

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2011

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

I'm pleased to report that ARRCC has achieved some amazing things in the last year, and this is mostly thanks to the inspiration and skilled contributions of its members. As I speak it will become evident that ARRCC's work is made possible by a large team of people, so I'd encourage anyone here tonight who wants to add their own ideas and energy, there is plenty of room for it in this grass-roots organisation.

For example, Sue Taylor in Western Australia who has joined us this evening over Skype is presenting at a workshop for us at the Youth Climate Coalition's Power Shift conference in WA. Rabbi Jeffrey Kamins, Sr Geraldine Kearney, Bhante Sujato and Bishop George Browning have spoken to the media for us at various times. Hans Arns has offered to help prepare material for our e-newsletter, and the list goes on. Do understand, everyone, all your contributions are valued even if I don't mention you tonight.

I suppose you've all seen our dynamic new website, in large part the fruit of Jenni Downes' and Melanie Ridout's combined creative genius. It's still being developed but the final outcome will be navigable, informative and visually attractive. Thanks to Jenni, we are also now on Facebook!

Jenni is one of the three gifted people who have joined the management committee, along with Dan Skehan and Adrian Salter. Jenni has had a lot of experience with the Make Poverty History Campaign; Dan works for Baptist World Aid and is passionate about the impact of climate change on African countries; Adrian is our wise and politically astute contributor from the Baha'i community.

We have a few campaigns, such as Ride to Worship and Meat-Free Day, aimed at encouraging individuals and communities of faith to reduce their carbon footprint. Those working on the Meat-Free Day campaign have created a colourful brochure which is being distributed widely and has now been translated into Chinese by Estella Hin Ling Lee, a volunteer in New Zealand!

There have been quite a few developments in our advocacy work. One was the development of ARRCC's official position on various areas of public policy, in consultation with our membership, resulting in the publication of the ARRCC Policy Positions paper, launched in February this year. This was a resource for the Religious Leaders' Working Group who, with the crucial help of Bishop George Browning and experienced campaigner Carlyn Chen, organized some lobbying in Canberra in June.

A number of valued members have recently joined ARRCC because of their involvement with this advocacy work, one of them being Jill Finnane who is one of our speakers tonight.

More recently Jenni Downes has completed a detailed analysis of the proposed carbon tax legislation. Jenni deserves high praise for this carefully researched work. I highly recommend that you read it.

We thank our treasurer, Vijai Singhal, for his very conscientious work over the last two years. With the audit, he's had the help of our volunteer auditor, Flavio Meoli.

I'd like to acknowledge at this point some large donations too, from the Sisters of St John of God and the Sisters of St Joseph. The reality is, even with so much of our work being offered

voluntarily, it takes money to run any organization, and these donations are essential to keeping us going in the medium term.

Finally ARRCC owes a debt of gratitude to Miriam Pepper, our tireless secretary and coordinator of the Ride to Worship initiative. There are few people you could say are completely reliable. They become the bedrock of organisations like ARRCC. We are very fortunate that Miriam continues to be prepared to put her time, energy and abundant talent into ARRCC. Thank you so much, Miriam.

Later in the evening, we will be hearing more about the different ARRCC initiatives from the individuals involved in them. I hope you enjoy their brief presentations.