

# THE STATISTICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

*New South Wales Branch inc.*

*Registered number Y1920037*

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## ANNUAL REPORT

for the period from the 57th Annual General Meeting, 17 March 2005,  
to the 58th Annual General Meeting, 21 March 2006

presented at the 58th Annual General Meeting

### 1. COUNCIL

The Branch Council for 2005 met 9 times following the 57th Annual General Meeting, up to and including the February 2006 meeting. Members of the Council, together with the number of Council meetings attended, are listed below.

President	Dr Alun Pope	9
Immediate Past President	Associate Professor John Rayner	8
Treasurer	Dr Shelton Peiris	8
Secretary	Associate Professor Neville Weber	9
Membership Secretary	Dr Jos Beunen	8
Councillors	Ms Caro Badcock	5
	Dr Eric Beh / Dr Than Pe*	3
	Mr Frankie Chan	3
	Dr Petra Graham	7
	Dr Chris Howden	7
	Dr Fred Osman	2
	Dr Scott Sisson	6

\* Eric Beh and Than Pe joined Council at the August meeting.

### 2. CENTRAL COUNCIL

During 2005, the delegates from the NSW branch to the Central Council of the Statistical Society of Australia Incorporated in July were Caro Badcock, Alun Pope and Chris Howden and the February delegates were Caro Badcock, Neville Weber and Alun Pope. The Central Council met in Canberra on 6 July, 2005 and in Melbourne on 23 February, 2006.

### 3. MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the NSW Branch each year since 1996 has been as follows:

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Honorary Life Members	5	5	5	5	6	5	6	6	6	6
Financial Members	281	265	297	329	259	322	164	227	244	275
Unfinancial Members	26	0	31	21	99	45	79	34	24	48
	312	291	333	355	354	372	249	261	274	329

The membership for 2005 included 6 retired and 22 student members.

#### 4. PROGRAM

##### Annual General Meeting and H O Lancaster lecture

The 57th Annual General Meeting was held in The Arcade Room, University of NSW on 17 March 2005. There were 18 members present. After the presentation and receipt of the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts, the H.O. Lancaster Lecture was given by Professor William Dunsmuir on "Modelling Dependence in Time Series of Counts."

##### Other Meetings

The program of general meetings in 2005 - 6 and the attendance at each meeting were as follows:

<b>Date during 2005</b>	<b>Number attending</b>	<b>Speaker and topic</b>	<b>Venue</b>
April 6	70	Sir David Cox: <i>From public policy to particle physics: some statistical challenges.</i>	University of Sydney
May 24	21	Stuart Gilmore and Inge Koch: <i>Understanding Australian illicit drug markets, or, learning with independent component analysis.</i>	Australian Bureau of Statistics
June 23	15	Robert King: <i>Investigating response times with the lambda distribution.</i>	University of Sydney
August 17	13	Anne Porter: <i>Next steps: improving statistical learning outcomes</i>	Macquarie University
August 26	25	Caro Badcock: <i>Intervention analysis of a short time series</i>	University of Newcastle
September 20	16	Michael McCrae: <i>Profitable statistics: cointegration, statistical arbitrage and pairs trading.</i>	Australian bureau of Statistics
October 20	19	Lyle Gurrin: <i>HealthIron: A study of the environmental and genetic modifiers of hereditary Haemochromatosis</i>	University of Sydney
November 23	53	Dennis Trewin: <i>100 years of official statistics – a review of the development of statistical methods over this time.</i>	MGSM, Macquarie University
February 21	28	Anthony Edwards: <i>Statistical Methods for Research Workers.</i>	University of Sydney

The Council records its gratitude to the speakers for their contribution to the Branch's program, and to Caro Badcock and Petra Graham for organising the program.

##### Attendance

The average attendance at lecture meetings over recent years has been as follows:

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Average attendance	29	39	27	30	25	26	25	26	27	29

#### 5. THE J.B. DOUGLAS POSTGRADUATE AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN STATISTICS

The *J. B. Douglas Postgraduate Awards for Excellence in Statistics* are named in recognition of the contributions to the discipline of Professor Jim Douglas, colleague, mentor and friend to many in our profession.

The awards are decided on the basis of a competition for graduate students, late in their research programs for masters or PhD degrees. Outcomes are determined by 20 minute presentations made to members of the Society and their guests.

This year the first prize was again dedicated to the memory of Dr Peter Wright, a former Branch Councillor who died suddenly in 2004.

In 2005 these awards were sponsored by (in alphabetical order) CSIRO, Macquarie University Department of Statistics, Roche Pharmaceuticals, SAS Australia, The University of Newcastle Department of Statistics, The University of Sydney School of Mathematics and Statistics and the Wollongong Statisticians. The Branch is very grateful to these organisations for their generous support.

The talks were judged by a panel of 3 consisting of Dennis Trewin (ABS), Alun Pope (Chair, President of the Branch), and Melissa Cassar (SAS). The Council expresses its grateful appreciation for the generosity of the judges in giving so much time and care to this task.

Talks (in order of presentation) were given by:

1. Maree O'Sullivan (Macquarie University)
2. Alex Woolaston (University of New England)
3. Nathan Pearce (University of NSW)
4. Daniel Smith (University of Sydney)
5. Frank Tuyl (University of Newcastle)
6. Maureen Morris (University of Wollongong)

The panel reported that all six talks were excellent and recommended the award of a special certificate for each student. Daniel Smith was awarded the \$500 Peter Wright Prize. In addition Nathan Pearce and Maree O'Sullivan were awarded cash prizes of \$400.

## **6. SPECIAL WORKSHOPS**

An extremely successful Branch-sponsored workshop *Meta-analysis for Drug Development* was given by Professor Stephen Senn on 30-31 March 2005. A full report is given in the August, 2005 SSAI Newsletter (No.112). The Branch is very grateful to Caro Badcock who organised this event.

## **7. BRANCH WEB-SITE**

The web-site is an important resource for the Branch and involves a great deal of hard work to develop and maintain. The web-site has been moved from the old *geocities* site and will be progressively migrated to the SSAI central web-site, as that is developed. The intention is that this will provide a cheap, efficient and timely means of communicating with the membership, while at the same time providing a repository for administrative information. Scott Sisson (Branch Councillor) has been the main person behind this effort.

The main page is now accessible through the SSAI central web-site, by following the links to Branches and NSW at: <http://www.statsoc.org.au/>.

## **8. SECTIONS AND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS**

### ***Young Statisticians***

Council member Chris Howden was active in organising meetings for those in the Young Statisticians Section of the Branch. Members wishing to be placed on the mailing list for YS activities should email Chris at [Chris.Howden@sydney.cbr.com.au](mailto:Chris.Howden@sydney.cbr.com.au).

During 2005, there was one active special interest group within the NSW branch: the Illawarra Statistics Group (convenor Dr Eric Beh).

**Illawarra Statistics Group**

The Illawarra Statistics Group met three times in 2005.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Speaker and topic</b>	<b>Venue</b>
30 March	Olivier Thas: "Estat: A collection of tools for an e-course in statistics."	University of Western Sydney, Campbelltown
2 August	John Nicholls: "The who, what, why, how and when of learning support for statistic: a preliminary study."	University of Western Sydney, Campbelltown
29 November	Sue Willis: "Design of experiments problems from industry." .	University of Wollongong

**9. ACCOUNTS**

A summary of the Branch's accounts for 2005 is attached. The Branch showed an excess of income over expenses of \$13,836.15. Sponsorships to a total of \$4830 meant the Postgraduate Awards evening was self-funding.

The Council would like to thank the honorary auditors, Brian Coote and Rodger Robertson, for their generous service over many years.

Neville Weber,  
Honorary Secretary  
March 2006