

# MD's Quarterly Update

## April 2010

As always, Q1 was a busy first quarter for CIPSA which seemed to take off noticeably the day after Australia Day. Activity levels for everyone spiked; perhaps post GFC, people's activity levels are returning to 'normal' after some inertia during 2009?

To some degree, both membership and exam entries prove consistently counter-cyclical for CIPS generally. Membership grew around 8% during 2009 but peaked in March 2010 to a new CIPSA record of 3,117... with more applications coming in daily. The new Member Referral Programme has already proved popular and our recruitment drive at universities started in earnest this month and should reap many new members. Record exam entries in Australia were also received by 17th March for the May exam series – over 300 entries in 20 exam centres throughout Australasia. Our capability to host exams will improve measurably with the recent appointment of CIPSA's new dedicated Assessment Manager, Sandra Reiser.

Unfortunately (but understandably), some organisations stopped reimbursing member subscriptions for their employees during the GFC. However, the payback to the organisation from one member's involvement is substantial for a humble \$275 pa. Maybe those organisations could re-consider as quickly as they cutback, now things seem to be picking up for most? Our new group membership rates offer discounts for groups from the same organisation. Sensible, considering most of the benefits support the organisation directly.

Membership satisfaction is also up. The annual BRW sponsored and Beaton conducted survey rated CIPSA member satisfaction at 70%. A full digest of the survey results is in the April issue of *Procurement Professional* magazine PP30 – which is also going from strength to strength. Additional advertising has led to a record edition of 64 pages for this issue, with a number of new contributors and features. A minor print error in the February edition led to some regional events being missed off the list for the year – but they are all detailed in the new issue. There were 44 regional events held in 2009 (another record), with average attendance of over 50 people per event. The new chairs and vice-chairs must be doing a great job!

New web stats also showed recently that over 75% of CIPS members open and download the fortnightly *PPonline* email – to read the procurement news, CIPSA updates, job adverts and The Buyer's Blog. In addition, over 4,000 users per month now visit [www.cipsa.com.au](http://www.cipsa.com.au).

The conferences season also took off with a bang, with a record attendance of 85 people at the Adelaide Strategic Procurement Forum in February – and rating the event as 100% satisfactory. Subsequently, some of the best feedback ever was received from the 245 people who attend the 3rd Category Management event in Sydney during late March. Speaker ratings were some of the highest ever. We are now looking forward to our inaugural event in Brisbane on 18th May, the return of Minister Lindsay Tanner to open the 5th Public Sector Procurement Conference back in Canberra on 27th May and the 15th June event in New Zealand – all three conferences are booking strongly already.

The feedback to the article in PP29 on my interview with editor Allan Leibowitz covering the first five years at CIPSA was very kind as well. Some people felt I was too harsh on ourselves, and did not bask quite enough in what CIPSA has achieved in its first five years. Probably, but then we have so much to do.

CIPS Australasia



*Driving excellence in procurement and supply management*

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Training wise, bookings for our public courses have also set records. Nearly 200 bookings year-to-date for the open programme puts us 40% ahead of the same time last year - though 2009 was our worst year for open training courses for obvious reasons. CIPS-e online learning modules towards MCIPS have also sold well. At \$310 each they are one of the cheapest ways to study towards MCIPS with professional learning support. Pleasingly our own in-house trainer and procurement expert, Ben Shute started work in February 2010. Ben will deliver about 25% of our training courses in future with the rest delivered by our stable of approved and long-standing providers. Ben's first few courses delivered have already received excellent feedback, along with the newly developed courses.

The Institute have also recently accepted a commission from the New Zealand government *Ministry of Economic Development* to implement a flexible learning programme. Part of the NZ government procurement reform programme, this will help over 115 NZ public sector procurement professionals work towards MCIPS. Of course, people with MCIPS now score heavily towards permanent residency applications in New Zealand as part of their recruitment drive for growing procurement capability. Adelaide seems to be following suit based on their full page advert in *Supply Management* magazine in the UK for procurement people to move to SA Water. Maybe the skills shortage is back with a vengeance in Australia?

Our recent CIPSA white-paper on 'The Business Case for Professional development' seems to be our most successful ever judging by the anecdotal feedback. It is odd so many need a business case for training on the face of it. But, it is an investment like any other and is not exempt from having to prove a return. Extra copies are available from the CIPSA office or online at [www.cipsa.com.au](http://www.cipsa.com.au) under professional resources. And it includes the case for membership too!

We also secured our 20th fellow within Australia last month – a certain Sam Walsh, Chief Executive of Rio Tinto Iron Ore; who began his career in procurement and has remained supportive of the profession since. Congratulations to Sam, and good luck to the other five people presently awaiting the outcome of their Fellowship application. If you have an extensive career in procurement and have been MCIPS for at least two years, why not apply for Fellowship now?

This month also saw the launch of our annual Essay Competition and the 2010 Procurement Professional Awards complete with its own dedicated web section at [www.pponline.com.au](http://www.pponline.com.au). Both competitions are out early this year to maximise entries – which will be accepted until early August. Why not enter now?

Finally, on a more personal note, the CIPSA team are pleased that the minor refurbishment of our office in Melbourne has now been completed – increasing formal capacity by 50% and improving our IT infrastructure & capabilities as well as reducing (by 70%) the cavernous office that the boss 'inherited' way back in 2005. CIPSA also have a decent reference library of over 500 books on procurement and supply chain management now. Members are welcome to pop in at any time during business hours to browse the books or meet the team. We look forward to seeing you.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the Institute.



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