

Chapter 2: Dissemination of information

Highlights 2004–05

- A successful change of national publications distributor
- List-building under way with new titles and updated editions
- Expansion of marketing and publicity, closely linked to sales
- Content and value added to website
- Nine book launches with varied audiences, in significant locations

In 2004–05, AIATSIS made available a large body of information through a variety of avenues. The Aboriginal Studies Press (ASP) enhanced its capacity to publish works in Australian Indigenous Studies. Within the Research Section, the Native Title Research Unit published a significant number of research works. Parts of the Institute's website were upgraded to make additional resources available electronically.

Aboriginal Studies Press

ASP is the publishing arm of AIATSIS. It facilitates and promotes high-quality research through its publishing program in Australian Indigenous Studies. ASP publishes a vital and varied list of both scholarly and general books.

In 2004–05, ASP published nine new books covering archaeology, anthropology, national and regional history, cultural studies, political activism, traditional Aboriginal fishing practices, biography and autobiography, and Aboriginal women's history and feminism. Of the nine titles published, four were academic and five were aimed at a more general audience. Two of the publications derived from AIATSIS research grants; one from an AIATSIS conference; two sets of authors were offered financial support to complete their works; and four received no financial assistance.

ASP published two editions of the Institute's multidisciplinary peer-reviewed journal, *Australian Aboriginal Studies*. The journal, published in collaboration with the Institute's Research Program, is distributed nationally and internationally in print form and selected articles are searchable through the online Australian Public Affairs Full Text (APAFT) and the Attorney-General's Information Service (AGIS) indexes and databases.

ASP PUBLICATIONS 2004-05



A Record in Stone — August



Thinking Black — August



Seeking Racial Justice — November



Whitening Race — November



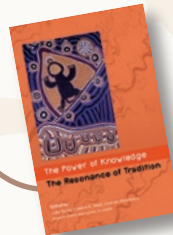
A Bend in the Yarra — November



Mutton Fish — April



Paint Me Black — April



The Power of Knowledge — April



Uncommon Ground — May

Selected book titles were also chosen for reprinting or new editions.

Other ASP publications in 2004–05 included:

- the AIATSIS Annual Report 2003–04
- three editions of *Institute News* (a newsletter for Institute members)
- three editions of *Insight* (an internal newsletter for AIATSIS staff)
- numerous corporate and promotional productions including stationery, invitations, brochures and posters.

PUBLISHING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

In making decisions about which titles ASP would publish, the Institute's Principal drew on the advice of the Publishing Advisory Committee (PAC), which met twice in 2004–05. The PAC's work was supported by ASP staff, who worked closely with the authors and solicited reports from the best-qualified peer assessors. In 2004–05, 37 unsolicited manuscripts were received compared with 31 in the previous year. The use of ASP's guidelines for intending authors resulted in easier decision-making by ASP and the PAC. An assessment matrix created by ASP staff provided a more equitable and transparent framework for the assessment of all manuscripts. The PAC's recommendations were also made within the context of ASP's human and financial resources.

For manuscripts forwarded to the PAC, ASP sought at least two peer assessors, one of whom was usually Indigenous. Knowledgeable and skilled assessors provide high quality feedback and often establish strong relationships with ASP. Most of the assessors teach courses or conduct research in areas for which ASP's books can be used. In addition, and perhaps more importantly, the appointment of assessors can encourage them over time to consider ASP for their own publications.

Publishing Advisory Committee members, 2004-05

Mr Steve Larkin — Principal and Chair

Dr Luke Taylor — Deputy Principal

COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

Ms Jackie Huggins, AM

Professor Martin Nakata

EXTERNAL MEMBERS

Ms Jennifer Martiniello

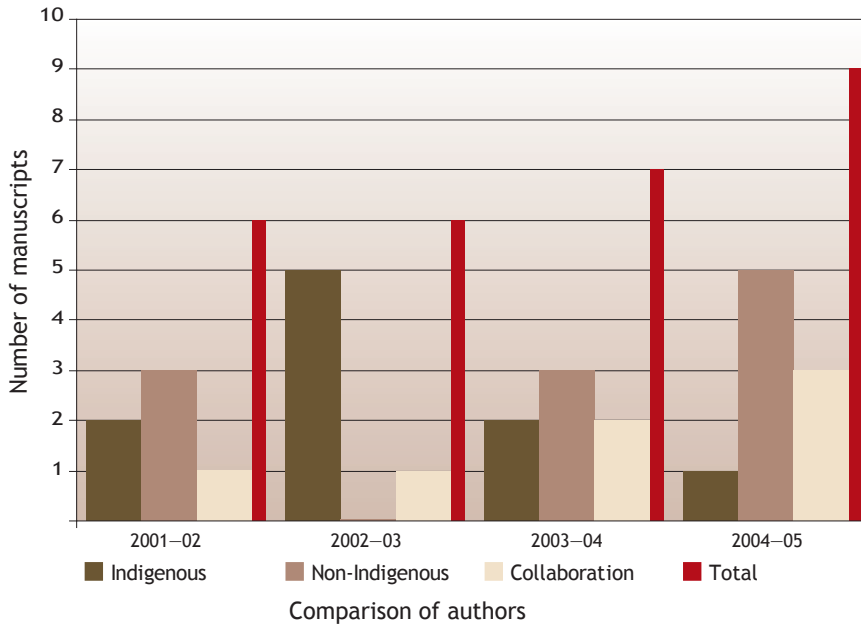
Mr Philip Morrissey

Ms Kerry Reed-Gilbert

INVOLVEMENT OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN ASP ACTIVITIES

ASP actively involved Australian Indigenous peoples in its undertakings. Of the nine titles published in 2004–05, one was written by an Indigenous author and three were collaborations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous authors.

FIGURE 3 COMPARISON OF ASP AUTHORS, 2001–05



All five Council and external members of the PAC are Indigenous. They continued their valuable work on the committee, bringing to the publication process strong academic credentials and Indigenous community and language knowledge, as well as writing and editing expertise. This expertise complemented the publishing knowledge of the ASP managers and the AIATSIS Executive who contributed to PAC meetings.

Where possible, ASP used freelance Indigenous authors and scholars to support other Indigenous authors in commenting on, rewriting or restructuring their work. Although most design work was carried out by ASP staff, ASP sought out and used Indigenous designers, illustrators and photographers where possible.

NEW DISTRIBUTOR FOR ASP PUBLICATIONS

The most significant undertaking by ASP during 2004–05 was the change of trade distributor to UNIREPS, a small distributor with a strong representation

in bookshops and a good reputation for marketing and selling academic and general books. UNIREPS represents some of the strongest Australian and overseas university presses and there is a good alignment between the categories of books they distribute and ASP's own list.

ASP expected the change of distributor to result in higher sales at a lower cost. After the change to the new distributor in April 2005, the first three months' sales showed a good increase in turnover. ASP worked closely with UNIREPS on various sales and marketing initiatives that resulted in an improved profile for ASP with booksellers and educators.

The change in ASP's distributor prompted ASP to develop further its relationships with authors, for example to source relevant sales and marketing information from authors many months in advance of publication. The change in distributor also required ASP to develop new formats, scheduling and information for the sales force, and to improve its marketing and publicity. It allowed ASP to draw on advice and sales representative feedback that fed into the design of book covers as well as book titles, and sales and marketing material.

PUBLISHING LIST DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

During 2004–05, editorial and other work was carried out to allow up to eleven titles to be published in 2005–06. Naturally the number of titles published in any year needs to be considered qualitatively as well as quantitatively—some titles require more work than others in the writing/editing phase; others in the design/production and sales/marketing phases.

While ASP attempts to publish at regular intervals during the year so as better to manage production and quality-management processes, the change to a new distributor in April 2005 meant holding over three titles until that date. This led to a hiatus in sales between December 2004 and March 2005, usually a slow time of year for sales.

ASP continued to work towards producing books that were accepted for publication up to three years ago, some of which required significant manuscript development. Final manuscripts now being received by ASP are generally in a more finished state than previously. This results from ASP staff working closely with authors before the submission of their final manuscripts, and an improvement in the quality of peer assessments provided to the PAC.

The ASP list continued to receive good support from the Literature Board of the Australia Council, which allows AIATSIS to publish authors who might not otherwise be published. As a part of building and maintaining its list, ASP selectively reprinted several titles from both the frontlist and backlist. In the

process, choices were made to reissue some titles in a different format or update some titles. This is expected to continue in 2005–06.

The change to a new distributor and the monitoring of leased warehouse space will allow ASP to further consider the stock levels and the number of backlist titles in 2005–06.

As part of the rationalisation process, and in line with the digitising occurring in other programs within AIATSIS, ASP began investigating the possibility of digitising its backlist titles. One possibility is to make selected titles available online, either free as a resource or sold via e-commerce. Added functionality via print-on-demand is also being considered. Contractual and technical issues are being investigated by an external consultant who will facilitate the process.

ASP is also investigating the option of licensing selected titles to third-party e-books and/or e-library organisations. The technical requirements for delivering online are significant and include staff learning new skills, such as writing complex metadata. Once learnt, e-publishing should be less complex and easier in future.

IMPROVEMENTS IN PUBLICATION PROCESSES, STANDARDS AND DISTRIBUTION

ASP's aim is to produce quality books in a timely fashion that are priced appropriately and marketed well. The engagement of a Deputy Director in March 2004 enabled ASP to institute best-practice systems in production management throughout the year. This is an ongoing process. ASP is now preparing more titles at any one time with smoother forward scheduling and improved production values. This is assisted by the majority of staff moving to ongoing contracts.

In 2004–05, ASP created a new set of checklists to ensure the smooth publication of its titles. A more seamless approach to producing books and a more regular publication schedule allowed the appropriate amount of time to be spent assessing and researching the best choices in design and production values, and then creating them. In addition ASP rationalised the number of formats to fit better with booksellers' requirements and to allow speedier production of books. Costings were closely monitored. The choice was made to produce smaller initial print runs and reprint quickly, rather than risk excess stockholding in the leased warehouse.

SALES, MARKETING AND PUBLICITY

Nine book launches were held during 2004–05 at a variety of venues, including writers' festivals, Indigenous keeping places and conferences. Through these activities, authors and ASP together had an opportunity to promote the

individual title as well as other relevant titles. ASP launched *Thinking black* at the Brisbane Writers' Festival in October 2004. In June 2005, both the Director and Deputy Director attended the Northern Territory Writers' Festival, Wordstorm 2005, where the Chief Minister launched *Paint me black*. In addition, ASP supported Wordstorm 2005 by sponsoring two authors of previously published books. ASP's support of this regional festival was the strongest of the publishers present.

In addition to establishing a relationship with UNIREPS, ASP engaged a consultant who attended the London Book Fair in March 2005 to investigate the choices of a UK/European distributor. ASP will make the final selection of a European distributor early in 2005–06. ASP continued to use International Specialized Book Services (ISBS) as its distributor in the United States.

In 2004–05, ASP produced a full-colour printed catalogue of its forthcoming and selected backlist. This proved an invaluable aid to the trade distributor, UNIREPS, and acted as a showcase for ASP's list for all readers. An electronic version is available on the ASP home page of the AIATSIS website. An updated version will be available in August 2005.

The **Booknet** computerised sales system continued to provide ASP with data on home sales that could be added to the data drawn from UNIREPS to create accurate sales reports. More work will be undertaken in 2005–06 to create a variety of reports to help decision-making on inventory, reprints and new titles.

A contractor was engaged to create **marketing mailing lists** that will be maintained by ASP in future. These lists included university libraries, schools suppliers, curriculum assessors, overseas embassies and overseas centres of Australian studies. The most important mailing list was for the new quarterly e-newsletter to academics teaching Indigenous Studies. The newsletter links to the updated ASP website

Tailored mailing lists for flyers were created for each new title published. Flyers for individual titles, or category-based flyers, were created and distributed, used as inserts, and supplemented authors' appearances at conferences, festivals and launches. ASP also produced various point-of-sale materials.

A freelance publicist was contracted to supplement the Institute's own media liaison. The most important impact was an increase in the number of radio interviews undertaken by ASP authors. For some this meant interviews on national, city, metropolitan, regional and Indigenous radio stations. This publicity also had a positive effect on the number of ASP books reviewed.

ASP staff attended the AIATSIS conference in November 2004 and hosted a session called 'Meet the Press.' Four books were showcased and two authors

***Mutton Fish* launched in traditional country**

The seas and beaches of the NSW south coast have sustained people for thousands of years. Mutton fish, or abalone, is a subsistence food—easy to find and harvest, extremely rich in energy and accessible for as long as the beaches are freely open to all.

Mutton Fish: the surviving culture of Aboriginal people and abalone on the south coast of NSW explores this relationship and the effects of the coastal resources being progressively restricted by European competition. The book includes interviews with Indigenous people who have participated in traditional as well as modern fishing practices on the NSW south coast.

Mutton Fish had its first launch in May 2005, when 60 people gathered at the Monaroo Bobberrer Gudu Keeping Place on the NSW south coast to enjoy the event. Sadly, co-author Liddy Stewart couldn't attend, but Beryl Cruse and Sue Norman were there and Sue spoke on behalf of the three authors.

Their previous published collaboration was *Bittangabee Tribe*, a children's book. Ossie Cruse gave the welcome to country, along with some rousing gumleaf playing, while great grandson Keedon played the didgeridoo. BJ Cruse, Chairman of the Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council, officially launched the book.

After the formalities, everyone tucked into a barbecue lunch — including mutton fish. In the following month, Ossie and Beryl Cruse attended the AIATSIS Native Title Conference in Coffs Harbour, where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Tom Calma launched the book to a wider audience with an entertaining reading of snippets that had touched him, especially examples of the ingenuity of Aboriginal people in making home-grown fishing equipment.

Commissioner Calma spoke of the relevance of Aboriginal fishing practices, comparing the experiences spoken of in *Mutton Fish* to that of his own country in the Northern Territory. The following day Ossie Cruse took part in a conference panel session.



Left to right, Ossie Cruse with great grandson Keedon in front; co-author Sue Norman; BJ Cruse, Chairman of the Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council; Beryl Cruse, co-author, at the NSW south coast launch in June 2005.

addressed the audience. Frances Peters-Little, author of a forthcoming ASP title in 2006, gave the keynote address. ASP staff also attended the Australian Booksellers' Association annual conference in August 2004, and held bookstalls at relevant academic lectures and symposia. ASP contributed to a variety of community and other forums by bookstall support, or by supplying information, for example at National Day of Healing and Reconciliation Day events, during NAIDOC week in Dubbo, and at the Sydney Indigenous Arts Festival at Parramatta.

ASP continued its NAIDOC week book sale in July 2004 and provided small bookshop stalls at a variety of events throughout the year. The ASP Sales and Distribution Officer conversed with visitors to the AIATSIS shop and offered advice about purchasing publications. In addition he addressed visitors to AIATSIS, including community groups, letting them know about ASP's publishing.

ASP'S STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

ASP maintained a range of alliances during the reporting period and forged new ones. Its new distribution arrangement strengthens alliances with other publishers and has already led to joint marketing initiatives. As part of UNIREPS' distribution system, ASP joined a set of smaller independent publishers with joint goals. Sharing of industry information and planning of collaborative approaches to sales and marketing are just two of the benefits expected.

During 2004–05, ASP collaborated with two Indigenous presses, Magabala Books (Broome) and the Institute for Aboriginal Development (IAD) (Alice Springs), discussing issues of mutual benefit including sales and marketing. This collaboration took the form of telephone and email exchanges and information-sharing and, in the case of IAD, booth-sharing or joint representation and selling of books at conferences.

Other activities to build strategic alliances included working closely with peer assessors and liaising with community groups in the bookshop and via bookstalls held outside AIATSIS. ASP took part in a variety of conferences and festivals, all of which reached different communities of readers. The ASP Director addressed a scholarly publishing forum initiated by the Australian National University and hosted by the National Museum of Australia, reaching an audience of emerging and previously published academics. ASP also actively maintained relationships with relevant funding bodies.

Publication and dissemination of research material by the Research Program

Fellows and staff of the Research Program completed an extremely comprehensive list of books, chapters, papers, reports, technical summaries and workshop curriculums during 2004–05. Fifty-two peer-reviewed manuscripts were completed by ten Fellows and other research staff. More than 100 non-peer-reviewed papers, reports, conference papers, social-legal summaries and workshop papers were also produced during this period. This represented an increase in publications of approximately 25 per cent compared with 2003–04.

More than 250 public presentations were made by Research staff to Indigenous visitors, communities and agencies, at national and international conferences as well as media and education locales (including secondary and primary schools).

Ongoing publications produced by the Research Program, including the Native Title Research Unit, included:

- research discussion papers
- the *Native Title Newsletter*
- NTRU Issues Papers – *Land, Rights, Laws: Issues of Native Title*
- AIATSIS Conference Proceedings (electronic) – *The Power of Knowledge, the Resonance of Tradition*
- AIATSIS Seminar Series (selected papers and electronic) – *Profiling Recent AIATSIS Research and Native Title Decision-making and Conflict Management*

THE NATIVE TITLE NEWSLETTER

The Native Title Research Unit (NTRU) continued to produce the bi-monthly *Native Title Newsletter*. The newsletter contained news from the NTRU including information about current research projects and publications; feature articles about current issues in native title; information about upcoming events; details of legislative reviews and publications of interest to the native title parties; summaries of native title news articles; information about native title applications lodged; registration test decisions and applications currently in notification; and a listing of recent additions to the AIATSIS collections.

Feature articles published in the newsletter during 2004–05 included:

- a case note on the Davenport Murchison native title determination by Ms Grace Koch
- a comment by Dr Jimmy Weiner on the *Jango v Northern Territory* decision
- an article on the Yorta Yorta agreement by Mr Henry Atkinson, spokesperson for the Council of Elders, Yorta Yorta Nation
- ‘From the Fringes to Economic Advancement’ by Mr Brian Wyatt from the Goldfields Land and Sea Council
- an update of native title events from the Kimberley Land Council
- an overview of the new NTRU website
- an update on the Blue Mud Bay case *Gumana v Northern Territory* [2005] FCA 50, Selway J, 7 February 2005 by Ms Phillipa Hetherington, Solicitor, Northern Land Council.

The *Native Title Newsletter* was redesigned during 2004–05 to improve its readability. It is available both online and in hardcopy. Almost one thousand people currently subscribe to the newsletter.

Laying down a challenge to authors

Author, film-maker and historian Frances Peters-Little laid down a challenge to academic authors, and especially Indigenous academic authors, in addressing ASP's 'Meet the Press' event at the AIATSIS Conference in November 2004.

She urged them to write in a style that allowed them to be 'read, and understood by the ordinary, so that they may learn about the extraordinary'.



Frances Peters-Little addresses the audience at 'Meet the Press', AIATSIS Conference, November 2004

The Research Fellow at the History Program of the Research School of Social Sciences at the ANU was giving the keynote address, titled 'Applying the practical to the unattainable'.

'Indigenous writing ... is about being able to teach our kids our cultural heritages, languages, knowledge of land and living skills, and we want to be able to teach non-Aboriginal people these things. We want to be able to share our stories directly from our hearts, and we would like to be able to show the rest of the world, what makes us survive, and how the oldest living culture known to mankind has kept the treasured stories and values of our forefathers', she said.

The speech is available on the ASP website.

Four ASP titles were showcased at the conference, including *Whitening Race* and *Bend in the Yarra*. Two authors spoke about their projects: Jack Horner on *Seeking Racial Justice* (later launched at Gleebooks in Sydney), and Sue Norman and Liddy Stewart on *Mutton Fish*. Jimmy Little's grandson, James Henry, and his band later entertained the audience.

ASP centre-stage at Wordstorm 2005

Aboriginal Studies Press had a strong presence at the Northern Territory Writers' Festival, Wordstorm, in June 2005, with three ASP authors taking part and the NT Chief Minister, Clare Martin, launching a new ASP title.

The launch was for *Paint Me Black* by newly published author Claire Henty-Gebert. AIATSIS Chairperson Mick Dodson spoke on behalf of ASP with Principal

Steve Larkin as MC. In the warm sunshine, and against a backdrop of the sparkling sea, Claire's family and friends and festival attendees helped the author release her book into the hands of the reading public.

ASP Director Rhonda Black describes Wordstorm as differing from other state-based writers' festivals in size, creating a more intimate experience for both writers and audience.

'Instead of big-name overseas authors, Wordstorm invited writers and activists from our near-neighbours Indonesia and East Timor,' said Rhonda. 'In one session, for example, panellists revealed the similarities and differences between East Timorese and Aboriginal ghost stories.'

ASP sponsored the attendance of Macquarie University academic, Anita Heiss (ASP-published author of *Dhuuluu-Yala*), who was an entertaining and valuable contributor to a variety of panels including 'Black Voices,' facilitated by Rhonda Black, which also included AIATSIS Visiting Research Fellow Steve Kinnane.

Debbie Bird Rose took part in a session called 'Country of the Heart: an intimate conversation' after the book she co-authored. In her session Debbie used images from the book to entertain the audience, some of whom knew the Mak Mak country the book explores.



Anita Heiss responding to keen questioning at a panel session in the main tent at the Wordstorm Writers' Festival in the lush surrounds of Darwin's Northern Territory Museum and Art Gallery, June 2005.

ISSUES PAPER SERIES

The NTRU also continued to publish an issues paper series, *Land, Rights, Laws: Issues of Native Title*. This series was also redesigned and is available both online and in hardcopy.

Papers published during 2004–05 included:

- ‘Promoting economic and social development through native title’ by the then Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, Dr Bill Jonas
- ‘An anthropological perspective on writing for the court’ by Dr Katie Glaskin
- ‘The recognition level of the native title claim group: a legal and policy perspective’ by Mr Daniel Lavery
- ‘Authorisation and replacement of applicants: Bolton v WA [2004] FCA 760 (15 June 2004)’ by Dr Lisa Strelein.

NEW REPORT SERIES

The NTRU’s Indigenous Facilitation and Mediation Project (IFaMP) launched a new report series documenting research from the project. Publications in this series included:

- *The business of process: research issues in managing Indigenous decision-making and disputes in land* (Report No. 1)
- *Report on native title representative body workshops: directions, priorities and challenges* (Report No. 2)
- *Native title mediation practice: the commonalities, the challenges, the contradictions: a survey of native title mediators* (Report No. 3)
- *Culture, conflict management and native title: an emerging bibliography* (Report No. 4).

AIATSIS websites

During 2004–05, a number of sections of the Institute’s website, including the ASP and NTRU sites, were reviewed and updated.

The NTRU website was redeveloped and launched in late 2004. Updated and new resources were added to the website and web content will continue to be developed in response to user feedback.

The Native Title Resource Guide was one of the new resources added to the website. The Guide is a self-contained website that is a unique collaboration between AIATSIS; the National Native Title Tribunal; the Agreements, Treaties and Negotiated Settlements Project; the Indigenous Land Corporation; the

Federal Court and the Australasian Legal Information Institute (AustLII). It provides a single portal to information on native title and land outcomes for Indigenous peoples in Australia. Native title representative bodies and other agencies contributed significantly to the project, providing data and reviewing material.

Other new or updated resources that were added to the website include research resource pages—*Yorta Yorta v Victoria*; *Western Australia v Ward* (Miriuwung-Gajerrong); *Yarmirr v Northern Territory* (Croker Island Case); *Fejo v Northern Territory*; compensation and native title; international law and native title; and expert evidence in native title cases—and *Native Title in The News* (a summary of native title news articles). Together with the exceptional resources provided by the Indigenous Facilitation and Mediation Project (IFaMP) website, the resources provided for native title researchers and practitioners are unprecedented for the NTRU.

Updates were also made to the ASP website to complement the marketing initiatives described earlier in this chapter. In particular, content was added to information on forthcoming titles. A consultant was engaged to create new material about permissions as well as templates to speed up ASP's processing of permissions requests. These forms were posted on the website. In June 2005 the Aboriginal Wall Map was added to the website to support sales initiatives, including the August publication of a new smaller-format map, and permissions requests.

The AUSTLANG (Web Indigenous Languages Database) website provides edited and research-interactive text and commentaries. The IFaMP website provides comprehensive and regularly updated sources directly relevant to decision-making, conflict management and agreements. As such, both sites constitute significantly resourced AIATSIS publications.

The Library has added substantial content to the AIATSIS website, in particular the full text of the *Dawn* and *New Dawn* magazines, the Freedom Ride online exhibition and language bibliographies.

The dissemination of information through the AIATSIS website is also discussed in Chapter 3.