

## A national organisation

*The issues paper on 'Why a national organisation is necessary' and the type of organisation required provoked a stimulating discussion among society members at the August meeting. Those present had experience with a variety of professional associations and, led by our secretary Bruce Howarth, contributed diverse viewpoints and valuable advice. Following is a summary of the main points made by members.*

### **Bruce Howarth:**

In December 2004 we voted on whether we wanted to set up an accreditation system. The answer was 'yes' from the majority of members who voted, although nation-wide only a minority of society members voted.

Accreditation will provide a professional outlook, higher standards and the improved status of editors. These should lead to editors making more money.

Because accreditation dictates that we have a national body, we are now discussing the format of the national body, the Institute of Professional Editors (IPE).

In the future, we may establish the national body, but we have to

discuss what the costs are now for the benefits that will come later.

For me the missing question is about money: any financial benefits from accreditation will take a long

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### **'This would mean transferring the focus from the State to the federal level, and perhaps even downgrading the State societies...'**

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time to arrive, but the costs of accreditation must be borne now. The process of de-accreditation is also important. Accreditation will only be respected if incompetent

people are kicked out. [Bruce read out point 10, Recommendations to CASE from the issues paper].

### **Michael Giffin [by email]:**

We need a national body, but that body needs to be larger, and more comprehensive, and better funded, than what is being envisaged in any of the proposals.

I would like to see a national body formed out of a federation of the State bodies. This would mean transferring the focus from the State to the federal level, and perhaps even downgrading the State societies so that the federal body can be viable and offer editors much more than the State societies can.

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**Next meeting: Tuesday, 6 September 2005**

### **Are you fit for editing?**

That knot at the base of your spine or your neck... the headache that makes it torture to focus on the screen. Physiotherapist Francine St George will take you through some innovative ideas and quick tips you can put into practise immediately to keep away those aches and pains.

Francine St George (MSc (Med), MAPA Physiotherapist/Sports Scientist) is a physiotherapist who combines clinical work and personal training at the Physiotherapy Posture and Fitness Clinic. She regularly teaches yoga and pilates classes for all levels of fitness and all ages. She is the author of a number of health and fitness books. Her latest release is *Bodyworks*. Francine keeps fit by swimming in the ocean every day, and doing Yoga and Pilates. There is no need to wear trackies to the meeting, but be comfortable as you will be moving around!

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Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts, 280 Pitt Street, 6.30 p.m. for 7.00 p.m. Drinks and light refreshments provided. \$15 for members; \$20 for non-members and those who don't RSVP; \$7 for holders of a current concession card.

**Please RSVP to 9294 4999 (voicemail) or <brhed@pnc.com.au> (email) by Friday, 2 September.**

**October meeting: Tuesday, 4 October 2005.**

**Bruce Howarth:**

Would a national society also give more weight to editors if it offered a national editors register? Would members benefit from the wider exposure?

**Sybil Kesteven [by email]:**

I would like to register my support for the recommendations to CASE set out on page 7 of the issues paper. I don't quite understand why the registration options aren't included in the recommendations but if there were to be a vote on those I would support becoming a company limited by guarantee.

**Elizabeth Murphy [by email]:**

Because society membership is so small the costs are greater per head for registration. Given our small size, I would go for the 'incorporated association' in the first place, with an option to move up to 'company' later.

The government has a model for associations and we should use it.

**Pam Peters:**

We can have an overarching organisation but support for editors happens at the local level. Societies come from voluntary groups in capital cities. In the future we want these societies to grow rather than shrink.

What people are willing to do for free for a small organisation they may not be so willing to do for a large organisation.

**Shelley Kenigsberg:**

Accreditation requires a national body.

We need to look at whether a national body has the same interest in individual members as does a State society. Maybe it needs to be proven and the process of change will be incremental.

**NEW MEMBERS**

- Bronwyn Blaiklock
- Ritchie Blunt
- Kay Bushnell
- Susan Flaxman
- Pauline McKelvey
- Jennifer More
- Lorraine Shannon
- Pervin Young

**Shann Gibbs:**

In my experience with different associations, national bodies are never as nurturing as State bodies. The image belongs to the federal body but the practice belongs to the State.

Certification is largely a trust situation—it comes down to trust. With other associations I chose to remain a member but not accredited.

A lot of problems arise with State finances—should funding of a national body be proportional? The secretariat could move around the States on a three-yearly basis.

Incorporation brings problems. Accountancy costs a couple of thousand, professional indemnity is costly.

**Peter Arnold:**

I've already made my views known in *Blue Pencil* and have given examples of wealthier societies where a national organisation has not worked.

The question we have to ask about CASE, a council of societies, is this: What is it that CASE can't do that a national body can do?

**Pauline Waugh:**

We will seek advice on Peter's question.

**Jennie Begg:**

How can an organisation of 1400 members, each paying about \$200, support a national organisation with employees, phone bills and so on—even if office bearers are prepared to stay in youth hostels? I have done fundraising for schools and we are talking about a national membership base the same size as one school.

**Bruce Howarth:**

The financial projections we have seen from the working group are viewed as naive by everyone outside it.

**Shann Gibbs:**

Transparency of finances is another problem.

**Terry Johnston:**

At present we don't have that many members on the ground.

Societies of editors in other states encourage creative people (for example, writers with little editing experience) to be members.

**Adam Raffel:**

The Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) has already had this debate and now operates as a federal body with States as small groups. The federal body does good work in lobbying the government on issues related to librarianship but is now quite distant from the members.

**Owen Kavanagh:**

The Australian Computer Society Inc. (ACS) also went through this.

The industry itself (including the publishers who employ editors) isn't asking for accreditation, so why are we doing it?

**Lorraine Shannon:**

Everyone has their own test they want you to pass anyway.

**Shelley Kenigsberg**

Accreditation will offer a first step before an organisation looks at whether you fit their requirements.

**Bruce Howarth:**

The ACS accredits courses as well as individuals.

**Terry Johnston:**

The Public Relations Institute of Australia (PRIA) makes money by accrediting courses, for example, charging \$10,000 to accredit a course. ALIA also does this.

**Catherine Etteridge:**

How many members also belong to the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance (MEAA)? They offer a superannuation scheme, a pay scale for in-house and freelance book editors and legal representation—will a national body offer anything similar for the membership fee?

**Bruce Howarth:**

The national body would be separate from the union.

**Jennie Begg:**

Obtaining sponsorship to run a national organisation could be difficult. Sponsorship isn't easy to get—especially when there would be no real prestige attached to the sponsor. Editing is an invisible profession.

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Less than 2 per cent of members are here tonight so it would be good to hear from other members who couldn't attend. We could each ask at least two other members for their views.

**Shelley Kenigsberg:**

Janet Mackenzie will collect the responses from tonight's meeting and present them at the next CASE conference.

**Pauline Waugh:**

The issue we really need to think about is whether we want a federal body that is run by the State societies or a federal body that runs the States.

*The issues paper is available from the society's website. Blue Pencil welcomes further contributions on this topic. Pam Peters and Elizabeth Murphy provided detailed comments by email and these follow in full:*

**On the constitution of the proposed IPE**

**Pam Peters [by email]:**

The issues paper prepared by CASE is most helpful in its detailing of the constitutional options by which the IPE could be set up, and their shorter and longer term value, allowing members to make a well-informed choice.

Other issues are left rather out of focus, for example, how the proposed IPE would relate to individual State societies. Would the IPE subsume all the State societies (and their budgets), and provide centralised management for all Australian operations? Or will the State societies continue to manage their own budgets and activities, and cede to IPE just certain federal matters, such as accreditation and promotion?

My biggest concern is the potential impact of a centralised IPE on the local editors' societies from which it draws its life blood (financially and in terms of people). What if the registered number of members declines (or is in real terms rather less than the quoted figure of 1400)? The costs of supporting IPE will certainly go up and make even heavier demands on State members than the \$200-\$300 being talked of—without necessarily providing as much support for the State societies as is achieved through the

present level of subscriptions. Costing of the proposal is certainly needed, with some recognition of the point at which the cost of services intersects with the numbers of members needed.

So my preference is for the second kind of structure, by which the State societies retain their autonomy and most of their budgets to satisfy their local needs.

Federal matters alone should be vested in the national body (IPE)—in close consultation with the State bodies just as CASE has done. That way the IPE would complement their activities and work to strengthen the local societies, rather than squeezing them to manage the national interest.

I note that the present list of IPE functions (page 8 of working paper) doesn't speak of active support for local societies, but rather managerially, of 'coordinating collaboration between them...', and 'advising...State societies on issues...'. I would suggest articulating a further function, to ensure that the IPE works energetically with the needs of each State society, to support the growth of the profession and its opportunities in each local area—not leave it all to trust!

**Asking too much of too few  
Elizabeth Murphy [by email]:**

Reading the document, I began to wonder whether this wasn't a case of the tail wagging the dog. We are a small group (fewer than 1500 members across Australia at present) compared with others, for example, the Australian Psychological Society (APS) with more than 14,000 members, so expenses of registration will be much higher per head than I think we realise, particularly if we go down the 'company limited by guarantee' path.

My point is that the costs of registration are the same, whether you have 60 members, 1500 members or 14,000 members. Larger organisations have more members to carry the load, so the individual load isn't too bad. A smaller organisation has to bear the same burden, but has fewer members to help bear it.

Again using the APS as a comparative model, membership fees will have to pay for the national body eventually forever—even if it is

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**Editing in Context  
National Editors  
Conference, Melbourne  
13 to 15 October 2005**

*Have you registered?*

The draft program for the conference along with session abstracts and biographical notes on presenters and participants on our panels and workshops are on the website. The conference will focus on specific issues like:

- changes in language use
- training
- cross-cultural writing and editing
- indexing
- project management
- mentoring
- online editing.

A feature of day two in the program will be sessions and workshops that focus on the issues of accreditation and how it will work, and the establishing of the new national body, the Institute of Professional Editors (IPE).

Join us for the best professional development and networking opportunities available this year.

This conference is not just based around plenary sessions and workshops. Short health and wellbeing sessions will give you an opportunity to refresh your mind and body. Those quick enough to book can take part in some lively and informative field trips away from the conference base.

Join us at the conference dinner with our guest speaker, the author, theatre and radio personality, Jane Clifton.

See page 8 of this newsletter for registration information.

Places are still available. Registration fees for the whole conference are \$430 (non-early bird) or \$345 concession (student, non-waged). One-day registration is \$215 (or \$175 concession). The conference dinner and field trips will attract additional charges.

For all details of what's happening go to the website at <[www.socedvic.org/editingincontext](http://www.socedvic.org/editingincontext)>.

# Occasional series on Australian editors (OSAE)

## National editors conference update

The overarching aim of this historical project is to increase the visibility and profile of editors as significant contributors to our cultural heritage and promote the editing profession. The Melbourne-based Occasional Series on Australian Editors (OSAE) working group—endorsed by the Society of Editors (Vic.) and CASE—has a national vision. We encourage expressions of interest and support from other State and Territory members and welcome new members or volunteers to assist with our ongoing program.

The recently launched new website for the Society of Editors (Victoria) <[www.socedvic.org/](http://www.socedvic.org/)> will feature regular updates about the activities of the OSAE working group.

The working group has been busy planning two special events tied to the national editors' conference (13 to 15 October) in Melbourne. We will host a panel, *Some of the Finest: Honorary Life Members*, sponsored by the Society of Editors (Victoria) on 13th October. This title refers to Anthony Barker's biography of Beatrice Davis, *One of the First and One of the Finest*, which inspired the establishment of the OSAE working group.

Honorary life members who will participate in the panel are: Sheila Allison (Tasmania), Pamela Ball (South Australia), Loma Snooks (Canberra) and Lee White (Victoria) (chair to be confirmed). The working group will also record Honorary Life Members—Editors in Conversation—during the conference for the OSAE oral and print archives.

### 'Some of the Finest' Honorary Life Members

Sheila Allison began her working life in various facets of newspaper publishing and as an editor for the Australian Film, Television and Radio School in Sydney and Australian Teachers of Media in Melbourne. Since 1989,

### 'Loma played a key part in the establishment of editing societies in South Australia and Canberra.'

Sheila has been manager and publisher for the Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies (University of Tasmania, Hobart), producing a national quarterly journal and various books and she also offers editorial and publishing services. She is proprietor and director of Montpelier Press and editorial production manager for Red Hill Books.

Pamela Ball was a teacher of French and English with the education department in Adelaide when the department offered her the chance to join their publishing unit, first as editor of curriculum materials, then as editor of their journal, *Pivot*, and finally as manager of the publishing unit. Pamela is now a freelance writer and editor, was one of the founders of the South Australian Society of Editors in 1989 and their first president.

Loma Snooks has over 25 years' experience at a senior level in editing, information design and publication team management. Some career highlights include assembling and leading the

team preparing the sixth edition of the Commonwealth's *Style Manual for authors, editors and printers*; developing and managing a large team of editors and designers working around Australia and in the USA and Asia on high-profile public reports; and creating a new brand (including logo, marketing material, website and writing guidelines) for a public-owned legal firm. Loma played a key part in the establishment of editing societies in South Australia and Canberra, and was the inaugural president of the Canberra Society of Editors, of which she is an honorary life member. She was also the ACT representative on the National Editing Standards Working Group, which produced the *National Standards for Editing Practice*.

Lee White started editing at Sun Books, where she was trained by Geoffrey Dutton. She worked at William Collins (London), Macmillan, the National Gallery of Victoria and Monash University before becoming a full-time freelance editor. During her career, Lee has worked with many famous Australian authors and celebrities, including Geoffrey Blainey, Barry Humphries, David Foster, Roland Robinson, Phillip Adams, Stephen Murray Smith and Patsy Adam Smith.

If members have any queries regarding the OSAE project, contact Diane Brown: phone (03) 9718 1358 or email <[diane@netspace.net.au](mailto:diane@netspace.net.au)>.

*OSAE Working Group (Victoria): Kerry Biram, Diane Brown (Convenor), Anitra Nelson, Renée Otmar.*

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wrapped up in 'the society will pay for this'—and our income as editors is nothing like that of psychologists who charge about four times what we charge on average for their work.

(I'm only using this model because I'm a member of the APS so relate to it.)

It isn't clear in the document whether individuals will remain members of their State/Territory societies or will become members of IPE in future. I suspect the former, but would prefer the latter. If IPE is to set standards and generally oversee the profession, then

I'd rather be a member of IPE with a say in its running than otherwise.

In the APS model, fees are paid to the APS and you subsequently choose and pay additionally for any colleges, interest groups etc you want to belong to. You are automatically (and for free) made a member of your relevant 'branch'—so I am a member of the ACT branch. In our case as editors, my choice would be to pay my annual sub to the IPE and that sub would include membership of the Canberra Society of Editors. If I want to belong to more than

one society, I should have to pay extra for that. I currently also belong to the Society of Editors (Victoria)—I realise dual membership may not be permitted at some point in the future and may not be necessary. I find it necessary at present for personal reasons.

I have a deep and undying mistrust of lawyers (sorry!), and would query their advice on the path to go down. Given our small size, I would go for the 'incorporated association' in the first place, with an option to move up to 'company' later.

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My experience with another not-for-profit voluntary organisation, RAPLink Inc, is that while we are based in Canberra and therefore registered in the ACT, we have no difficulty functioning all over Australia, and indeed overseas. We are, of course, a minuscule organisation with fewer than 100 sub-paying members, but we have a large newsletter subscription list (free) which is well over 1000 now. Different circumstances, of course, but I see no reason why IPE couldn't function perfectly well from one State or Territory for the time being. My choice would be Victoria, as they have the largest membership and therefore probably more voluntary help available.

I would also like to see some actual figures—costs of going down each path, how much membership fees would have to rise to cater for each option etc.

Most of our members are, I suspect, part-time freelance editors. A smaller proportion, I suspect, would be salaried in-house editors. This doesn't make either one any more or less professional, but it certainly impacts on income and limits how much one is prepared to pay for extras like conferences, training sessions, seminars, and additional fees for administration, unless much of the cost of the last can be absorbed by whichever State/Territory is going to run it.

I am in favour of accreditation and of tidying up the administration nationwide. I think it's a great pity we didn't start out as a national body with branches, but it's not too late. IPE has to be given administrative teeth.

This is something that I think every member should be involved in and not leave it to a few dedicated representatives such as Ed Highley.

Back to my 'tail wagging the dog' comment: I think we're too small to go for the 'company' idea yet—if IPE can do what it needs to do by just being an 'incorporated association', that's the way to go at this stage. I've investigated all these possibilities myself on behalf of another organisation, and decided to stick with 'incorporated association'. What's more, I'd save a lot of effort and use the 'model rules' for a constitution—there are some limitations on numbers, but you can get round them. I don't think anything else warrants the expense at this stage in our development—it would be asking too much of too few.

## **IPE notes July 2005**

*News from the Institute of Professional Editors (formerly CASE)*

### **National organisation**

The National Organisation Working Group, convened by Haya Hussein of Victoria, has been hard at work investigating the problems and possibilities of a national body.

The institute recognises that the strength of the profession is in its State and Territory societies, and that any national body should contribute to the societies rather than draw energy away from them. Yet it is essential for the societies to form some kind of federation that can undertake such matters as accreditation, advocacy and promotion at the national level.

What should the national organisation's functions be? How should it work with the state societies? What legal structure should it adopt? The working group's issues paper sets out some of the options, and the societies will hold workshops to discuss them during August and September. Each society will send its members a copy of the issues paper, inform them of the date and venue for its workshop, and give an email address for feedback from those who cannot attend. (The issues paper will also be posted on the website <[www.case-editors.org](http://www.case-editors.org)>.)

This is obviously a crucial step for Australian editors, and all members are urged to take part in the discussion. A plenary session at the Melbourne conference will consider the feedback from the workshops and

determine how the profession wants to proceed in this matter.

### **Accreditation**

The institute has received a thoughtful discussion paper dealing with several aspects of accreditation from Professor Pam Peters of Macquarie University. The paper and the institute's response will be placed on the website. Meanwhile the Accreditation Board is preparing its presentation for a plenary session at the Melbourne conference in October.

### **National conference, 13 to 15 October**

As editors face the far-reaching changes resulting from organising at a national level and introducing an accreditation scheme, it is vital to air all the issues with complete openness. The institute cannot function without the informed consent of members and it makes every effort to consult them at each step. The biennial national conferences are as close as we get to a representative meeting of members. The Melbourne conference is shaping up as an enticing opportunity for individual professional development, and it will also be a forum at which members can influence the national profession and help to shape its future.

*Janet Mackenzie*  
*Liaison Officer*  
<[www.case-editors.org](http://www.case-editors.org)>

## **Call for contributions**

Have you been to an interesting conference or event?

We welcome your contributions to

*Blue Pencil.*

We would like to publish your articles, book reviews or letters.

Please email the editor at <[cje\\_editing@hotmail.com](mailto:cje_editing@hotmail.com)>.

# Response to 'Enhancing accreditation'

*The Institute of Professional Editors (IPE) has provided this response to the article 'Enhancing accreditation' by Pam Peters, which appeared in the August 2005 issue of Blue Pencil. Further contributions to the debate over the proposed accreditation scheme are welcome.*

Professor Peters' comments on the accreditation scheme ratified by the members of all State and Territory societies of editors centre on four issues. She feels that: the scheme privileges senior editors, and that a tiered scheme admitting 'entry-level' editors would be fairer; that it fails to recognise formal training as a means by which editors gain expertise; that the *Australian Standards for Editing Practice* (ASEP) are currently an inadequate benchmark against which to measure 'competence'; and that there has been insufficient consultation with employers and industry in its development.

In one way or another, each of these issues was explored to the greatest degree possible during the more than three years that the Accreditation Working Group (AWG) of the Council of Australian Societies of Editors took to research and test the current scheme. The history of the development of the scheme can be tracked through documents on the Institute's website at <[www.case-editors.org](http://www.case-editors.org)>.

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## **'...the accreditation scheme must be, more than anything else, performance-based.'**

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A crucial point in the current context, and perhaps indeed in all thinking about the implementation of the scheme, is that there was a dramatic, member-driven shift between the initial and final schemes put forward to the societies by the AWG. This was that the accreditation scheme must be, more than anything else, performance-based. An editor applying for accreditation must be able to provide evidence, not of education and training courses completed—critical though these might be in their personal development—but rather of competence as an editor as measured against the ASEP developed by the societies.

In the broadest terms, the scheme will acknowledge the ability of an editor to do the job and recognise that there are many routes by which

editors come into the profession. We see the following specific benefits to the approach proposed.

- The decision to seek accreditation should encourage editors to put together a good portfolio, choose tasks that will add to a body of work of high standard, seek mentorship, think even more seriously about the quality of their work and strive for excellence.

- Accreditation will be a foreseeable, attainable goal that demonstrates competency in the workplace and increases future job prospects. It will become an integral part of an editor's career path.

- If, as is touched on elsewhere in this response, courses and the accreditation scheme eventually work together in terms of standards, requirements and outcomes, the scheme can but benefit students, steering them away from inadequate courses and again providing direction for a career pathway.

- Increasingly, national industry standards require professions and training organisations to have assessment and accreditation processes. By delivering such standards for our profession through an accreditation scheme, we are helping all editors, established and beginning. Without a capacity to work towards industry accreditation, new editors are, in many respects, left adrift.

- Accreditation should benefit editors moving to work in other States or countries, in that accreditation based on rigorous assessment against comprehensive standards by a national professional association is likely to be a more transportable qualification than, say, completion of a particular course.

To respond to the specific issues raised by Professor Peters:

### **Why not a tiered system?**

The AWG examined more than a dozen professions, many of which have graded schemes for accrediting their members, and the idea of a graded or tiered system came up frequently during the consultative process. The AWG looked into it thoroughly and concluded that such an elaborate

scheme was beyond the profession's resources at present. Instead, the group decided on an achievable aim, being bound by the criterion of sustainability in the issues paper of June 2002: 'The financial cost and professional commitment involved in setting up and operating the system must be able to be maintained in the long term...As well as the cost in money terms, the members involved might have to commit time and effort that could be better spent in other areas of the profession.'

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## **'There appear to be few professions in which graduation from a course is also a ticket to accreditation or certification in the profession.'**

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This is not to say that the accreditation scheme will not evolve to fulfil Professor Peters' suggestions (indeed, the current scheme has, in effect, two tiers—'meets the Standard' and 'exceeds the Standard'), but this will take some time. The institute's Accreditation Board must first set up the machinery of the scheme and establish transparent, consistent, agreed criteria (based on the ASEP) for granting accreditation. Once that is done and the scheme is working successfully, the institute may wish to consult the membership about refinements such as grading or specialisation. There are other possibilities: for instance, the institute might prefer to retain a single grade of accreditation and put its efforts into mentoring junior editors so they can achieve it.

There appear to be few professions in which graduation from a course is also a ticket to accreditation or certification in the profession. Some period of experience in direct employment is often required before—perhaps in order to continue practising—some form of industry requirement must be met.

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### The 'level' of accreditation

The aim of the institute's accreditation scheme, as stated in the *Final Report* of the AWG, is to make accreditation neither absurdly easy nor impossibly hard. It was framed (and tested) with 'The expectation is that most working editors will be able to satisfy the requirements'. It is applicable to both general and specialist editors. Applicants are assessed in relation to the nature of their work: they are not required to meet every subsection of every Standard. A book editor, for example, would not be expected to meet the requirements for editing screen-based information if they are not also involved in that type of work. Thus, we do not concur with Professor Peters' deduction that accreditation will be restricted to editors who are 'veteran[s] of multiple publishing projects with plenty to show for it, and experience of various editorial roles'. Accredited editors will be working editors who can demonstrate, to their peers, satisfactory competence in their areas of editorial activity.

### Attracting new editors

Editing is generally seen as a desirable occupation, and competition to enter the profession is fierce. All the societies have experienced solid growth in membership over the last few years. This seems at odds with Professor Peters' claim that special efforts are needed 'to entice younger talents into the profession'. Some of the societies have various classes of membership—student, associate and full, for example. In such cases, most 'new entrants' are happy to join as, say, associates and progress to full membership through work experience supported by society mentoring, training and contacts. We expect that this will continue and that the implementation of the accreditation scheme and the concomitant establishment of a national body will in no way diminish the critical role that the State and Territory societies of editors play in the development of editors and the profession.

The accreditation scheme was never intended to cater for 'the aspiring novice with base-line skills'. It is not an entry-level qualification but a recognition of achievement, designed to separate aspiring novices from competent editors.

### The availability of formal training

Professor Peters recommends 'a comprehensive survey of the range of editing/publishing courses offered by Australian institutions'. Early in its deliberations, the AWG embarked on just such a survey but had to abandon it when it realised that it was beyond its brief and our resources.

In any case, we believe that the suggested parameters are too coarse-grained to provide an informative assessment of a course. For such research to be useful to the institute, it would have to report on more than duration, level and an outline of the content. The names and even the descriptions of units can be misleading, and similar courses can vary depending on who is teaching them.

That aside, we would see it as useful in the future for Australian institutions offering editing and publishing courses to assess their content against the Accreditation Board's criteria for accreditation.

### '...the institute may research courses and recognise those that meet its requirements.'

### The disconnection between formal training and the industry

The discussion paper describes the scheme's disregard for formal training as 'extraordinary'. The industry's scepticism about the value of formal qualifications in editing is well known anecdotally and was confirmed by the AWG's consultative process. The assessors will take qualifications into account, but the profession was united in insisting that accreditation should not be granted without evidence that an applicant can actually do the job.

The societies of editors have made training a priority since their formation, and they were instrumental in setting up the first formal courses. Training providers have not shown the same responsiveness to the profession's identified training priorities. The ASEP state the knowledge that the profession regards as essential for an editor, but although it is four years since they were first published, few providers have begun to alter existing courses to reflect their content and requirements.

The institute's initiatives such as the ASEP and the accreditation scheme provide a positive opportunity to create dialogue and improve communication between the profession and training providers. Perhaps when the institute has more resources, it will set up an Education Working Group to consult with providers and industry. When funds become available, the institute may research courses and recognise those that meet its requirements. A two-way process in which training providers also sought to align their courses to the requirements of the institute would bring mutual benefits.

### ASEP

There are now some deficiencies in the *Australian Standards for Editing Practice*, as Professor Peters points out. These reflect the pace of change in technology and other aspects of the information industry. It was always the intention to revise the ASEP at regular intervals and a revision is currently in progress. The Standards Revision Working Group will take note of the suggestions in the discussion paper.

### Consultation with employers

The AWG approached the Australian Publishers Association several times during the three-year process which delivered the accreditation scheme. The APA made encouraging noises and provided a generous donation of \$400 to assist with the costs of teleconferencing but, to our disappointment they provided no feedback on the content of the scheme.

The suggested questionnaire to consult employers has already been mooted by the Standards Revision Working Group, and the possibility of establishing an education working group was mentioned above.

### Acknowledgment

The institute thanks Professor Peters for her discussion paper, which has contributed to a sharpening of ideas about the implementation and future evolution of its accreditation scheme. It hopes that she will continue to contribute to institute activities and the development of the editing profession.

*Institute of Professional Editors  
July 2005*

## **Freelancers for lunch, 21 September 2005**

Following the success of the inaugural freelancers' lunch held last month, we have selected the date and venue for the next lunch. Meet at Rossini Restaurant, Alfred Street, Circular Quay at 12 noon on Wednesday 21 September. Rossini is licensed and mains cost about \$12–14. There is no need to RSVP. See you there!

## **Style Council Conference, Melbourne 15 to 16 October 2005**

The Style Council Centre researches and publishes information about the English language in Australia. It builds databases of spoken and written Australian English, Aboriginal English and terms on which Australians diverge from Britons and Americans.

The centre conducts regular conferences, on the state of the language (known as Style Councils), and publishes their proceedings.

Style Council 2005, taking the theme 'Style in context, Australian and international', will be held in Melbourne on 15 to 16 October, dovetailing with the national editors conference at the Eden on the Park Hotel. Non early-bird registration will be \$165. For more details, see the website <[www.shlrc.mq.edu.au/style/styleconf05.htm](http://www.shlrc.mq.edu.au/style/styleconf05.htm)> or contact Adam Smith, phone (02) 9850 8783, fax (02) 9850 9199, email: <[adam.smith@ling.mq.edu.au](mailto:adam.smith@ling.mq.edu.au)>.

## **CASE Editing in Context conference, 13 to 15 October 2005**

The Editing in Context conference will be held in Melbourne from 13 to 15 October 2005. Information will be posted on the website <[www.socedvic.org/editingincontext/](http://www.socedvic.org/editingincontext/)>.

Further information is on page 3 of this issue of *Blue Pencil*. Current details on the planned sessions are also available on the website.

If you have any suggestions or questions, please contact the conference convenor, Lan Wang, at <[editingincontext@optushome.com.au](mailto:editingincontext@optushome.com.au)>.

## **Asialink arts residencies applications, closing date 2 September 2005**

Asialink's Residency Program offers residencies in Visual Arts and Crafts Performing Arts, Arts Management and Literature in different Asian host countries. Residencies are usually of three to four months duration and each residency offers a specified amount of funding and initial contacts. Residency applicants may include writers and book illustrators. Book industry personnel such as editors, festival staff and program managers may apply for Arts Management residencies.

Applications will close on Friday, 2 September 2005. More details on the arts residencies and application forms are available from the Asialink website <[www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/arts/](http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/arts/)>.

## **Frankfurt Book Fair, 19 to 23 October 2005**

For five days in October, the book trade congregates at Frankfurt for the world's largest international rights fair. This year Korea will be the country honoured at the fair. For more details on the book fair visit the website <[www.frankfurt-book-fair.com](http://www.frankfurt-book-fair.com/)>.

## **New non-fiction book award, closing date 2 September 2005**

The inaugural Walkley Award for Best Non-Fiction Book acknowledges literary works of journalism published between August 2004 and September 2005. Nominations are now open. Information and entry forms are at <[www.walkleys.com](http://www.walkleys.com)> or phone Catherine Bugeja on (02) 9333 0918.

## **ABC unpublished fiction award, closing date 26 September 2005**

Submissions for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) award for unpublished fiction close on 26 September. The winning manuscript will be published by ABC books with a prize of a \$10,000 advance. For more

details on the award see the website <[www.abc.net.au/abcfictionaward/](http://www.abc.net.au/abcfictionaward/)>.

## **Bad editing makes world headlines**

Bad editing is newsworthy! News reports on *Harry Potter And The Half-Blood Prince*, the latest book in JK Rowling's Harry Potter series, gleefully highlighted the quote, 'wordy, flabby and badly edited'.

The words of the book's unimpressed reviewer, Suzi Feay, literary editor of the *Independent on Sunday*, were actually: 'It's wordy, flabby and not very well edited—perhaps a bit less inventive than the previous ones.'

The criticism of this hugely successful book may be unfair; however, it does remind us that acknowledgement of the editorial process is rarely positive. We await the day when literary critics across the globe rush to praise the latest 'well-edited' bestseller.

## **History Writing Festival, 24 September 2005**

This NSW Writers' Centre festival will focus on the nature of writing history, whether for the more traditional non-fiction historical writing or for the purpose of using historical material in fiction. Phone (02) 9555 9757 or visit <[www.nswwriterscentre.org.au](http://www.nswwriterscentre.org.au)> for more details.

## **Brisbane Writers Festival, 29 September to 2 October 2005**

More than 200 international and Australian writers will be involved in this year's Brisbane Writers Festival. For full details visit the website at <[www.brisbanewritersfestival.com.au](http://www.brisbanewritersfestival.com.au/)>.

## **Read *The Fine Print***

Read the second issue of *The Fine Print*, an online journal dedicated to editing, at <[www.emendediting.com/ezine/](http://www.emendediting.com/ezine/)>. The journal is published each February and August and contributions on all aspects of editing are welcomed. The next copy deadline will be 10 December 2005.



## Pay increase for some editors

Editors subject to the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance Book Industry Award rates of pay have received an award rate increase.

As of 3 August 2005 the rate of pay will rise by 4.76 per cent. This rate will be applicable for the next 12 months.

For more details contact the alliance. Phone the information desk on 1300 656 512 or visit the website <[www.alliance.org.au](http://www.alliance.org.au)>.

## Strong freelancers market?

Reports from Sydney-based freelancers indicate there has been a flurry of work around lately. One was told by an exasperated project editor that she was the thirteenth freelance editor she had approached for an educational text.

The freelancer then began hearing from many unknown clients who had been given her name by other freelancers who were equally booked up. Over the past few months, she has had dozens of offers to take on jobs, something previously unknown in her many years of freelancing. Curious, she began asking all the publishers who called her to do work if they were having difficulty finding people. All confirmed this was the case; one packager said she had to phone 34 freelance editors for one title alone.

Is there a shortage of freelance editors? Or is the demand restricted to people who do copyfitting in Quark or work on non-fiction illustrated titles? If you have had this experience yourself, or have some answers, please email *Blue Pencil* and we will follow up the topic in a future issue.

Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007; Voicemail: (02) 9294 4999  
<[www.editorsnsw.com](http://www.editorsnsw.com)>.

### **Blue Pencil**

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Assistants: Robin Appleton, Janice Beavan, Deborah Edward, Moira Elliott, Julie Harders

Printer: Complete Design, Marrickville

Published: 11 issues a year (including combined Jan/Feb issue)

Your comments and contributions are welcome. Mail them to the Editor, *Blue Pencil*, Society of Editors (NSW) Inc., PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007, or email Catherine Etteridge at <[cje\\_editing@hotmail.com](mailto:cje_editing@hotmail.com)>.

### **Copy deadline for the October issue is Tuesday, 13 September 2005**

The views expressed in the articles and letters, or the material contained in any advertisement or insert, are those of individual authors, not the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

### **Advertising rates**

Full page, \$150; half page, \$80 (horizontal only); one-third page, \$50 (vertical or horizontal); quarter page \$40 (horizontal only); one-sixth page, \$30 (half of one column). Inserts: \$75 per hundred for DL-sized or A4 pre-folded to DL size. Circulation: approximately 375. Please note that the committee reserves the right to decide whether advertisements are appropriate for this newsletter.

### **Membership**

Membership of the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc. is open to anyone working as an editor for publication (print or electronic documents) and anyone who supports the society's aims.

Membership runs for a calendar year. 2005 fees are \$65 for new members (\$40 if joining after 30 June) and \$60 for renewals.

To obtain a membership application form, phone (02) 9294 4999 or write to PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007. You can also download an application form from the society's website at <[www.editorsnsw.com](http://www.editorsnsw.com)>.

### **Listing in the *Editorial Services Directory***

The society's *Editorial Services Directory* is available online at <[www.editorsnsw.com/esd/](http://www.editorsnsw.com/esd/)>. New listings and updates can be added quarterly as follows:

- online only: July (deadline 30 June); October (deadline 30 September)
  - print and online: January (deadline 31 December); April (deadline 31 March).
- The cost is \$40 per year (\$20 for new listings received from April to September) in addition to the fee for membership of the society. New listings should be submitted using a template available from Cathy Gray at <[cgray@mpx.com.au](mailto:cgray@mpx.com.au)>.

### **Committee meetings**

All members are welcome to attend the society's committee meetings, generally held on the second Tuesday of each month. Please contact a committee member for details if you wish to attend the next meeting.

## 2005 COMMITTEE

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Copy deadline for the October issue of *Blue Pencil*:

**Tuesday, 13 September 2005**

## Professional development

**Successful freelancing**

**Date:** Saturday & Sunday, 17 & 18 September 2005  
**Presenters:** Renée Otmar and Sally Woollett  
**Venue:** City Tattersalls Club, 198 Pitt Street, Sydney  
**Cost:** \$350 for two-day workshop, members and non-members (lunch included)

So you know all about structural editing and you've honed your copy-editing and proofreading skills. Now you're set, right? Wrong. This weekend of workshops is designed to provide practical business skills you can use immediately.

**Structural editing**

**Date:** Saturday, 29 October 2005  
**Presenter:** Pamela Hewitt and Shelley Kenigsberg  
**Venue:** City Tattersalls Club, 198 Pitt Street, Sydney  
**Cost:** \$195 members, \$250 non-members (lunch included)  
Structural editing is a jigsaw puzzle with more than one solution. This workshop presents practical techniques to develop the logic and flow of a text—whether the manuscript is fiction or non-fiction.

**MS Word: advanced editing skills**

**Presenter:** Bruce Howarth  
**Date and venue:** TBA (tentatively, November)  
**Cost:** \$195 for members, \$240 for non-members.  
In this workshop, we will look at advanced find and replace, positioning graphics and fields and will introduce macros. Each topic will be discussed, and participants will then have time to work through examples. Each participant will have a computer.

**InDesign**

**Date:** TBA  
**Presenter:** Alpha Computer Consultants  
**Venue:** Level 3, 123 Clarence Street, Sydney  
**Cost:** \$300, lunch not included  
**Course includes:** course notes, certificate, 12 months help desk (via email to reinforce the learning) and repeat any public course within 6 months for free (conditions apply). Each student will have a workstation.

**Effective writing: structure, style and the power of plain English**

**Date:** TBA  
**Presenter:** Pauline Waugh

**Writing and editing for the creative industries**

**Date:** TBA  
**Presenter:** Ginny Lowndes

**Regional members** will receive 50 per cent discount on the cost of the society's workshops.

**Cancellation and refunds**

The society will refund 100 per cent of the fee if you cancel four or more working days before the workshop, and 50 per cent if you cancel one to three days before. However, please note that there can be no refund if you cancel on the day of the workshop.

For more information about the society's workshops, please email Pauline Waugh at paulinewaugh@ozemail.com.au.