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The President's Message

The President's message this month is very brief! Your State Council has been busy on several fronts. Performance management and the departmental reviews in functional directorates are our current focus. Rest assured that between our eagle-eyed Executive Officer Ron and the emails we receive from members, we have our collective finger on the pulse to ensure your interests are championed. Please keep the communication going! **Barry Laing, ISEA President**

Review of Curriculum K-12 and Centre for Learning Innovation

The DET is to conduct a review of the functions of the Curriculum K-12 Directorate & the Centre for Learning Innovation. The review is to be conducted by Mr Lindsay Wasson, former Director Curriculum Support & Regional Director, Western Sydney.

The review is to be conducted within the context of the establishment of the Australian Curriculum Assessment & Reporting Authority (ACARA), the Commonwealth Digital Education Revolution & the National Partnerships. The review is intended to:

- identify critical curriculum services, the information capabilities and the products that are required for supporting NSW public schools into the future; and
- propose an appropriate merger of functions and staff across the two directorates.

An interim report will be delivered by the end of the school year and the final report in early 2010.

Given that there are members throughout the two directorates, the ISEA has sought a guarantee from the DET that it will be consulted throughout the course of the review. All members are invited to provide advice and comments about the proposed review to the ISEA through the Executive Officer or any member of the State Council.

Review of Proposed Performance Management Scheme for Chief Education Officers

Members will be aware that in the course of the recent negotiations for a Salaries and Conditions Award for Chief Education Officers, the ISEA agreed to work with the DET in developing a new performance management scheme for CEOs. The scheme was to be based on an existing scheme currently applicable to a range of staff across the DET.

After several meetings the DET has provided the ISEA with a draft document. While generally acceptable the State Council had some reservations about the document & in particular how specifically it reflected the positions, qualifications & responsibilities of CEOs. The ISEA has now provided the DET with an amended document which it believes is more in line with the basis of the agreement reached with the DET during the Award negotiations and which will satisfy the intentions of both parties.

Leave Loading Back Pay to CEOs Completed

It appears as if the DET has successfully identified and paid all of the CEOs who were due back-pay for underpaid leave loadings over the period of the last two salaries and conditions awards. The ISEA took up the very few queries received from members about the payments but they were all resolved to the satisfaction of the members concerned. The DET is to be congratulated on the efficiency with which the process of identifying and paying eligible CEOs was carried out. Any CEO who still has queries about the payments should contact the ISEA immediately.

ISEA Tour to Singapore and Hong Kong

The ISEA is in the process of planning a study-tour to Singapore and Hong Kong to be conducted during the 2010 NSW second term school vacation which extends from Monday 5 July 2010 to Friday 16 July 2010.

The intention is to visit schools, education systems and universities while leaving sufficient time to take in the cultural attractions of both locations. The visit to Hong Kong will coincide with a leadership conference to be conducted by the Hong K

Kong Institute of Education in cooperation with the Peabody College of the Vanderbilt University . Arrangements for the tour in Hong Kong are being assisted by Allan Walker who is Chief Professor of Educational Administration at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. In January 2010 Allan is to become the Co-Director of a new Centre for Educational Leadership at the Hong Kong Institute for Education. Alan was formerly a teacher, principal and academic in Australia and has since worked on the international scene.

In Singapore the ISEA tour will be assisted by Catherine Seah a principal of a large Singaporean secondary school. Catherine led a study-tour of senior Singaporean administrators, consultants and principals to NSW in 2007, during which time the group met with ISEA members and visited DET schools and offices.

The ISEA has conducted successful tours to the UK and Germany (2004), the west coast of USA and Canada (2006) and the east coast of USA and Canada (2008). The proposed tour to Asian education settings will round out the professional links the ISEA has with education authorities around the world.

Members are invited to express initial interest in joining this tour. No firm commitments will be expected until the details of the tour are developed and published.

ISEA at Daily Telegraph Education Forum

The ISEA was recently represented at the Daily Telegraph's annual education forum. The topic of *League Tables* was addressed by a panel consisting of the NSW Minister for Education the Hon Verity Firth, the Chief Executive of the Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority (ACARA), Professor Peter Hill, and the President of the Australian Secondary Principals Association (ASPA), Mr Andrew Blair.

All speakers confirmed a commitment to open and transparent communication to the community about the performances of schools but expressed real concerns about the damage done and injustice that could be caused by the publication of simplistic league tables. No guaranteed means were offered to ensure that media outlets would not resort to simplistic league table but all panel members proposed measures that would minimize or counteract such publications. For instance ASPA will seek to have all major media outlets sign off on a code of ethics relating to the publication of school performances. The Minister, while admitting that there was no way the media could be prevented from commenting on school performances, said that the Government would rigorously defend any school unfairly treated by media reports or tables. The ACARA chief said that the Australian Government, and therefore ACARA, was committed to publishing performance data gathered from all Australian schools. He believed the range and sophistication of the information published would make the compilation of simplistic leagues table very difficult.

The invited audience for the forum consisted of system, professional, union and community representatives. It was of note that none of the media representatives present gave any commitments as to the use they would make of the ACARA data when they became available. A report of the forum is yet to appear in the Daily Telegraph.

Dinner with Newly Appointed ACARA Chief

The ISEA has an agreement from Professor Peter Hill, the newly appointed Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority (ACARA) to attend and address a professional dinner to be conducted by the ISEA. Peter Hill has been a prominent academic in the UK, USA, Hong Kong and Australia and served as Chief Executive of the Victorian Ministry of Education. This experience, and his research into teaching and learning throughout the world, fits him well for his ACARA role.

Professor Hill will speak about the ACARA charter and the progress made in carrying out the organisation's major responsibilities.

Details of the dinner are still being determined. Members will be informed as soon as they are finalised but the dinner is likely to be in late November or early December.

Car Leasing Through Smart Salary

ISEA members, who lease cars through the DET's contract with Smart Salary Pty Ltd, are advised to check carefully the arrangements they enter into and in particular the conditions that apply when leaving the DET through retirement or resignation. The pro-rata calculation of the part of the year served prior to leaving the DET, which is then used to determine the Fringe Benefit Tax payable, can leave the departing officer with a sizeable bill.

A recently retired member has been subject to this calculation but has successfully negotiated a more favourable final payment. ISEA members who are leasing or contemplating leasing cars and who require further advice about this matter are welcome to contact this member through the ISEA's Executive Officer.

The ISEA does not doubt the overall value that can be gained by leasing a car through the DET's scheme. It is merely advising members to be fully aware of the conditions that apply.