Sue Hutley

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Local Liaison Officers

LLOs are ALIA representatives in each state/territory. Their duties include being a point of contact for members and non-members.

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e-List etiquette

Feedback from members was requested during March 2007 for a review of the documents relating to ALIA e-mail netiquette and the guidelines for management of ALIA e-lists. Thank you to all those members (and non-members) who made suggestions for updating these documents, which will be discussed at the May Board meeting. (See also the article 'Are e-lists free?' below.)

Membership renewals

Membership renewals will start going out in late May. A couple of our members recently summed up the point of ALIA membership very nicely – their letters are published in Your Voice on page 5.

ALIA's newest Fellow

Congratulations to Sherrey Quinn, who will be awarded an ALIA Fellowship at the 2007 AGM on Tuesday 15 May.

ALIA Board meetings

A report of the March 2007 Board meeting can be found on the ALIA website at http://alia.org.au/governance/board/reports/. Board meeting dates for the rest of 2007 are 15–16 May (Canberra), 6 August (Adelaide), 3 December (Canberra).

All Advisory/Working groups and self-nominating groups are reminded that funding proposals or papers must be submitted to the Executive Director at least three weeks prior to a Board meeting. We need you to meet this deadline for papers so that we can send them out in good time to Directors.

'Farewell' and 'Welcome' to Directors

Dagmar Schmidmaier, Rachael Browning and Ann Ritchie will complete their terms as ALIA Directors on 15 May 2007 at the AGM. Dagmar and Rachael are finishing two-year terms and Ann four years. They have our heartfelt thanks for their countless volunteer hours, their expertise, enthusiasm, leadership and support for the work of the Association.

A warm welcome to Derek Whitehead, who will be Vice-president/President-elect, and to Damien Lodge and Kate Watson, who were elected Directors. Details of election results and profiles of the new Directors will be published in a future issue of inCite.

National Advisory Congress 2007

Each year the NAC meetings are held around Australia to gain member input into the future of the Association. In 2007 the meetings will be focussed on the topic of Education and Workforce Planning (a priority for 2007). Proposed dates for meetings and more information to inform our discussions will be placed on the website over the coming months at **http://www.alia.org.au/governance/nac/2007/**.

Are eLists free?

David Pruss, IT Manager, ALIA
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An interesting question, with an interesting answer.

From the perspective of the subscriber: yes, they are free. But, as with any provided service, there are the hidden costs that someone is paying for (and in this case, to state an obvious but important fact, that is you, the members of ALIA). The question ALIA members should ask is 'Should non-members be using a service paid for and maintained by our membership subscriptions?'.

To inform the discussion, we need to know the cost of providing this service. There are several financial factors.

Bandwidth (the cost of access to, and delivering the post to an ALIA e-list) is the first. ALIA has 24 523 registered subscribers to its e-lists. Industry studies show that, on average, 30 per cent of subscribers send five messages a month to an e-list. Using these figures produces 441 414 posts per year. I have used a conservative, industry standard, base bandwidth cost of $0.01 per message. Multiplying base cost by the industry average number of messages gives a delivery cost of $4 500 per annum. I have used five messages per month per 30 per cent of subscribers as a base for these cost projections, but it seems likely that ALIA's figure is closer to ten messages per month, which raises the base delivery cost to about $9 000 per annum.

Then there are the ancillary costs: a percentage of the cost of hardware, system maintenance, network security, IT staff salaries, list owners or administrators salaries, volunteers' personal time, software licenses, electricity and security controls. Studies suggest these costs effectively double the bandwidth cost of an e-list service.

So five messages from 30 per cent of subscribers per month will cost ALIA approximately $9 000 a year, ten messages swell this to $18 000.

The only subscribers who get free ALIA e-lists are non-members of ALIA. Free e-lists are, in reality, a fanciful thought.