

# Celebrating success, and planning for the future

## 2004 National Policy Congress

The ALIA National Policy Congress is an important mechanism that enables the Board of Directors to consult with members about future directions for the Association. The Congress follows a two-tier model with meetings held in regions, followed by a national meeting in Canberra. The meeting program for the regions seeks feedback on issues set by the Board. The regional meetings are organised by the ALIA local liaison officer for the region and a member of the Board attends these meetings if possible. Every ALIA group is invited to nominate one delegate to attend a regional meeting and in 2004 the model was expanded to include any personal members and the nominated representative of institutional members interested in attending regional meetings. Each regional meeting elects one delegate to attend the national meeting, which is normally held in Canberra. In 2004 meetings were held in Alice Springs and in Cairns for the first time in addition to those held in each capital.

The NPC was held in Canberra at ALIA House on 18–19 November 2004. Delegates to this meeting included the elected delegates from each of the regional meetings, representatives of self-nominating and Board advisory groups, and the ALIA Board of Directors. ALIA local liaison officers and key ALIA National Office staff attended as observers. The Congress theme was the celebration of successes for the Association in 2004. The Congress included several sessions where delegates were given the opportunity to present success stories for their ALIA group or region. The program focussed on future planning for the Association with sessions that included information gathered from the regional meetings on the review of member engagement and group communications, issues of professional practice, and the *ALIA 2005–2006 plan*.

The Congress also provided a valuable opportunity for delegates to gain a stronger understanding of the breadth of activities undertaken by the Association, and to work with the ALIA Board of Directors in planning the Association's activities for the next two years. The Congress dinner was also a celebration of success that saw

tables sprinkled with silver stars and ALIA Silver Pins presented to Margie Anderson and Jane Jeppson in recognition of their contribution to ALIA as volunteer group office bearers, prior to their appointment as ALIA local liaison officers.

Outcomes of the 2004 NPC include:

- self-nominating group web pages have been moved from the members-only section of the website into the public area;
- areas of professional practice were identified and will be incorporated into ALIA's publishing and CPD programs;
- the Congress identified those initiatives of the 2005–2006 plan that will be given high priority in 2005; and
- a special resolution will be made to the ALIA 2005 Annual General Meeting to change the name of the NPC to the National Advisory Congress as the Congress fulfils a broad advisory role to the Board and does not focus solely on policy matters.

In its meeting immediately after the NPC, the ALIA Board of Directors endorsed a further revision to the NPC model. Under this new model, regional meetings will be held throughout the year to communicate and exchange information about the work and planning of the Association and the interests of members and groups in the region. Ideally, these meetings will be run in conjunction with other activities, such as CPD or group events, or information sessions about ALIA services. These meetings will be open to any ALIA member and will be attended, where possible, by a director and a member of ALIA National Office staff.

Planning for the 2005 National Policy Congress is already underway with the national meeting scheduled to be held in Canberra on 23–24 September 2005. Further information about ALIA's NPC and reports from the 2004 NPC meetings are available at <http://alia.org.au/governance/npc/>.

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