

IEEE Queensland Section Report for 2008

PART A - SECTION SUMMARY

A.1 Executive Summary

This year has been a year of continued strong growth and vigorous activity.

- The membership has increased to 960 (as of 3rd December 2008). This represents 3% annual growth on last year's figures.
- The eight Chapters that our Section hosts each held numerous activities for the benefit of members. This includes a number of seminars by IEEE Distinguished Lecturers, international leaders in their fields.
- Two new chapters were established this year, Aerospace & Electronic Systems and Engineering in Medicine & Biology, under the guidance of their inaugural Chairs, Mr. Robert Ellen and Dr. Mohan Karunanithi, respectively. Already, these chapters are active.
- The by-laws of the Queensland Section were repealed in favour of the provisions in the MGA Manual. As a result of this, terms of office are now uniformly one calendar year and there is no longer automatic progression from Section (or Chapter) Vice Chair to Chair, except to honour commitments for Vice Chair offices already held.
- As a further consequence of repealing the by-laws, a nominations process was undertaken to fill nearly all positions in the Section and its organisational units for 2009. Elections were successfully held in April for Power & Energy Chapter and are about to take place for Engineering in Medicine & Biology Chapter.
- Immediate Past Chair, Prof. Tapan Saha, was awarded the Region 10 Outstanding Volunteer Award for 2007.
- The Computational Intelligence Chapter was awarded the Computational Intelligence Society's Best Chapter Award for 2007 under the inspired leadership of Chair, Dr. Brijesh Verma, and Vice Chair, Dr. Marcus Gallagher.
- The Section actively promoted student activities and membership.
 - The Section organised a competition for most active student volunteer. The winner, Mr. Manoj Sivasane, was the Section's delegate to the Region 10 Student Congress in Chennai, India.
 - The Section undertook several initiatives to make recruitment drives more effective at busy student functions (such as BBQs), including the purchase of a digital picture frame to display an engaging automatic presentation, printing of pads of student membership application forms

to facilitate student sign-ups in the absence of a PC and the purchase of memory sticks as give-aways to new student members.

- Consequently, a number of very successful recruitment drives were held throughout the year.
 - The annual thesis prize competition was again very popular.
 - The Section initiated a bid to hold the inaugural IEEE Global Student Congress in Brisbane, under the leadership of Mark Griffin.
- The Section continued its educational outreach through a programme to distribute members' recent copies of IEEE Spectrum to Queensland school libraries.
 - All positions in the Section's executive committee continued to be filled, and there was increased participation in the Chapter committees.
 - The Section continued its educational outreach through a programme to distribute members' recent copies of *IEEE Spectrum* to Queensland school libraries.

In 2008, eleven executive committee meetings were held, as well as the AGM. This year's committee meetings were organised through teleconference, as in previous years. For the first time, the Section used Chorus Calls for teleconferencing. From a central meeting place at The University of Queensland at St. Lucia, members were able to attend the teleconference from more distant locations in the Section such as the Gold Coast, Toowoomba and Rockhampton.

A.2 Financial Report

The financial condition of the Section has been very sound throughout the 2008 financial year.

- The financial report (L50) was sent to IEEE HQ in due time by the Treasurer.
- To summarise from the financial report, the balance has decreased from AUD57,143.02 at the end of 2007, to AUD50,112.15 at the end of 2008.
 - The decrease has occurred because receipts from HQ fell with the rising value of the Australian dollar versus the American dollar, and because of increased activity, and commensurate expenditure, by Chapters.

PART B - ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Membership Development Programs

- Every effort was made in all levels to attract new members and also to provide different programmes for membership development. Non-IEEE members were invited to become members on all possible events such as seminars, conferences, workshops, etc.

- Evidence of retention of members: IEEE Queensland Section has experienced a moderate growth in membership during 2008 with a **gain of 3%**

Membership information

IEEE Current Grade Description	Count of Members
Affiliate	44
Associate Member	34
Fellow	3
Graduate Student Member	91
Life Fellow	1
Life Member	7
Life Senior	5
Member	631
Senior Member	57
Student Member	87
Total	960

Professional and Continuing Education Activities

Queensland Section has continued its programme of educational outreach (rather than continuing education) throughout 2008. Once again, the Section was involved in the annual RoboCup Jr. competition, sponsoring trophies. This competition promotes electrical engineering to high-school students through activities centred on robotics.

Furthermore, the Section undertook an initiative to distribute 2nd-hand copies of *IEEE Spectrum* to local high schools. This has resulted from a campaign to collect, on an ongoing basis, recent copies of Spectrum magazine from staff members at the Universities of Queensland and Southern Queensland.

Awards

In 2008, the Section continued with the new award structure. Three categories of award were: Recognition of Service, Outstanding Contribution and Volunteer of the Year. Eight volunteers were presented with Recognition of Service awards, four were recognised for Outstanding Contribution and the Volunteer of the Year was awarded to Mr. Michael Lees, the Awards and Recognition Chair. These awards were made at the 2008 AGM and annual dinner in December, 2008.

Recognition of Service

Award Recipient	Contribution
Dr. David Thiel	Chapter Chair Joint MTT/AP 2006-2007
Dr. Rajat Majumder	Chapter Chair Power Engineering 2007
Dr. John Williams	Chapter Chair Computer 2006-2008
Mr. Peter McLarty	Inaugural Chapter Chair GOLD 2006-2007
Dr. Jasmine Banks	Vice-Chair Joint SP/Comms 2007
Mr. Michael Lees	Chapter Chair Joint CSS/R&A 2006-2007
Dr. Bouchra Senadji	Chapter Chair Joint SP/Comms 2006-2007
Dr. Udantha Aberyratne	Student Counsellor UQ 2007

Outstanding Contribution Award

Award Recipient	Contribution
Dr. David Thiel	Chapter Chair Joint MTT/AP 2006-2007
Dr. John Williams	Chapter Chair Computer 2006-2008
Dr. Jasmine Banks	Vice-Chair Joint SP/Comms 2007
Mr. Michael Lees	Chapter Chair Joint CSS/R&A 2006-2007

Thesis prize awards

Each year, Queensland Section awards prizes at the Annual Dinner for the best undergraduate thesis in two categories. For 2008, the winners were:

1. **IEEE Queensland Section Student Prize for the Best Final Year Thesis in All Fields of Electrical Engineering and Information Technology** was awarded to *Will Maddern* from The University of Queensland, for his thesis entitled 'A Biomimetic Compound for Visual Odometry Estimation'
2. **ICPADM¹ Mat Darveniza IEEE Queensland Section Student Prize for the Best Final Year Thesis in Power Engineering** was awarded to *Tze Hin Yip* from the University of Queensland for his thesis entitled 'An Analysis of the Impact of Grid-Connected Photovoltaic Generation on Maintaining Acceptable Distribution Supply Voltages'

E-mail and Newsletter Activities, Home Page

Members of IEEE Queensland Section have been kept informed throughout 2008 with regular email notifications of upcoming events and meetings through the use of the IEEE e-notice system. Three editions of the newsletter were published and the website was continuously maintained and updated throughout the year.

PART C - OTHERS

Relationship with National Societies

Queensland Section maintains a special position on its executive committee for 'Engineers Australia Liaison'. For the last couple of years, it has been held by Prof.

¹ ICPADM: The International Conference on the Properties and Applications of Dielectric Materials.

Tapan Saha. Furthermore, several other members of the executive committee are also members of the corresponding committees in Engineers Australia and IET in Queensland.

Several events were 'co-branded' as joint events with either Engineers Australia or IET or both.

Special Events

While Queensland Section hosted many events during 2008, not all of which were purely technical or administrative, there were no events that were outside of the regular schedule.

On the other hand, the Annual Dinner (held in conjunction with the AGM) continues to increase in popularity. This year, the dinner was held at Brisbane's Sofitel. Attendance remained historically high at 35.

C.3 Problems to be Anticipated

The primary concern for 2009 will be to maintain the growth that has been achieved over the last couple of years. This will be no easy task. The feeder for growth is always to maintain a healthy number of student members. Student members must be actively recruited and this requires enthusiastic volunteers, not only in the student branches but also (and perhaps more importantly in Queensland historically) from Student Branch Counsellors. It will require renewed dedication to maintain the enthusiasm and energy of these critically important volunteers.

PART D - GOALS AND PLANS

D.1 Continuation of project/activity in progress and their Implementation Plans

There were a number of projects and activities identified in the previous annual report:

- The number of senior members in the Section is rather low. An effort has been made to increase the awareness of the benefits of membership elevation. A web page has been created to promote senior membership. In particular, the web page contains a directory of senior members who are willing to act as referees. This is intended to address the issue that members may not be aware who, amongst their colleagues, already have senior membership. This directory will continue to be maintained and the Chair will promote its existence through contributions to the Section newsletter.
- Interaction between Queensland Section and industry requires constant maintenance and encouragement. Implementation will be through active promotion of the Section in industry, identification of industry members to serve on the executive committee, and invitations to industry to take part in, and wherever possible organize and lead, technical activities.
- Chapter officers are required to report monthly on activities and plans at the Section's executive committee meeting.

Goals and future plans

Although the directory of referees for membership elevation was successfully established during 2008, the awareness of the benefits of Senior Membership is still rather low. All

opportunities will be used to promote these benefits and also to identify, encourage and assist candidates for promotion to Fellow grade.

Links between the major professional societies catering to electrical engineering will be strengthened. In particular, the Section will endeavour to work more closely with its Queensland counterparts in Engineers Australia and IET.

The activity of Student Branches is still patchy. There is an opportunity for IEEE Student Branches to play a much bigger role in student life and the Section has the means to support them. The Section will encourage and materially support Student Branches and student membership. Similarly, our GOLD affinity group has a potentially very important role to play in facilitating the transition from study to career for Queensland's recent graduates. The Section will strongly support GOLD activities.

As Chair, I personally intend to make further visits to industry to explain and promote IEEE and to continue to attend as many local activities as possible. I will attend the Region 10 Meeting along with the Vice Chair.

Finally, an aim of Queensland Section will be to increase membership of the Section to four figures for the first time in 2009.

Abbas Bigdeli
Chair, IEEE Queensland Section
February, 2009