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## Isolated Children's Parents' Association of Australia

Advocating for equitable access to education for students in rural and remote Australia

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### FEDERAL COUNCIL'S BRANCH BULLETIN Volume 17, Number 5: April 2019

A productive and successful time for ICPA right across Australia. State Conferences have been held in Western Australia, South Australia, New South Wales and the Northern Territory. All of these State Councils now have a new Council with Annual General Meetings taking place during these Conferences. Sending a very warm welcome to new Councillors and welcome back to returning ones. We look forward to continuing the great relationship that Federal Council has with all State Councils.

The Federal Budget was handed down last Tuesday and it is looking like a Federal election will be set for Saturday 11 May. Exciting times ahead!

#### **State Conferences**

##### **NEW SOUTH WALES**



Federal Councillors Kate Thompson and Sally Sullivan travelled to the NSW State Conference held in Buronga on 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> March which was convened by the Wentworth Branch. Forty-five motions were tabled with one being withdrawn and the rest carried. The AGM saw Kate Treweeke, Helen Ponder, Nerida Healy and Rachel Brindley retire off Council with Deb Castle, Ali Briggs, Shennah Joiner and Gabie Le Lievre become new Councillors.

After a year off Council Claire Butler returned and stepped straight into the President's position. Congratulations to the remaining Councillors and welcome to the new ones. Read the NSW post conference Media Release [here](#).

*Pictured L to R - Immediate Past President Bruce Paynter, Telstra Regional Australia senior specialist, Ann Jakle, retiring Immediate Past President Kate Treweeke and retiring Secretary Helen Ponder*

##### **SOUTH AUSTRALIA**



Due to this year's ICPA Federal Conference being held in Adelaide and convened by the SA State Council, it was decided that this year's SA State Conference would be a webinar using technology from Open Access College and Port Augusta School of the Air. This was an excellent way of hosting their conference and gave delegates the opportunity of experiencing Webex which is the platform that Port Augusta SOTA uses. The AGM saw a farewell to long serving Councillors Belinda Hatcher, Kylie Morton, Sonya Fels and Kirsty Williams and a warm welcome to new ones Penny Rasheed, Lisa McIntosh, Paulaine Vermuelen, Edwina Bowie and

Michelle Hilder. Read the South Australia State Conference Update written by newly appointed Publicity Officer Petie Rankin [here](#).

*Pictured L to R - Kate Greenfield, Lynly Kerin, Petie Rankin, Mija Reynolds, Jill Greenfield, Kerry Williams, Penny Rasheed, Edwina Bowie, Helen Williams, Jodie Keough, Ros Breeding, Katrina Morris and Lisa McIntosh.*

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Federal Councillors Jane O'Brien and Sally Sullivan travelled to scenic Scarborough for this year's WA State Conference on 22 March, convened by Esperance Branch.

With the beautiful Scarborough beach as a back drop, delegates saw 13 Agenda Motions, 3 Supplementary and 2 Floor Motions tabled. Once again the Annual General Meeting was conducted and fond farewells were said to Councillors Carol Ford, Elize Scheepers and Karina Walter.

WA now has a full council with Kym Burns, Chandra Ridley, Naomi Obst, Jane Hughes and Sandie McCombie stepping on and we would like to send them a warm welcome. The WA contacts can be found on their website [here](#).

*Pictured L to R - Federal Membership Officer Jane O'Brien, Past Federal President Roxanne Morrissey and Federal Vice President Sally Sullivan.*

## NORTHERN TERRITORY



The Northern Territory ICPA 37<sup>th</sup> State Conference was held in Katherine on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April. Convened by the Katherine Branch, this conference was top heavy in Federal Councillors with dual State and Federal Councillors Sally Sullivan and Suzanne Wilson along with visiting Federals Kristen Coggan and Jane Morton in attendance. Stepping out of NT positions were long standing Webmaster Sue Shotton and Ruth Woerle who was the Down The Track editor for 13 years. Newly appointed positions went to Helen Kemp and Ruth's daughter Annika Bell who is

taking over the reins to become the editor of Down The Track. New Councillors are Amber Driver, Kerrie Scott and Amanda Murphy. Click [here](#) to view the NT State Councillor contact details.

*Pictured L to R - **Back Row** Kerrie Scott, Sarah Measey, Bec Cadzow, Sarah Cook, Amber Driver, Amanda Murphy, Helen Kempe **Front Row** Sally Sullivan, Tiani Cook and Suzanne Wilson*

## Federal Conference 2019



The plans are well and truly in full swing for this years ICPA Australia Federal Conference, to be held on 31 July and 1 August at the Adelaide Oval. Hosted by the ICPA South Australia State Council, the convening committee are currently working hard to deliver two wonderful days which will showcase this magnificent city in all its wonder.

The conference is being held at the picturesque Adelaide Oval, a short walk across the newly constructed Torrens River Park Pedestrian Bridge and not far from most accommodation.

The partners tour is in full swing of being organised and will be a great highlight showcasing of some of Adelaide's regions.

All enquiries regarding the conference can be directed to Conference Convenor [Katrina Morris](#). Keep an eye on our [website](#) for further details as they come to hand.

## 2019 AGM Notice

The Annual General Meeting of the Isolated Children's Parents' Association of Australia Incorporated will be held on **Thursday, August 1, 2019 at 8.30am** at the Adelaide Oval. During the AGM, elections will be held to establish the 2019/2020 Federal Council. Have you considered becoming a Federal Councillor? A full council lightens the load for all of the volunteers and the breadth of experience and talents you would bring to a council position would help to strengthen your ICPA. Click [here](#) to download Federal Council nomination forms. Further information is available by contacting a Federal Councillor which can be viewed [here](#).

## Federal Conference Motions

Click [here](#) for the **Motion Template** to use, along with further information.

**Agenda Motions** are to be in the hands of the Federal Secretary by *midnight Tuesday June 4, 2019*. A reminder that only Federal related issues should be presented at the Federal Conference. Explanations are very important - please remember to include them when you send your motion to Suzanne Wilson, [Federal Secretary](#).

**Supplementary Motions** are to be with the Federal Secretary by *midnight Tuesday July 23, 2019*. Supplementary motions are designed to address an issue that has arisen since the agenda motion cut-off date. Supplementary motions will only be accepted onto the agenda if they pertain to an issue *not* already covered in the main agenda. Please contact Suzanne Wilson, [Federal Secretary](#) for more information.

**Floor Motions** generally come about as a result of discussion and debate during conference. Occasionally they cover issues that have arisen since the closing date for supplementary motions. Floor motions can only be accepted for debate with the consent of delegates, after the motion has been read to the conference by the Chair.

Please contact Suzanne Wilson, [Federal Secretary](#) for more information.

- **Branches are reminded that a motion does not have to be presented at a State Conference to be accepted as a Federal Agenda Motion.**
- **Motions should be approved by the branch and submitted after a majority decision.**
- **Full explanations are to be sent with your motions for printing in the booklet, however please note, only a short summary of the explanation to be presented at conference in a maximum of 2 minutes (or about 250 words).**

- **Branches - please prepare your summaries before conference and have the shortened versions ready to read instead of the full written explanations.**
- **Federal Council and the relevant portfolio leaders can be contacted for assistance with motion wording and writing. Contact details [here](#).**
- **Previously carried motions do not have to be presented every year. Once a carried motion is in policy, it remains part of the lobby until resolved or modified.**
- **Branches do not have to submit a motion in order to attend Federal Conference.**

A motion should be directed to someone and ask the organisation to carry out a specific course of action. It is important that a motion is worded in a way that clearly reflects the Branch or State Council's intention. If you are not sure who you should be directing your motion to, the following may be of some assistance:

- **Boarding (AIC)** motions can be directed to the Minister for Families and Social Services and the Minister for Education or use alternate general wording – relevant Ministers.
- **Communications** motions should be directed to the Minister for Communications and the Arts unless the matter relates to the service provider.
- **Early Childhood Education** motions should be directed to the Minister for Education.
- **Child Care** policies and program motions should be directed to the Minister for Education.
- **Distance Education**, including the DETA lobby and any increases to the AIC should be directed to the Minister for Families and Social Services and the Minister for Education or use of the wording - the Federal Government or relevant Ministers, is also acceptable.
- **Youth Allowance** motions relating to changes to YA, increases in rent assistance and the relocation scholarship should be addressed to the Minister for Families and Social Services.
- **Tertiary Access Allowance** either Minister for Education or Federal Government.
- **Training Motions should be directed to** the Minister for Small and Family Business, Skills and Vocational Education.

### Conference Workshop

#### Federal Conference Motion Process

Federal Council will hold its "**Conference Procedures Workshop**" and all conference attendees, whether they are first time delegates or not, are invited to attend. Presenters will run through a variety of scenarios that arise during conference including but not limited to, motion amendments, word changes and withdrawing motions. A full explanation of how motions are presented at conference as well as other important information is [here](#).

### Communications Update

#### Mobile Black Spot Program

It has been a busy time for communications in rural and remote Australia with the locations being announced for Round 4 of the Mobile Black Spot Program across Australia. A list of the 180 funded base stations can be found [here](#).

To continue this great work of connecting people in the bush, the Minister for Regional Services, Sport, Local Government and Decentralisation Senator Bridget McKenzie announced \$220 million to establish the Stronger Regional Digital Connectivity Package to address these issues:

- \$160 million for two new rounds of the Mobile Black Spot Program

- \$60 million for a new Regional Connectivity Program
- A digital tech hub to improve digital literacy

### **Landlines**

At the 2018 Federal Conference in Canberra, members expressed their concern for the reliability of landlines and the time frames taken to restore these services. It is reassuring to see an obligation from Telstra to acknowledge and improve these issues that affect the learning of rural and remote students. Further information can be found at the Regional, Rural and Remote Communications Coalition (RRRCC) Media Release [here](#).

### **Scam Alert**

NBN Co has contacted ICPA (Aust) asking our organisation to alert members to be vigilant of callers claiming to be from NBN Co requesting personal or financial information.

This follows a significant increase in enquiries about suspected scams to NBN Co's contact centre in the past six months.

NBN Co have advised the following: "Protect yourself by verifying who you are talking to. If in doubt, hang up and call your retail service provider customer service centre to check if the call is legitimate." Read more from NBN [here](#).

### **Tertiary Update**

#### **Centrelink Claim Tracker**

Centrelink customers, including students, once a claim is submitted online, will automatically be able to track the progress of their claim via their [Centrelink online account](#) or [Express Plus Centrelink mobile app](#).

The Centrelink online account or the Express Plus Centrelink mobile app allows the customer to:

- Track your claim, receive notifications and reminders during the claiming process (e.g. further documentation required).
- Upload documents
- View your payments, transaction history and letters
- Receive reporting reminders including employment income, family income estimate and payment choices and to reminders to provide documents
- View and update your details including bank details and work status
- Manage Centrelink appointments,

It is only for claims submitted online so is not available for AIC or ABSTUDY Living Allowance. Download the Express Plus Centrelink app to your device.



### **Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)**

#### **Additional Child Care Subsidy**

The Additional Child Care Subsidy is available for families accessing child care (or In Home Care (IHC) and experiencing temporary financial hardship after national disasters such as the NQ floods, extended drought and the Tasmanian bushfires, as well as being available for those caring for children 'at risk'.

Claims need to be made within 6 months of the catastrophic event to Centrelink or the Dept of Human Services for 13 weeks of temporary support per event. This covers 100% or 120% of the hourly rate cap of the child care fees for 100 hours per fortnight and is only short term assistance provided in exceptional circumstances. The family is also exempt from the activity test. If a further tragic event occurs within the family, then another 13 weeks of

support will be provided on demonstrated evidence of the same. This ensures continuity of care.

Click [here](#) for the Additional Child Care Subsidy-Temporary Financial Hardship Fact Sheet.

### **Curriculum Update**

Several Federal Councillors attended the first meeting of the ACARA Parents and Principals Peak National Bodies Meeting for 2019 via teleconference. ACARA encourages parent participation and interaction with the organisation and encouraged Parent Bodies to share information with our members.

- The ACARA website provides access to a variety of information and resources and we encourage members to take a look. The website can be access via this [link](#)
- Parents can access the NAPLAN Public demonstration site, giving an insight into NAPLAN tests. This site can be accessed by searching on the ACARA website mentioned above or can be directly accessed via this link [here](#)
- ACARA releases a Monthly Parent Update, available through the website, or alternatively Parents can chose to subscribe to the Update – click on this [link](#) for recent updates and more information. ACARA would appreciate suggestions on issues to cover in future editions of this publication, as well as anything you would like them to share and encourage parents to email ideas through to this [email](#)
- NAPLAN testing is coming up for years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in May and the move towards NAPLAN Online continues. Click [here](#) for up to date NAPLAN information and [here](#) for specific parent/carer support resources and information.

### **AIC & ABSTUDY Update**

Families who receive Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) or ABSTUDY in flood affected Queensland shires, have received good news from the Department of Human Services via email.

The Australian Government is providing a \$1,000 Flood Education Supplement to each eligible student as part of the North QLD Flood Recovery Package. The affected shires are

- Burdekin Shire Council
- Hinchinbrook Shire Council
- Burke Shire Council
- McKinlay Shire Council
- Carpentaria Shire Council
- Richmond Shire Council
- Cloncurry Shire Council
- Townsville City Council
- Douglas Shire Council
- Winton Shire Council
- Flinders Shire Council

IMPORTANT - If families are still to apply for their 2019 AIC or ABSTUDY, they have until 23 APRIL to get their applications to the DHS for this supplement to be received.

Further information regarding this announcement can be found [here](#).

### **Central Station Blogs**

Do you have a DE/SOTA story to tell? Would you like to share some fun schoolroom anecdotes, success stories of DE/SOTA kids or interesting outreach/minischool/inreach experiences? (and photos to match!)

Central Station has once again offered ICPA members an opportunity to participate in a week of posts this year. Our goal is to present a week of positive stories from DE/SOTA - anything that can show how much we value our DE/SOTA experiences. If you are interested in participating or would like further information, contact Alana [alana@icpafc.org.au](mailto:alana@icpafc.org.au)

## **The Mental Health and Wellbeing of Young People Seminar**

A not for profit educational seminar is to be held at the University of Qld on Friday 24 May from 9am to 5pm. With nine top end presenters ranging in topics from keeping young people safe in party environments to how the internet is affecting youth wellbeing, we think this is an informative day that would benefit schools and parents alike.

These seminars are being held across Australia. Follow their [Facebook page](#) for dates and booking information.

Brisbane [early bird discounts](#) end 10 May, 2019.

## **2019/2020 Conferences**

ICPA QLD – Charters Towers, 5 & 6 June 2019 - [Website](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#)

ICPA FEDERAL – Adelaide, July 31 & 1 August 2019 - [Website](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#),

[Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#)

ICPA NSW – Moree, 18 & 19 March 2020 - [Website](#), [Facebook](#)

