



The Australian Society for Microbiology Inc.

Unit 23, 20 Commercial Road
Melbourne VIC 3004
Tel (03) 9867 8699
Fax (03) 9867 8722
Email admin@theasm.com.au
www.theasm.com.au
ABN 24 065 463 274
For *Microbiology Australia*
correspondence, see address below.

EDITORIAL TEAM

Prof Ian Macreadie, Mrs Jo Macreadie
and Mrs Hayley Macreadie

EDITORIAL BOARD

Dr Chris Burke (Chair)
Prof Mary Barton
Prof Linda Blackall
Prof Peter Coloe
Assoc Prof David Ellis
Dr Ruth Foxwell
Dr Geoff Hogg
Dr Ailsa Hocking
Dr Ipek Kurtböke
Dr Gary Lum
Dr John Merlino
Prof William Rawlinson
Dr Paul Selleck
Assoc Prof Lindsay Sly
Dr David Smith
Ms Helen Smith
Prof John Turnidge
Dr Paul Young

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Current subscription rates are available
from the ASM Melbourne office.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

Prof Ian Macreadie/Mrs Jo Macreadie
Tel 0402 564 308 (Ian)
Email ian.macreadie@gmail.com

Published four times a year by



CAMBRIDGE
PUBLISHING

a division of Cambridge Media
10 Walters Drive
Osborne Park WA 6017
www.cambridgemediacom.com.au

Copy Editor Rachel Hoare

Graphic Designer Gordon McDade

Advertising enquiries to

Simon Henriques, Cambridge Publishing
Tel (08) 6314 5222
Fax (08) 6314 5299
Email Simonh@cambridgemediacom.com.au

© 2011 The Australian Society for Microbiology
Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this publication
may be reproduced or copied in any form or by
any means without the written permission of the
Australian Society for Microbiology. Unsolicited
material is welcomed by the Editor but no
responsibility is taken for the return of copy or
photographs unless special arrangements are made.
ISSN 1324-4272

The opinions expressed in articles, letters and
advertisements in *Microbiology Australia* are not
necessarily those of the Australian Society for
Microbiology or the Editorial Board.

Vertical Transmission



Prof John Turnidge

President ASM

Steadying the ship

The last nine months have been an interesting and challenging time for the Executive of the ASM. I am taking this opportunity to describe the problems and what we are proposing to do about them, and have done so far. You may know that we have had a series of resignations from the office staff: our Conference Manager in May, our Office Manager in August and our Events Manager in November. At this time the ASM is no longer an employer. We have had to consider a number of things as these resignations have accumulated. You'd be aware already that we brought in a professional conference organiser (ICMS) to manage the annual meeting in July at short notice. Given the circumstances, ICMS did a great job, and the meeting went ahead smoothly and did not suffer financially.

A little before all these events, our Vice-President of Corporate Affairs, Johnson Mak, had brought in an accounting firm to put the society's accounts into better order. As a result of their work, irregularities were noted, and ultimately this led to the resignation of our Office Manager. Again, ICMS was able to help us with office management at very short notice, and Janetta Stones is now doing a great job of putting the office in order and keeping the ASM 'engine' running. Our Events Manager also assisted us greatly in this task, but chose to leave because of the major change to her duties. We wish her well after almost 10 years of service.

The Executive believes that the ASM has now reached a watershed. Twenty years ago, the decision to establish an independent office for the ASM was a natural one. Many scientific societies were doing this at the time, and a large organisation like the ASM clearly warranted good central management. The decision to purchase real estate to house the office, and subsequently to employ our own Conference Manager, flowed on as obvious things to do. However, over the last decade, there have been repeated human resource issues in the office. The events of the last nine months have led us to believe that it is time to remodel the business activities of the ASM (not the scientific ones). Hence we are proposing to outsource conference and office management and we will be going out to tender for such in the not-too-distant future. For the immediate term, ICMS will undertake our conference management and assist us with office management. The need to retain the office real estate is also under consideration. We are aware after a good spring clean that it is in rather a poor state of repair. There is no urgency to make this decision, so the membership will be able to express their views when the time for a decision comes.

As you might imagine, there has been a steep learning curve for Janetta to sort out the office affairs and keep things going. A number of items are still outstanding but we have them in hand and hopefully everything will be running normally again by the end of February. I'd personally like to thank her for taking on this challenging task, now single-handedly. She has done a fantastic job under trying circumstances, and without her wisdom and happy disposition, we wouldn't have been able to get the Society back on track as quickly as we have. I would also personally like to thank the other members of the Executive: Hatch Stokes, Johnson Mak and Liz Harry for contributing all that they have to steadying the ship and putting in so much of the extra effort required. Finally, I would like to thank you, the membership, for your patience and understanding. Hopefully all will be well for the future and together we can concentrate on the true objectives of the Society, while we engage experienced professionals to manage most of the business aspects of the ASM.

Happy New Year indeed!