

## Editors' Report ANZJS

The current ANZJS editorial team is Stephen Haslett (Managing Editor), Mervyn Silvapulle (Theory and Methods Editor), Alan Welsh (Applications Editor), Neville Bartlett (Technical Editor), and Petra Graham (Book Review Editor). Ken Russell tendered his resignation toward the end of the 2009/2010 year, and Neville then replaced him as Technical Editor.

In line with a number of other international journals, ANZJS has adopted the ScholarOne Manuscripts package as its electronic paper submission system. While Wiley-Blackwell remains the publisher of ANZJS, continued use of ScholarOne is not publisher dependent. There has been an overhead moving to this new system, but nevertheless this change has significantly improved tracking and handling of papers in comparison with the previous, fragmented Excel based method. There is a learning curve with ScholarOne however, so that some aspects of the system remain to be explored. At this stage, this means that authors, referees, and to a lesser extent associate editors and the editorial panel, are still learning how best to use the package. The benefit of a common system is however already apparent, and the reminder system is a major benefit. Using ScholarOne has already meant that the editorial panel now spend less time clarifying administrative issues, and more time discussing the shape and content of ANZJS at the editors' regular phone meetings and at the annual editors' face-to-face meeting (which was last held at Wiley Blackwell in Melbourne in November 2010).

Book reviews have recently returned to the journal after a long absence, and already they are becoming an integral part of each issue. Invited papers, and papers with discussion are also becoming more common. Such papers tend to have wider readership and well-recognised authors. Publishing special issues is also an option being considered, provided this can be done within the current, contracted, annual page limit for the journal. The editors have also agreed that ANZJS should not become a journal of record for papers that provide only a small increment to statistical knowledge.

It is only by improving the quality of submitted papers that ANZJS can further increase its quality. At present there is a high volume of submissions, but around 40% of these are obviously unsuitable for publication, either because they are minor variations on a known statistical theory, or because they are applications that use only very standard statistical methods. Such papers add to editorial time, and less frequently refereeing time, in non-productive ways, so that, in everyone's interest

including authors', effort is being made to streamline and make early decisions rather than unnecessarily involving associate editors and referees.

These initiatives and intentions are providing mechanisms for planned, longer term improvement to ANZJS, rather than having editorial direction driven solely reliance by journal metrics such as impact factors, or editorial effort being used primarily on improving marginal papers. The editorial aim is to focus on the standard of ANZJS rather than attempt to manipulate impact factor or any other such publication measure, and to focus editorial effort on those papers most likely to be published.

The updated Impact Factor for ANZJS has nevertheless risen over the last three years from 0.373 for 2007, to 0.650 in 2008, and to 0.814 in 2009 (ISI Journal Citation Reports, 2007, 2008, 2009). The journal rank was 68/92 in 2008 and 57/99 in 2009. The 2010 figures are not yet available, but continuation of this monotonic progression over the longer (or even medium) term cannot be expected, given how sensitive such measures are to particular papers being in the time window. The five year impact factor, which for 2009 stood at 0.843, may be a better indicator for statistics journals given the long lead time required for research, writing and publication.

The Immediacy Index also increased significantly from 0.138 in 2008 to 0.259 in 2009. Again, the corresponding figures 2010 are not yet available.

ANZJS is getting better electronic coverage. Online usage has increased from below 5,000 online uses in 2002 to over 70,000 uses of abstracts and over 20,000 uses of full text articles in 2009 (Source: Wiley-Blackwell).

Over the last two years, the journal has markedly reduced the backlog of papers accepted for publication. Papers published in each issue of ANZJS are now generally reached publication standard in the same or previous quarter.

Exact acceptance rates are difficult to calculate, because papers submitted in a given year are not generally those published in the same period. However, the current estimate is 10%, based on approximately 250 papers submitted and 25 accepted. While this seems a comparatively low acceptance rate, as noted above, around 40% of papers are rejected as either out of scope because they lack a statistical focus, or because they are only minor additions to theory, or because they are reports of applications that use only basic statistical methodology.

The ANZJS Editors continue to encourage all members of SSAI and NZSA to submit sound, original papers in any of the following four categories: Applications, Theory and Methods, Reviews, and Historical and General Interest.

There have been major changes in the Wiley editorial personnel linked with ANZJS over recent years. From being an Australian based operation, copy editing production has moved to Singapore, with overview and marketing now run through the United Kingdom. This has provided challenges for the editors, who have made a collective decision that publication standards will take precedence over having quarterly journal issues published to a tightly pre-specified timetable. Nevertheless, with emphasis being placed on meeting the new personnel involved and phone meetings, achieving both objectives should be possible by end-2011.

ANZJS was represented at the Wiley-Blackwell stand at the 2010 Joint Statistical Meetings in Vancouver, and at a series of other international statistics conferences. These are detailed in full in the annual report from the publishers.

The publishing contract renewal with Wiley-Blackwell is nearly complete, with agreements in principle from both SSAI and NZSA.

From an editorial perspective, the structure under which ANZJS operates remains in need of review. An example is the annual report from the editors to the two associations, SSAI and NZSA. At present, when the Managing Editor is an Australian, the report to NZSA is from an editor who is a member of NZSA. If the Managing editor is a New Zealander, the report to SSAI is made by an editor who is an Australian. This complicates process by dislocating the editorial reporting process. The solution recommended is that the formal editors' report to both SSAI and NZSA is provided in writing by the Managing Editor, but that any questions about editorial matters asked at the SSAI or NZSA AGMs are answered by the member(s) of the editorial panel present.

On balance, although recognising it must remain an ongoing process, the editorial panel are currently pleased with the editorial operation and general direction of the journal. This favourable assessment would not be possible without the support and assistance of the associate editors and the referees, and the overview provided by the ANZJS Management Committee. The editorial panel would like to thank these people, as well as the authors, for their effort and their ongoing contribution to ANZJS.

Stephen Haslett  
ANZJS Managing Editor

29 June 2011

*Addendum – Information received from Wiley Blackwell, 30 June 2011:*

The 2010 Impact Factor for the *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Statistics*, which was released by Thomson Reuters last night. The Impact Factor has dropped by 25% from 0.821 to 0.618. The journal is now ranked 78/110 in the Statistics & Probability category. The 5-year Impact Factor has also decreased, but only slightly (from 0.843 to 0.811).