

AAP TODAY

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AAP joins Press Council

AAP is to join the Australian Press Council following meetings in May which reshaped the Council's structure.

It was decided that from 1 July the number of members in the Council would be increased from 17 to 23 and there would be more groups represented.

The APC said 11 of the 23 members would represent the major publishing groups in Australia and an independent

chairman would be included as a member.

Direct representation would be by publishers John Fairfax and Sons Ltd, David Syme and Co. Ltd, News Ltd, The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd, Australian Consolidated Press Ltd, Bell Group Publishing Pty Ltd and Northern Star Holdings Pty Ltd.

AAP would also join the Council and the present membership of associations would continue to include

Country Press Australia, Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd and The Australian Suburban Newspapers Association Pty Ltd.

Representatives of journalists and editors would also sit on the Council and public membership would be increased to eight.

The APC said the Council was examining ways to improve readers' access, particularly those outside New South Wales, to its complaint procedure.

AAP Editor-in-Chief Barry Wheeler welcomed the move, saying: "It is the first time AAP has been part of the Press Council.

"It is a logical move, considering AAP's development over the past few years, that we should be invited by the Council to participate in the self-regulation of the Australian press.

"It is a recognition of the increasingly important role of AAP in the news pages of Australian papers."

DEEP DOWN, THEY ALL ENJOY A BREATHER

Bottom of the harbour investigative reporting is a speciality at AAP's Adelaide Bureau.

All five staff journalists are certified divers, the underwater type, not those who leap from high boards.

Tim Dornin, who was for some time the only diving staffer, was the founding member of the Adelaide AAP Scuba Club.

With staff changes, the number of underwater enthusiasts grew and today all have taken the plunge.

James Grubel, Ian Williams, Chris Pash and Tim dive regularly, and Karen Noack, a lapsed qualified diver, is being pushed back into the water.

This growth in the sport has taken place despite a woman being bitten in half by a white pointer shark at Port Lincoln on South Australia's Eyre Peninsula.

Ian, wife Jan, and James have completed the advanced diver course under the tutelage of Chris who became a PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) instructor last year.



Ian Williams (second from right) shows the glint of cold steel to a made-in-Taiwan crocodile being wrestled into submission by worried-looking Bureau Chief Chris Pash (left). James Grubel and Tim Dornin do their best to repossess an unidentified leg, also from Taiwan, while Karen Noack, patently the only sensible member of the group, tries to warn her foolish colleagues of the dangers of ignoring 'no diving' signs.

James has become a legend in Adelaide since he first leapt from a jetty and bit through his regulator mouthpiece when he hit the water (he didn't have time for breakfast).

Tim makes a business of it, finding lost diving knives and masks

as he pokes his inquiring nose into watery crevices and caves.

Ian has more than once tried to breathe underwater, forgetting to put his mouthpiece in until about five metres down, trying to suck air through a water-filled snorkel.

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Commitment to independence

News Limited and John Fairfax Limited have reaffirmed their commitment to the independence of Australian Associated Press by equalising their Board representation and shareholdings in the national news agency so that neither has a majority holding.

The decision by AAP's two major shareholders follows the restructuring of the ownership of Australia's media groups earlier this year.

Under the changes, announced at AAP's recent Annual General Meeting, Fairfax and News Limited have limited their holdings in AAP Information Services Pty Ltd, which distributes news and financial information to 43.4 per cent each.

Their holdings in Australian Associated Press Pty Ltd, which administers the firm's interests in Reuters Ltd, will be 44.65 per cent each. Other shareholders are West Australian Newspapers Limited with 8.3 per cent in AAP and 8 per cent in AAP Information Services and Harris Enterprises

Ltd (Burnie) and W. R. Rolph and Sons Ltd each with 1.2 per cent in AAP and 1.1 per cent in AAPIS.

AAP Chief Executive Lee Casey said AAP had been established by metropolitan newspapers in 1935 as an independent company and was restructured in 1983.

The independence of the companies was reinforced by the AAP Information Services Memorandum of Association, which said "a balance of control should be maintained between members so that no one member may obtain a majority shareholding in the Company."

The AAPIS Board now consists of seven directors, three each from Fairfax and News Limited, with Mr Casey a non-voting member.

The Australian Associated Press Pty Ltd Board now has three directors from each of the groups.

Shareholdings equalised

"Both companies have also agreed to equalise their sharehold-

ing so that neither has more than 50 per cent of shares," Mr Casey said.

Herald and Weekly Times Executive Director Lyle Turnbull was elected Chairman of both companies for the coming year.

Commenting on the year's performance, Mr Casey said the Company had continued to build on its role as the major provider of news and information to the media and the financial and business community in Australia, and as a leader in the development of private telecommunications systems and network facilities.

The Company had again invested heavily during the year in the development of new systems and services for the financial markets and business community and the thoroughbred racing industry.

Gross turnover increased by 51 per cent from \$41.4 million in 1985 to \$62.5 million.

Operating profit

Operating profit before taking into account losses from subsidiaries was \$1.56 million, compared

with a 1985 loss of \$231,000. Net profit for the year was \$596,000, compared with a loss of \$840,000 the previous year.

Mr Casey said the Company's Australian and overseas news coverage continued to expand with more than 150 journalists employed in eight domestic and five overseas bureaux.

During the year permanent staff correspondents were appointed to Fiji and to the Philippines, although the Jakarta bureau had to be closed when the Indonesian Government banned Australian journalists.

AAP's subsidiary, AAP Reuters Communications Pty Ltd, completed its third year of operation and had established itself in the forefront of new communications technology in Australia, Mr Casey said.

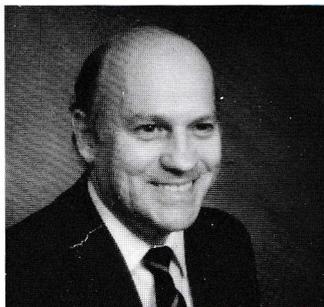
Using a 12-watt transponder leased from Aussat, the Company now had the largest privately owned and operated satellite communications network in the country.

Overall, staff in the AAP Group of Companies had increased by 14 per cent to 600, he said.

New Customer Services Unit

AAP's expanded Customer Services Unit has been established to give around-the-clock treatment for any fault affecting clients' services.

Based at AAP's communications headquarters in the Sydney suburb of Glebe, the Customer Services Unit is initially monitoring AAP's traditional services to newspapers, radio and television stations, as well as desk-top news and information services such as the Corporate Report, Flak Fury and Enquir, and the Newscan service to hotels and business premises.



Bill Bowen has been appointed Group Manager, Western Australia, for the AAP Group of Companies. Mr Bowen, 47, is a former Corporate Business Manager of Swan Television and Radio Broadcasters. It is the first time AAP has appointed a Manager in WA and Mr Bowen will be responsible for promoting the AAP Group's sales and marketing activities in the State.

The unit will grow in the months ahead as it takes on responsibility for the AAP Reuters Economic Services range of services.

It will also handle services produced from Glebe including Sportsplay, Page Alerts and the telephone voice messaging system Aspen.

The unit, headed by Cynthia Coleman, has two 4P terminals to monitor Corporate Report, two 45 cm television screens to monitor Sportsplay and Newscan, and personal computers to monitor Flak Fury. Other staff will soon join

This and other monitoring equipment enables the duty officers to form the first-line diagnosis of a client's fault.

Client satisfaction

When necessary, the unit will alert technicians to a problem, then follow up later by contacting clients to make sure it has been rectified to their satisfaction.

The staff can assist clients while their service is down by offering to fax, telex, courier or read out information.

The officers also 'spot check' clients, making random phone calls to check satisfaction with, and per-



EVE Simmons (left) and Louise Talbot at work in the new Customer Services Unit at Glebe.

formance of, the various services.

All faults are logged into the system for reference at any time.

With the amalgamation of the AAP RES services into the unit, there is likely to be an increase in the volume of calls handled and an automatic answering system will be installed to reduce any inconvenience.

Staff at the Customer Services Unit say it enables them to deal with clients' problems directly with as little fuss as possible.

They say having a central unit means staff are aware of the status of any fault at any time, and clients have just one phone number to get easier and faster access to have their faults rectified.

SOLD, BUT NO REPEAT BUSINESS!

What would possess five young AAP RES Sales Executives to jump out of an aircraft at 2500 feet on a cold winter's morning with only a few square metres of nylon to support them?

And with a mere six hours of theoretical and practical instruction on the ground to build up confidence before the jump?

We're still not sure.

But the insurance-policy defying, thrill-seeking quintet rate it an experience never to be forgotten, and probably not to be repeated either.

Jeffrey Revell-Read, Neil Archer and Michael Tarlinton are Marketing Executives with AAP RES in Sydney and Craig Hutchinson their Melbourne counterpart.

Indoctrination

The fifth member of the group was Dave Stewart, newly posted to the antipodes as National Sales Manager.

They drove to Wilton, west of Sydney, early on an overcast day for their indoctrination into one of the world's more dangerous pastimes.

Michael Tarlinton takes up the story:

"The classroom instructions over, one final test remained before we were strapped into our para-

chutes. A test. Forty multiple-choice questions to ensure you were reminded of the safety aspects of the jump and a last chance to change your mind and stay on the ground.

"Gathered around the plane with stomachs churning, we waited anxiously for our turn to defy the law of gravity.

"Then into the aircraft and static lines are attached.

"Neil is the last one in after finally locating a jumpsuit he liked and a helmet that matched.

"None of us would have qualified for an 'exit with style' award.

"There were some funny sights as we all discovered watching the video later. The classic style taught in the classroom is the last thing you're worried about at that moment of truth.

"Then the satisfaction of landing on terra firma within metres of the target.

"Not an experience to encourage anyone to rush back for a repeat performance, but one that none of us will ever forget."



THE intrepid team (from left): Craig Hutchinson, Michael Tarlinton, Jeffrey Revell-Read, Neil Archer and David Stewart (in front).

Bleary-eyed Bill

Sydney Finance Desk journalist William Borbasi and his wife Sally Ann have fallen victim to parenthood.

Their daughter, Jessica Ann Louise, arrived in June, weighing a fraction over 4.1 kg (9 lb) and emitting a noise Bill fears is slightly

more than a fraction over the legal suburban decibel limit.

Bill, whose first Christmas gift to his first child will be a *Roget's Thesaurus*, reports the baby is thriving but the parents are "a bit dazed and bleary-eyed".

Ugly... but fascinating

Reporting court cases is nothing new to Sandra Harvey, a journalist at AAP headquarters in Sydney.

But when she was assigned to cover the trial arising from the 1984 Father's Day massacre at Milperra, she knew it was no ordinary case.

Her instant fascination with what was to become Australia's biggest murder trial led to her joining forces with another journalist

and write a book which is now nearing completion.

The reporter sharing Sandra's fascination for the subject is Lindsay Simpson of *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

Extracts from their book are due to appear in the *Herald* and

they were interviewed about the project on Channel 9's *Today Show* in Sydney.

The publicity for the book - as yet untitled - came after Justice Roden handed out six life sentences for the murder of seven people, six bikies and a bystander, during a clash between members of the Bandido and Comanchero Clubs at the Viking Tavern in Milperra on Father's Day, 2 September 1984.

Security overwhelming

Sandra says the size of the security operation at Penrith Court in Sydney's west was almost overwhelming.

"And once inside, when I finally was game enough to glance sideways from the press box toward 43 men, housed in two reinforced dock cages, I knew my curiosity wouldn't be satisfied just by reporting the facts as told to the Court.

"I had a preconception - I'm sure the popular public image of a bikie - of powerful Harley Davidson motorcycles and leather jackets.

"I wanted to know more about them - the way they thought, their lives as bikies, even what they ate for lunch, and ultimately the reasons leading up to the shoot-

out and the personalities of the men involved.

"Although hostility in the early stages was high, it was directed toward their fellow bikies in the opposing docks."

Sandra says the press enjoyed a popularity among the bikies which diminished when reports unfavourable to them appeared in coverage of the Crown case.

"However, apart from occasional abuse, there were smiles, sometimes an occasional note - a request for a letter - smuggled across the dock as the tactical response group police officers dozed their way through months of droning legal argument."

She and her co-author began researching in their spare time.

"After much research, most of which was completed during three months leave from our respective jobs, we completed half our manuscript in March this year.

"The story may be ugly - a massacre in a public place on a family day - but it is contemporary Australian crime.

"Although many would say it's a slight on our society, it's an inescapably fascinating study of human behaviour and I believe it deserves to be written about."

JACKIE WEDS

Relatives of Jackie Cooney of the Sussex Street Pay Office rolled out the tartan carpet, warmed up the bagpipes and piped in the haggis before Jackie flew from Australia with her fiancé to marry in her native Scotland.

Jackie wed New Zealander Craig Parker in Edinburgh on 28 August.

Before returning to Sydney they are planning a honeymoon somewhere in Europe, but either haven't decided, or aren't saying, exactly where.

Jackie came to Australia five years ago and, as the only member of her family here, thinks it well worth the 24,000-mile round trip to celebrate her wedding with the Cooney clan back home.

Jackie, who is in her third year with AAP, has been back to Scotland once before but the Australian sunshine has prevented her visits from being anything but temporary.

"The weather makes all the difference," she says.

She will be honeymooning during the European summer but is quick to stress: "That could mean anything."

With a touch of the true romantic, she adds: "If it rained every day I wouldn't care."

Covering a poll...

We're in this steel cylinder, hurtling through space. All sense of time and place is suspended. It's BAC111; maybe Bob Hawke's Charisma 1 (briefly renamed Cerebral 1); maybe John Howard's Hopemobile (briefly renamed The Hearse).

We may be crossing the continent: Perth to Brisbane with 40 minutes in Alice Springs, or Cairns to Melbourne non-stop. Except that time Tullamarine was fogged in, so we diverted to Mangalore and ended up being bussed in at 1 a.m.

It was always hard to remember just where you'd come from or where you were going. Everyone had trouble remembering what day it was.

Somehow the plane seemed the one fixed point in an election campaign of frenetic activity. It was the womb where we were well fed and well wined, where we returned after listening to the same speech for the 13th time in yet another shopping complex in some outer urban marginal; after trying to shout a question at a 60-second door stop; after hassling the minders for filing time.

Even our refuge failed once. The left engine of Charisma 1 blew up on take-off from Melbourne early

What is it like to report a Federal Election campaign? Anything but glamorous, according to AAP Canberra Bureau Chief Don Woolford. AAP Today asked Don to describe his experiences in the run up to the 11 July election and, as his account shows, stamina is just one of the prerequisites.

one Sunday morning. I ran across the tarmac and up through a cargo bay to get to a phone in the terminal, then suffered the indignity of flying to Perth by commercial. Mr Hawke, being Prime Minister, immediately commandeered Mr Howard's BAC and the poor sods on his trail spent a week on commercials.

That apart, it didn't matter much which leader you were with. Mr Hawke's campaign was better organised, but in other respects the problems and anxieties, and the disorientation, were the same.

The biggest problem was what to write. Mr Hawke, from the outset, and increasingly Mr Howard as well, were more concerned with not making mistakes than with saying anything new. After a while they even found it difficult to say anything nastily new about each other.

There's a limit to the number of times you want to hear Mr Hawke on Mr Howard's tax bribe; or Mr Howard on Mr Hawke's broken promises. We got to the stage where

we could recite their key lines ahead of delivery.

Access problems led to a show-down of sorts with Mr Howard in Adelaide. He'd been peddling the line that Mr Hawke was wrapped in cottonwool by his minders.

No one objected to that, except Mr Howard was just as cocooned. We'd been at Mr Howard's minders for a news conference and at last were told that after a lunchtime speech we'd be given at least an extended door stop.

It lasted about two minutes. There was a lot of abuse of his minders, with many accusations of hypocrisy. We tried to ambush him as he left a motor-car factory and got about 30 seconds.

At last he agreed to delay his departure for Melbourne and sit down with us, where he copped some hostile questioning of his wages policy. But no one had told the TV people, who'd gone off to their local studios to put their pictures together. So we writers had him to ourselves for what was possibly his most interesting

press conference of the campaign. The heroes of the small screen were livid.

We became obsessed about filing time. When, between this shopping centre rally and that door stop or fund-raising lunch, would we be able to file?

Labor did a better job on this, sometimes hiring hotel rooms for an hour so we could file. But some hotels simply didn't have enough lines to accommodate 20 or more clamouring journalists and few, these days, have the old-fashioned handsets the TRS80 coupler (an attachment for a portable video display terminal) needs.

One lousy phone

Mr Howard's people once stopped the bus outside a pub and grandly told us we had 20 minutes filing time. The pub had one lousy phone in the public bar.

We saw a fair bit of both leaders in the planes. Both would come down to our section. Mr Hawke tended to joke and tell stories. Sometimes he played some cards or joined some singing, to the guitar accompaniment of his economist, Craig Emerson. Mr Howard was more likely to talk about the campaign. He spent most of one Brisbane-Sydney flight arguing with us over his conservation policy.

Bias claims

The bias claims were also, of course, a useful pre-emptive strike. My impression was that after they had had an airing, the criticism was toned down a little.

Not that I noticed any journalists angst-ridden about their alleged bias. Their main concerns were more mundane as they increasingly battled tedium and fatigue.

A few personal tips for future campaigns:

- Talk to your counterpart with the other leader whenever possible; it's a useful antidote to the inevitable tunnel vision.
- Have a good breakfast, then you can pass on the plastic chicken at the fund-raising lunch.
- Don't drink before dark.
- Never pass a vacant toilet. You never know when you'll get another opportunity.

...and a coup

Australian Associated Press broke the news of the Fiji coup to the world through its veteran correspondent Jim Shrimpton.

Shrimpton, 55, has been with AAP for 25 years and has spent the past year as the only full-time foreign correspondent based in Fiji.

His reports on the coup, led by Colonel Rabuka, were the only ones to the outside world for about three hours.

The Australian Government, QANTAS, banks and other business organisations with interests in Fiji were able to respond quickly to the news through AAP's exclusive world scoop.

He first heard of Colonel Rabuka's coup during a routine visit to the Sugar Growers' Council.

Shrimpton then went straight to the Ministry of Information where the department head confirmed: "Look, we're under military rule. This is a one-paragraph

statement we have for you. I can tell you nothing else under military law."

He raced to his home, which doubles as the AAP office, sent a snap message announcing the coup, and phoned a Press Gallery contact who gave him a good description of what happened in the Fiji Parliament.

He then monitored local radio announcements to keep up with the story.

"Within half an hour of the coup," Shrimpton recalled, "I was faced with one of those awful situations which journalists face in thousands of similar cases around the world.

"I've got a superb story - do I hang around and interview the parliamentary guards, Members of Parliament and so on, or do

I get the hell to my office and send it?"

"I could have spent the next four hours at the Parliament gathering great interviews and returned to my office to write a nice leisurely story.

But I had to make that decision - go home and send it - which I did, and I then picked it up off phone and radio."

Shrimpton said many journalists who flew to Fiji to cover the coup tried to get too close to the action.

"They were getting inside the action. I kept my distance. I wasn't going to risk getting arrested. I don't want to be arrested. I don't want to write a first-person story which I can't file.

"I wanted to be seen as a local, just in case someone acted on the suggestion that all overseas journalists should be shipped out."

A valuable forum: PM

More than 120 delegates representing all major Australian media outlets attended AAP's national Editorial Conference on the Gold Coast in June, a gathering that could claim with some justification to have unequalled influence on public opinion in Australia.

AAP, as the independent national news agency, initiated the event in 1985 to commemorate its 50th birthday.

Two years on, 'Edcon' again brought together in a unique forum editors from the major newspapers, radio and television stations around the country.

Prime Minister Bob Hawke opened Edcon '87, praising AAP's initiative in organising it and expressing the hope that it would become a regular event.

"This is the second time that AAP has hosted a conference for editors and news directors of the nation's media," he said.

"It is in fact only the second time that such a conference has been held in Australia. I remember with pleasure addressing your first conference in May 1985 - AAP's 50th anniversary.

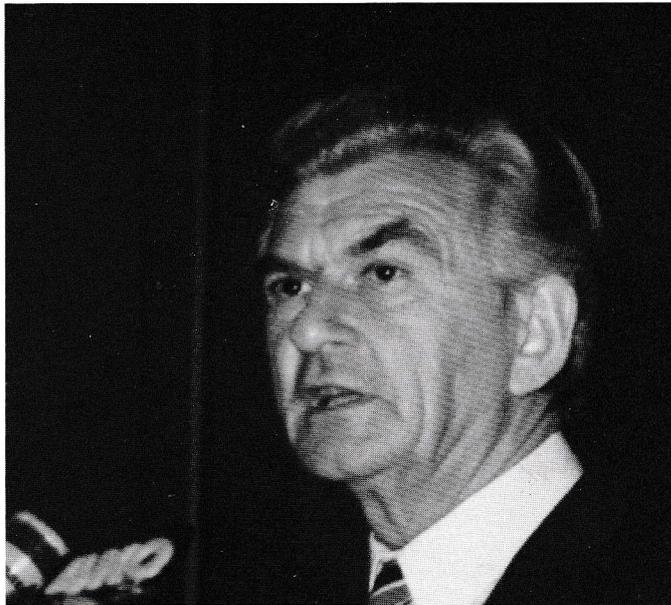
Praise from PM

"I must therefore congratulate AAP - and its Chief Executive Lee Casey - for again displaying the initiative to provide such a valuable forum for the men and women who produce the nation's news.

"As the notes which accompany the conference agenda observe, it's not a bad idea for AAP, which acts as a vehicle to the media, to provide this means of communication between them.

"So I trust the conference will become a regular major event in the media calendar."

Mr Hawke said Australia had no inbuilt constitutional guarantee of the freedom of the press compar-



PRIME Minister Bob Hawke addresses Edcon '87.

able to the First Amendment of the US Constitution.

"Instead, it is part of the reality of Australian public life that the Australian media must operate within a web of common law protections of, for example, privacy and national security.

"But it is not Parliament, and it is not the courts, and it is not the proprietors, but you editors and news producers who must ensure on a day-to-day basis how that web of regulation is to apply."

The Prime Minister congratulated Australian journalists for their coverage of the coup in Fiji, news

which AAP Suva correspondent Jim Shrimpton broke.

"Only recently . . . we saw a military government crackdown on a free press - the first time we have witnessed in the South Pacific the knee-jerk repression of the media which is the familiar hallmark of authoritarian regimes around the world.

"Despite that crackdown, I was proud and gratified that Australian journalists kept at their jobs and provided a detailed coverage of the coup and its follow-up.

"I believe this is an appropriate audience for me to express my

personal gratitude and respect to those Australian journalists responsible for what was, overall, a professional and informed coverage of a very difficult story."

The *Sydney Morning Herald* Foreign Editor David Jenkins said 1987 would go down as the year Australian editors discovered the Pacific, and praised AAP's decision to base a full-time correspondent to cover the region.

AAP sent Jim Shrimpton to Suva last year, a decision Jenkins said paid off handsomely when Colonel Rabuka seized power in a military coup in May.

Correspondent's role

"The foreign correspondent is in the business of explaining one society, one culture, to another," he said.

"He doesn't pick up those skills by reading through the clips on the plane going in.

"Fiji provided ample proof of that.

"I don't want to sound snotty about this but it's a complex world out there and you can't expect too many instant insights when you send in the police roundsman.

"Significantly it was AAP and the ABC which had the drop on all the rest in Fiji.

"Both had already made a commitment to the coverage of the South Pacific.

"The investment paid off handsomely."

Interest

Altogether 19 speakers spotlighted the way Australian editors do their jobs.

They included the Prime Minister, Liberal Leader John Howard, Mr Howard's predecessor Andrew Peacock, National Farmers' Federation President Ian McLachlan, former *National Times* Editor Brian Toohy, Criminologist Paul Wilson and investigative journalist John Pilger.

AAP Editor-in-Chief Barry Wheeler said interest in Edcon had been intensified by the Federal Election campaign.

All the speakers had accepted long before 11 July was named as the election date but none, he observed wryly, had subsequently tried to cancel.

STAFF APPOINTMENTS

Karen Lee has joined the Finance Department as Asset and Management Accountant. She will be responsible for the financial control and management reporting of the Company's fixed assets and subscriber equipment.

Barbara Taylor has been appointed as a Financial Accountant. She will be assisting with the financial accounting function for the Company.

Michelle Ryan has been ap-

pointed as Inventory Controller. She will be responsible for the subscriber equipment and stock reporting functions of the Company.

Phil McCrea has transferred from AAP Information Services to COMCO to take up the position of Software Development Manager. He will join the COMCO Executive Group and will have initial responsibility for completion of COMCO's AAP Data Network (ADN) tasks.

Jim Flaye has been appointed Assistant Financial Controller of COMCO. He recently arrived in Australia from Britain where he was the Financial Accounting Manager for Raychem for four years.

Alex Bond Hughes, who joined COMCO last year, has been promoted to Materials Manager. He joined COMCO after 12 years with Siemens in Perth where he was Telecommunications Manager.

There isn't any horsing around here!

Australian Associated Press has been collecting thoroughbred horse-racing data for over a decade, but it is one of the many little-known facets of AAP's operations.

However, the launch of the Company's Thoroughbred Information Services (TIS) has, in the words of one industry official, put AAP on course to lead thoroughbred racing into the 21st century.

TIS, in its first year of operation, is committed to providing subscribers with access to the most comprehensive thoroughbred racing and breeding service in the world.

AAP joined forces with Australia's official results and statistical body, the Racing Services Bureau, to compile the data for its services.

Constantly updated

Using a desk-top display terminal or personal computer, subscribers have, or will have, instant access to racing form, results, ratings, future events, pedigrees, statistics, broodmare records, sales results, analyses – any information connected with thoroughbred racing and breeding in Australia or overseas.

The constantly updated database is designed to stay abreast of racing and breeding activities of 50,000 mares and stallions which produce 42,000 racehorses to compete in 30,000 races every year.

TIS marketing representative Tony Cramb says: "The racing

industry, like the money market, relies on the speedy delivery of up-to-date, comprehensive and accurate information.

"Prior to the launch of TIS, no single source could promise the racing professional immediate access to this detail.

"Many hours would be wasted thumbing through various reference books gathering information that TIS can now provide at the touch of a button."

When fully developed, TIS will offer the racing public:

- racing form for individual horses;
 - a stud book showing pedigree details for individual horses;
 - race fields and form for Australian TAB meetings;
 - catalogues and results of yearling sales in Australia and New Zealand;
 - a racing calendar outlining programs of future races;
 - premiership tables for trainers, jockeys and sires; and
 - international racing and breeding information.
- *Class Racehorses of Australia and New Zealand*, a hard-cover book, published annually, with full-colour illustrations, to record the outstanding track performances of the year, which includes all performances of every group race winner. The fourth edition is due for publication later this year.

TIS was hailed in the press variously as "the day racing galloped into the space age", the day turf data became only "the touch of a keyboard away" and when "access to the good oil means pushing computer buttons".

It was also a hit with industry professionals.

Victoria Racing Club Secretary Murray Cox said the combination of official racing data and the resources of AAP would provide a service "of lasting benefit to the entire industry".

Sydney bookmaker and prominent racehorse owner Dominic Beirne described the service as "invaluable to anyone who is really serious about winning in this industry. Precise and detailed information such as this has just not been available in the past."

ARABS Chairman John Messara said: "Immediate access to data such as this is essential for making purchases and sales decisions."

And Sydney Turf Club Chief Executive Pat Parker said: "It will clearly head the racing industry into the 21st century."

It is already being used by industry professionals such as studmasters, owners, trainers, bookmakers, bloodstock agents and punters.

"Our research showed that the racing industry long awaited a service like TIS to reduce the amount of time necessary to collate all the relevant data," says Cramb.

"This is reinforced by the fact that the number of subscriptions signed in the first year of operation exceeded forecasts."

AAP's Formguide computer database includes full form and statistical details for more than 170,000 horses to have raced in Australia and New Zealand since 1974.

This information is compiled and transmitted to newspapers around Australia. Computer print-outs are also provided to racing and breeding enthusiasts.

Apart from the PC-based thoroughbred service, TIS offers a number of other products including:

- Sires Record, which provides the full racing performance of a particular stallion's progeny each month, so that breeders can maintain an accurate record of the racing success of their sire's progeny;
- Form print-outs, enabling a subscriber to obtain the full racing performance of any thoroughbred that has raced anywhere in Australia since 1975 or New Zealand since the early 1980s.

Press power!

Trotting writer Tim Gossage, a relative newcomer to AAP's Sydney Sports Desk, has proved the power of the press by helping to influence Western Australian Aussie Rules Football Coach John Todd to reinstate a player in the State of Origin team.

Tim, a proudly one-eyed sand-groper, was dismayed to discover that Wayne Henwood of the Sydney Swans had been dropped from the WA squad to play Victoria in July.

Sniffing a good story, Tim phoned Henwood.

Henwood told Tim it had been his lifelong ambition to represent WA against Victoria, even if it meant clashing with his Sydney team-mates.

The story was run in the following morning's *The West Australian* newspaper and read with interest by Todd, who still had to consider his final selections.

Todd said it was obvious from reading the story that Henwood was determined to play for his home State. He was so impressed he ordered the Sydney centre-half-back into the WA squad.

WHAT'S UP, DOC?

When Dr Brian Corrigan, one of Australia's top sporting physicians, walked into a Sydney restaurant recently, he thought he'd be sharing a cup of coffee with AAP soccer writer Ted Simmons.

Instead he walked into a carefully prepared ambush by a group of AAP sports writers, past and present, some he comes into contact with frequently, some he hadn't seen for years.

It was their small way of celebrating Dr Corrigan's return to health after surgery to remove a brain tumour last year.

Two generations

The good doctor has been a friend, contact and confidant to a couple of generations of AAP journalists as well as Australian athletes.

Present at the luncheon were:
• Ted Simmons, who has travelled with Dr Corrigan on countless trips abroad with the Socceroos;
• Ian Telford, whose association

with him covers Commonwealth and Olympic Games;

• Stephen Dettre, who has worked with him at major soccer events such as the Youth World Cup in Australia and the Socceroos' sojourn to Israel in 1985;

• Andrew Dettre, Steve's father and veteran soccer commentator, whose association stretches back to soccer tours in the early 1970s as well as the 1974 Munich Olympics;

• Doug Conway, who travelled with him on the 1978 World Cup campaign, and to subsequent Commonwealth and Olympic Games; and

• Bruce Walkley, now of Product Development, whose professional association with Dr Corrigan probably goes back furthest for AAP – to the 1970 world tour.

Dr Corrigan has been involved with Australian Olympic and soccer teams since the 1960s, first coming to the nation's attention as the doctor who rushed to Ron Clarke's aid after the runner collapsed at the end of the Mexico Olympics 10,000 metres – a picture which was flashed around the world.

He is one of Australia's leading sports medicine specialists and works as a rheumatologist at his practice in Manly and at Concord Hospital.

He is one of five doctors who will travel with the Australian Olympic Team to Seoul next year.

Coincidentally, Dr Corrigan's daughter Sue has been working as a casual journalist this year at AAP's Canberra bureau.

Walter Parr, AAP's Media Services Manager and a former Manager of AAP Reuters Economic Services based in Sydney, reviews the four decades of the Bulletins service provided by AAP RES, recalling the days when exchange rates were cabled in code to save money and staff were fined threepence for every mistake they made.

When the last full run of the Bulletins service was completed on the last day of May, AAP closed down a production line which had run for 41 years.

But more than that, the Bulletins were the service which most closely followed the original financial dispatches which were the basis of Julius Reuter's enterprise over 100 years ago.

Bulletins - hard-copy print-outs of market prices and reports delivered by courier to commercial clients - have fallen victim of the computer age which they helped to spawn.

They have been replaced by the Financial Business Service (FBS) which delivers the same specialist information to subscribers by microwave, either on their personal computers or their printers.

AAP took over the responsibility of producing Bulletins in 1946 when it became a partner in Reuters.

Old hands recount

To listen to old hands recount the ups and downs of the Reuter services from the '30s Depression to the post-war booms was a fascinating and often humorous insight into one aspect of Australia's financial development.

When Reuters ceased to be a bank and a cable company in Australia, the Bulletins were Reuters' major interest and revenue source. And it was the main supplier of financial news and prices to banks, commerce and government.

Right up to the 1970s, the Australian trading banks relied on the AAP RES Exchange Rate Bulletin to set the foreign exchange rates for the day. Even the Reserve Bank waited until the Bulletins were delivered before they set the official rate for the day.

A queue of uniformed bank messengers gathered each morning around 8 o'clock at the elbow of the Bulletins staffer who was preparing the exchange rate pages, waiting to grab the printed sheet and trot off to their head offices.

Obscure code

The messages from London on which the rates were calculated were in the obscure Reuters code designed to squeeze as much information as possible into the fewest groups of characters.

This meant a saving in cable tolls and at the same time made the messages indecipherable to anyone who had not been taught the code.

For example, 4310502030, paid for as a double word, translated into: 'New York Forward Rates 0.50 Premium to 0.30 Discount.'

To add to the difficulty, the message was sometimes incom-



WALLY PARR ... the bank messengers used to queue up each morning to get the good (or bad) news.

plete, distorted in transmission or badly typed by the receiver.

Cabling London for a repeat took precious time, so the experience and ingenuity of the clerks came into play.

From their years of experience the Bulletins veterans would check the New York exchanges against the London figures, cross-check one foreign currency with another, estimate the movement up or down on the day and fill out the missing exchange rates.

And that would be Australia's official rate for trading with the world for the next 24 hours.

Fines of 3d a time for mistakes - and it was all in code!

As there were hundreds of coded messages received daily, clerks relied on their memory rather than use the thick code books which were the bible of the Reuter office.

Memory was not always perfect, so to help stamp out errors in translating, pre-war management imposed a fine of threepence for every mistake made.

Threepence may not sound like much of a deterrent but Tony Inglott, AAP's longest-serving staff member who worked in Bulletins, recalls that it was the price of a meat pie when he started with the company.

Apart from the years he spent in the Brisbane office, Tony worked the early morning shifts in the Bulletins section until about six years ago when he moved to Customer Liaison and more recently to Product Development.

Greg Martin of the Economic Services Unit and Max Gerlach,

now at Data Control in Glebe, followed Tony as head of the Bulletins section.

Before the Australian Wheat Board was established, with the power to purchase compulsorily the country's crop, the Grain Bulletin was one of the most sought-after products.

During the Depression, Reuters would sell printed sheets over the counter as well as by monthly contract.

There was one scrap-metal dealer who would wait each morning to buy a single sheet of the Metals Bulletin for around one shilling so he could fix the price he paid for old copper kettles and brass scrap as he wheeled a barrow through the suburbs.

At the peak of the metals and share boom, the Sydney office was serving over 200 clients a day with Bulletins and printing over 40 different sheets of information.

STOCKSET BOWS OUT

A chapter in AAP's history closed when the *Canberra Times* received the last transmission of the Stockset service introduced in 1971.

Like other newspapers, the *Canberra Times*, with the introduction of its SII equipment, graduated to the more sophisticated SMICS (Share Market Information Capture System) in a national switch-over that started on 23 March 1983 and ended with the final Stockset transmission on 3 April this year.

Stockset was a victim of progress, but when it was installed 16 years ago it enabled Australian newspapers, for the first time, to produce daily sharemarket tables electronically.

The first newspaper to publish the service was the *Melbourne Sun* on 5 January 1972.

That first table listed companies' par value, buy, sell, open and last price, volume for the day and yield, initially for industrial and mining shares only.

Deputy Technical Operations Manager Owen Keogh recalls that in the years before Stockset, newspapers, as well as AAP, collected share information manually and compiled their own individual tables.

"This involved teams of copy-takers and teleprinter operators who punched up prices on telex-type machines, producing a five-level tape which was then fed into linotype machines to produce the metal slugs for each line of the table.

With the introduction of Stockset, data was supplied from the stock exchanges' own computers in Sydney and Melbourne and keyed in by AAP RES staff in Perth, Adelaide and Brisbane.

MIKE GALE... QUICK WIT, HELPING HAND

A humorous anecdote and a familiar laugh were the trademarks of Mike Gale, senior AAP journalist who died in June after a sudden illness.

Few were in a better position to appreciate them than the Sydney newsroom's Warwick Stanley, the colleague who was closest to the Gale household.

Mike's quick wit and good humour never deserted him, as Warwick recalls here:

"At will, Mike could turn on his skills, and his *joie de vivre*, and still find the time to help newcomers on the second floor at Sussex Street.

"Less obvious was a private-ness about him, which some of us sensed on occasions, for his first priority was his family.

"His wife Judy never left his side during his five-month illness.

"A measure of her commitment was the little time Mike spent in hospital, and that he died where he would have wished, in his Avalon home on Sydney's northern beaches.

"Both were resolute to the end of their time together.

Proud moment

"After his speech had failed and his return to everyday life seemed less and less likely, one of Mike's proudest moments was to witness the marriage of his eldest son Peter at St Mary's Cathedral.

"It was a wedding the family had

considered putting off because of the difficulties posed by Mike's illness. But Mike had been adamant he would not miss it.

"Two weeks before he died he sat in the church in a wheelchair and smiled his way through the ceremony.

"The illness did not blunt his memories of his days at AAP. Even as his speech was leaving him, he wanted to help workmates with suggestions about recent changes in newsroom operations.

"And he kept his verve for living to the last.

Beloved golf

"When he was forced to give up driving, Mike rode a bicycle for as long as he could manage.

"And only days before being bedridden, he'd smiled and joked his way around his beloved 'Royal Av' golf course, whacking drives down the centre of the fairways.

"At the memorial service, one of Mike's oldest friends summed him up so well, saying: 'He was never flippant, he was never sarcastic, but he could turn on the personal charm and humour like a tap. And he always did his utmost to excel.'

"Mike gained a formidable reputation as a schoolboy athlete over

800 and 1500 metres and his winning attitude later found expression in sailing, his favourite pastime for more than 30 years.

"If he found himself behind, he would choose the riskiest possible tack if that was what it was going to take to win.

"And when the breezes were too fluke, what better way to relax than sit back and sample your favourite music.

"Mike's love was jazz - he could while away the hours with it - and as a percussionist he was a fine exponent of the knife and fork if ever friends decided on an impromptu jam session.

"In his chosen field of journalism, Mike's was a distinguished career.

"A former TV presenter, he was an international news editor for most of his 15 years at AAP.

"As a reporter he covered a number of assignments, including the 1977 America's Cup and several South Pacific forums.

"Last year Mike was appointed editor of AAP's Newline desk, now part of the revamped broadcast desk, which specialises in tailoring desk-top and other news and information services for non-media customers.



MIKE GALE... kept his verve for living to the last.

"In television Mike's career spanned more than 10 years from 1961 - eight of those as a documentary maker, talk-show host and news presenter with TVW 7 Perth.

"Mike was born in Brisbane and educated at Scots College in Sydney.

"He is survived by his wife Judy and his four sons, Peter 26, John 24, Jess 23 and Robert 20.

"Mike died the day before his 54th birthday."

BRADLEY RYAN

Senior Computer Operator Brad Ryan fought a losing battle against a tumour this year, but his professionalism and sense of humour live on among his colleagues at Glebe.

In this tribute, Computer Operations Manager John Riffel recalls Brad's life in and outside AAP:

"Brad joined AAP in 1979 as a Computer Operator on Formguide and Stockset, and revelled in the environment of the critical deadlines associated with both horse-racing and financial services.

"He was promoted to Senior Operator and was often referred to for advice on Stockset - the system he virtually grew up with and adored.

"He was responsible for writing operations and procedures manuals on both the Stockset and SGS Systems.

"Though Brad was a shy young man, he was always pleasant, obliging and often displayed a strong sense of dry wit and humour.

"Evidence of this was borne out when a colleague of ours finally mastered the rigours of Formguide and he was awarded a brass statuette of the rear end of a horse.

"In May last year he mentioned that he had to attend hospital for investigative tests on a tumour near his ear.

"The tumour had been there since he entered his teens and at times caused him severe pain and discomfort.

"Toward the end of last year, his health deteriorated to the extent where he had two choices: either to have an operation to remove the tumour or to sustain increasing pain and discomfort.

"Brad chose the former, even though he knew that the type of operation they were suggesting had never been performed before and the chances of complete success were 30 per cent.

"Several local and overseas neurosurgeons presided over the case and performed the operation in two phases.

"The first part was successful. However, complications arose after the second part."

KEN ROYLE

Brisbane Bureau Operator Ken Royle, who died from a heart attack at his home in May, had been due to retire next February.

Ken had worked with AAP since 1976 when Queensland's Regional News Service (RNS) became part of AAP.

He had worked with RNS, previously the Country Press, since 1964.

Born in Hughenden, western Queensland, where his father was postmaster, Kenneth William Royle also joined the post office as a telegraphist and travelled widely.

During the Second World War he established a long-standing record for the number of telegrams transmitted in an hour.

Together 39 years

Fellow operator Neal Cameron described Ken as a "brilliant typist. His hands never moved but he had flying fingers."

During a posting to Canberra Ken married. He and his wife Eileen had celebrated 39 years together just two weeks before his death.

He played representative standard hockey for the ACT when young, and later in Brisbane was a team manager for Northern Suburbs and junior coach for many years.

Twin sons

Five years ago Ken suffered a mild stroke, but after surgery, appeared to make a good recovery.

So good indeed that fellow operators Neal Cameron and Arthur Seaman recall he played a fair round of social golf, enjoying the benefit of a Honda buggy to "save the old legs".

Ken and Eileen had planned, on retirement, to move to Gosford where their twin sons live with their families.

Presently Eileen is staying in their home in Brisbane where another son lives nearby.

A daughter died in a motor-ing accident in Sydney several years ago.