Annual Report ACAP SA Branch
2005-6

The committee
I would like to begin by acknowledging the great work done by my colleagues on the ACAP SA committee over the last 12 months. There are a few key people in particular who continue to stand out as the driving influence within this committee; they work very hard for ACAP and are very dedicated individuals. The membership in SA is indeed fortunate to have such selfless and benevolent people amongst their ranks.

Seminars
The last 12 months has seen SA Branch continue to provide educational opportunities to ACAP members and non-members. Winding up a successful sponsorship agreement with SA Ambulance Service’s Country Ambulance Service Advisory Committee (CASAC) from the previous financial year saw ACAP run two very popular one day seminars; the first being a presentation at Tailem Bend for about 50 ambulance officers where trauma management and an interactive snake awareness talk were presented; and the second a booked out one day seminar at Burra entitled “The trouble with Burns” which focused on burns management and a range of other medical and trauma presentations. The afternoon saw the attendees undertake a range of skills stations in various tourist locations around the town. Over 120 people joined us during the day’s activities and nearly all of them stayed on for a catered dinner and live band.

Journal Club and other initiatives
Journal Club was held only once during this last 12 months, and attendance was very high, as is the norm for these meetings. A new, panel-style format was adopted and was very successful. This meeting was teleconferenced to three country locations. We continue to support team and regional training days for SA Ambulance Service and last year donated hundreds of dollars worth of ACAP merchandise as prizes for various clinical initiatives around the state, as well as resourcing country training initiatives.

National representation
The branch has continued to provide high level input to National initiatives such as the National Professional Relationships Project and the six-monthly Chair’s meetings, where the professional relationships project is being sanity tested and refined. The chair’s meetings are also a useful forum to share ideas between the branches and lobby national on behalf of our branches.

Support for Tertiary Education
Our branch continues to support educational initiatives financially, such as the Masters in Pre-hospital care through Flinders University (worth $6000 over two years) and a Health Research prize for the student with the highest score in his third year subject. One person is enrolled in the Master’s programme utilizing this scholarship, looking at the suitability and effectiveness of the ambulance degree programme and its implications for ambulance services. No one has taken up the
scholarship offer in 2006, but we are advertising now for a 2007 position and hope that it will soon be taken up.

**Representation to SA Ambulance Service**

ACAP has recently been invited by SA Ambulance Service to provide professional representation and input to four very important newly formulated SAAS committees designed to significantly engage its workforce in ambulance service delivery: Clinical Advisory, Uniform, Fleet design and Staff Welfare groups. This is in addition to the representation ACAP already has on SAAS’ Educational Quality Assurance Group and the Volunteer Education Review Group.

**National ACAP Conference 2006**

A main focus of the committee over the last 12 months has been resourcing the 2006 national ACAP conference that is being held from 2-4 November 2006. Whilst a vibrant sub-committee has been overseeing this large task, the committee has been working behind the scenes to position the branch in the best possible light.

**Overseas exchange programme**

One area which has unfortunately not materialized in the last 12 months, which we had planned to implement in 2006 is the overseas exchange programme for members to access. Our goal is to deliver this in 2007 and we should be in an excellent position to finance it. This will most likely be co-funded with SAAS.

**The branch office**

The branch currently rents a room at 108 South Rd, West Hindmarsh which has proved very useful for the conference sub-committee, and has provided us with a secure storage facility for member’s files. This arrangement will be reassessed when the lease comes up for renewal shortly.

**Fee structure**

The ACAP membership fee rise from $6 per fortnight to $7.70 per fortnight came in to effect during December 2005 and has been a useful resource for our branch. Another fee rise, whilst not on the agenda locally for this next financial year, may ultimately be on the horizon as the national body seriously considers a more professional focus and infrastructure for the College. Any such initiatives will ultimately necessitate a fee rise that will flow on to our branch.

**Future directions**

I would like to finish by saying that the future for ACAP in SA is looking the brightest it has ever been. Whilst we already have a healthy cash flow, hosting the 2006 national conference should give us a serious injection of funds that we intend to invest wisely in members and the greater ambulance community.

A clinical agenda will be at the forefront of our focus, and this is likely to see us enter the political arena on occasions. Moreover, the professional development of members and the general advancement of College initiatives such as national registration should finally start to be implemented over the next 12 to 18 months as national policy on related issues comes to fruition.
Effective communication with our members is also an area we intend to invest significant infrastructure in as the national database finally comes on line.

**Summary**

With all of these College initiatives due to become realized over this period it is essential that SA branch positions itself to be a relevant and respected organization that is appropriately represented and managed.

I am of the opinion that we have the capacity within the current committee to meet and exceed the challenges ahead, and become a major driving force for the College both locally and nationally. Over the next 12 months the direction for ACAP SA will become more strategic, as the breadth of experience on the committee maps out the direction and future initiatives via a projected and funded business plan.

If we build it, they will come.

Chris Cotton  
Chair  
Australian College of Ambulance Professionals  
SA Branch