

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2010

Report of Management Committee to the AGM (Thea Ormerod, President)

This will be a brief report because we'd like to leave plenty of time for each working group to say what they have been up to in the last year. At the recent planning day for our management committee, we decided that basically ARRCC's mission is two-fold: (1) to inspire religious people and communities to make lifestyle changes which are more respectful of the Earth; (2) to advocate for public policies which are consistent with a low carbon future.

In the area of lifestyle changes, we've had an exciting year with Ride to Worship and Meat-Free Day initiatives and the Eco-Awards Dinner. In the second aspect we've had the work of our Policy and Advocacy working group and a Religious Leaders' Working Group. All these projects are driven by volunteers now, who can be as creative as they like about what they do.

ARRCC has now been going for a couple of years and we keep growing as an organisation. At last count we had about 50 individual members and eleven organisational members, now including Caritas Australia, Jesuits Australia and UnitingCare NSW/ACT. We're grateful for this support because it is great for our profile, and it gives us more standing when we put our case to political leaders.

Earlier this year, The Climate Institute had to make the tough decision that they could provide office facilities, but they couldn't continue funding us beyond August 2010. We appreciate all their support, past and present. Our last campaigner, Greg O'Donnell, did great work but decided to leave us early. That means we do have some money left over. We have also gratefully received \$5,000 from UnitingCare NSW/ACT. Together these amounts will give us the capacity to pay consultants for short-term pieces of work. In fact we do pay Melanie Corben to do some of the administrative, communications and website work for us.

Given that we're all volunteers now, we are very much a grassroots organisation. We don't have a hierarchy to answer to, and with a bit of funding behind us, there's lots of scope to be creative. Ideally we'll go for more grants to increase our capacity further.

At our recent Management Committee planning day we all felt probably the high point of our history so far was the Eco-Awards Dinner. We wanted to create a positive feeling around religious communities being ecologically aware and active. We found communities which had been quietly working away for years, and they were pleased to finally get some acknowledgement. It was a very much a team effort but special thanks should go to Shyreen Lal and Bruce Cooke for all their hard work. About a hundred people had a ball that night!

Special thanks goes also to our very reliable and unassuming treasurer, Vijai Singhal, who looks after our very fiddly books. With the audit, he's had the help of our voluntary auditor, Flavio Meoli.

Last but not (by any means) least, ARRCC owes its viability as an organisation to Miriam Pepper. Miriam is enormously dedicated and skilled, attentive to details and easy to work with. She puts huge amounts of time and energy into ARRCC. Thank you so much, Miriam.

There have been other high points in the year but we'll get an idea of those when people share what the various Working Groups have been doing.