

Report on 1999 Member Survey

Introduction

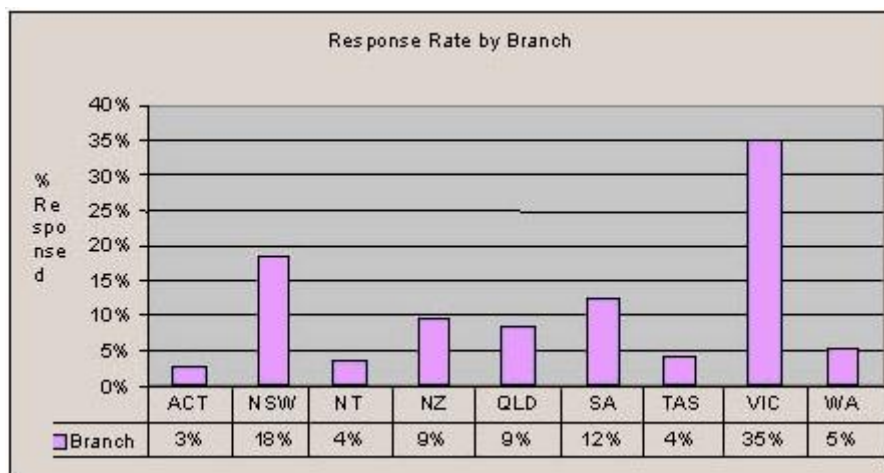
The ATEM Council agreed in late 1999 to survey all members across a range of issues. This was the first time such a comprehensive survey has been conducted of all members. The survey was conducted in the first half of 1999.

The response rate for the survey was 16%, (265 responses) on the lower end of the response rate scale for mail surveys. There were a number of problems associated with the distribution of the questionnaire, ranging from inappropriate format for electronic completion, and apparent lack of effective distribution in some branches. Nevertheless, the results are worth considering and form one further input into ATEM's discussions about its future.

Survey Report

Section 1: Branch Responses

1.1 Response Rate by Branch



The response rate is obviously skewed towards Victoria where return of surveys was easier because of the location of the survey coordinator.

Section 2: Communication with Members

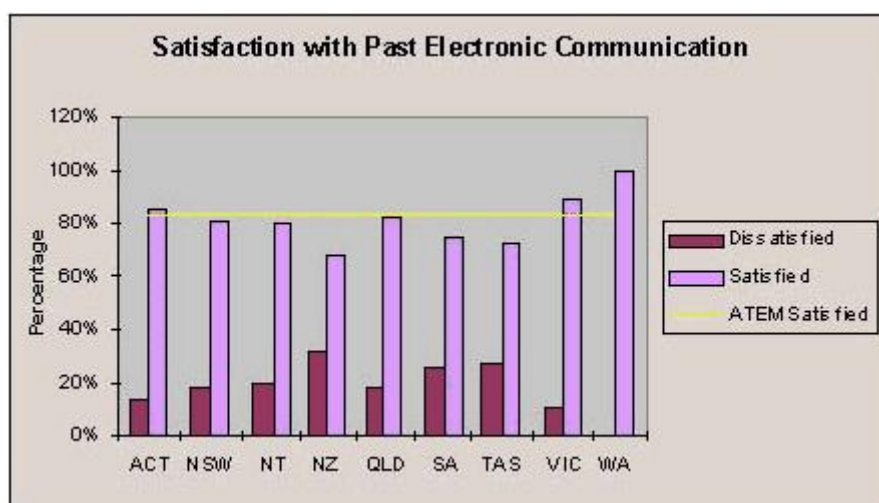
2.1 Satisfaction with Past Branch Electronic Communication

2.1.1 Overall

83% of members were satisfied with the level of electronic communication from Branches in the past, with 17% dissatisfied.

2.1.2 Branch

The chart below indicates satisfaction with past electronic communication by Branch and compares it with the overall ATEM satisfaction rate.



All Branches have considerably higher satisfaction rates than dissatisfied, although only ACT (Canberra), Victoria and Western Australia have satisfaction rates exceeding the ATEM average.

2.2 Use of Email Discussion List Established by ATEM Queensland

51% did not know about the List, but many of the respondents would not have been members at the time the list was in use. 38% did not join or access the list, while 11% used the list.

Question 2 did not seek comment on frequency of use but provides a benchmark for use of electronic communication on ATEM matters.

2.3 Electronic Communication as Major Means of Day-to-Day Communication

92% agreed that electronic communication should be the major means of day-to-day communication with members.

2.4 Reasons given by those not agreeing that electronic communication should be the major means of day-to-day communication included:

- , ineffective at generating responses;
- , does not get to people in the same way;
- , gets lost in business emails;
- , need to be aware email can be impersonal and not all members are comfortable with it; and
- , while email is good, not everyone has WWW access. Overreliance on the web is not a good thing.

2.5 Access to ATEM Web Site

90% of those responding had accessed the web site. Those who had not accessed the web site had not done so largely because they did not have their password or had lost it, or were too busy to take the time to look at the web site. One member indicated that he/she had only just been upgraded to a computer which made web access easier. Password issues have now, by and large, been resolved with members able to change their password themselves.

2.6 Usefulness of ATEM Web Site

2.7 Usefulness of Members Only Section

78% of those responding found the ATEM web site useful; 19% very useful and 3% not useful. 71% of those responding found the Members Only section useful.

The web site was in early days of development at the time the survey was undertaken, so these questions again provide a benchmark for the future.

2.8 Ability to Choose Own Password

81% of those responding indicated they would like the ability to choose their own password. This function is already operational.

2.9 Fully Available Site: No Members Section

Only 35% of those responding indicated they wanted the information available in the Members Only section available publicly. Even given the low response rate, this result indicates that members value having an “exclusive” section for particular benefits and services available only to members.

2.10 Improvements to web site

Comments on improvements to the web site included:

- , more information about what's on, forthcoming programs;*
- , easier navigation to scholarships information;*
- , need to be aware email can be impersonal and not all members are comfortable with it; and*
- , while email is good, not everyone has WWW access. Overreliance on the web is not a good thing.*
- , more links, particularly with Ministeries of Education in Australia and NZ;*
- , information on related non-ATEM courses and professional events;*
- , ability to search on membership database to create own networking lists;*
- , update email reminders when content changes;*
- , feedback on outcomes of staff exchanges and research projects;*
- , ability to view one's current membership/financial status;*
- , availability of information which might assist in recruiting ATEM members (ie shift some of the information which might be useful to the open site).*

2.11 Reminder notice via email and renewal via the web.

78% of those responding indicated they were happy to receive a reminder and pay via the web, although many members answering "yes" to this question also indicated they are happy to receive the reminder but cannot pay via the web because of the procedures of their employing institutions.

22% indicated they would not like reminders and payment electronically, with the main reasons being:

- , institution pays, and they pay by cheque;*
- , security of web site for credit card details (non encrypted);*
- , need a physical receipt for tax records; and*
- , not an effective way for generating payment.*

ATEM might want to investigate costs for providing secure, encrypted access for payments via the web site.

2.12 ATEM Matters via the Web Site instead of Hard Copy

90% of those responding indicated they were happy to receive ATEM matters via the web. This practice has now been implemented.

Some reasons for not wanting to receive the newsletter electronically included:

*, must be sent to me direct, I don't want to have to go and get it;
 , more likely to actually read hard copy, more portable;
 , need email advice when it's published; and
 , hard copy is easier to pass on to non-members.*

2.13 Branch Communication about Professional Development Programs

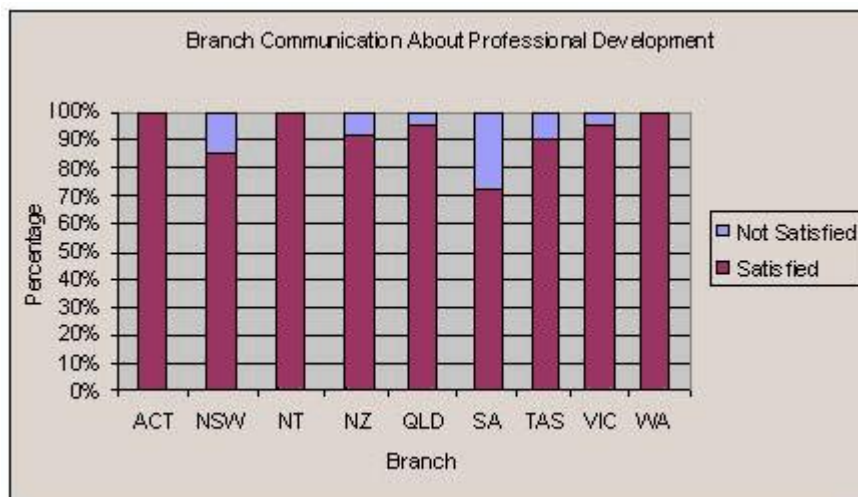
2.13.1 Overall

91% of those responding indicated that they were satisfied with the level of communication about professional development programs by their Branch.

91% of those responding indicated that they were satisfied with the level of communication about professional development programs by their Branch.

2.13.2 Branch

Responses by Branch indicate that all branches except South Australia and New South Wales are at or above the overall satisfaction rate for the Association. South Australia also has the highest dissatisfaction rate. Given the low response rate, it is possible that these results do not reflect satisfaction levels across the Branch but may be interpreted as a signal for further investigation by the Branch.



Reasons for not being satisfied with the level of communication include:

*, miss the odd flyer to put on the noticeboard;
 , should make more use of electronic meetings;
 , has increased in 1999 and I'm happy with that (VIC);
 , not enough that is relevant and not enough notice given;
 , regional issues - particularly travel - don't have access to same programs as those members in capital cities; and*

, infrequent and lost communication (NSW).

Section 3: Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management

3.1 Should the Association publish a scholarly journal?

85% of those responding indicated that the Association should publish a scholarly journal; 11% responded in the negative, with 3% not answering this question. Even with the low response rate, this result indicates strong support for ATEM to continue publishing a scholarly journal.

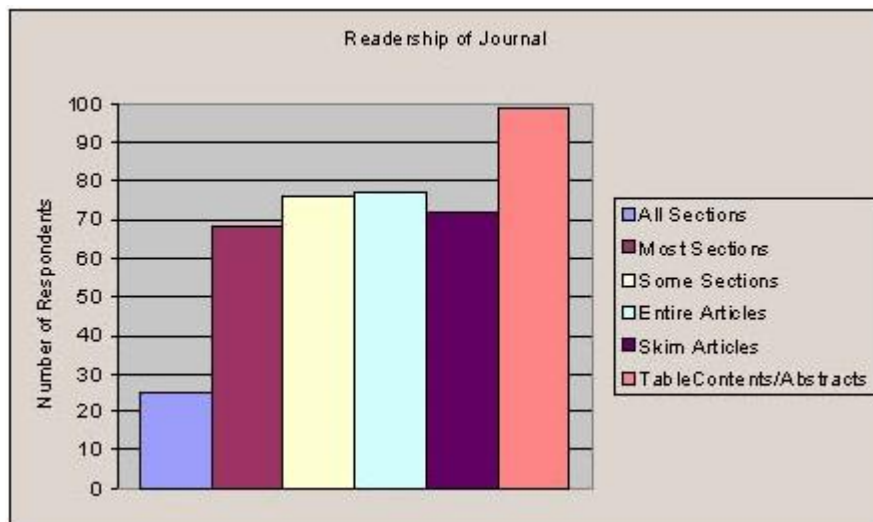
3.2 Relevance of JHEPM to individual members

80% of those responding indicated the current Journal was relevant to them with 17% indicating it was not relevant. Again, 3% did not answer this question.

3.3 Readership

51% of members responding read every Journal, 40% read an issue occasionally, and 7% never read it. The results of this question need to be read in conjunction with the results of question 3.4 on the scope of readership.

3.4 Scope of Readership



This chart indicates that most members who read the Journal check the Table of Contents and Abstracts and then read those articles or sections most appropriate to them.

3.5 Journal in Electronic Format

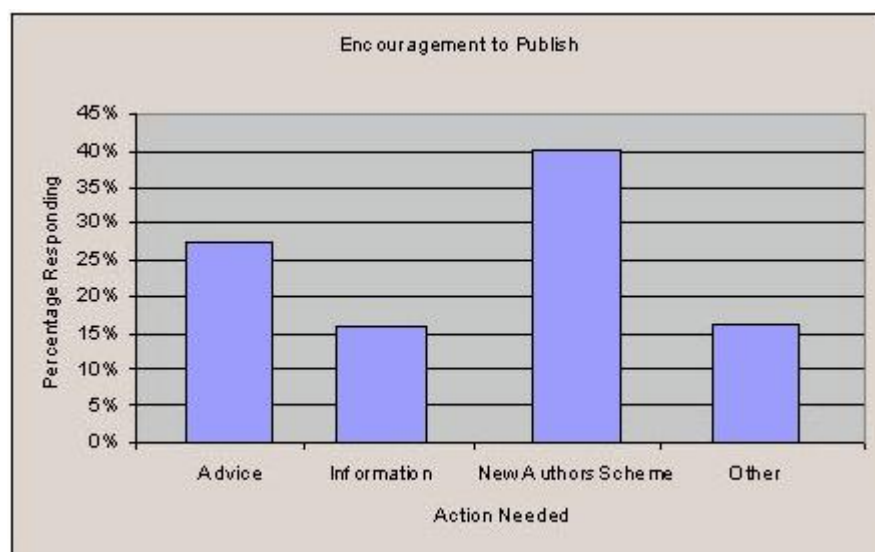
Members appear to be strongly of the opinion that the Journal should remain in hard copy form with only 14% voting for it to be available electronically. 64% said they would not be happy to receive the Journal electronically, while 22% said it would make no difference.

3.6 Usefulness of Journal

Of those members answering this question, 128 found the Journal useful for contributing to their professional practice while 219 found it useful for broadening their knowledge of tertiary education. Some of these responses would be duplicated as some respondents ticked both boxes on the survey.

3.7 Encouragement to Submit an Article

Members were asked to indicate what ATEM might do to support and encourage them to prepare a piece of work for publication in the Journal.



Most members indicated they would welcome a New Authors Scheme to provide advice and mentoring to assist them to prepare a piece of work for publication. The major items cited in the "Other" category were:

- , *time to do research to prepare a paper (the most commonly cited reason);*
- , *don't believe I have anything worthwhile to say (second most commonly cited reason);*
- , *get rid of academic pretensions;*
- , *slight softening in definition of scholarly;*
- , *nothing would encourage me to do so;*
- , *list of topics or themes to encourage me to write on something I feel competent about;*
- , *letters to editors on general topics;*
- , *deciding upon a suitable topic;*
- , *not interested in contributing; I read the AAPPA journal instead; and*

I have submitted articles that have been published and others not. I find that the editors tend to reject stuff which may be relevant to only some practitioners, speculative, anecdotal, humourous. It prefers technical and heavily researched factual contributions. In my view, the Journal could be improved by letting through some of the former as well as the latter. It would broaden appeal. They need to lighten up, chill out etc.

3.8 Practitioners Notes Section

72% of members responding indicated they would contribute to a Practitioners Notes section in the Journal. The most frequent reason for not wanting to contribute was that the member felt they had nothing worth saying.

3.9 Comments

Members were invited to make other comments as the Journal as they wished. These comments are reproduced below in four categories: Support for Current Format; Suggestions for Improvement; Negative Comments about Current Format; and Other Comments.

Support for Current Format

An important means of making available well-considered reviews and information relevant to university management. So much of what one reads is ephemeral, ill-considered and comparatively trivial. The Journal is a serious flagship of a professional body.

Keeps me in touch with current thinking as opposed to current events. It is an excellent institution which is highly valued.

The Journal is a very friendly professional publication. My colleagues and I often make reference to it at Divisional level so it prompts useful and worthwhile debate when discussing matters of administrative process and procedure.

Generally satisfied with current format.

I often share articles with colleagues.

Very professional publication.

I love that it gives me a far broader view of tertiary education both in Australian and overseas.

A valuable high quality publication which supports a professional image for ATEM.

Highly visible means of uniting ATEM members.

Good for professional development to see articles on other areas of work apart from your own.

Very useful tool for busy managers - always relevant.

Very relevant to personal career and professional development.

Suggestions for Improvement

Would like more models of good practice in management.

Needs to have a wider focus.

- , *Providing for specialist practitioners - equal opportunity, student residences.*
- , *Should be reformed as a practitioner magazine.*
- , *Practitioner notes would be better in a magazine.*
- , *I support the Journal but I must say the standard of articles has fallen over the years. I also think a feature article from someone with particular expertise might be useful (eg enterprise bargaining).*
- , *Would prefer articles of interest in the newsletter.*

Negative Comments on Current Format

- , *Some items a bit waffly and ramble a bit.*
- , *Distribution is unreliable and pitifully late.*
- , *Prefer an Australian based journal.*
- , *I am not sure how the Journal fits into the mission or objectives of the organisation. However, I am not sure that there are any other journals around that would provide a source for this type of publication.*
- , *Have felt intimidated by 'academic' approach to publication.*
- , *Tone down scholarly aspect and make more relevant to day-to-day issues.*
- , *I am very ambivalent about the Journal. Whilst I recognise it as important in giving credence to ATEM as professional body, I don't believe it means much to most members in its current form. Perhaps a more newsy, magazine format with less emphasis on scholarly would be more acceptable but would cost more money.*
- , *Get rid of the useless, bloody thing.*
- , *I doubt the active readership warrants publishing and mailing a bound journal.*
- , *I generally find the articles irrelevant to me.*
- , *It must be relevant to the majority of members. This one suits a minority of more 'academic' members.*
- , *Scholarly journals are decreasingly relevant. Conferences/conference proceedings on the Web (electronic magazine style) are faster, more focused and can still provide the depth where it is necessary. Journals are a great consumer of organisation funds and (in analysis) wasteful. Better return on investment comes from work on electronic access/content.*
- , *It seems to academically rather than practitioner based.*
- , *A bit too scholarly/academic.*
- , *Waste of money.*
- , *Articles seem to have a completely academic quality which is excellent but which disenfranchises non-academic administrative staff. A second publication looking at areas of interest to all administrators is needed.*

Other Comments

- , *What is cost of production?*
- , *The whole question of contributing scholarly information to commercial publishers who then resell it on to universities etc at great cost is a hot topic of debate right now.*

How often is it published?

The establishment of ATEM Matters as an alternative forum for members to publish items of interest may go some way towards addressing the comments about the Journal being too scholarly and not relevant. The Journal, nevertheless, would appear to have strong support from the membership although some more attention might need to be paid to promoting its purpose and value and to introducing a New Authors scheme to assist members who want to publish to produce a work of an appropriate standard. Responsibility for developing a New Authors scheme could be allocated to a member of the Executive or to an interested ATEM member to ensure the workload of the Editors did not become too onerous.

Section 4: Professional Development

4.1 Number of Professional Development Programs Attended in 1998

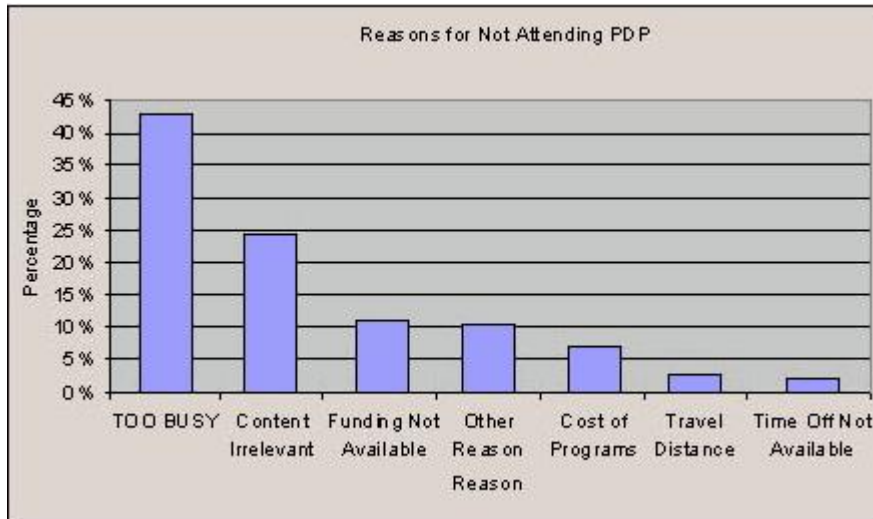
Members were asked to indicate the number of professional development programs they attended in 1998 as indicated below.

| Number of Programs | % Attending |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 0 | 53% |
| 1 | 20% |
| 2 | 11% |
| 3+ | 16% |

More than half of members responding did not attend any programs which, even with the low response rate, is a matter of some concern.

4.2 Reason for Not Attending Professional Development Programs

Those members attending 1 or fewer programs were asked to indicate a reason. Results are displayed in the chart below.



Of those members who indicated they had an “other” reason for not attending programs, the following were their most frequent comments:

- , *attended in-house programs;*
- , *travel time too great (country location);*
- , *attend CPA training (or similar) to maintain professional recognition;*
- , *inertia;*
- , *combination of factors, got funding but then program cancelled due to lack of numbers;*
- , *currently involved in organising them;*
- , *lack of back-up when I’m away;*
- , *involved in postgraduate study - not enough time; and*
- , *employer didn’t let me do it.*

4.3 Type of Program

Members were asked to indicate what type of programs ATEM should run for members. Results were as follows:

| | |
|---|-----|
| Combination of specialisation and generalised | 80% |
| General only | 7% |
| Specialised | 13% |

4.4 Potential Interest

Members were asked to indicate the number of advertised professional development programs of potential interest. 86% of members indicated that between 0-5 programs were of potential interest, which would seem to suggest that it is not the content of Branch programs which prevents members from attending programs.

4.5 Payment of programs via the web

51% of members indicated they would register and pay for professional development programs via the web. Many members commented that they could not support this because of payment arrangements by their employing institutions.

Reasons for not wanting to pay via the web were:

- , *meetings via video-conference rather than formal programs;*
- , *university pays fees via cheque;*
- , *security of transaction issues;*
- , *registration yes, but only if local arrangements to pay; and*
- , *get real - it's a branch activity and the web is not safe.*

While web security remains a debatable issue, it might be seen that ATEM members are ready to go on-line for registration and payment, but are held back by financial procedures at their employing institutions.

4.6 Suggestions for Programs

Members were asked to suggest topics for programs which ATEM might run. This question and question 5.4 attracted most comment from members. The responses are detailed below in the following categories:

- , *Specific Program Suggestions;*
- , *General Program Suggestions;*
- , *Award Courses;*
- , *Program Delivery;*
- , *Branch Specific Comments; and*
- , *General Comments.*

Specific Program Suggestions

- , *Records management re electronic developments.*
- , *Task management, not time management.*
- , *Coping with bad decision making and still performing.*
- , *Empowerment and leadership - how to become one.*
- , *Growing your organisation through commitment and support.*
- , *Tips for writing papers for conferences/journals.*
- , *Benchmarking/quality.*
- , *Beyond the In Tray - a program for new administrators (note that this program was mentioned more than one as a good program which should be offered again).*
- , *Women in leadership, pay equity, dealing with bullying/harassment, career development*
- , *Focus on valuing and managing diversity.*
- , *Programs dealing with organisational change and management.*

- , *Law and tertiary education.*
- , *Working in partnership with external agencies.*
- , *Student administration systems, accessing student information via the web.*
- , *Project management, research funding, student administration, handbook preparation, methods of communicating information to students, skills for dealing with statistics, organisation of workshops.*
- , *Program for new supervisors.*
- , *Web Administration.*
- , *Assertiveness training.*
- , *How to increase efficiency when dealing with increasing paper mountain.*
- , *Marketing and communication seminars, information on successful media programs.*
- , *Time management, stress management.*
- , *Project management, supervision, preparing articles for publication, career advancement in institutions.*
- , *Current developments in the sector - share/discuss experience.*
- , *Impact of technology.*
- , *CAL and Screenrights Licenses.*
- , *Internet/on-line education.*
- , *Presentation skills for workshops, negotiation skills, supervision, committee skills.*

General Program Suggestions

- , *More programs for higher education novices, not institution specific - career development and design.*
- , *Programs where members can explore beyond current boundaries.*
- , *Institutional Visits - why I joined initially.*
- , *Interface between academics and administrators - frequently fraught and sometimes appears the administrators are not perceived as professionals. Something about managing this and extending the belief in professionalism would be helpful.*
- , *Senior manager programs.*
- , *Special interest group for newcomers.*
- , *Higher level management seminars/courses - team building, conflict resolution, supervising staff.*
- , *How older universities do x,y and z (eg special consideration, academic progress).*
- , *Programs which focus on institutional issues (marketing, strategy development).*
- , *Strategic future directions for the industry - current programs too narrowly focused.*
- , *Three hour sessions of general interest (not hard to find half days).*
- , *Bring in people from mainland or send groups to the mainland.*
- , *Discussion groups and special interest groups.*
- , *Senior level short programs on current issues.*

New/old paradigms in education.

Award Programs

- Nested formal aware course (eg NIA and USQ).*
- Focus should be on developing award programs recognised by employers.*
- Web based micro courses, essay assessed and building in aggregate to a qualification.*
- MA in Women and Management in Higher Education - tap into such courses and get groups of interested people together as study groups.*
- Formal courses, GradDips etc.*
- Links with AVCC Professional Development Program - HEW 5-10 level. AVCC cost makes access difficult.*

Program Delivery

- Video conferencing and internet for courses.*
- Not breakfasts or weekends.*
- Run more programs in the country.*
- Early breakfasts on current issues with influential speakers.*
- Focus on groupings of staff (eg faculty administration) - do program for each over a two year period.*
- Links with professional development programs run by universities.*
- Breakfast meetings with motivational speakers, senior management, leading business people, authors, VCs, DVCs etc about directions in their areas.*

Branch Specific Comments

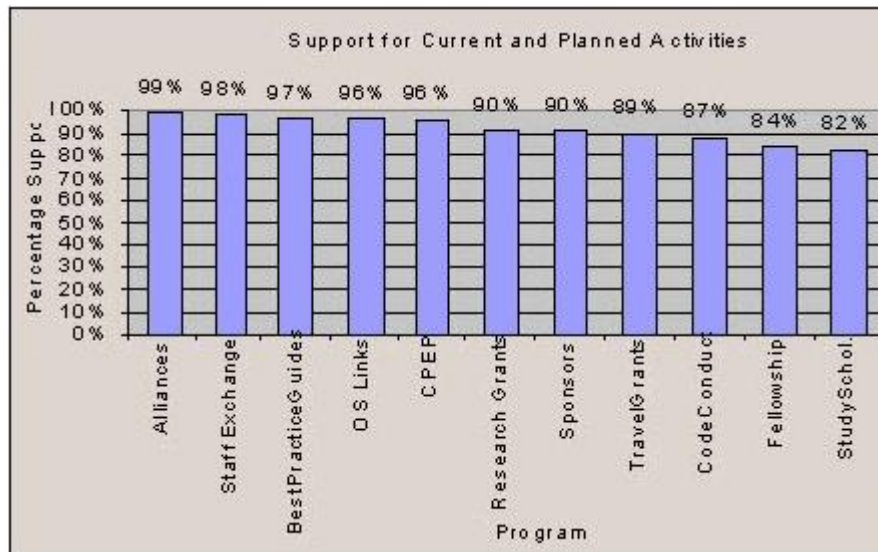
- WA runs very good professional development programs.*
- The WA Executive is very active, but some of the sessions are targeted too narrowly, thus limiting possible attendance.*
- Victorian Branch legal issues seminars should be offered wider.*

General Comments

- How to impress on academic managers that professional development for general staff is relevant and that they should commit funds.*
- Note the proposal to establish a Society of Research Managers.*
- Put suggestions for programs on the web and allow members to vote.*
- Less formal networking.*
- Needs analysis.*

5.1 Activities and Programs: Current and Future

Members were asked to indicate their support for a range of current and future activities. The chart below combines data for “support” and “strongly support”.



The strong support for establishing strategic alliances is notable, as is support for the more practical programs of staff exchange and best practice guides. Developing international links and the Continuing Professional Development Program also attracted strong support. The least favoured, while still supported, were study scholarships and the Award of Fellowships which might both be viewed as individual awards and not advancing the Association as a whole.

5.2 Positioning of Association

Members were asked to indicate their support for the following positioning statement for the Association:

“These activities and initiatives are designed to position ATEM in the tertiary education sector as a unitary association which:

- , represents the professional interests of administrators and managers;*
- , has as its core effective and relevant Professional Development Programs organised and run by Branches;*
- , is structured so that Branches are supported to develop programs designed to meet local needs; and*
- , has an Executive and Council which operates at a strategic level to raise the profile of the Association and its members in the sector.”*

98% of members responding indicated they supported this approach.

Members were also asked to comment if they wished about the positioning statement. The following comments were made:

- , *regions still missing out on programs - don't know answer - need to promote ATEM more in local areas;*
- , *good central structure with flexibility to meet local needs;*
- , *approach is essential to continuing relevance and viability;*
- , *ATEM highly regarded but needs to publicise itself more;*
- , *how does ATEM provide feedback to the sector/institutions on members priorities?*
- , *less about study and research and more about collaboration locally, nationally and internationally;*
- , *Tertiary Education Administration is a career choice and therefore a profession and legitimate field of employment which warrants its own association and recognition.*
- , *positive initiatives to expand ATEM's influence;*
- , *needs to be more clearly seen to represent all tertiary sector, including TAFE.*
- , *what plans are there to attract academic managers?*
- , *we also need to lose our shyness and be much more active as lobbyists for our members;*
- , *many initiatives are employers' responsibilities and we need to spend time to get employers to face this rather than spend members funds to try and make all good things happen;*
- , *urge sharper focus on education support ie ATEM activities promote better education through better members;*
- , *we should also try to integrate work of administrators and academics at universities.*
- , *sets high standards for efficient, effective and top quality administration;*
- , *a stronger national approach is required;*
- , *concerned with the "M" in the name - does this limit membership among non-managers?*
- , *moving in right direction; and*
- , *need to ensure all aspects of administration are covered (eg research administration).*

5.3 Incorporation

83% of members agreed that ATEM should incorporate, with 16% having no opinion. Incorporation has now occurred.

5.4 Future Directions of ATEM

As indicated above, this question was one of two which drew most comments from those members responding. Members were asked to make comments on ATEM's future as they wished.

Specific Comments on Activities

- , *Most useful activities for regional members are the Journal and the Conference.*

Disseminate information regarding policy initiatives in Australia as well as nuts and bolts.

Leadership development internally and externally, taking a more proactive political stance about what is happening in universities and disseminating information to members. Setting up forums around the state to listen to what members want and need.

Strengthen networking.

Stop spending money on frills (like the launch) and concentrate on issues raised in 5.1. ATEM needs to raise its profile and reputation with senior staff to enable them to support staff by attending ATEM functions and seminars in times of little funding and less time.

More levels of membership (member through to Fellow).

Should amalgamate with IPAA and become its higher education division.

Re-focus on core activities, meeting fellow administrators, collaboration/networking.

Vitaly important that ATEM seek to engage and involve senior management staff. WE have seen lessening of support over the years. Presence at ATEM Branch functions and obvious support and encouragement is essential if more junior staff are to see the Association as truly relevant to their career aspirations or for ATEM to be properly accepted as voice for administrators.

Place high emphasis on leadership into the future and formulate visions for the future. ATEM could promote leadership excellence as well as administrative and management excellence.

General Comments

Currently seems progressive and moving in right direction.

Get on with it.

Keep it simple.

I think it is heading in the right direction.

I think it is a great association but it does not relate to my work (research administration).

There seems to be high levels of energy driving the process - congratulations.

Needs to be more externally focused.

Need to get younger and lower level people involved.

I'm impressed with the professionalism of the Association. I would like to see it embrace regional members more.

Remember that 99% of members are administrators. Do not get above their station and remember that academics still do most of the management.

Keep going as is.

profession or at least a specialisation.

Broadly on track. Ultimate goal is recognition of tertiary education management as a

Consider re-introduction of central association PD activity - a touring guru.

As a national body, it still seems to have a very low profile. Something needs to be

done about that.

Need to continue to promote within institutions to reach all levels.

There is a real need for ATEM to continue developing as there seems to be nothing else as relevant to tertiary administrators.

Membership kits need to be available to senior members to facilitate recruitment.

Should concentrate on its direct role to promote welfare and professional development of members. It should not share control over these matters with organisations like the AVCC because their focus is likely to change.

Must help members develop technical expertise especially computing packages for administration, improving computing skills generally.

Keep it clearly focused on professional development and interchange.

Important to stay user friendly and promote professionalism of tertiary education managers without getting carried away with structures and processes that become cumbersome, expensive and self-important.

More tailored to specific areas of administration (eg research administration).

We must develop ATEM as the natural professional association for managers. It has to take in TAFE and private institutions. We need to have a sound financial base not dependent on subscriptions.

With demise of university based professional development programs, ATEM is well placed to fill that gap and also thereby extend its membership.

Need to get decisions made and implemented and be seen as decisive. Too much talk, promises haven't been delivered. Better feedback to members on what's happening.

ATEM plays a very important role in higher education and is pivotal to staff professional development.

It's about time ATEM positions itself as a professional association of credibility and standing in education.

Not all members are senior managers/administrators. Focus should be on developing and promoting lower level administrators to take on more responsibility.

Less academic involvement/emphasis at conferences.

More comment on national policy directions.

Ensure members are trained to equip to run their institutions efficiently and cost effectively.

Primate foci - professional development and protection of professional image.

Expensive extras (eg staff exchange/travel grants) should be secondary.

Important as information exchange network, to represent views to government, AVCC etc.

Seems OK. Of main importance - conference, PDP, and Journal to keep members abreast of what is happening.

Look outside of immediate sector to get directions of how other sectors are coping with change and use that experience to introduce new thinking into the tertiary sector. ATEM will not survive unless it is relevant to members.

Keep conferences as a priority and encourage institutional support.

Seems to be on track and responds well to the changing face of higher education.

Pursue idea that professional development activities be accredited towards formal

qualifications.

Section 6: Member Benefits

6.1 Awareness of ATEM/Ansett Arrangement

Of those members responding, only 26% indicated they were aware of the Ansett arrangement. This outcome indicates that ATEM needs to do more to publicise the member benefits it has arranged and to ensure that members are able to access the benefits in as easy a way as possible.

6.2 Likely to Use the Arrangement

60% of those responding indicated that they may use the arrangement in the future.

6.3 Other Member Benefits

Members were asked to indicate what sort of member benefits ATEM should provide. The following comments were made.

- , Equivalent arrangement with QANTAS.
- , Further Study Scholarships.
- , Tell me how to pursue current arrangements.
- , Discounts for tertiary fees for study.
- , Holiday packages, maybe a holiday home for stressed workers(!), mentoring program needs to be pushed - there are so many people out there who could help others to achieve.
- , Would not waste too much effort on this non-core matter.
- , Discounts for professional courses, books, videos.
- , Travel and accommodation.
- , Discounts for journal subscriptions.
- , Notification of professional events at other universities.
- , Professional accreditation like CPA? We should be proud of what we do.
- , Insurance discounts.
- , Book discounts - Angus and Robertson or university bookshops?
- , Exchanges with other institutions.
- , Link with Alumni Association to get more purchase power.
- , Reductions in subscriptions to allied journals.
- , Benefits should be allied to mission - don't need another affinity program.
- , Car hire.
- , Please don't waste time and resources in this way.

Money should be put into core activities.

Section 7: Satisfaction with ATEM

7.1 Satisfaction with Local Branch

7.1.1 Overall

92% of ATEM members were satisfied or very satisfied with their Branch services.

7.1.2 Branch

The chart below indicates Branch satisfaction rates, with all but one Branch recording satisfaction at 90% or higher. Western Australia and the ACT (Canberra) Branches had a 100% satisfaction rate.



7.2 Satisfaction with ATEM as a Professional Association

7.2.1 Overall

Overall, 96% of those responding were satisfied or very satisfied with ATEM as a professional association.

7.2.2 Branch

Satisfaction with ATEM as a professional association was higher than branch satisfaction rates in all but two Branches. It is notable that two of the three Branches with the highest Branch satisfaction rate had a lower ATEM satisfaction rate.



7.3 Comments

Members were asked to comment on their responses to the above two questions if they wished. The following comments were made.

Association

- , Despite goodwill and professionalism of those involved over the years, local branches are only marginally sustainable because of size and remoteness. Should have electronic meetings. Focus attention on professional issues.
- , Lots of talk, little action at association level re raising profile or gaining sponsorship.
- , Given this is totally voluntary, I believe the Executive do a mammoth job and should be assisted not defamed.
- , I'm still to see the benefit of the Secretariat.
- , We seem to lack focus and too many ideas are floated with few results. We should therefore concentrate on some things we know we can achieve and do that. Sponsorships are greatest need and we should get that right before we touch anything else. Many Association level activities seem peripheral to main game.
- , Members don't see enough about what's going on behind closed doors.
- , Involved people are committed and hard working.
- , Need coordinated approach to raise profile and to increase diversity of programs.
- , More members from all levels.
- , Get impression Association is floundering at the moment.

Professional Development Programs

- , Professional development programs have been excellent.
- , Support and course structure is quite good.
- , Web developments looking good but professional development programs looking tired.

Branch Specific Comments

- , QLD - many programs, lots of variety and priced fairly.
- , SA - not many professional development events; moribund and not relevant for some years.
- , NSW - less presence from local branch.
- , WA - local branch very active but only small group of members attend functions; PDP is excellent.
- , NZ - local newsletter to foster group ethos.
- , NT - PDP excellent.

General Comments

- , Though not a perpetually active member, I have found considerable value from being a member.
- , Response time when I joined was terrible - not professional.

7.4 Other Services

Members were also asked to indicate what other services ATEM should provide. The following suggestions were recorded.

- , *Local chapters linked to main body.*
- , *Perhaps more forums/lunches on interesting topics might stimulate graded participation. These should not be a large commitment on time.*
- , *More regular electronic newsletter.*
- , *Bring in experts on current and emerging topics.*
- , *Institutional visits.*
- , *PD by videoconferencing/computer CD ROM/audio through internet.*
- , *Focus on PD core.*
- , *There appears to be little active support for ATEM from high level administrators. There needs to be a survey to determine why that is so because despite an active Executive, participation in ATEM activities is less than it ought to be.*
- , *Would be great if there were universal membership of administrative staff - perhaps another recruitment drive. More members = more and cheaper PDP.*
- , *Promote member's personal interaction via Bulletin Boards, web debates, gossip pages and humour pages.*
- , *Informal contacts; occasional guest lectures/seminars.*
- , *Best practice guides; central list of all universities, job vacancy site.*
- , *Info on changes provided by federal government/lobbying of government to re-think cuts to funding.*
- , *Mentoring program.*
- , *Information and updates on matters affecting tertiary education (political or economic) or changes that will impact on staff.*
- , *Networking, exchange programs between organisations, government and private*

sector.

Rotating social gatherings with guest speakers (10-15 mins).

Needs a higher profile at institutional level.

More diverse program of activities with provision for discounting costs if unemployed.

Facilitate interaction between all levels of staff, not be elitist.

More one day workshops.

Support for further study.

Guide to competency levels at national/international standards.

Need to promote 'value-added' by administrators.

Regional staff access to programs

PD very important - likewise conferences - should have strong practitioner focus.

Section 8: Other Comments

Members were asked to make any other comments about ATEM they wished. The following comments cross a range of areas, some repeated in sections earlier in this report.

ATEM should concentrate on giving value for money and activities/services of high quality. The Association should re-think its policy of providing substantial benefits for individual members (travel grants, scholarships) out of other members' subscriptions. The trend to electronic communication I support, but with some reservations with respect to the Journal and the newsletter, since their printed form is higher readable and portable.

Pressure of work means many things are done on the run without proper notice to members for planning. It is usually the busiest people who take on things like ATEM, but ...

Good idea to do the survey.

Level of management has improved considerably over last few years.

I value my association with ATEM and am trying to give it support via the local committee.

Why not look at possible international alliance with SCUP. A SCUP branch in Australia is being investigated - don't need another organisation - alliances more productive.

Monthly email update (no more than a page) to ensure awareness remains current.

Funding for staff development not enough to justify attendance at higher level programs (Towards Middle Management).

Since my joining the Association, I have had very little information other than the monthly newsletter, about this organisation, what it offers, how a new member gets passwords etc. I'm not alone as others in the Association have similar views. Input is required to new members - you should not take for granted new members will just

find out - introductory booklet needed?

I think the Branch (WA) and Association do an excellent job. Keep going in current directions as planned.

Valuable organisation to belong to.

Thanks for opportunity to comment.

Lack of renewals suggests we moved too far away from members needs. Our first aim should be PDP and sponsorships so members can benefit. We seem to have spent a lot of money on central office activities which I don't see improving the lot of members in institutions. We should discuss this seriously without people feeling threatened or unappreciated.

Have enjoyed all dealings with ATEM.

Need younger members.

I believe ATEM operates quite effectively and often refer colleagues to PD activities and membership availability.

Working or grants suggest only those active in the Executive could apply - not true competition.

I feel I have joined an organisation that is very professionally administered. It has an unusually well education membership, articulate and willing to participate.

Members have access to, and preparedness to use web/email.

Should be more high level targeting within universities which would encourage managers to support staff to attend programs/conferences. It is still not viewed as appropriate for administrators to be supported to go to conferences.

In general for the \$ I pay, conferences have too much low level uninteresting papers and I'm not sufficiently challenged or stimulated.

Comparison/discussion of like operations between institutions.

Development of website/communication with other branches/universities.

Would like to see more done on mentoring or buddy system across institutions.

Summary of electronic communication be put at top of messages.

At Darwin conference, ATEM office-bearers didn't put themselves out to be friendly to rank and file or anyone they didn't know.

You all do a wonderful job. ATEM puts a 'profession' face on what we do - university administration is more than just a job.

The committee should be congratulated on its excellent proactive approach in keeping members informed of activities and its continual review to improve practices to ensure relevance.

NT PDP very good.

How can we raise ATEM's profile?

ATEM does particularly well at maintaining links across institutions and should be encouraged.

Rotate events around universities rather than only in the city.

ATEM is silent during the period where middle level managers are under serious threat of elimination.

Need to look at succession planning and finding ways around "too busy to be involved".

Good quality publication that promotes ATEM well in a professional sense.

Concluding Comments

Administering the survey and analysing the results of this survey was difficult for a number of reasons, least of all the time commitment of a new job! However, if future surveys are conducted, it is important that the instrument be available via the web and hard copy, distributed only by the ATEM Secretariat. Branches assisted in the distribution of follow-up surveys but it was apparent from the origins of responses that distribution was more effective in some branches than others. The reasons for this do not matter given the time past and the response rate.

Surveys always have an element of bias in them, for a number of reasons. However, they can produce useful information when administered effectively. In a geographically spread organisation like ATEM, they also provide a cost effective way of obtaining feedback from members but need to be part of a broader suite of mechanisms designed to ensure that the Council receives member feedback on a regular basis.

Some thoughts (not necessarily new) for consideration:

Many of the suggestions made by members reflect a (mis) belief that the organisation is better resourced and better placed to undertake broad ranging activities than it is. We might want to do a better job of explaining how the organisation operates and exactly what limited resources we have. We should also explain the structure of the organisation - that when you join ATEM you join via a Branch and that there are two, different but complementary, levels of activity.

Associated with this is the need for members to accept responsibility for the future of ATEM. Members need to be active in ATEM and participate in events or organise those events. It is easy to suggest a range of activities, but fewer and fewer members are willing to give up a little time to continue to move ATEM forwards. We might need to think about how we can convey this responsibility to members.

We might also want to work of raising awareness among members that raising ATEM's profile is a task for the Association as an organisation in conjunction with the efforts of individual members. All members should be encouraged to talk about ATEM whenever they can, and to refer colleagues for membership at every opportunity.

The survey indicates we have strong support from among members for our current and planned initiatives. Even though the response rate is low, the survey reports the views of members which should not be ignored or summarily dismissed as irrelevant. No member's view is irrelevant, and we need to take notice or risk developing the 'ivory tower' syndrome which reportedly afflicts the offices of so many Vice-Chancellors today.

Maree Conway

3 April 2000