for 2011 - 2012

**Greg Mills, Treasurer**

This report is based upon an audit of APEN's finances conducted by Bob Travers & Associates, Chartered Accountant, Albury, NSW.

The APEN financial position at June 30, 2012 was sound with total equity of \$94,303. This included \$70,000 in a term deposit which we had been able to add to during the year and receive \$4,258 interest from (an average of 5.3%pa) back to our operating account.

Most of the sponsorship income for the APEN Forum was received in the previous financial year while the expenses were paid in the 2011/2012 financial year. This contributed to APEN's operating loss for the 2011/2012 financial year being \$31,663.

Other unusual payments included:

- higher bank charges due to the forum registration income payments;
- the APEN Management Committee meeting held in May this year and more teleconferences;
- the production of a new APEN brochure;
- exclusion of Secretariat costs (postage, telephone, internet, fax, stationery) from the new Secretariat tender agreement (now included as reimburseables); and,
- initial partial payment for the redevelopment of the APEN website (to be completed in 2013).

Tables 1 and 2 record the profit and loss situation and Table 3 records the Assets and Liability situation.

The membership income shown here is still at the old rate of \$77 for ordinary members.

A healthy surplus allows APEN to provide free webinar attendance to members, to underwrite future conferences and forums as well as cluster activities and be able to offer tenders for the completion of tasks needed to keep APEN operating as a peak body.

*Table 1 Income and Expenses*

	2009 - 10 Total \$	2010 - 11 Total \$	2011 - 12 Total \$
<b>Income</b>			
Advertising	210	-	-
APEN Conference	22 998	7 770	110 791
APEN Roadshow workshops	1390	2 455	-
Shaping Change Book	-	6 872	2 751
Membership	15 877	21 624	19 161
Sundry Receipts	1 097	3 873	1 398
Sponsorship –GRDC & Other re Forum, DAFF Region Income	-	95 816	12 104
Interest Received	2 252	2 893	5 016
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43 824</b>	<b>157,278</b>	<b>151 348</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Accountancy & Audit Fees	1 163	1 552	1 328
Administration	22 113	24 586	29 620
APEN Award	1 289	-	1 399
APEN Mentoring Scheme	343	146	480
APEN project AEP & Forum 07	4 470	56,035	4 429
Bank & Government Charges	716	730	2 541
Cost of Meetings Conference/Forum Costs APEN	1 121	1 755	4 442
	-	2 797	123 310
ExtensionNet	14 771	14 972	7 083
Insurance	382	382	377
Printing, Stationery and Postage	227	-	295
Promotion (Members Directory & membership brochures)	900	1 373	2 582
Region Events Payments	-	1 132	533
Sundry Expenses	255	193	801
Website	1 819	1 800	3 791
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>68 323</b>	<b>107 453</b>	<b>183 011</b>

*Table 2 Profit and Accumulated funds*

	2007- 2008 Total \$	2008 - 2009 Total \$	2009 - 2010 Total \$	2010 - 2011 Total \$	2011 - 2012 Total \$
Net Surplus/Loss	64 046	1 376	-24 499	49 825	-31 663
Accumulated Funds	99 264	100 640	76 141	125 966	94 303

*Table 3 Assets and Liabilities as at June 30*

		2009 - 2010	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012
<b>Assets</b>	Cheque Account	20 869	64 013	26 695
	Term Deposit	55 000	60 000	70 000
	Grant account (DAFF)	0	0	0
	Cash	0	0	0
	Accounts receivable	2 503	17 736	1 104
	Provision for impairment of receivables	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>78 372</b>	<b>141 233</b>	<b>97 282</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>	Accounts owing	2 231	15 267	2 979
	GST owing	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2 231</b>	<b>15 267</b>	<b>2 979</b>
<b>Equity</b>		<b>76 141</b>	<b>125 966</b>	<b>94 303</b>

As Treasurer I would like to thank Rosemary Currie for her management of the organisation's finances

AUSTRALASIA  
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## APEN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Christchurch, New Zealand

28-30th August 2013

# Transformative Change: Chosen or Unchosen

Pathways to innovation, resilience and prosperity

We live in changing times – sometimes we can choose our challenges and sometimes these are created for us. The 2013 APEN International Conference will encourage delegates to share their experiences and learnings about dealing with opportunities and threats in the fields in which we work as we consider how we react to – or help bring about – transformative change.

Key themes for the conference are:

- *Change – an opportunity or limitation?*
- *Adaptive management – farming, community, health, other*
- *Resilience – building and encouraging resilience on farm, in community*
- *Collective action – broader community, health, farming, other*
- *Future trends in extension and advisory services*



### Call for abstracts

You are invited to submit conference abstracts of less than 350 words to Toni White via email: [toni.white@agresearch.co.nz](mailto:toni.white@agresearch.co.nz). Abstracts must include the title of the paper, the author(s) names and institution(s), plus telephone and email address of the corresponding author. A template is available from [www.apen.org.au](http://www.apen.org.au).

The abstract should conclude with a sentence on the three key learnings from the work reported.

The presentation choices for the conference include:

- Orally (approximately 15 minutes at concurrent sessions)
- Poster display (posters will be displayed throughout the conference and there will be a special poster session).

Presenters have a range of choices available to them for submission as follows:

1. Presentation/Poster with abstract only
2. Presentation/Poster with abstract and conference paper (2-3 pages)
3. Presentation with abstract and journal paper

Authors of papers that are not accepted for the conference will be offered an opportunity to publish in the journal.

Submitters are required to clearly indicate which publication options they are submitting. Further information on guidelines for submitting full papers will be available from the conference website closer to the conference date.

### Dates and deadlines

**Paper abstracts due 15 February 2013**

**Authors notified 25 March 2013**

**Poster only abstracts due 12 April 2013**

# Would you benefit from an APEN mentor?

Are you a young extension officer who would like assistance from an experienced mentor, from outside your organisation, to help develop your professional capacities and your career opportunities? Then the APEN mentoring scheme may be for you.

You would be matched with an experienced extension professional that would assist you to build your professional competencies and confidence from February to November 2013. It is envisaged you will have about 6-8 contacts with your mentor during this time, either face-to-face or via telephone.

An enthusiastic participant in the 2012 scheme recently wrote:

*"I think the scheme was fantastic for me. ... It was the initial drive and support (from my Mentor) that allowed me to gain a work life balance for the first time in a year; it allowed me to set professional boundaries with landholders I worked with. As it progressed I was able to understand the way I operated as a person and how that translated into my work*

*and personal life. I learned how to be better organised, I learned to open up to my manager about how I was coping with my work load, I learned how to reflect and define success outside of my work targets and milestones, I learned about why I procrastinate and how to combat those tendencies. The list could go on and my mentor's professionalism, understanding and non-judgemental relationship with me was simply fantastic."*

The 2013 Scheme will get going early in the new year, so if you are interested, please register via the APEN website or send an email to Roe at the APEN Secretariat; [info@apen.org.au](mailto:info@apen.org.au). Roe is happy to provide the names of 2012 participants so you can contact them to see how the mentoring scheme may assist you.

It is very important that you want to join the mentoring scheme and are committed to see the process through. No one else can decide if you have that commitment.

Welcome to these new members who have joined since last edition. We're glad to have you all on board.

Isobel Knight	NSW
Gavin Beever	Vic
Olubunmi Ashimolowo	NIGERIA
Janice Mentiplay-Smith	Vic
Bronnie Grieve	Tas
Graham McAlpine	WA

**The APEN mentoring scheme** is designed as a low cost peer mentoring system, which benefits the individuals involved, our discipline and our organisation. Is this something for you?

## Mentees will benefit from:

- the disciplined approach of reflection and planning to achieve outcomes
- increased knowledge and skills in a particular area of interest
- increased confidence in undertaking your daily work
- improved understanding of what is expected in your work role
- a supportive environment where you are encouraged to take risks and learn constructively from failure
- increased potential for career mobility and promotion
- improved understanding of the extension system
- getting to know other APEN members
- access to a "sounding board" to try out new concepts and ideas.

A comprehensive information booklet on the scheme can be downloaded from the APEN website.

## Mentors will benefit from:

- refreshing and honing your own professional skills
- the satisfaction of helping another person grow and further develop
- being challenged to think about your perspectives and viewpoints
- getting to know other APEN members
- helping the extension discipline to grow and mature
- contributing to the future of APEN
- the public recognition of your knowledge and talents
- giving back to others and the organisation
- the challenge of having to explain often complex principles which then improves your own understanding
- being more aware of recent trends and developments in your area of expertise
- the discipline of reflecting on your own career and where you are headed.

*All truth passes through three stages:*

*First, it is ridiculed.*

*Second, it is violently opposed.*

*Third, it is accepted as being self-evident*

**Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860)**



# Ian Teese, Your New Editor



Your new editor, a longstanding member of APEN, comes from a very different professional background to most APEN members. I probably fit the profile that President Austin suggested in his report that APEN needs to target for new members. A twice retired dairy farmer, I work as a business management and international development economist in Australia and internationally specialising in project and programme design, and evaluation across a range of sectors.

My technical speciality is the dairy industry. I have not worked directly in the public sector

but have been involved in innovative extension activities as a farmer (dairy feed budgeting in the 1970's) and was the coordinator for the large dairy focus farm programme in Western Victoria from the 1990's.

I have reviewed and designed extension activities and projects in countries including Azerbaijan, Nigeria, P.R. China, Indonesia and Rwanda. I will elaborate on these experiences and how they have many common links to extension issues in Australia in a future newsletter.

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## Guidelines and deadlines

*Submissions should be made in MS Word 6.0 with minimal formatting. A portrait photograph of the author is required. All photographs, figures and/or tables ought to be provided as separate files (preferably TIF or JPEG; photos scanned at 300 dpi). Feature articles should be around 1000 words and minor articles 500 words. The editor reserves the right to edit submitted material to meet space restrictions. Letters to the editor or general items of news of interest to the network are welcome. Articles should be submitted at least four weeks prior to publication.*

*Preference is given to articles that are grounded in some form of project or event.*

**Editing: Ian Teese**

**Layout: Ross Tasker, Snap Albury Wodonga, Victoria.**

**Production management: Rosemary Currie, APEN Secretariat, Wodonga, Victoria.**

*Opinions expressed in ExtensionNet are not necessarily those of the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network (Inc.) unless otherwise stated.*

**Stories and photos (next edition) due to Editor 22 February 2013**