



President's Column

Tim Marchant*

A bid committee comprising representatives from the Mathematics Education Research Group of Australasia, Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers, the Australian Mathematical Society, The Statistical Society of Australia and the Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute submitted a bid earlier this year to host the 14th International Congress on Mathematical Education (ICME-14). This major conference attracts 3000 delegates from across the world. The bid committee together with the support of Business Events Sydney spared no effort in submitting a highly competitive bid. Unfortunately we were unsuccessful, with Shanghai being awarded the hosting rights. My commiserations go to Professor Merrilyn Goos, the proposed conference convenor and the rest of the bid team. However there are some positives to take from the experience; the teamwork and cooperation across a range of organisations supporting the broad range of mathematical sciences in Australia was first class. This bodes well for future cooperative activities between our sister societies.

Currently the AustMS publishes three journals, with the support of Cambridge University Press. These comprise the Bulletin and the Journal of the AustMS, which focus on pure mathematics and the ANZIAM Journal, which has an applied focus. Journals via editorial policy and their editorial panels have the opportunity to influence research directions, both in Australia and overseas. A survey of sister organisations overseas shows that many societies support a much bigger range of journals. In the UK, for example, the London Mathematical Society and Institute for Mathematics and its Applications publish twenty different journals in total. A quick look at Scopus shows that authors based in Australia published over 500 journal articles in 2014, whilst the AustMS stable of journals published around 250 articles. Hence our influence over journal publishing activities is much lower than our publishing activities. Moreover the income the AustMS derives from its publishing activities forms a substantial part of our annual budget and is used to support a wide range of activities for our members. I believe there is capacity within the Society to support the launch of an additional journal. I encourage AustMS members to discuss the idea of forming a new journal and what disciplinary focus would be most suitable.

Recently I have received some emails from concerned members regarding the impact on the mathematical sciences from the Defence Trade Controls Bill, recently passed by the Australian Parliament. The Act restricts the supply of military and dual use technologies and will impact the university research sector. The dual use technologies cover a wide range of engineering and technology disciplines. In

*Email: President@austms.org.au

particular there is a supply offence, related to the transmission of information from Australia to overseas. This offence includes all physical and electronic forms except verbal means of communication. Clearly this places restrictions on the operation of research groups with international partners and is likely to impact Australia's research efforts and further burden us with red tape. However, the mathematical sciences are fortunate as most of their research activities fall outside the scope of the new Bill.



Tim Marchant received his Doctorate from Adelaide University in 1989. After graduation he joined Wollongong University where he is currently Dean of Research and Professor of Applied Mathematics. His research areas include nonlinear optics, nonlinear waves and combustion theory. Tim is a Fellow of the Australian Mathematical Society, a Member of the Endeavour Awards selection panel and on the editorial board of *Applied Mathematical Modelling*. His other interests include playing bridge and learning Mandarin.