

A First for ICPA

It's quite surreal to think that the ICPA Federal Conference has been and gone and I don't even have a plane ticket or goodie bag to show for it. But alas, these are the times and as words like 'new normal', 'social distancing' and 'online house parties' become prevalent in every second sentence, we were lucky to have a conference at all.

Every ICPA member and those interested in ICPA happenings would be incredibly proud of the effort that Federal Council and all involved contributed to pull off a first ever online Federal Conference (and hopefully last I hear you all say?) and make it through without a smashed screen in sight. When knowing that Covid19 would prevent us all making our way south to the icy temperatures of Tasmania, Federal Council worked tirelessly behind the scenes (and screens) to ensure that the year wasn't a complete waste of lobbying time and came together to give

us a virtual experience of technical glitching proportions.

What better way to show NBN and Telstra the vital importance of reliable internet than by making sure a solar flare would take out the SkyMuster service, whilst showing off the resilience of ICPA members! As it turns out, it actually wasn't cleverly planned by Federal Council and it just happened that, out of 365 days, day 1 of Conference was, in some ways, the perfect time for this to happen.

Federal President, Alana, took it in her powerwalking stride and continued unflustered to those who were able to remain online. We all know, that if this had happened during a regular school day for most of our young distance education kids, they would have found a way around it (albeit after trying to outrun the govie with no internet being the perfect excuse for a day off), and continued on their merry way. It's not so easy when it's in the middle of

Distance education made easy with unmetered satellite data ^!

nbn™ Sky Muster™ Plus

plans from **\$60*** per month
*Min cost over 30 days is \$60

^ unlimited browsing, online learning & video calls

Call us on **1300 366 169**
or visit **harbourisp.com.au**

hi
harbour isp

powered by
nbn™

*Unmetered content will not count towards monthly data allowances. Video streaming and traffic via a VPN are classified as Metered Content and will count towards monthly data allowances. Fair-use restrictions apply.

a lesson, in the middle of nowhere, with no other internet options. So, in hindsight, it was kind of a bittersweet reminder that this is our everyday life.

Motions were read and passed, commented on, debated or not carried throughout both days, with regular breaks to hear speakers and various reports to keep everyone engaged. The State Presidents' reports were fantastic as they showcased some wonderful words and images of each state and territory, and how the pandemic is affecting us all. It's hard not to be moved by photos of our country's wonderful younger generation and their coping abilities.

My coping abilities throughout the days were a challenge as I had planned to have a lovely social catch up (that we all so desperately need), with conference being projected onto my kitchen wall, and locals from near and far joining me. We had school teachers planning to visit, students geared up with laptops, ICPA friends testing new recipes to indulge us and me with my eagerly opened numerous packets of Arnotts cream biscuits (that's the Martha Stewart in me) in preparation. But alas, COVID struck again and SA brought in the 'only 10 extra's in every household' rule and, so my gathering dreams were shattered. Instead I enjoyed my solitary conference at the dining table, copiously downing cups of tea and hot soup. Lucky, I like my own company. (I did have the kids popping in and out, competing to see who could press the most buttons on my laptop!)

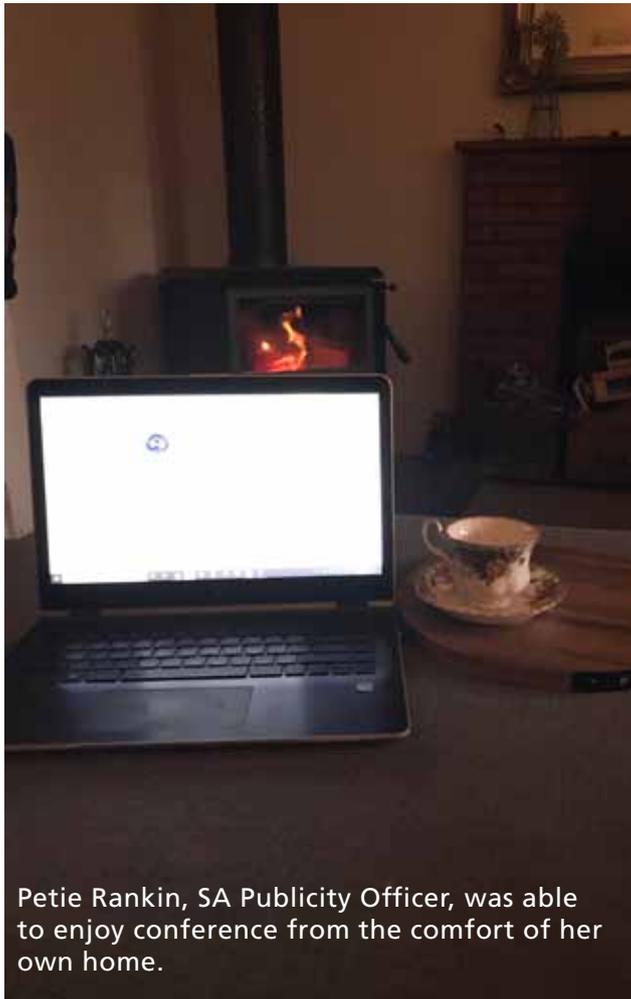
Throughout every technical glitch and minor hiccup, Alana and her council kept their cool and managed to get through the motions and voting system with ease. Guest speakers were able to indulge themselves by leaving their pyjama bottoms on and switching the camera to the best angle for their speeches while we were invited into their homes (virtually) to hear them speak.

The big one next year (I say big one as it's the 50th!!) was voted on and after some debate, it was agreed that Longreach would welcome us all into their fold to showcase that ICPA started at the grass roots level of regional families and has become the powerful and passionate organisation that stands today.

I would like to offer my congratulations to the ICPA Federal Council, and all those involved behind the scenes, for getting through the very first online ICPA Federal Conference, without a laptop being thrown in frustration (well not on live streaming camera anyway). You all did an amazing job and, whilst technology will always have its problems, the passionate men and women behind those screens are what we are there for and that passion shone through brightly. A job extremely well done.

Petie Rankin

SA ICPA Publicity Officer



Petie Rankin, SA Publicity Officer, was able to enjoy conference from the comfort of her own home.

