

President's report

The society is doing well in terms of member numbers. We currently have 163 members with 24 of them being new members added this year. Following the discussions with the council last year, I corresponded with the Royal society and obtained a half price membership for ORSNZ this year. RS are reviewing their membership structure and fees and the current rate will not necessarily continue. Of course we have the option of discontinuing our membership as a society.

Earlier this year APORS had to make a decision regarding the 2018 hosting country. I emailed all ORSNZ members and asked for their feedback regarding their choice for Nepal or the Philippines. All those who responded with an email indicated that Nepal was the preferred option, hence the ORSNZ voted for Nepal. As a result of the APORS ballot, Nepal was announced as APORS 2018 hosting country.

Also discussed in last year's meeting was more frequent council meetings online. This year I had a matter to raise with the Council regarding our 2013 conference settlement with the NZSA.

Martin Hazelton indicated in an email to me that the NZSA's treasurer at the time had failed to invoice and collect a sum of \$5100 from the conference sponsors. Had the sum been collected, the ORSNZ's share of the conference surplus (at the agreed ratio of 60:40) would have been \$3108.56. Martin proposed that the ORSNZ receive the entire realized surplus (of \$2,671.41). The ORSNZ Council was unanimous on maintaining our 60:40 agreement on the split and sharing the realized surplus that way. This decision was implemented.

I would like to express my immense gratitude to Mike O'Sullivan for setting up the payment mechanism for the conference, as well as thanks to Andrea and Andrew for tracing the payments and correcting many unintentional errors by the participants.

I would also like to thank John Crequer deeply for his part on conference organization and Grant Read for all of his contributions to the conference organization this year.

We have not had a newsletter this year. We have an agenda item to move the ORSNZ Newsletter into a blog to have a more modern slant and for it to be more agile.

I would also like to remind all members that I will resign in at most 2 years (or earlier) so please think of volunteering for as an officer of the ORSNZ if you feel the society should continue.

Golbon Zakeri

Treasurer's Report 2015

The funds available at the start of the period (1/7/2014) were \$59,948.18. The funds at the end of the period (30/6/2015) were \$63,266.50. There is an excess of receipts over expenditure of \$3,318.32.

The 2013 ORSNZ conference was run as the Joint NZSA+ORSNZ conference. The ORSNZ collected funds on behalf of the conference. All collected funds were transferred over the NZSA to settle the accounts, as outlined in my 2014 report. These accounts have recently been settled, but after the end of the 2014/2015 financial year. The resulting conference profit was shared between NZSA and ORSNZ and will be shown as part of the 2015/2016 accounts. The 2014 conference was also jointly organised, and in 2014 NZSA collected all conference funds. We hope that these accounts will soon be settled; We are waiting for the NZSA Treasurer to progress this.

Related to the 2014 conference the YPP prize was again awarded, and a total of \$1,000 paid out to the winners. ORSNZ received a total of \$4,000 in sponsorship, \$3,000 was YPP sponsorship (\$1,500 each for the 2013 and 2014 conferences), and \$1,000 general conference sponsorship.

As in previous years, we continued our policy of having zero annual subscriptions fees. New members joining the Society (typically via the conference) pay a one-off entry fee as part of their conference registration. There is only one subscription payment of \$350 where one member wanted to pay outstanding subscription fees.

Branch expenses of \$833.75 are for an ORSNZ function in Auckland, other branches did not claim expenses.

There was no IFORS subscription payment in the 2014/2015 period, and we were still in the process of negotiating subscriptions with the Royal Society hence no payment to them was made in the 2014/2015 period.

As usual PO Box rental is \$265.00.

VISA related costs are \$180 which is the fee we pay for maintaining our credit card processing facility (\$15 per month). As noted above the credit card facility was not used for the 2014 conference, hence there are no additional VISA charges.

Presidential expenses of \$99.95 were related to the 2014 conference to thank the people who contributed to organising the conference.

Website related fees of \$269.97 are for renewing one of the SSL certificates and \$69.96 for domain name registration.

\$40,989.51 was held on term deposit at the end of the financial year. It is continuing to be rolled over every 180 days. Interest of \$1,686.95 earned was higher than in the 2013/2014 period.

I would like to thank Paul Rouse for auditing the ORSNZ accounts.

Andrea Raith
Hon. Treasurer

Auckland News

This year the OptALL collaboration with the European Union entered its final year, with exchange visits to Denmark and Germany being made by Engineering Science staff Andrew Mason and Andrea Raith, and PhD students Oscar Dowson, Rupert Storey, Samuel Ridler and Isaac Hamling. Andrew Mason particularly enjoyed his 4 month sabbatical visit to the Danish Technical University (and hopes the cycle lanes in Auckland come up to the Danish standards before too long). Cameron Walker was also on sabbatical in the first semester, while Andrea Raith began her long leave in the second semester. Cameron visited University College London, King's College London, London School of Economics, University of St Andrews, and TU Graz. Andrea has visited Danish Technical University, Georg-August University Göttingen, Technical University Kaiserslautern, and Erasmus University Rotterdam.

We had a large number of visitors this year, including: Melanie Reuter-Opperman (Karlsruhe Institute of Technology), Prof Anita Schöbel (Georg-August University Göttingen), Jonas Harbering (Georg-August University Göttingen), Sönke Behrends (Georg-August University Göttingen), Sabine Büttner (Technical University Kaiserslautern), Prof Sven O. Krumke (Technical University Kaiserslautern), Clemens Thielen (Technical University Kaiserslautern), Prof Siegfried Vössner (TU Graz), Nik Furian (TU Graz), and Prof Gwyn Bevan (London School of Economics).

A number of graduate students have submitted their theses this year. Olga Perederieieva (Algorithms for Multi-objective Network Equilibrium Problems) and Siamak Moradi (Algorithms for the Bi-objective Multi-commodity Minimum Cost Flow Problem) defended their PhDs. Antony Philips (Mathematical Programming-based Models and Methods for University Course Timetabling) is due to defend his in December. Nicholas Simmons and Neil Moraes submitted their Masters. In addition, 21 students completed their honours research projects in Operations Research .

We are lucky to have a number of new PhD students starting this year, including Oscar Dowson who is working in farm analytics, Sam Ridler who is extending previous work in ambulance move-up, June Lau who is modelling the Cardio-Vascular ICU at Auckland Hospital, and Hamid Moghaddam who is building predictive models for Cloud Infrastructure workloads. 2015 was the first year in which David Ryan was truly retired; not even the prospect of teaching Set Partitioning and Constraint Branching was enough to drag him away from fishing off Waiheke.

We are very pleased that Engineering Science graduate Iain Dunning was part of the JuMP development team that won this year's COIN-OR Cup for Open Source optimisation contributions. JuMP is a new modelling toolbox that brings optimisation capabilities to Julia, a new very fast scripting language being developed by MIT. Andrew Mason's SolverStudio add-in for Excel now includes support for Julia and JuMP, making these tools easily accessible to spreadsheet users.

Ilze Ziedins became Head of Department of Statistics in 2015 and has spent most of the year in meetings.

Finally, we were very pleased to see Andy Philpott awarded Marsden funding (Optimal decision making under uncertainty) to develop new methods for making the best decisions when data is limited.

Canterbury Branch report

Once more, the Canterbury Branch has no specific "Branch" activity to report. The wind down of the MSCI group at Canterbury University has taken a little longer than expected, but the final two PhD theses are now under examination. While some OM staff still teach "MSCI" labelled courses, and some former OR/MSCI staff remain in Christchurch, they are not actively involved with the OR society. This year's ORSNZ conference is being held in Christchurch, and limited assistance has been provided by the local branch chair. But the organisational responsibility lay with the ORSNZ national council, and the main burden has been borne by John Crequer and the NZ Statistical Association, to whom the society should be most grateful. The Canterbury Branch chair is still of the opinion that the Society should consider dissolution of the Canterbury branch, and/or replacing its geographically based branch structure with one based on "interest groups".

Grant Read
ORSNZ Canterbury Branch chair