



Annual Report

1 July 2014 – 30 June 2015

P.O. Box 164
Turrumurra
NSW 2074

Tel 0424 720 915
www.independentaudiologists.net.au
exec@independentaudiologists.net.au

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Mission Statement

The mission of Independent Audiologists Australia is to promote and support clinical practices owned by Audiologists.

About Independent Audiologists Australia Inc Executive Members during 2014 – 2015

President:	Ms Patricia Sharples
Vice President:	Ms Elaine Melville
Treasurer:	Ms Deborah Pallett
Secretary:	Ms Nolene Nielson
Councillors:	Mr Peter Altidis Mr Grant Collins Dr Ross Dineen Mr Ronald Kendall Mr Mel Gray-Thompson Ms Myriam Westcott
Executive Officer:	Dr Louise Collingridge

Contact Independent Audiologists Australia Inc

Website:	www.independentaudiologists.net.au
Email:	exec@independentaudiologists.net.au
Tel:	0424 720 915
Mail:	P.O. Box 164 Turrumurra NSW, 2074
ABN:	37475036210

Independent Audiologists Australia Inc is a not for profit professional association incorporated in the State of Victoria.

The association has national membership and holds activities across Australia.



President's Message Patricia Sharples

I was privileged to have taken on the role of President during the financial year 2014 – 2015, a year in which Independent Audiologists Australia's promotion of the profession of audiology has been recognised and which our membership has continued to grow.

Our activities over the past year have sought to strengthen our ties to other professional and consumer groups both nationally and internationally. We now subscribe annually to the Academy of Doctors of Audiology (ADA) offering all our members access to ADA resources. We offered a free joint webinar to members of both associations on the topic of billing in audiology, one that is of international interest. Closer to home, we consolidated our close affiliation to Independent Audiologists New Zealand by offering a jointly convened seminar on the topic of professionalism in healthcare, which has been instrumental in shaping our policies, statements to the media and promoting the professional practice of audiology.

In 2014 we signed a memorandum of understanding with Audiology Australia, which ensures that we meet to discuss matters of mutual interest at least twice per calendar year. These meetings provide a forum to discuss matters of mutual interest which also builds mutual understanding and cooperation between our two professional associations.

Our association's growth over the past five years has introduced new challenges to facilitate communication between members. When our Executive reviewed strategic directions for the association and for the 2014/2015 period, they identified communication with members as a key area to work on. As our numbers have exceeded the number allowed by most email packages to send a single email out to all, we've turned to social media to communicate with members. We now have a LinkedIn members only discussion group, a Linked In discussion group for all who are interested in independent audiology in Australia and a Facebook page. A regular President's newsletter also serves to keep all up to date with the association's activities.

I would like to thank all those who have contributed to the association over the past year – including our Executive committee and our Executive Officer. Special thanks to all participants (speakers and delegates) at our seminars and webinars – the range of topics and the quality of discussions and presentations has ensured that our association's reputation for delivering a truly excellent education programme.

2015/2016 promises to be another year of challenge and opportunity to promote independent professional practice of audiology and I look forward to working for all members to promote and support their clinical practices.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patricia Sharples'.

Patricia Sharples
President, 2014 – 2015



Treasurer's Report Deborah Pallett, Treasurer

Income to Independent Audiologists Australia for this financial year was derived from membership subscriptions, seminar fees and sponsorship, as well as interest from savings.

Accumulated funds available at the start of this financial year (1 July 2014) amounted to \$178,225. Members' funds (to 30 June 2015) totalled \$196,356, representing an operating profit of \$18,131.

There was no increase in membership subscription fee and there is a decrease from sponsorship accumulated in this financial year due to the timing of payments.

The total expense incurred during this period was \$127,377.

Liabilities for the next financial year will be as follows:

Fixed:

Executive Officers salary Superannuation (increased from 1 July 2015 to \$80,000 pa incl superannuation)

Insurances

Website and other online services

Variable:

Seminar expenses

Travel

Postage and stationary

Telephone

Banking / Merchant Fees

Promotional materials

As a not-for-profit association, all surplus funds are used for association purposes, and income tax is not payable. The association is registered for GST.

Financial record keeping involves reconciling the bookkeeping records in Cashflow Manager, an accounting software programme, and internet banking. Cash is held in an interest bearing savings account and in a cheque account – both at Westpac.

Two signatories are required to authorise any payment from the association's accounts. Reconciliation is done on a monthly basis or more frequently if required.

Profit and loss and transaction statements are reviewed each month. Bruce Tanner from Accounting Business and Taxation Services provides advice on accounting processes and reviews financial records at regular intervals.

Legislation adopted by Consumer Affairs, Victoria requires the association to undergo an audit only where the income exceeds \$250 000 in any year.

Income and expenditure statement for the year ended 30 June 2015, showing a comparison with the previous two years.

Income	2015 \$	2014 \$	2013 \$
Interest Received	3,150	3,454	3,451
Seminar Income	64,552	108,516	27,636
Subscription Income	24,847	29,301	34,818
Sponsorship	52,700	36,345	63,613
Sundry Income	240	3,971	100
Total Revenue	145,508	181,589	129,618
Expenses			
Accountancy	880	1,040	570
Advertising and Promotion	3,019	1,348	3,632
Amortisation Expense	0	525	1,050
Bank Fees and Charges	314	232	193
Seminar Expenses	51,875	80,195	20,093
Honorarium	6,895	0	3,500
Insurance	1,567	1,407	1,244
Merchant Fees	416	408	409
Printing, Postage and Stationary	2,463	3,671	1,392
Subscriptions	4,903	4,036	215
Sundry Expenses (Refunds, IT Allowance)	2,821	5,280	2,456
Superannuation	1,900	4,685	2165
Telephone & Online Meetings	2,750	1,232	916
Travel	5,265	9,995	6,203
Website	729	3,657	575
Wages	41501	40,000	27,500
Filing Fees (Consumer Affairs, Victoria)	78	195	0
Total Expenditure	127,377	157,907	74,963
Net Profit	18,131	23,682	54,654
Retained Assets	196,356	178,225	154,543



Membership

Dr Louise Collingridge, Executive Officer

Members of Independent Audiologists Australia are required to hold tertiary qualifications in audiology, hold a financial interest in an audiology related business that is at least 50 % owned by audiologists, be proposed and seconded by current members, and sign the code of ethics, subject to approval by the membership during a period of 5 working days.

New members are offered complimentary attendance at one seminar – typically a members' only or business/practice oriented seminar.

There are currently no joining fees. Membership fees are charged pro-rata in the second half of the membership year.

Life members were established to reward foundation members. Neil Clutterbuck, Susan Clutterbuck, Marie-Louise Hekel and Janice Milhinch are life members.

All members enjoy the same rights to:

- access the members only section of the website
- voting rights
- propose and second membership applications
- object to members joining
- serve on the Executive
- call for special general meetings
- use the letters M. IAA after their name
- display membership certificates and membership status in their clinics and websites
- pay members fees (for themselves and their staff) to attend IAA seminars
- access the ADA online resources and educational programme subscribed to on their behalf

Members are listed in the “find an independent audiologist” section of the association’s website unless a request is made to remove their name or details.

All members are issued with an Excellence in Education certificate reflecting their participation in the ongoing education programme offered by IAA.

Membership trends 2011 – 2015

Year	Starting number	New members	Resignations	Total
2011	43	9	5	47
2012	47	11	0	58
2013	58	9	0	67
2014	67	7	5	69
2015	69	7	4	72

As shown in the above table, membership has shown a steady increase over the past five years, with 43 new members having joined in that time period, with 14 resigning.

The 72 members as at the end of June 2015 represented over 150 clinic locations across Australia.

Communication with members

One of the challenges of a growing membership is how to retain the associations close channels of communication. The number of members means that for many people, emails sent to all members exceed the number of allowable addresses in their email systems. The association has sought to shift towards online discussions for member this means via a members' only LinkedIn group, which is supported by approximately half of the membership. We also use social media (a LinkedIn group open to all audiologists and a Facebook page) which have limited but growing support.

Regular newsletters are sent to members with updates on the activities of the Executive and directions that the association is taking.

All monthly reports submitted to the Executive by the Executive Officer and all minutes from the monthly meetings of the Executive are placed in the members' only section of our website, and so can be accessed by all who are interested.



Advocacy

Elaine Melville, Vice President & Chair of Advocacy

Advocating for the profession of audiology and promoting independent practice took several forms during the period 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015.

Our primary focus in advocating for the profession has been to raise awareness of the limitations of self-regulation and to request that audiology be included as a profession requiring mandatory national registration under the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). A review of AHPRA provided us with the opportunity to draw attention to the inequities in the registration system and to call for reforms that ensured regulation by a government appointed board. The need for mandatory national registration and the impact this could have for our profession was discussed in depth at our seminar, Professionalism in Healthcare, and the Wellington Declaration which was drawn up at the conclusion of that seminar included a statement of commitment to seeking registration for audiology. The Wellington Declaration has since been endorsed and reported on by consumer groups Better Hearing Australia and Self Help for the Hard of Hearing.

Growing awareness amongst members of the public and audiologists about the benefits of being a regulated profession has lead us to engage in discussions about regulation with Audiology Australia, with whom we have signed a memorandum of understanding to hold regular meetings to discuss matters of mutual interest. Two meetings were held with Audiology Australia under that agreement during the 2014/2015 year. As a result, Audiology Australia sent delegates to our seminar Professionalism in Healthcare and offered us an opportunity to discuss the Wellington Declaration at an Audiology Australia seminar in June 2015.

A close collaboration between IAA and Audiology Australia is very welcome and timely given that changes to the profession are occurring – such as shifts in the service delivery framework adopted within the Office of Hearing Services, funding of some services via the National Disability Insurance Scheme, which may ultimately lead to increased opportunities for independent practices to be engaged to deliver services to children now attended to by Australian Hearing. The IAA Executive Officer and the newly appointed Audiology Australia CEO, Dr Tony Coles, have agreed to work together to produce a paper on regulation.

We have taken up various opportunities to raise our concerns about the lack of regulation with government advisors and also to raise public awareness via the media. ABC Radio National Background Briefing aired a broadcast entitled “Have I got a hearing aid for you” which raised matters of public concern related to undisclosed commissions paid to clinicians associated with the sale of hearing aids. Several of our members and our Executive Officer shared their views and extensive knowledge of regulatory structures with the investigating journalist.

The most significant development in our advocacy work during the period 2014/2015 was the drawing up of the Wellington Declaration in May 2015. The Wellington Declaration stands as a guiding document for our advocacy for the profession of audiology and our support for independent practice that is defined as distinct from industry.

THE WELLINGTON DECLARATION

17 MAY 2015

Preamble

Relationships with industry are an integral element of audiological practice, but as an emerging profession with few guidelines to follow, many of those relationships have not been transparent leaving the public unsure of the difference between the hearing device industry and the profession of audiology. The range of services that audiologists deliver has been obscured by the marketing of products via audiology clinics. The public is not well informed as to the differences between audiologists, audiometrists, hearing aid distributors or online or retail stores (such as pharmacists or direct to consumer businesses) that sell hearing devices direct to the public. Audiology currently falls outside of regulation by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). Similarly, in New Zealand, audiology is currently an unregistered profession.

In response, Independent Audiologists Australia Inc and Independent Audiologists New Zealand engaged a panel of internationally recognised bioethicists comprising Prof Paul Komesaroff, Assoc Prof Ian Kerridge and Prof Grant Gillett to facilitate a three day seminar in Wellington, New Zealand from 15 – 17 May 2015. The facilitators drew attention to relationships that audiologists hold with industry that have emerged but which, to date have not been clearly defined, disclosed, constrained or regulated. These relationships are known to be of concern to patients, audiologists and other stakeholders, having been the topic of recent public scrutiny in the media. In order for the profession of audiology to achieve a position of trust within society, transparent and regulated relationships are needed between audiologists and all stakeholders (including other audiologists and industry). Patient-centredness needs to be demonstrated in all aspects of audiological service delivery – including the prescribing and fitting of hearing devices.

The Wellington Declaration was accepted by all delegates on Sunday 17 May 2015 – including independent audiologists, audiologists employed in non-independent sectors, patients, consumer group representatives and regulators. The Wellington Declaration has been endorsed by Mojo Mathers, (MP and Greens Political Party spokesperson for disability issues in the New Zealand parliament), Richard Brading (President, Self Help for Hard of Hearing People Australia, Inc.), Sara Duncan (President, Better Hearing Australia) and Michele Barry (CEO Better Hearing Australia).

The Wellington Declaration 2015

We, the participants at the seminar co- convened by Independent Audiologists Australia and Independent Audiologists New Zealand, in Wellington, New Zealand, are mindful of the responsibility that rests on us at this moment in the history of our profession, to declare our commitment to:

1. Ensuring a patient-centred approach within audiological services including the prescribing / dispensing elements of our practice.
2. Building and strengthening relationships between stakeholders (including patients, colleagues, industry, funding bodies, regulators, training institutions, associations and health care practitioners) across the field of audiology in both Australia and New Zealand.
3. Promoting a single code of professional conduct for audiologists, that incorporates clinical, ethical and legal aspects of practicing audiology in Australia and New Zealand.
4. Reducing risk of harm (including risk of financial harm) to the public through seeking mandatory national registration in both New Zealand and Australia under the relevant regulatory structures.
5. Guaranteeing transparency of interests (financial and otherwise) that could be perceived to influence the clinical judgement and professional recommendations made by audiologists, including transparency in billing for products and services.
6. Encouraging professional bodies to uphold the code of conduct in the interests of all members regardless of their employment status including the offering of legal advice and mentoring within the profession.

Implementation of the Wellington Declaration

Independent Audiologists Australia Inc and Independent Audiologists New Zealand will set in motion the process of promoting this declaration and providing audiologists with practical skills to implement the declaration, including the following:

- Applying and promoting this declaration when advocating for the profession.
- Providing guidance to professional bodies in light of this declaration including facilitating a culture of mentoring in a collegial, not competitive fashion.
- Advising audiologists how to define and explain their relationships with industry and other stakeholders including guidelines about transparency, declaring interests, negotiating employment conditions, explaining billing practices, and disclosing commissions, sales targets and clinic ownership.
- Lobbying for mandatory national registration, seeking recognition of audiology as a profession distinct from industry.



Excellence in Education Programme Dr Ross Dineen, Chair of Education

Independent Audiologists Australia members who attend Excellence in Education events are awarded certificates annually that indicate the number of hours of ongoing education they have accumulated. Events that are open to members and non-members are submitted for endorsement by other professional associations.

Quality is ensured through detailed planning of all seminars and master classes, according to the following principles:

1. The Independent Audiologists Australia Executive appoints a Chair of Education to oversee all decisions related to the Excellence in Education programme.
2. Seminar topics arise from contemporary themes that emerge at international conferences and in international peer reviewed publications, and which are determined by the Executive, to be relevant to local needs.
3. Seminar convenors are appointed to assist with seminar arrangements at the discretion of the Executive and the Chair.
4. All seminar contributors are invited on the basis of their academic, research and/or clinical record and reputation.
5. Seminar contributors are required to submit detailed abstracts before seminar programmes are finalised.
6. Seminar programmes are carefully compiled to ensure maximum learning opportunities, introducing theoretical bases, current research findings, and clinical applications for each topic.
7. Seminar programmes allow sufficient time for each contributor to offer in depth and advanced knowledge on their specific topic.
8. Programmes build in discussion and question time to ensure that the relevance of each topic is made known within each seminar.
9. Pre-seminar reading lists and post-seminar access to presentations and resources are available to all Independent Audiologists Australia members, and to seminar delegates who are not members.
10. Feedback is sought after all activities to ensure optimal learning and development opportunities.

Four *Excellence in Education* events were held between July 2014 and June 2015.

Pricing Strategies for Diagnostic and Treatment Services– a joint IAA/ADA Webinar

4 September 2014

Dr Kim Cavitt and Elaine Melville

A joint webinar was arranged by the Academy of Doctors of Audiology and Independent Audiologists Australia as part of an affiliation established between these two organizations. The topic of pricing strategies is one that is of concern across many countries and the similarities of perception of the high cost of hearing devices in the US, Australia and New Zealand was discussed. Twenty six members of IAA /IANZ joined the webinar.

Beyond the Audiogram

4 – 5 October, 2015, Cochlear, Macquarie University, Sydney

Prof James Hall III

Prof WPR Gibson

Dr Louise Collingridge

Dr Celene McNeill (Convenor)

Thirty delegates attended this two day seminar that covered both theoretical underpinnings and clinical applications of electrophysiological and electroacoustic assessment measures. Keynote presenter Prof James Hall III delivered very sound theoretical and research evidence for undertaking comprehensive assessment procedures. Prof Bill Gibson explained electrocochleography, assisted by a video produced for Independent Audiologists Australia that was recorded from a camera inserted into an external auditory meatus during the procedure. A practical aspect was the opportunity for demonstrations and hands on practice on a range of equipment types common to audiology clinics across Australia. The facilities offered by Cochlear were ideally suited to this mix of presentations and workshop activities for a small group.

Aural Rehabilitation - Essential Tools for Clinical Practice Master Class

20 & 27 February 2015, Clifton's, Collins Street, Melbourne

Dr Chyrisse Heine

This one day master class provided audiologists with essential tools to expand their intervention beyond the provision of hearing aids, to include individualised therapy programmes that are based on the assessment of the needs of each patient, their communication partners and their unique circumstances. Case studies were used for demonstration and hands on practice at assessment, reporting and formulating therapy goals. The programme allowed for delegates to bring cases causing concern to the master class for discussion so that they can be assisted in the practical planning of appropriate assessment and intervention tools. Numbers were restricted at each master class and due to demand, the class was offered twice, allowing for a total of 49 delegates to attend.

Independence Matters: Professionalism in Healthcare

15 – 17 May 2015, Wellington NZ

Prof Paul Komesaroff

Prof Grant Gillett

Prof Ian Kerridge

This seminar was jointly convened by Independent Audiologists Australia and Independent Audiologists New Zealand. Seventy five delegates met in Wellington, NZ.

Internationally recognised bioethicists, Paul Komesaroff, Grant Gillett and Ian Kerridge facilitated in depth discussion about profession and industry, conflicts of interest, regulation, use of evidence and ethics.

Representatives from Audiology Australia were specifically invited to attend. Complimentary attendance was taken up by Richard Brading, President of Shhh and Michele Barry, CEO of Better Hearing Australia.

A sample of feedback received from delegates and presenters is as follows:

From Ian Kerridge - Keynote Presenter

I wanted to express my thanks for asking me to be part of the wonderful meeting just concluded in Wellington. Although I have many opportunities to speak at conferences - I regard the past few days as one of the most wonderful occasions I have been involved in. All present were warm, respectful, collegial and hugely engaged and a real sense of integrity pervaded the conference.

From a seminar delegate

It was absolutely amazing! It was the most intellectually-stimulating seminar I have ever attended and I feel truly privileged to have been there. The presenters were world-class in their individual fields were truly-inspiring professionals and incredible human beings. Ron Paterson said it was the best-organised seminar he'd ever encountered and both Paul Komesaroff and Ian Kerridge said they were excited to be involved in what they identified as an historic moment in the profession of audiology. They thought we were at a cross-road and that the outcome of the seminar may be instrumental in identifying issues and conflicts within our profession, discussing possible solutions and unifying to present and drive these ideas within the bigger arena.

The seminar concluded with the drawing up of the Wellington Declaration 2015.



Governance Patricia Sharples, President

Independent Audiologists Australia is incorporated as a not for profit in the State of Victoria. Rules of the association are lodged with Consumer Affairs, in Victoria. The rules of Association are updated as changes are voted in by the membership.

Association rules cover the following:

- Mission of Independent Audiologists Australia
- Membership Criteria
- Subscriptions
- Database of members and associates
- Resignation from the association
- Complaints against members
- Election of the Executive
- Rules for meetings of the Executive, Special General Meetings, and Annual General Meetings
- Office bearers – duties
- Employees – duties
- Industry Partnerships
- Excellence in Education Programme
- Communication with members
- Disputes and mediation within the association
- Record keeping
- Winding up and cancellation

The 2014 AGM was held in via webinar / teleconference on 1 November 2014. The following committee was formed at the AGM

	2014 – 2015
President	Patricia Sharples
Vice President	Elaine Melville
Treasurer	Deborah Pallet
Secretary	Nolene Nielson
Councillors	Peter Altidis Grant Collins Ross Dineen Ronald Kendall Mel Gray-Thompson Myriam Westcott

Being incorporated in the state of Victoria, but with national membership, requires Independent Audiologists Australia to have a physical address in Victoria. The secretary for Consumer Affairs Victoria purposes is the Executive Officer. Independent Audiologists Australia members are from across Australia, and the Excellence in Education programme operates across all states.



Sponsorship and Affiliations Peter Altidis, Executive Committee

Sponsorship

Sponsorship is provided to the association on an annual, once off basis to enable the association to plan seminar budgets in advance and to provide benefits to its members such as an annual subscription to the Academy of Doctors of Audiology and to subscribe to consumer groups, where the voice of independent audiologists might otherwise not be heard.

The agreement that we hold with sponsors is as follows:

1. Sponsors' company logo is displayed on the Independent Audiologists Australia website
2. Sponsors' company logo is printed on all seminar and master class programmes
3. Links to sponsors' documents can be created from our members' only section of our website.
4. Sponsors promotional events and ongoing education events can be placed in our Events section of our website on request.
5. Sponsors are able to register up to 2 company representatives at Independent Audiologists Australia seminars and networking functions offered during the sponsorship period for the same registration fee as is paid by members of the association.

Conditions of sponsorship

1. Annual sponsorship (\$8 000.00 excl GST) is due by 31 July of each year.
2. Sponsors are invited to renew sponsorship for a further 12 months by 30 June of each year.
3. Sponsorship is neither binding nor restrictive on the policies, associations, membership, practices or other sources of funding of Independent Audiologists Australia.



Affiliations

Independent Audiologists Australia is affiliated to Self Help for the Hard of Hearing (NSW), Better Hearing Australia (Victoria) and Deafness Forum (ACT). Independent Audiologists Australia Members have the opportunity to participate in the SHHH hearing aid bank in New South Wales.

Members also contribute to discussions regarding auditory disorders and their rehabilitation through the publications of these affiliated bodies.

Members of Shhh and Better Hearing Australia the Independence Matters: Professionalism in Healthcare seminar as invited participants. Their contribution to the discussions during that seminar were extremely valuable.





Excellence in Education in 2015 – 2016
Myriam Westcott, Executive Committee Member

IAA / ADA Aural Rehabilitation in Private Practice

4 September 2015

Presenters: Dr Dusty Jessen and Peter Altidis

A joint one hour webinar that will address the theoretical basis for aural rehabilitation, present clinical tools and discuss case studies. Common features of aural rehabilitation between service delivery models adopted in the USA and Australia will be discussed.

Tinnitus Misophonia and Hyperacusis
Stamford Plaza Melbourne

23 – 25 October 2015

This three day seminar will bring together local and international experts to address the topic of Tinnitus, Misophonia and Hyperacusis. Psychological, neuroscience and audiological models of causation, assessment and treatment will be presented.

Invited presenters include:

*Prof William Hal Martin
Dr Laurence McKenna
Dr Robert Patuzzi
Dr Celene McNeill
Ross McKeown
Kristian Robinson*

*Mr Robert Webb
Dr Jennifer Martin
Dr Ross Dineen
Jenny Smith
Dr Dave Langers*

*Maria Harasymczuk
Myriam Westcott
Assoc Prof Catherine McMahon
Assoc Prof Neil McLachlan
Dr Helmy Mulders*

Patient Centred Audiological Care
Harbourview, North Sydney

11 – 13 March 2016

This three day seminar will incorporate presentations and practical workshop activities to address adopt social science as an appropriate framework for audiology – including how to infuse patient-centredness and counselling into all aspects of audiology – including technological solutions.

Invited presenters include:

*Dr Gurjit Singh
Dr Sigrid Scherpiet
Prof Kristina English*

*Dr Joseph Montano
Dr Gaby Saunders
Dr Dusty Jessen*

*Dr Christopher Lind
Prof Louise Hickson*

Incoming Executive 2015 - 2016

At the 2015 AGM, held on 23 October 2015, a new Executive Committee was formed, which will take Independent Audiologists Australia through the next financial year.

President:	Ms Patricia Sharples
Vice President:	Ms Elaine Melville
Treasurer:	Ms Deborah Pallett
Secretary:	Ms Nolene Nielson
Councillors:	Mr Peter Altidis
	Mr Grant Collins
	Dr Ross Dineen
	Mr Mel Gray Thompson
	Dr Celene McNeill
	Ms Myriam Westcott

