



Statistical Society of Australia Inc.

Strategic Plan 2004 - 2008

Version 1.1. July 2004

Next review date: February 2005

1. Introduction

This is the 2004 revision of the SSAI 2004 – 2008 Strategic Plan.

The basic situation for the discipline of Statistics has not altered greatly and the concerns expressed a year ago apply still. Over recent years Statistics as a profession appears to be under threat as witnessed by

- disappearance of separate Statistics departments at Universities
- falling numbers of undergraduate and graduate students in Statistics
- shortage of research-minded applicants for University positions
- shortage of suitable young recruits for ABS, pharmaceutical companies, ...
- articles that warn of the threats to the discipline *etc.*

Paradoxically, the need for Statistics and statistical thinking within our community is continuing to grow because of

- increased use of data in government, business and industry to inform and justify their activities
- increasing numbers of major studies (EPA, clinical trials, ...)
- increasing competition \Rightarrow increased pressure to remain competitive and to demonstrate this
- increasing numbers of jobs and opportunities for which (in our view as statisticians!) good statistical skills, knowledge and ability are prerequisites
- increasing availability of genetic information the need to understand what it means and what role it plays in biological pathways.

Concern about the erosion of Statistics within Australian universities is driving some of our main strategies and actions.

Membership of the SSAI has at last shown signs of recovery, as shown in Figure 1. Such membership challenges have been affecting other professional societies (see the SSAI Strategic Plan 2003 – 2007 for more details). The SSAI Branches have made very strong contributions to this turn-around combined with an improving stream of new membership applications.

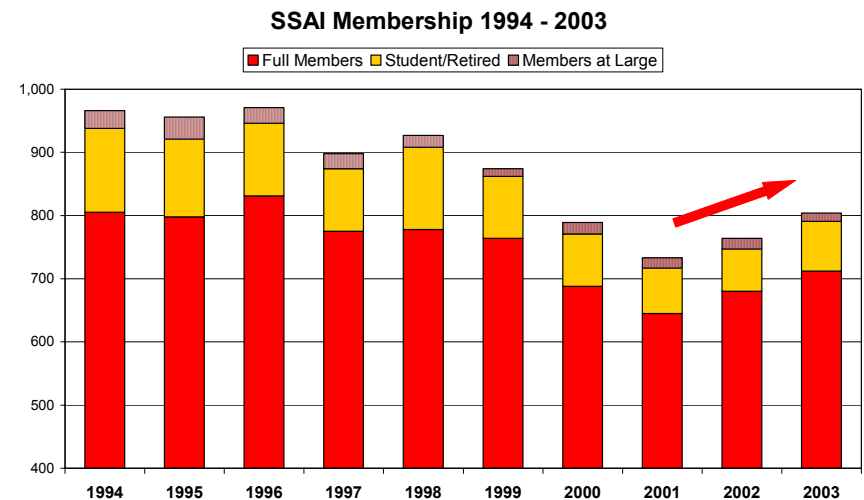


Figure 1: SSAI membership since 1994. Increases in 1996 and 1998 correspond to recruitments at the Australian Statistical Conferences in Sydney and Brisbane in those years.

The challenges facing the Society operate at two distinct levels and members can participate in many ways. At the macro level involvement can be directed at thinking about strategies and helping to shape plans that tackle the broader issues facing the profession. At the micro level there are ongoing needs for members to participate in organising and implementing a wide variety of activities. Leaving these activities to a small group of members makes progress slower than it could be and limits diversity and richness of ideas.

We urge anyone interested to participate in making this plan work. It's your society and this Plan has the membership as its primary beneficiaries. Please join in.

Approved by the SSAI Executive:

N. Bartlett	President
N. Fisher	Past-President
D. Shaw	Honorary Secretary
S. Horn	Honorary Treasurer
C. Lloyd	Editor, <i>ANZJS</i>
A. Branford	Branch President representative
K. Mengersen	Section Chair representative
A. Munday	Young Statisticians' representative
J. Waslin	SSAI Executive Officer

2. Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objective	Strategies (see next section)	How measured
1. Provide products and services that are vital to the academic statistical community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate publications • Continuing Professional Development program • Institute a Visitors' Program • Appropriate web site • Accredit tertiary courses • Conferences • Develop constructive relationships with funding providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value survey (top-level measures)
2. Provide products and services that are vital to statisticians working in Government, business and industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a strong Professional Accreditation program • Continuing Professional Development program • Appropriate publications • Support networking & other communication • Appropriate Web site • Conferences • Public Awareness program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value survey (top-level measures)
3. Ensure strong and active Branches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate publications • Appropriate Web site • Public Awareness program • Provide appropriate central support and advice for Branch initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value survey (top-level measures)

2. Strategic Objectives (cont'd)

4. Ensure strong and active Sections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conferences • Appropriate publications • Appropriate Web site • Provide appropriate central support and advice for Section initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value survey (top-level measures)
5. Maintain a vigorous Young Statisticians' program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conferences • Appropriate web site • Appropriate publications • Maintain job vacancies clearinghouse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value survey (top-level measures)
6. Develop effective approaches to Statistical Education at all levels of the Australian education system	<p>(a) Work with the Curriculum Corporation on the adoption of a national Statistics Framework in Australian schools, for years K – 12.</p> <p>(b) Work with DEST, employer groups and the academic community to improve the quality of all aspects of Statistics education at both university undergraduate and graduate levels.</p> <p>(c) Work with DEST, employer groups and the academic community to improve the Careers advice provided to prospective Statistics students, and prospective statistical employees.</p>	<p>National Statistics Framework in place by 2007</p> <p>Plan for Universities developed and implemented.</p> <p>Careers Advisory Process developed and implemented.</p> <p>‘Significantly’ enhanced numbers of Australian students studying Statistics at undergraduate and graduate levels.</p> <p>‘Significantly’ enhanced numbers of formally qualified statisticians entering the workforce.</p>

To be adopted if we can find a champion for it:

7. Establish and maintain the Society as a trusted public commentator and advisor on statistical issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Awareness program • Channelled opportunities for genuine expert participation in public debate on matters of social/political controversy with statistical dimensions 	
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3. Strategies to achieve Objectives

Strategy	Specific aspects	Milestones, needs and actions (lettered items correspond to those under Specific aspects)
1. Provide high-quality and relevant journal (ANZJS) and Newsletter. [Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5]	(a) Pursue whether to make <i>ANZJS</i> fully electronic (b) Include sections in <i>Newsletter</i> relevant to key groups (c) Expand <i>Newsletter</i> to complement <i>Journal</i>	(a) Trans-Tasman group to report recommendations by May 2004. Decision at CC meeting July 2004 (b) Ongoing. (c) Appropriate editors to encourage YS and Sections to make regular contributions.
2. Run high-quality conference program, with a biennial Australian Statistical Conference alternating with a biennial Special Topics conference [Objectives 1, 2, 4, 5]		Establish a good planning process for this, so that requirements are established in a timely fashion, and ensure it is linked to CPD requirements.
3. Maintain a website that supports the diverse requirements of the SSAI membership, its Branches and Sections and Executive, and the wider community [Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6]	(d) Provide Branch and Section pages along with an efficient means of updating.	(d) Executive Officer and small working group to implement current plans and to review with Sections and Branches.
4. Conduct an ongoing Public Awareness Campaign [Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6]	(e) Include annual plan for attracting and retaining people in the profession	(e) President to ensure that activity continues and to find suitable leader.

3. Strategies to achieve Objectives (cont'd)

Strategy	Specific aspects	Milestones, needs and actions (lettered items correspond to those under Specific aspects)
<p>5. Conduct ongoing professional development and scientific interaction program [Objectives 1, 2, 5]</p>	<p>(f) Run Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs (g) Institute National Visitor program (h) Support networking & other communication, especially facilitating two-way consultative advice with academic statisticians (i) Introduce AusCan Scholar program</p>	<p>Neville Bartlett to have overall responsibility. (f) CPD to be planned and managed by separate group. (g) University statistical departments need to be involved. Approach a leading academic about establishing the National visitor program. (h) Networking and other communication should be Branch activity, so Alan Branford will have responsibility for reporting on this aspect. (i) Establish AusCan Scholar Management Committee and <i>modus operandi</i> by ASC 2004</p>
<p>6. Ensure representation and involvement of key groups on key committees [Objectives 3, 4, 5]</p>	<p>(j) YS membership on Branch Councils, (k) Branch and Section and YS membership on SSAI Executive (l) Sections and Branches to produce annual Plans</p>	<p>(j) Implemented during 2003 (k) Done (l) By end 2004</p>

Strategies to achieve Objectives (cont'd)

Strategy	Specific aspects	Milestones, needs and actions (lettered items correspond to those under Specific aspects)
<p>7. Conduct a Professional Accreditation program [Objectives 1, 2, 5]</p>	<p>(m) Run professional accreditation and re-accreditation processes</p> <p>(n) Implement a program for accrediting Statistics programs at universities</p>	<p>(m) Overall responsibility devolves to the incumbent Chair of the Accreditation Committee (with administrative work handled by the SSAI Business Office).</p> <p>(n) July 2004</p>
<p>8. (a) Work with the Curriculum Corporation on the adoption of a national Statistics Framework in Australian schools, for years K - 12.</p> <p>(b) Work with DEST, employer groups and the academic community to improve the quality of all aspects of Statistics education at both university undergraduate and graduate levels.</p> <p>(c) Work with DEST, employer groups and the academic community to improve the Careers advice provided to prospective Statistics students, and prospective statistical employees. [Objective 6]</p>	<p>(o) Establish funding source and implement Stage 1 of Stat Ed proposal for schools. Develop Stage 2 scoping document and reach agreement with Stakeholders. Obtain funding for Stage 2. Implement Stage 2.</p> <p>(p) Develop mutually agreed Plan. Obtain funding. Deploy</p> <p>(q) Develop mutually agreed Plan. Obtain funding. Deploy.</p>	<p>(o) Obtain funding for Stage 1 of Framework development by July 2004. Complete Stage 1 by December 2004. Develop Stage 2 scoping document by end 2004. Implement Stage 2 by end 2006.</p> <p>(p) Plan in place by end 2004. Implementation underway by end 2006.</p> <p>(q) Plan developed by end 2004. Plan implemented by mid-2005.</p>

9. Develop a constructive relationship with funding providers [Objective 1]	(r)	(r) Incumbent President responsible for this
10. Manage the affairs of the Society in an efficient and effective manner [Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6]	(s) Secretary to review the Rules and Regulations. (t) Employ staff under terms and conditions to be determined by the Executive.	(s) Ongoing (t) Secretary is responsible for this strategy. Formal performance reviews at least twice annually.
11. Recruit new members [Objectives 3, 4, 5,]	(u) Strategy for undergraduates (partly covered by development of Career Advisory Process under Strategy 8)	(u) Alan Branford to coordinate with Branches.
12. [Strategy relating to Establishing and maintaining the Society as a trusted public commentator and advisor on statistical issues.]	(v) Inactive	(v) Inactive – awaiting initiative by N Fisher & E Sowey