1. BRIEFING BY A MEMBER OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT

Distinguished Professor Helene Marsh will present to Council on HDR student recruitment and retention.

2. VISITS AND MEETINGS OF NOTE

Senator Glenn Lazarus
On 20 April, Professor Robyn McGuigan and Professor Paul Gadek hosted a visit for Senator Glenn Lazarus during his regional visit to northern Queensland. This was the first time the Senator had visited the region in his capacity as Senator so it was very much an educational visit to learn more about the economic opportunities and tropical expertise the northern region had to offer.

3. RECENT AND UPCOMING VISITS AND EVENTS

Events to support victims of the Nepal Earthquake
As Council would be aware, the catastrophic earthquake of magnitude 7.8 that struck Nepal on 25 April has caused widespread damage in Kathmandu and surrounding areas. Casualties from this tragic event have exceeded 5000, with numbers increasing as the recovery work progresses. A number of fundraising activities and prayer services organised by the Nepalese student community in collaboration with the Multifaith Chaplaincy, International Student Support and JCU Student Association, were held on the Townsville and Cairns campuses between 4 – 7 May to support victims of the recent earthquake in Nepal.

Public Lecture – Our Incredible Immune System
On 28 April, the Division of Tropical Health and Medicine presented “Our Incredible Immune System”, a Public Lecture held at the Education Central Building on the Townsville Campus. Dr Margaret Jordan, a Senior Research Fellow in the Comparative Genomics Center working on autoimmune disease, along with other experts in the field, spoke about allergies and autoimmune diseases such as diabetes and coeliac disease. JCU regularly holds free public lectures, seminars and book launches during the year on both our Townsville and Cairns Campuses, which all members of the community are welcome to attend.

Science and Engineering Challenge
The Science and Engineering Challenge is a nationwide Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths outreach program aimed at inspiring year 9 and 10 students to consider a science or engineering career by encouraging them to study subjects such as maths, physics and chemistry in years 11 and 12. The event is sponsored in part by JCU and run in conjunction with the University of Newcastle. The Far North Queensland Challenge was held in Cairns on 28 April at Edge Hill Primary School. Approximately 260 students from Cairns, Gordonvale Kuranda, Mareeba, Herberton and Dimbulah attended the event. The North Queensland Challenge was held 30 April and 1 May on JCU’s Townsville campus. Approximately 450 students attended the North Queensland Challenge. Qualifying schools will now go on to compete at the State Super Challenge and eight winning schools from around Australia are invited to compete at the one-day National final.

Launch of the ARC Industrial Transformation Research Hub for Advanced Prawn Breeding
On 5 May, together with Professor Chris Cocklin, Professor Dean Jerry (Director, Australian Research Council Research Hub for Advanced Prawn Breeding), Professor Aidan Bryne
(Australian Research Council CEO), Mr Dallas Donovan (Seafarm CEO) and Mr Ewen Jones MP, I spoke at the launch of the ARC Industrial Transformation Research Hub for Advanced Prawn Breeding, in Cardwell. The purpose of this event was to officially launch the newly established research hub and to recognise formally all funding agencies, institutional participants and industry partners. The Hub will work in conjunction with industry partner, Seafarms, Australia’s largest prawn farming operation, which runs 52 ponds at the site, just South of Cardwell. The project will focus on developing the world’s most advanced breeding program for the farmed black tiger prawn. The Hub is hosted by James Cook University (JCU) and involves industry and research partners the CSIRO, University of Sydney, Australian Genome Research Facility and Universiteit Gent, Belgium.

**Jocelyn (Jo) Wales Seminar Series – Rules of Engagement**

This Public Lecture, titled “The Rules of Engagement: University Students as Citizens and Leaders, will be presented by Professor Alf Lizzio at the Padua Theatre on 8 May. Discussion will be around the considerable debate about the legitimate roles of universities in contemporary society and the desirable professional and civic capabilities of graduates.

**Mayo Lecture**

The 2015 Mayo Lecture will be held on 11 May on the Townsville campus, and will be simultaneously video-conferenced to the Cairns campus. The Mayo Lecture has attracted many notable speakers over its 25 years of existence. This year’s Mayo Lecture will be delivered by Mr Dan Mori, former United States Military Lawyer and Judge, and currently Social Justice Consultant at Shine Lawyers. Mr Mori, was also the lawyer appointed by the US Marines to represent Australian Guantanamo Bay detainee, David Hicks, until the case’s conclusion in May 2007. The Mayo Lecture is held annually in memory of the late Mrs Marylyn Mayo, the first teacher of law at JCU, a senior lecturer in law and the inaugural Dean of the JCU Law Faculty.

**Professorial Inaugural Lecture**

Titled, “A Confused Engagement with Science: Coastal fish nurseries and an eclectic mix of other research”, this Professorial Inaugural Lecture will be presented by Professor Marcus Sheaves at the Southbank Hotel and Convention Centre on Palmer Street, Townsville on 14 May. Professor Sheaves will speak about his twenty five years of research into tropical estuaries and coastal wetlands and the functioning of tropical coastal ecosystems as nursery grounds for fish.

**Visit by Governor-General Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd)**

On the 11 May, I will host a visit for His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd) Governor-General of the Commonwealth Of Australia and Her Excellency Lady Cosgrove during their visit to North Queensland. Their Excellencies will tour the Cairns campus and meet with academics and research staff for a showcase of the University’s current research priorities.

**Eddie Koiki Mabo Library Commemorative Art Exhibition 2015**

Each year JCU hosts an exhibition by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander artist to celebrate the official naming of the Eddie Koiki Mabo Library and the release of the University’s Reconciliation Statement in 2008.

This year’s featured artist is Teho Ropeyarn and his exhibition is titled Madang Ikamba
(strength of a crocodile). The exhibition will be open during normal library hours between 14 May – 12 June.

**Jocelyn (Jo) Wales Seminar Series – Treating Depression and Insomnia**
Dr Gregory Willis, will present “Treating the depression and insomnia of Parkinson’s disease with Phototherapy – understanding deep brain function by looking beyond the retina” at the Padua Theatre on 22 May. This presentation will introduce a novel approach to the assessment, management and treatment of patients afflicted with Parkinson’s disease using various psychotherapeutic and non-invasive interventions including phototherapy.

**Annual Colin Roderick Lecture**
The Foundation for Australian Literary Studies presents the Annual Colin Roderick Lecture, as part of the Savannah Writers’ Voices Up North Festival on 23 May at the Medical Lecture Theatre (Building 45). This Lecture will be presented by Joanna Murray-Smith who is a prolific playwright, novelist and screenwriter.

**Science and Society in the Tropics**
This presentation by Professor Linda Shields, titled, “Nurses, Midwives and Doctors in the Third Reich” will be held on 26 May. In Nazi Germany and Occupied Europe, nurses, midwives and doctors were involved in some of the worst crimes in history. Some were courageous and saved people. This presentation will outline the involvement of these health professionals, how they came to be involved, and their accountability at the end of the war. It will discuss the experiments in the concentration camps, as well as the so-called “euthanasia” programmes.

**National Reconciliation Week and Mabo Lecture 2015**
National Reconciliation Week is celebrated across Australia each year between 27 May and 3 June. These dates commemorate two significant milestones in the reconciliation journey – the anniversaries of the successful 1967 referendum and the High Court Mabo decision. JCU will be holding celebratory activities on both Townsville and Cairns campuses between 25 – 29 May to recognise these milestones. This year’s activities, which will include the annual Mabo Lecture, Mabo art exhibition, cultural performances and speeches, are being coordinated by the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group with the assistance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff. I am delighted to advise Council that The Hon Leeanne Enoch MP has accepted our invitation to deliver the 2015 Annual Mabo Lecture. The Hon Leeanne Enoch MP is the first Indigenous woman elected to the Queensland parliament.

All students and staff will be invited to celebrate National Reconciliation Week. An increased level of participation in this year’s activities is expected as a result of the implementation of JCU’s Reconciliation Action Plan.

4. **DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR**

**ICAC report Learning the hard way: managing corruption risks associated with international students at universities in NSW**
The NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) released its report on 16 April. The report outlines tensions in the recruitment and retention of international students, particularly around English language proficiency and the level of support required to ensure students can successfully complete their studies. The report further notes that universities are taking the issues seriously and are acting to counter problems as they become apparent.
Recommendations
The Commission has identified 12 corruption prevention initiatives that NSW universities should consider adapting and adopting as appropriate to their organisation. These include the need to consider:

1. Restricting the freedom of academics to enter into binding agreements with overseas agents and partners on behalf of the University without considering the full cost and risk of such agreements;
2. Considering the full costs associated with international students of different capabilities when making marketing decisions; understanding profit rather than revenue contributes to a more robust minimum capability standard being established;
3. Assessing risk in markets and using this to develop risk treatments. These may include strengthening due diligence on agents, targeting of specific students, increasing vetting for students from high-risk markets or withdrawing from the market;
4. Building on University strengths, where possible, to develop niche international operations capable of attracting higher-capability students;
5. Altering incentive structures applicable to agents in order to encourage the provision of quality students. These may include performance ranking-based payments, payments linked to student progress at various stages, and payments linked to long-term performance of the agent;
6. Limiting the number of overseas agents with which the universities work, where possible;
7. Increasing due diligence on and monitoring of agents and partners, particularly focusing on the use of fine-grained data analysis of student issues that can be linked back to markets, agents and partners;
8. Forming closer relationships with trusted agents and building business through them;
9. Seeking partnerships with other educational institutions as an alternative to agents;
10. Integrating the IT system of international student offices with the main system to ensure that these offices can be held accountable for the quality of international students entering the University and that their operation falls under the jurisdiction of the universities’ internal audit function;
11. Balancing the strength of the academic standards compliance system with the business development risks. This may include appointing an independent representative from another University to sit on academic standard committees or auditing of course standards by well-regarded Australian and overseas academics; and
12. Separating the compliance function from the business development function, as feasible. This may include moving the admission functions out of international student offices that are responsible for marketing and recruitment and limiting the impact of international student numbers on faculty budgets.

Four Corners
The Degrees of Deception episode, screened 20 April, focused on the role of agents in international full-fee paying student recruitment, amongst other things. The program positioned the ‘decline in standards’ as an established truth, suggested the reason is that inadequate public funding has meant that universities cannot afford to maintain academic integrity and asserted that staff are unable to acknowledge the problem for fear of retribution. Commentators are pointing out that this is a story that has been recycled quite regularly over the past decade and more.
JCU was not mentioned in the program. Four agents were highlighted by Four Corners – Shinyway, Eduglobal, EIC or AOJI. JCU receives a limited number of students through Shinyway, EIC and AOJI; these students' progress is being tracked. Universities who were mentioned by the program have responded by tabling the ways that they respond to problems of plagiarism and fraud.

JCU was mentioned briefly in an ABC Online story examining the issue of international agents' commissions. The story falsely claimed that JCU’s total commissions from 2013 totalled more than $19 million. However, this was an aggregate figure taken from JCU’s annual report, which grouped together various “commissions” under one financial category. The great bulk of that amount was payments from JCU Australia to JCU Brisbane, and the agents’ commissions were a small fraction of the $19 million figure. The ABC Online neglected to confirm with JCU what was included within that category before publishing.

JCU Media demanded an immediate correction, which the ABC provided a short time later. The misreporting was re-published on several third party websites and JCU requested that the ABC also ensure that those websites amended their copy.

**JCU’s International Student Operations**

JCU has a strong focus on diversity in our international student population with over 100 nationalities represented, which in turn, represent 12 per cent of our total student cohort in Townsville and Cairns. Students are typically attracted to our strategic intent of ‘Creating a brighter future for life in the topics world-wide’.

JCU has in place processes and procedures designed to reduce the risk of conflict of interest in the recruitment of International students. Less than 40 per cent of our international students are recruited through an agent network, one of the lowest rates in Australia. Partnerships and agent agreements are subject to set criteria, are reference checked and have sunset clauses, prior to being signed off at senior levels (Deputy Vice Chancellor Global Strategy and Engagement and Director, Future Students).

Agents are monitored and assessed, and not paid commission until after census date. JCUB controls its incentives and commission, although programs are delivered under JCU CRICOS so risk and reputation remain with JCU. JCU and JCUB are jointly reviewing agent networks to ensure greater consistency of quality. JCU conducts training for agents, visits agents in source countries and conducts an Agent Familiarisation tour each year in Townsville and Cairns. The recruitment and admissions process for JCU report to different Deputy Vice Chancellors. JCU has now decommissioned the international admissions system, Pandora, in preference to SMS so there is a single, university supported student system. Furthermore, our International Student Barometer survey can now be integrated within our data management warehouse. However, without a university wide CRM there is little ability to track students throughout their lifespan with JCU.

JCU participates in annual data collection and benchmarking commissioned by the Australian Universities International Directors Forum. The benchmarking has occurred for 12 years and provides critical time and trend analysis on twelve key indicators, including revenue from international student fees, the costs of international offices, the structure of international offices, and scholarships. JCU participates in streamline visa processing, and has a risk rating that is monitored by our compliance team, enabling adjustment of our recruitment process where increased risk or threat of increase risk exists. For example, in response to a higher risk rating of our Indian recruitment activities, we employed an in-country staff member in
February 2015, to further improve our quality of applicants and to retain an acceptable risk rating. It is of note that Universities are not responsible for issuing student visas, this is a shared risk with the Department of Immigration and Border Protection.

**Productivity Commission report into International Education Services**

The report, released 30 April, details:

- That the sector is back on high-growth trajectory after the downturn of 2009 – 2011.
- 37 per cent of students come from China and India.
- In 2014, there were 450,000 onshore international students and 160,000 students in programs delivered by Australian institutions offshore.
- International students represent about 20 per cent of higher education students and 5 per cent of vocational education and training students.
- Australia has 6 per cent of the worldwide market in international students but has one of the highest national concentrations of international students (at around 20 per cent of total enrolments).

**Key points/Recommendations:**

- International competition for international students is intensifying.
- The Australian government’s policy and regulatory framework for education/quality and immigration/visas is critical.
- There is a strong case for publicly available information on the comparative quality ranking of providers in order for domestic and international students to make informed decisions.
- Future success will depend on meeting student expectations and providing a value proposition as technology and business models evolve.
- Current focus on teaching standards should be rebalanced so learning standards have a greater role in quality assurance.
- Australian institutions should reduce their reliance on agents for recruitment.

**National Union of Students (NUS) Education Quality Survey 2015**

The NUS’s Education Quality Survey opened 1 May and will close 15 June, with results due August. The survey has previously run in 2010 and 2012, and this year is part of the *Demand A Better Future Campaign*. The NUS advise the survey is designed to track the effects of a deregulated demand driven system and student experiences of quality of teaching and learning under the changing nature of federal funding.

**The Knowledge Boom: Draft National Strategy for International Education**

JCU will be providing comments on the draft strategy by the 29 May. The Strategy sets out three pillars and six goals:

**Pillar 1:** Getting the fundamentals right

**Pillar 2:** Reaching out to the world

**Pillar 3:** Staying competitive

**Goal 1:** Creating a world-class education system. This goal relates to institutional autonomy, investing in research and infrastructure, supporting information on quality performance, providing quality assurance and reducing red tape.
Goal 2: Building on strong and emerging international partnerships. This goal relates to partnering in new areas with existing partners and identifying new partners, investing in research collaborations, building confidence in government-to-government engagement through bilateral agreements, creating new areas for growth.

Goal 3: Fostering an international outlook. This goal relates to preparing students for global outlook, e.g., New Colombo Plan and rejuvenating language study.

Goal 4: Attracting international talent. This goal relates to attracting students, marketing Australia as high-quality destination, building lasting connections with alumni.

Goal 5: Ensuring a positive and rewarding student experience. This goal relates to maintaining competitive student visa arrangements with strong consumer protection, identifying work experience opportunities, improving English language proficiency, improving access to public transport, health and suitable accommodation, increasing community engagement.

Goal 6: Embracing opportunities to grow international education. This goal relates to leading good practice in delivery, including online, enhancing opportunities to provide services overseas and understanding the opportunities that exist.

Measuring Impact
The Government’s Industry Innovation and Competitiveness Agenda and its Boosting the Commercial Returns from Research Strategy is based on promoting greater interaction between universities and industry, and particularly research. The Government is interested in recognising and incentivising research that does this.

Measuring the impact of collaboration is not straightforward. The UK has worked with a case study approach that has been expensive to implement but has benefits of orientating participants to thinking broadly about impact. Strictly quantitative approaches risk dismissing important but inexpensive collaborations between researchers and the community / industry.

The Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (ATSE) released its Research Engagement for Australia report on 23 April, which sets out a methodology to measure impact of industry engagement by utilising existing data. The Minister for Education and Training has welcomed the report as a practical framework. The IRU has tabled concerns that the approach relies almost exclusively on financial input measures, when impact is primarily about outcomes; that the way it ranks universities makes comparison with ERA ratings invalid; that the method does not capture all inputs and that there is highly valued research that is transacted without substantial financial inputs. The IRU has produced a “Not another metric” paper which gives further detail (attached). JCU has been invited by ATSE to participate in a pilot of the Research Engagement for Australia metrics and has agreed to participate in this trial.

Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) repayments for students living overseas
The Government announced on 2 May 2015, that Australians residing overseas for more than six months will be required to repay HECS under the same conditions as graduates who
remain in Australia, as of July 2017. Currently Australians overseas are able to make voluntary HECS repayments but are not legally obliged to. The new requirement is expected to result in $140 million over ten years. The current estimated level of HECS debate is about $40 billion, of which $10 billion is likely to be written off.

The initiative to recoup HECS, based on the income earned by graduates whilst overseas, is complex to administer as it potentially involves interaction with other nations’ tax systems. The cost of recouping the loans is likely to be significant. New Zealand has sought to simplify its arrangements by requiring ex-pats to make a flat rate repayment.

**IRU Research in Asia**
The IRU is holding a Research in Asia event at Parliament House in Canberra on 23 June 2015. Professor Philip Pearce will represent JCU and cover State of the Tropics and New Directions: Chinese Tourists in Australia. The flyer outlining other presentations is attached.

**IRU Senior Staff Forum**
The IRU Senior Staff Forum will be held in Melbourne, from 22 – 23 July. The draft program will include a discussion of the role IRU can play, research policy with a focus on industry driven research, higher education reforms and specific IRU projects.

**Universities Australia (UA)**
My term on the Board of UA will finish on 19 May 2015. I have served on the UA board since January 2009, and have been Chair since May 2013.

5. **FEDERAL BUDGET**

The Federal Budget will be handed down on 12 May. JCU’s Directorate of Quality, Planning and Analytics will model the impact of the budget on JCU. I will provide a verbal update to Council on key aspects of the budget. I will also hold a staff forum on 15 May that will cover any Budget impacts for JCU and the sector.

6. **MANAGEMENT MATTERS**

**State of the Tropics Leadership Group Meeting**
The next stage of the State of the Tropics project is rolling along nicely. A meeting of the members of the leadership team has been arranged for 1 – 2 October 2015 in Singapore. As Council is aware, the key objective of the State of the Tropics project is to create a better understanding of the tropical world and its significance as a major, geo-political region demanding the attention of world leaders and policy makers. As we are all aware, decisions made in the tropics have global significance. This work is a very important platform that lends both strength and significance to the work of our University.

From its inception the State of the Tropics project has been a collaborative affair and to truly represent life in the tropics it must continue to be. The purpose of this meeting is to consolidate the role of the leadership group and continue to keep the world’s eyes on the tropics.

Discussion at the meeting will cover the future direction of the project, plans for an Infrastructure report and how we might expand to include more institutions and key individuals to develop and embed global understanding of the importance tropics.
**State of the Tropics and TESS Flagship Program**
As part of the next stage of the State of the Tropics initiative JCU is exploring avenues to facilitate interdisciplinary, collaborative projects to help link JCU researchers and centres together to work on crosscutting issues identified in the State of the Tropics 2014 Report.

To this end, the State of the Tropics Project team are partnering with the Centre for Tropical Environmental and Sustainability Science (TESS) to develop a TESS flagship project (to be headed by Professor Steve Turton) that draws on information from the State of the Tropics Report with the aim of producing high quality peer reviewed outputs. If this model works, it is intended that the flagship project extends further within the University and beyond.

To outline the State of the Tropics project and its vision going forward, a Seminar and Workshop will be held in Cairns on the 13 and 14 May, respectively. I will open the Workshop with a discussion of the future for the State of the Tropics project and my recent trip to the UN and US.

**Australian Tropical Herbarium Joint Venture Renewal Celebration**
The Australian Tropical Herbarium (ATH) is an unincorporated joint venture of the CSIRO, Director National Parks, Queensland Government, and JCU. Initiated in 2008, the ATH has pursued a successful plant science research and community outreach agenda focused on species discovery, ethnobotany (Indigenous plant use), evolutionary biology, vegetation mapping, agroforestry, and on providing training, tools, resources and advice to a broad range of community stakeholders. I am delighted to inform Council that the partners have agreed to continue the Joint Venture for a further ten years. An event celebrating the achievements of the ATH and, future agenda and major projects, was held on 21 April at the Sir Robert Norman Building. The State Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation, The Hon Leeanne Enoch MP visited the Herbarium for the official signing of the agreement. The Member for Barron River, Mr Craig Crawford MP, and the Member for Leichhardt, Mr Warren Entsch MP, also attended this celebratory event.

**UPNG MOU and Program**
The relationship between JCU and the University of Papua New Guinea is strengthening as JCU continues to actively engage in PNG. On the 28 April JCU signed a new MOU with the UPNG paving the way for a significant project to be undertaken as a twinning arrangement between our institutions funded by DEFAT. The University sees potential opportunities emerging with a recommitment by the Australian Government to invest in PNG universities. Our connections with Papua New Guinea are well established in medicine and allied health, but we are also exploring further initiatives in the humanities and social sciences. The Cairns Institute and the Division of Global Strategy and Engagement continue to lead much of this engagement. A public announcement about the MOU and Program will be made in the coming weeks.

**Multi-purpose Facility on Cairns Campus**
An indoor multi-purpose facility has been the subject of a great deal of discussion in Cairns in recent years due to increasing student numbers, the lack of appropriate all weather recreational facilities on campus, as well as the occurrence of natural disasters such as Cyclone Yasi in 2011. On 27 April, Professor Robyn McGuiggan met with Mr Warren Entsch MP to discuss an idea he had around a velodrome on the Cairns Campus. As a result of the meeting, that initial idea was developed further to focus on an indoor Multi-purpose Facility instead of a velodrome. JCU will now develop a paper for Mr Entsch to help ‘sell’ that idea for financial support. There is a demonstrated need for an indoor Multi-purpose Facility in the
Northern Suburbs of Cairns due to the limited facilities currently available in the area and the need is only going to get greater as JCU and the Northern Suburbs communities continue to expand.

**NHMRC grant program policies and processes**

Following my last report to Council advising of changes to the Administering Institutions Policy, we have been advised of a number of other changes to NHMRC grant program policies and processes to be introduced in the coming months. Key changes include change to timing of payments and changes to reporting obligations. Regarding timing of payments, NHMRC announced in December 2012 its decision to change grant payments from ‘quarterly in advance’ to ‘monthly in arrears’ and implemented this change in 2013. While the move to monthly in arrears was on the basis that there were lags in payments by Administering Institutions, analysis by the Office of NHMRC in 2014-2015 showed the payment lags have now been reduced. NHMRC will accordingly bring forward its grant payments to within the month that the funds are due, making it much easier for Administering Institutions to administer. NHMRC expects that two payments will be made in May 2015. The first is anticipated to occur at the start of the month for April’s scheduled payments, and a second, mid-month, for the May scheduled payment. From June 2015 onwards, the monthly payment will be made in the middle of each month. The impact on Administering Institutions will be an increase in cash received for the 2015 calendar year, equivalent to one month’s grant funding payment.

Regarding change to reporting obligations, this change relates to scientific reporting only such as the requirement to complete a Progress or Midterm report; the removal of the requirement for the Scholarship supervisor to complete a report at the end of the scholarship; and, final reports, required within 6 months of the end of the grant, will no longer be a document completed outside of the Research Grants Management System. There are no changes to current financial reporting obligations.

**Professor Ann Kelso AO new NHMRC CEO effective April**

Professor Warwick Anderson’s (AM) tenure as CEO concluded at the end of March. Professor Anne Kelso AO is NHMRC’s new CEO. I recently wrote to Professor Kelso congratulating her on her new appointment and wishing her all the very best for what will be an exciting and challenging new role. In an earlier life as a research scientist at the Queensland Institute of Medical Research, Professor Kelso spent a few days at JCU giving some lectures in immunology. Professor Kelso has indicated that she would love to visit again and so hopefully we can organise a visit before too long.

**NHMRC Women in Gender (update)**

Since I reported on this to Council at the last meeting, an initial gap analysis regarding JCU’s compliance with the revised NHMRC Administering Institution Policy which includes a requirement for all administering institutions to “provide an environment that aims to retain and progress women in their health and medical research careers,” has commenced. As Council will recall, the NHMRC requires that JCU demonstrate organisational capabilities in the following 7 specific areas:

1. An institutional strategy that addresses the underrepresentation of women in senior positions in relevant strategic/corporate plans.

2. Mentoring and skills training strategies that promote and seeks to increase women’s participation.
3. The provision of parental/maternity leave and carers leave, as well as transitional support to encourage return to work.

4. Working arrangements that cater for individuals with caring responsibilities.

5. Remuneration equity between men and women with the same responsibilities.

6. Employment strategies that encourage the recruitment, retention and progression of women in health and medical research.

7. Strategies to address the need for the provision of support for childcare.

After an initial desktop assessment undertaken by the Manager of Staff Equity and Diversity, it would appear that JCU is compliant with criteria 3, 4 and 7. It is possible that JCU is able to demonstrate compliance against criteria 2 and 6 dependent upon information that may be forthcoming once this gap analysis has been finalised. Criteria 2 and 6 require specific actions and strategies particularly focussed on health and medical research. Criteria 1 and 5 require specific actions to be carried out prior to the December deadline. Suggested actions that could be undertaken by December this year that would enhance our compliance, will need to be identified.

**Emeritus Professor David Hopley**

Testament to a remarkable commitment to JCU, Emeritus Professor David Hopley has recently achieved 50 years of service. He has made a significant contribution to Geography and Geomorphology, formerly within the Department of Geography, the School of Tropical Environment Studies and Geography, the School of Earth and Environmental Science, and now within the College of Marine and Environmental Sciences. Through his publications and mentoring he has left a substantial and lasting legacy in his field. Emeritus Professor Holpey also made history by gaining the first Doctorate conferred by JCU. A morning tea was organised by the Division of Tropical Environments and Societies on 14 April to recognise Emeritus Professor Hopley’s exceptional 50 years of service and commitment to the University.

**Departure of Andrew Maclean Wet Tropics Management Authority**

JCU has had a very long and productive association with the Wet Tropics Management Authority and it has been terrific to have had the opportunity to work with Andrew on areas of importance to the Tropics. Like JCU, the Wet Tropics Management Authority has historically had a strong northern focus and this intersection of institutional interests and focus has been the catalyst for a strong relationship between the two organisations. I also note that the Chancellor of JCU, LTGEN John Grey AC, was chairperson of the Wet Tropics Management Authority Board from 2003 – 2009, followed by former JCU academic, Associate Professor Peter Valentine.

Among other interactions, Andrew provided support to JCU during its preparations for the launch of the White Lemurid Possum brooch at the Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation Conference in Cairns last year by working with local Australian Aboriginal peoples to identify the language name (Yuwa) of this beautiful and endangered animal. His assistance not only allowed us to launch the brooch with confidence. His long association with the University is valued and appreciated.
Vale John Livingston
I was deeply saddened by the recent passing of John Livingston. John was Principal and then Executive Principal at Kirwan State High School for nearly 30 years. Under John’s leadership, Kirwan State High School became the first school in north Queensland to become an Independent Public School and be accredited by the Council of International Schools. John was widely respected and will be remembered for being a truly great leader and educator. He was a great friend to the University and he will be sorely missed by the community.

Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) 2015
The first full round of ERA occurred in 2010 and the results were published in early 2011. As Council may recall, this was the first time a nationwide stocktake of discipline strengths and areas for development had ever been conducted in Australia. The results of the second round – ERA 2012 – were published by the ARC in December 2012. The submission stage for ERA 2015 commenced on the 23 February and was completed on the 20 April. The ratings are not expected to be announced until December this year although timing ultimately will be a decision of the Minister.

JCU will be evaluated in 18 2-digit (broad) Fields of Research (FoRs); one less than ERA 2012. The primary focus of ERA is the finer grained 4-digit FoRs and the University will be evaluated in 44 FoRs; six less than 2012.

The reduced number of evaluations reflects a general sharpening of the focus of the JCU research portfolio – e.g. the disestablishment of the (non-strategic) work in astronomical and space sciences – but also a more sophisticated approach to coding and analysis of the portfolio.

The ARC have implemented some minor changes to ERA primarily to improve accountability of optimisation strategies and will also provide, for the first time, some detailed feedback on assessments of peer review disciplines such as the arts, humanities and social sciences. (The sciences, engineering, medicine and public health primarily use research metrics which are far more objective).

ERA has its limitations but it is a useful and generally well accepted instrument that does emphasise the importance of research quality.

Changes to Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching
There have been changes for the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) in 2015 including the name change of the University Experience Survey to the Student Experience Survey, the transition of the Australian Graduate Survey to the Graduate Outcomes Survey, and the development and implementation of the Employer Satisfaction Survey.

The Social Research Centre at ANU is the ‘independent’ administrator of QILT and is responsible for developing, implementing and reporting on these surveys.

Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Centre
The restructure of the University provided an ideal opportunity to consider a new model for the University to improve educational outcomes and coordinate our engagement with Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (AA&TSI) peoples. A stand-alone entity, nominally titled the Indigenous Centre, was identified on the University’s proposed organisational structure presented to Council in February 2014.
In late 2014, the Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor formed a small group to consider the reach, functions and structure of the proposed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entity (hereinafter referred to as the Centre, although no decision has been made in regard to nomenclature for the entity). The group comprised of:

- Professor Chris Cocklin, Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor (Chair)
- Professor Yvonne Cadet-James, Head, Indigenous Australian Studies
- Professor Jacinta Elston, Professor and Associate Dean, Indigenous Health
- Dr Felecia Watkin Lui, Senior Lecturer, Indigenous Australian Studies
- Mr Philip Mills, Principal Research Fellow, Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine (AITHM)
- Ms Stephanie Hunter, Executive Officer to the Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor
- Ms Eliza Glasson, Project Officer (Cultural Competency), Office of the Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor

A Case for Investment for the new Centre was endorsed by University Executive on 21 April. The proposed vision of the Centre is to enhance the lives of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through education and research to be achieved by:

- Raising the aspiration of AA & TSI people to attend University and supporting them to enrol in and complete a qualification;
- Increasing the number of AA & TSI graduates from JCU;
- Delivering academic programs that relate specifically to AA & TSI knowledges and developing a framework to embed Indigenous perspectives in courses and subjects across the University;
- Engaging in research with and for AA & TSI peoples that addresses their priorities and brings about enduring benefits for their communities;
- Being a partner and advocate for AA & TSI peoples and their communities;
- Re-affirming JCU’s position as a hub for public policy debates and leadership on issues relating to AA & TSI peoples and communities; and
- Strengthening the service capability and cultural competency of JCU’s graduates.

A formal change process commenced on Thursday 30 April in regards to the internal structure of the Centre and consultation will be occurring throughout the University up until 22 May.

**Thomson Reuters Global Institutional Profiles Project**

JCU will be participating in the Thomson Reuters Institutional Profiles Project this year. The Institutional Profiles data will support several initiatives. These include the Thomson Reuters InCites service, several evaluation programs by governmental organisations around the world, and for the first time the data will be used for the US News & World Report’s – Best Global Universities Ranking. Profiles will be publically available in the third quarter of 2015. This will allow us to see our performance, as well as the performance of our peers. It also feeds well into other rankings, and methodology includes citations from Thomson indicators, on which JCU performs well.

Whilst we do not need to be a participant in the institutional profiles to be ranked by US News & World Report’s – Best Global Universities Ranking, as the US is an important student market for us we will participate at least for a period to see if this has any effect on our student numbers.

The 2015 data collection process will be finalised on 1 June.
Times Higher Education World University Rankings
The Times Higher Education rankings of the top 100 universities under 50 years of age was released on 30 April. Five IRU members participate in the rankings. The comparative rankings table released by IRU, is attached. As Council would be aware, the University has previously declined to be part of THES rankings due to methodological concerns with the reputational surveys used in this ranking. We are aware that they have been improving the methodology so participation in future rounds is being reviewed.

2015 Staff Opinion Survey
On the 4 May, the Staff Opinion Survey was made available to staff across the University – including Singapore. In the last opinion survey round in 2011 JCU achieved an excellent response rate. Headline results for the 2015 survey will be shared with the University community, including Council, from early July onwards.

Qld Government Reef Water Quality Ministerial Taskforce
Professor Allan Dale has been appointed by the Queensland State Minister for the Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef, the Hon Dr Steven Miles, as a member of the Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Taskforce. Professor Dale was chosen based on his expertise across the industry, conservation, science and government sectors.

The Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Taskforce will provide advice and recommendations to these Ministers and Queensland Government more broadly

Cairns Chamber of Commerce (JCU Alumni)
Two JCU alumni were recently appointed to the Cairns Chamber of Commerce. The new Cairns Chamber of Commerce President, Sam Marino, graduated from JCU Cairns with an MBA in April. The Co-Vice President, Jodie Duignan-George, completed her undergraduate and postgraduate degrees at JCU in Cairns. The Chair of JCU’s Pharmacy Advisory Committee, Nick Loukas is also a committee member of the Cairns Chamber of Commerce.

Vet Sciences Accreditation Visit
Veterinary Sciences hosted an accreditation visit between 4 – 8 May. This accreditation visit was necessary to ensure our students are eligible for registration to practice as Veterinarians in Australia. The Australasian Veterinary Boards Council oversees the accreditation process and lays out certain standards that accredited veterinary schools have to meet. I will meet with the panel in an exit interview on 8 May.

Review of Student and Academic Services
A review of the Student and Academic Services Directorate has been commissioned by Professor Sally Kift, Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic. The call for submissions issued to all staff and students, closed on 22 April. Professor Kift has commissioned the review as a quality enhancement measure and to inform decisions on the structural and procedural changes for the Directorate to best align with and support the aims and outcomes of the restructure of the University as a whole.

The Review Panel members are:
- Ms Gail White (Panel Chair) – Director Student Central and Academic Registrar, University of Newcastle
The Review Panel will conduct the Review visit between 25 – 28 May 2015.

ANZAC Day
Professor Chris Cocklin performed the important duty of laying a wreath on behalf of the Townsville JCU community, at the Dawn Service held at ANZAC Park, The Strand. Professor Paul Gadek performed the same important duty on behalf of the Cairns JCU community, at the Dawn Service held at the Cenotaph on the Cairns Esplanade. The Australian National flag was flown at half-mast on both the Townsville and Cairns campuses until noon on the 25 April, and then raised to the masthead until sunset, in accordance with Australian Flag protocol.

Business Case – Internet of things Program
As I mentioned briefly at the last Council meeting, IBM has announced a plan to invest $3 billion over four years on a new business aimed at making sense of the immense data that will be generated by the many sensor-equipped devices in our homes, offices, and public spaces. The Internet of Things (IoT) refers to the growing network of sensor and Internet-connected devices around us.

Following reviews and stakeholder consultation, JCU has identified engineering as a major growth opportunity in northern Queensland. The College of Science Technology and Engineering (CSTE) has developed a strategy to grow engineering around four theme areas relevant to the tropics: 1. Sustainable development; 2. Natural hazards and mitigation; 3. Natural resources and water; 4. Energy. CSTE has re-organised its internal structure around these themes.

CSTE will establish a new major in the Bachelor Honours Engineering programme in “Electronic Systems and the IoT)” to be offered at the Cairns campus. This will be the first engineering programme in the IoT, in Australia. IoT engineering is of fundamental importance as we shape the future towards a more efficient, and smarter, high-tech society, that can make optimal use of better internet connectivity. This program will offer many opportunities in a wide variety of areas.

Final Audit Determination U.S. Department of Education, Multi-Regional and Foreign Schools Participation Division
The 2014 audit by the U.S Department of Education, Multi-Regional and Foreign Schools Participation Division has just been performed for fiscal year ending 31 December 2014 and JCU will receive the auditors’ report in the coming weeks. All compliance audits submitted to the Department are reviewed for completeness, accuracy, and deficiency level.

7. JCU SINGAPORE UPDATE

JCU Singapore Awarded the EduTrust Star
As advised to Council in April, JCU Singapore officially earned the distinction of being the first private education institution (PEI) in Singapore to attain an EduTrust Star quality mark by the
Council for Private Education on 13 April 2015. This status has been awarded for four years, with CPE advising plans for monitoring JCUS performance in the area of our debt rating after two years.

Attainment of this award has received a great deal of positive media coverage in Singapore.

8. MARKETING UPDATE

Strategic Recruitment
The Division of Global Strategy and Engagement is recruiting for strategic positions in the Marketing Directorate, including Market Research Co-ordinator, Manager Campaigns and Events, Digital Marketing positions and Content Production Officers.

Website Restructure
Implementation of enhanced design, new information architecture and new Content Management System is proceeding, with JCU’s Singapore site due to launch mid May and JCU Australia’s site to launch in August.

Mid Year campaign
The mid-year campaign commenced Sunday 12 April and will run until early July. The campaign rolls out in stages, beginning with reputation positioning, followed by promotion of information sessions, general online and tradition media promotion, and specific course promotion.

The campaign commenced as scheduled, with branding/reputation advertisements aimed to position the University’s reputation and Tropics positioning. Media included online, radio, television and cinema.

Information session advertisements were placed Sunday 26 April in Cairns and Townsville. Media included radio, television, press and online; information sessions are scheduled for Cairns, Townsville, Mackay and Rockhampton.

Filming and content production for course specific television commercials has been completed. This features specific targeting of online Nursing and online Business offerings across regional Queensland. Media include TV and online. Specific promotion of the Cairns campus was planned to commence airing from 6 May.

JCU’s diploma campaign is currently running on digital free to air stations and late night television. JCU’s online campaign was due to start 6 May with the adwords campaign followed later in May with a website retargeting campaign. Media include adwords (Search Engine Marketing), Facebook and online display advertisements.

Publications
Undergraduate and postgraduate guides have been produced. Seven subject area guides have been finalised, reflecting JCU’s main offerings at a detailed level. A new publication targeting southern markets has been produced. A photographic calendar has been produced showcasing JCU research photographs, and is for sale at the Co-op bookshop.
9. **ENGAGEMENT UPDATE**

**Fundraising**

JCU has entered into a partnership with Blackbaud, to be the sole Australian user of Raiser’s Edge to receive an upgrade and to be the trial site of the next generation of the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) program. This will be at no cost to JCU. JCU uses Raiser’s Edge as a database to manage our alumni, VIPs and events, donations and sponsor information and activities. The product is high quality and our users are having direct interaction with the creators to tweak and improve the product before it goes to general release.

Stage 1 of the Turtle Health Research Facility (within the Discipline of Veterinary Sciences) funded entirely from philanthropic donations totalling $200,000 over 2 years (John T Reid Trust; WWF; Perpetual Trustees; Winifred Violet Trust and the Albert George and Nancy Youngman Trust) has now been completed. A formal opening will be arranged for later in the year. Funding for stage 2, the Turtle Nursery is now being solicited.

The 2014 “Run for the Reef” Funds raised through the runners and supporters contributions (including crowdfunding) of $15,000 were awarded to the Dwarf Minke Whale project (Alastair Birtles, Matt Curnock) to allow the placement of satellite trackers during the upcoming 2015 observation season. It is also important to highlight that this event is undergoing a significant expansion from a single event conducted in Port Douglas to a 6 event series covering the whole of Queensland. Accordingly, we are anticipating that the financial contribution to reef research activities from this program will increase substantially over the coming few years. JCU will contribute to sponsoring this event along with other key partners in the Bendigo Bank, Channel 7 and the Queensland State Government.

**Alumni**

As part of my recent US visit I hosted alumni events in New York and Boston, and provided exclusive alumni time prior to my seminars in Washington and Houston. These visits were very well received by the New England Alumni network, which made all the arrangements for Boston, and have inspired a group of New York alumni to commence the formation of a network there. More detail regarding my meetings in the US and these alumni events are in my US trip report, attached.

**Sponsorships**

JCU has agreed to be the Silver Sponsor Partner of ‘The Women of Achievement UnConference’ event, which will be conducted in Palm Cove on June 1 and 2, 2015. This event is aimed at highlighting and celebrating the achievements of women in the community and stimulating the aspirations of women to take initiatives to provide leadership within our community.

JCU has also agreed to be the Gold Level (principal) sponsor of the Developing Northern Australia Conference, which will be conducted from July 20\(^{th}\) to 22\(^{nd}\) 2015 in Townsville. This conference will provide a multi-steam approach to considering economic development, community development and future planning for the growth of Northern Australia. The conference is being organised by the Association for Sustainability in Business.

JCU has continued to build upon its sponsorship relationship with the Cairns Business Liaison Association (BLA). The BLA is a not-for-profit association which provides pathway support for students between secondary schools, university and the business community in the Cairns region. It aims to improve job opportunities for school leavers, and for schools to better
understand the needs of local employers. In addition to being a Platinum Sponsor we have also supported a number of business events (such as breakfast and luncheons) to build on JCU’s relationship with the BLA and to enhance our profile and connectivity to the broader business community in Cairns.

JCU has agreed to continue its working relationship with the Cairns Northern Pride Rugby League team through a sponsorship program. Of particular importance within this partnership is a schools and community engagement program (aspiration raising program) where JCU staff will be working alongside Northern Pride staff on a joint schools program. Of particular focus within this partnership is engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander schools and communities.

**External Engagement activity**

The Business Excellence Series in the Tropics (BEST) will commence for 2015 with a luncheon event featuring Ita Buttrose. The BEST luncheon is on Friday June 19 and we expect a significant number to attend. Ms Buttrose will be presenting her views on leadership (particularly women in leadership) as well as her views on successful small business operations in today’s economic climate. We have also secured the commitment of five Townsville based businesses which sponsor BEST (under the collective name of the Best Business Circle) for 2015. These are Escape Travel, Queensland Country Credit Union, The Carey Group, Investor Central and Success Business Magazine.

External Engagement has worked closely with Professor David Low, Dean of the College of Business, Law and Governance in the development of the Cairns Young Chamber of Commerce Young Leaders Program. In launching the program for 2015, thirteen aspiring young leaders have been selected for participation. Professor Low is assisting in the implementation of the program which has been established with direct links to the JCU MBA program.

Our relations with the Cairns Chamber of Commerce goes from strength to strength with several joint initiatives underway or programed for implementation in 2015 and 2016. This includes the Education Sector Industry Leader Program, joint initiatives for the JCU 20 years on Cairns Campus celebrations, increasing industry and university research connections, and the planned JCU Asia Business Forum to be delivered in partnership with the Cairns Chamber in 2016.

An additional initiative in collaboration with the Cairns Chamber of Commerce planned for 2016 is the conduct of the Chinese Economics Society Australia (CESA) Annual Conference. This conference will be conducted in Cairns and will have an additional side event which will examine Chinese tourism issues for Far North Queensland and will seek to include a wide range of Cairns based tourism operators. This is being led by two JCU academics – Dr Sizhong Sun (who is the current President of CESA) and Professor of Economics Zhang Yue Zhou.

The JCU Townsville City Campus has now been operating for around two months and has already seen a significant growth in the number of activities conducted at the Campus, with both JCU use as well as use from a number of external stakeholder groups. This has included groups such as Regional Development Australia, the Townsville Chamber of Commerce, the Coffee Club Franchise Group, and a number of smaller interest groups having their meetings and other informal gatherings.
10. HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENTS

Staffing Developments

Appointments
Professor Paul Dirks has accepted the position of Dean of the College of Science Technology and Engineering. Professor Dirks has been acting in this role since the formation of the College. Professor Dirks brings an exceptional and active research background to this post juxtaposed by inspirational leadership. His appointment is for a 3 year term.

Resignations
Trevor Goldstone, Director, External Engagement, provided his formal resignation on 20 April 2015. Normally his resignation would require a maximum of 6 months’ notice but an earlier release date is being negotiated.

Recruitments
The Dean of Public Health, Medical and Veterinary Sciences has been a difficult role to fill – as is the case in many universities with these specialist subject disciplines. We advertised again in late April with an even wider global campaign including the UK, USA and South Africa. Our search consultants (Odgers Berndtson) are also actively pursuing wider markets.

Change Management
This month, the Directorate of Human Resources continued to support the following formal change management processes as shown below through the implementation of the relevant change plans:

- Global Strategy and Engagement (GSE)
- Human Resources

We have redeployed one GSE staff member successfully and, by the end of April, made redeployment offers to three other GSE staff members.

Annual Leave Project
Senior managers are actively encouraging staff to take and record their annual leave both for the wellbeing of all colleagues and to prevent escalating leave liabilities. This was an issue raised in our annual Audit. Line managers are required to speak individually to all colleagues who:

- As recorded in the HR system, took leave of three weeks or less in 2014; and/ or
- Have more than 50 days outstanding annual or 90 days long service leave.

Australian Higher Education Industrial Association (AHEIA) Submission to Productivity Review
JCU has contributed to a sector-wide submission by AHEIA to this review. The submission includes the following issues being ‘non-permitted matters’ for Enterprise Agreements:

- Restrictions on mode of employment. Tightly controlled restrictions on where Universities can use fixed term contracts, affect the flexibility of our workforce.
- Disciplinary procedures – these should be an internal policy/procedure issue.

The submission also asks that issues such as bullying complaints have a mandatory requirement to follow an internal process before an external claim can be lodged.
There have been over 200 submissions to this review from all stakeholders. The draft report is expected by the end of July 2015 at which point the Commission will seek further information and feedback with the final report due by the end of November 2015.

11. **INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE**

**Sports and Recreation Master Planning**
Feedback on the draft report was provided to the Consultant and the report will be amended and finalised in May 2015.

**AITHM (Thursday Island)**
The deposit has been paid for land acquisition and the final payment is due 20 May 2015. The schematic design phase has been completed and endorsed by the Project Control Group and will be presented to the FIAC and the Estate Board on the 8 May.

**Daintree Rainforest Observatory – Solar and Scientific Research Projects**
The solar installation was disrupted by the cyclone watch for Tropical Cyclone Nathan but is expected to be completed by the end of April. Operator informal training occurred on 27 April 2015.

The research trail to Thompson Creek has been completed.

Construction of the drought experiment has commenced. The solar weave material is currently on order and will be available by early May. Completion of the drought infrastructure is programmed for end of June. The knowledge and experience of the Contractor has been of considerable benefit to implementing the bespoke infrastructure solution for this research project.

Construction of the measuring weir on Thompson Creek will commence in the dry season.

**CAIRNS**

**Tropical Sustainable Futures Complex**
The scope and budget of the project were reviewed by Professor Chris Cocklin, Ms Tricia Brand, Professor Andrew Krockenberger and Mr Hilary Kavanagh, and additional funds of $550,000 allocated to provide sufficient infrastructure services to cater for economic future development of research facilities. This involves additional civil works and augmenting the electrical supply and extending chilled water pipework from the existing main service lines. The proposed plant for the Temperature and CO₂ Controlled Greenhouse will also be upgraded and connected to the reticulated chilled water system.

**Cairns campus accommodation update**
On 18 February 2015, the Cairns Student Accommodation concept was presented to Estate Board. Estate Board resolved that the proposal for Student Accommodation on the JCU Cairns Campus by an external provider which included: the proposed site plan; the area of land taken up; and 600 bed facility with an area provided by licence for car parking outside of the leased site; be approved. The project team has visited the manufacturer in China and reports and recommendations will follow. Negotiations continue for the purpose of developing a Heads of Agreement. The exclusive dealing period has been extended indefinitely, on the condition that
either party can terminate provided they give one month’s notice, through agreement by the parties to allow negotiations to continue.

**AITHM (Cairns)**
The project is in developed design phase. A value management workshop was facilitated in March, reducing the estimated budget variance from 4.1% to 1.4%, which is acceptable at this stage of the project. An early works package is still planned for August 2015. The target date for Practical Completion remains at 31 March 2017.

**CBD Space**
A lease proposal has been provided to the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Services and Resources. Fee proposals for Schematic and Developed Design have been sourced based on JCU’s standard City Campus fitout. A single select process has been used for these initial design phases. This enables early ordering and procurement (by JCU) of air conditioning equipment with 12 to 14 week lead-times. The procurement strategy will then be a public Request for Tender “Design and Construct” project providing local design and construction firms the opportunity to participate. The Lessor is expected to complete preparatory works by 31 May 2015 and JCU’s fitout is forecast for completion in October/November 2015 (due to the long lead-time of plant and equipment).

**Integration Package**
Procurement Plan has been approved and tenders invited in April. Works are programmed for a May commencement. Practical Completion is programmed for 31 October 2015. The Integration Package will allow the buildings to be individually metered and to resolve the current system pressure inefficiencies. The Package is proposed to firstly augment the chilled water pipework to those buildings that are not supplied directly from the main chilled water loop and have them supplied direct, and secondly, install Magflow Flow Meters with Energy Management System (EMS) Energy Calculators, Building Management System (BMS) Water Pressure Sensors and BMS and EMS Water Temperature Sensors in each of the existing buildings (as required) along with the associated upgrade works to the existing BMS – this will provide the individual building chilled water metering and pressure monitoring required for an “Automatic System”.

**TOWNSVILLE**

**Campus Master Plans**
The expression of interest process to select a partner to master plan the Townsville campus (focused on learning, teaching, research, sports and recreation, accommodation and transport areas – and finally merging Discovery Rise) closed on the 23 April with 25 organisations submitting a proposal. On 1 May, the Panel selected a shortlist of proponents and commenced the request for tender process. The Cairns Campus Master Plan is proposed to be reviewed/updated in 2016/2017.

**AITHM (Townsville)**
The contract is comprised of two work packages. Package 1 has been completed and Package 2 (the main works) commenced April 2015. Practical Completion remains on track for 31 March 2016. Construction activity can be viewed on the site cameras by accessing http://aithmtrf.jcu.edu.au/construction-camera, with camera 4 providing the best outlook.

**The Science Place**
The project is within budget on the basis of the pre-tender estimate and construction tenders have been invited. Works are expected to commence on site in June 2015. The southern
section of the verandah walk (wrapping the south side of the library) is being included in the tender as a separable portion.

**Nursing Car Park Upgrade**
Tenders have been invited for sealing, line marking and lighting the unsealed car parking area. Works will be programmed for the mid-semester break in 2015.

**Student Services and Amenities Fee Projects**
Construction of external works to Building 34 (Earth and Environmental Sciences) has been completed. Construction of Peer to Peer space in building 4 commenced in March and will be completed in late May 2015.

**Office accommodation for the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Tropical Environment and Societies and the Dean, College of Arts, Society and Education**
The Deputy Vice Chancellor, Tropical Environment and Societies and the Dean, College of Arts, Society and Education’s room alterations in Building 4 have commenced and will be completed in May 2015.

**Space Rationalisation Study**
The audit has been completed and options have been developed. Due diligence has been completed and the costings are being updated ahead of presenting the options to Facilities Infrastructure Advisory Committee (FIAC) on the 8 May.

**Student Accommodation**
A siting paper submitted to the Estate Board identified Mount Stuart Street as the preferred location for new student accommodation. There is still a lot of work required to identify the partner for this development.

**Townsville City Council (TCC) Shared Pedestrian and Bike Path (Angus Smith Drive)**
TCC sought approval to construct a shared pedestrian and bike path on JCU’s frontage to Angus Smith Drive. Estate Board minutes confirmed conditional approval. TCC were advised of the conditional approval and responded negatively. The Estate Office met with TCC and the Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning (who are funding the path) on 28 April to discuss JCU’s position and TCC’s response. FIAC will be presented with a paper and consider TCC’s position at its meeting on 8 May 2015. TCC has advanced design on the path without consulting with JCU on the alignment, but has not completed design of the bridge which is proposed to be delivered by Design and Construct procurement. Commercial Services Office has been requested to negotiate the terms and conditions of the proposed easement and possibly a construction license.

12. **MEDIA LIAISON REPORT**
The Media Liaison Report from 17 March to 17 April 2015 is attached.

13. **UNIVERSITIES AUSTRALIA UPDATE**
Universities Australia updates numbered 4 and 5 of 2015 are attached.

14. **OTHER ACTIVITIES**
The following information was correct at the time of this Report’s submission.
12 Apr  I travelled to Canberra.

13 Apr  I met with Professor Barney Glover, incoming Chair of Universities Australia (UA) before hosting a Universities Australia (UA) Board dinner.

14 Apr  I chaired a UA Board meeting.

15 Apr  I travelled to the United States.

16-30 Apr  Please see attachment 4 for US trip report.

30 Apr  I met with Townsville.

04 May  I travelled to senior executives from TAFE Queensland North.

05 May  I travelled to Cardwell to participate in and speak at the launch of the ARC Industrial Transformation Research Hub for Advanced Prawn Breeding.

07 May  I met with the Department of Education, Training and Employment’s Ms Leanne Nixon, Assistant Director-General State Schools-Performance and Ms Sharon Schimming, Regional Director North Queensland Region about a possible school on campus.

08 May  I will meet with the Veterinary Schools Accreditation Advisory Committee before travelling to Cairns.

11 May  I will participate in selection interviews for the position of Deputy Vice Chancellor, Tropical Environments and Societies.

12 May  I will participate in an interview for an external research project on performance measurement in the Higher Education sector. I will travel to Townsville.

13 May  I will attend a News Corp luncheon in Townsville.

14 May  I will meet with Member for Townsville, Mr Scott Stewart before opening the TESS State of The Tropics Flagship Workshop via videoconference to Cairns. I will later attend the Mabo Library Commemorative Art Exhibition launch.

15. FOLLOW-UP ACTION FROM PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING

I have contacted the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Global Strategy and Engagement and asked that she arrange a meeting with Dr Tyrell and Ms McLaughlin to consult both on fostering the University’s relationships with local Councils as part of a Regional Council Engagement Strategy.

16. QUESTIONS PREVIOUSLY TAKEN ON NOTICE

I took on notice a question regarding the SP1 intake student numbers in relation to Domestic Higher Degree Students at census date and also the projected shortfall against budget for 2015. Distinguished Professor Helene Marsh will present to Council on the issue of Higher Degree Research student recruitment and completions. I can report that since the last Council, the commencing numbers are tracking slightly above 2014 at this
time. As Domestic Higher Degree Research students pay no fees, there would be no material impact on the current year budget should a decline in commencements occur, as funding for domestic HDR students comes to the University through completions, and as a contribution to the Joint Research Engagement and Research Training Scheme block grant funding.

I also took on notice a request to provide a six month update in relation to JCU Brisbane/RHE JobLinks Program which is aimed at assisting Graduates to find employment in their home countries after graduation. Information will be sought for the October meeting of Council.

17. LATE DEVELOPMENTS

I will report verbally to Council on any late developments.

Professor Sandra Harding
Vice Chancellor and President
7 May 2015

Attachments:

1. IRU Statement – Not another metric
2. IRU Comparative Rankings – All Australian Universities
3. Media Report for April 2015
4. US Trip Report
5. Universities Australia Update No. 4.
6. Universities Australia Update No. 5
23 April 2015

IRU STATEMENT 03/2015

Not another metric

The release of *Research Engagement for Australia* by the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (ATSE) does not provide the needed balance to the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) assessment to recognise the excellence of university research in support of industry and public needs.

The IRU recognises the work ATSE has done to extract from current data metrics about engagement with research users in industry and the public sector. However, ATSE is wrong in its guiding assumption that a thorough qualitative assessment of the value of research for users outside the academic communities is not feasible.

With the third ERA to be completed in 2015, the Government should redirect the resources that support ERA to assessing the extent of industry driven research, with the next ERA to follow after the impact assessment.

ERA’s reinforcement of traditional assessments of standing has been major. Industry driven research has less standing in university culture than research that achieves great recognition amongst other researchers. Balancing those priorities, without diminishing the importance of investigator led research, will not be easy.

A parallel exercise to ERA to assess the real impact of a university’s research is a central element to changing the importance given to supporting industry driven research. Such an exercise must have a qualitative element. Like ERA, it must be benchmarked against an objective standard rather than being rankings-based. ATSE’s proposal does not do this.

IRU also has concerns about the detail of the ATSE approach:

- it relies exclusively on financial input measures, when ‘impact’ is primarily about outcomes;
- it ranks universities and then arbitrarily forces them into four sets with no clear basis to distinguish the groups. Comparisons with ERA ratings which it does are hence invalid. A true comparison requires a similar objective assessment of value
- by design, the method will not capture all inputs, even for engagement with business, such as fee-for-service consultancy income;
- there is much highly valuable research engagement, particularly with sectors other than business, that is transacted without substantial reliance on financial inputs.

END

For comment contact

IRU Executive Director, Conor King M: 0434 601 691
### Comparative Rankings Table - All Australian Universities

Current as at 30 April 2015

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<th>University</th>
<th>ARWU World Top 500</th>
<th>ARWU Ex. Award Top 500</th>
<th>THE World Top 400</th>
<th>THE Top 100 Under 50</th>
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**Notes:**

* James Cook University does not participate in the Times Higher Education or QS ranking systems

**Sources:**

ARWU (http://www.shanghairanking.com);
Times Higher Education (http://www.thewur.com);
QS (http://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings)
JCU Media Report

Reporting Period:
17 March - 17 April 2015

There has been very strong growth in JCU’s media coverage during the reporting period, particularly by national and international media.

JCU’s national coverage was boosted by mentions on Radio National, ABC 24 and the Australian newspaper, among many other news organisations. There was also a 21% increase in JCU’s coverage on online news websites.

This reflects JCU Media’s strategy, which aims to strengthen the University’s coverage by statewide, national and international media, while maintaining solid coverage by local media (Townsville, Cairns and other nearby regions).

Summary:

• During the 32 day reporting period there were **2164** mentions of JCU across TV, radio, print, and online news – a **22% pro rata increase** on the previous reporting period.

• It’s estimated the advertising space rate (the cost of purchasing the equivalent media space as advertising) for print, TV and radio coverage is **$2,833,103** - a **62% increase on the previous reporting period**. (Online news coverage and social media is not included as it is difficult to reliably estimate its financial value).

• The cumulative potential audience/circulation for TV, print and radio was **20,654,328 people** – a **78% pro rata increase in audience/circulation compared to the previous reporting period**. These figures do not include the estimated **1.9 million people** who read the New York Times, which published an op-ed by Prof Bill Laurance (details below). (Note: combined - but not unique - viewers, listeners and readers. Similar and reliable figures are unavailable for online and social media).

• There were **1173** mentions of JCU on social media. JCU’s Twitter page recorded a **31% increase** in followers.

• The media team distributed **26** media releases / media alerts during the reporting period.
In April, Prof Terry Hughes, Jon Brodie and others co-authored a paper published in *Nature Climate Change*, which set out a plan to restore the health of the Great Barrier Reef. The paper received global news coverage. The research was covered by the BBC World Service, the Guardian, and news outlets in south-east Asia, the United States, Europe and South America.

JCU’s impossibly cute baby turtles caused a media sensation in March when the University revealed it’s preparing to release the reptiles into the wild, fitted with GPS trackers. The research project received wide coverage across all mediums.

**Highlights:**

**Roads to ruin**

By William F. Laurance

**GRIEVES, AUSTRALIA** If you want to see how different countries and regions view the world, just ask them about roads. Many recommend how roads can be built in a manner that is sustainable for the environment. In this month’s revealing article, The New York Times reports on the transcontinental Australian railway planned for a new interstate highway in a green environment. The railway is planning to build a network of new high-speed trains in the state of Queensland, which would improve access to tourism opportunities and facilitate trade between coastal and inland regions. The railway is expected to open in 2023, and will include a number of environmentally friendly features, including solar-powered trains and reduced emissions. The railway will provide a significant boost to the local economy, and will attract tourists from all over the world. The government has уже announced 25% of the investment will come from the private sector, which will be in charge of building and maintaining the railway. The railway is expected to create thousands of jobs, and will provide a much-needed boost to the local economy. The railway will be a significant step forward in the development of sustainable transport, and will set a positive example for other countries around the world.

Bill Laurance continued his strong leadership as a distinguished researcher and environmental advocate with an April 13th op-ed piece (left) in the New York Times. The NYT has an estimated daily circulation of 1.9 million readers.
Details of Coverage: Press, radio and TV

There were 583 mentions of JCU in TV, radio and print coverage during the 32 day reporting period (see graph above). This coverage reached a cumulative audience of 20,654,328 people and was worth $2,833,103 in equivalent advertising cost.

- Print had the highest volume of coverage (253 items or 43% of the total volume of coverage)
- Print reached the highest cumulative audience (10,710,974 people or 51% of the cumulative audience)
- AM Radio had the highest advertising space rate ($1,481,893 or 52% of the total advertising space rate)
Details of Coverage: Press, Radio and TV (cont’d)

• Media outlets based in Queensland provided the highest volume of coverage (446 items - see graph above)

• Media outlets based in Queensland reached the highest cumulative audience (9,820,346 people)

• There was strong national coverage during the reporting period, with 49 items reaching a cumulative audience of 4,506,433 people.

• This represents a **108% increase** in national coverage, on a pro rata basis compared to the previous reporting period. The increased national coverage included stories run in the Australian newspaper, ABC 24 and Radio National.
Details of Coverage: Press, Radio and TV (cont’d)

- The highest volume of print coverage (204 items) was provided by outlets based in Queensland (see graph above).

- The highest volume of TV coverage (95 items) was provided by outlets based in Queensland.

- The highest volume of AM Radio coverage (103 items) was provided by outlets based in Queensland.

- The highest volume of FM radio coverage (43 items) was provided by outlets based in Queensland.
Details of Coverage: Press, Radio and TV (cont’d)

- The highest volume of coverage (49 items) was provided by the Townsville Bulletin (see graph above).

- The highest cumulative audience (1,464,673 people) was reached by coverage provided by the Courier Mail.
Details of Coverage: Press, Radio and TV (cont’d)

- Content produced by Radio National had the highest advertising space rate ($\$1,053,494$ - see chart above).

- As a rule, national media coverage delivers much higher equivalent advertising value.

- For example, 8 mentions of JCU aired on Radio National during the reporting period, delivering an advertising space rate (ASR) of $\$1,053,494$ (as mentioned above).

- During the same reporting period, 49 mentions of JCU in the Townsville Bulletin delivered an ASR of $\$123,395$. 
Details of Online Coverage:

- There were 1581 references to JCU on websites around the world during the reporting period (see chart above) – a 21% pro rata increase on the previous reporting period.

- Nearly a quarter of that coverage was on US websites.

Details of Social Media Coverage:

- There were 1173 mentions of JCU on social media during the reporting period across Twitter, Facebook, Youtube and blogs (see chart next page).
Details of Social Media Coverage (cont’d):

- JCU’s profile on Twitter continues to grow. Since JCU Media began tweeting in August 2014, the number of people following the account has risen from 5210 to 6810 – a 31% increase.

- Every day JCU Media tweets original content promoting the University’s research, academics, events and other news. Below are details of our Twitter profile during the reporting period.
Details of Social Media Coverage (cont’d):

- During the reporting period the JCU Twitter page had **842,000 page impressions**. (See chart below - impressions is the combined number of potential users that saw any content associated with the Twitter page)

![Twitter statistics chart]

For further information please contact: Richard Davis, Head of Media and Communications.
Meeting with Australia’s Ambassador to the United Nations, Ms Gillian Bird PSM

**Purpose:** Thank the Ambassador for supporting and hosting the briefing to Permanent Representatives on the State of the Tropics 2014 Report. Gave the Ambassador a White Lemuroid Possum brooch.

**Discussion:** Outlined to the Ambassador the presentation and the relevance of the report to the UN’s focus on the Sustainable Development Goals, likely to be endorsed in September and the continuing discussion around the establishment of targets and indicators. We discussed the possibility and process around the establishment of a World Tropics Day, including the engagement required with DFAT in Canberra and the negotiations that would be required within the UN. Ms Bird provided the details for Dr Lachlan Strachan, who will commence as First Assistant Secretary, Multilateral Policy Division, DFAT in May to progress this.

I also used this opportunity to update the Ambassador on the growth of JCU including the recent EduTrust Star accreditation awarded to our Singapore Campus.

Lunch Briefing to UN delegates

**Purpose:** Briefed 33 delegates, Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives, members of the Secretariat, and others on the State of the Tropics Report, particularly how it might relate to the Sustainable Development Goals (attendance list at attachment 1).

**Discussion:** I advised the delegates that the aim of the report was two-fold: to answer a very simple question “Is life in the Tropics getting better?” and to geopolitically map and raise the profile of this important lateral zone of the world, where right now 40 percent of the world’s population live, alongside 80 percent of the world’s biodiversity and that features most of the great challenges of the world – whether that is climate change effects, environmental management, economic development, health and disease issues, governance and much more. The intent was to ensure we added a new axis of understanding to global dynamics – alongside those we traditionally call upon – North/South; East/West, developing/developed, Asia/the rest.

After examining more than 50 headline indicators and performance over the past decades, a major finding is that this zone of the world, with many common challenges and opportunities driven by similar climate and geography, and its trajectory will affect the future of the world. Indeed, in no small way, the future depends on the Tropics. These populations are already highly urbanised and are urbanising further at a faster rate than the rest of the world. The future impact of the Tropics is most clearly evidenced in demography. By 2040, more than half of the world’s people will live in the Tropics. By 2050, a full 67 percent of the world’s children will live in the Tropics.

This means that there is an imperative to ensure that there is educational, health and economic infrastructure in place so that these children can grow up and live a life rich with meaning for themselves and add to the development of their nations and communities, or we mustn’t be surprised if growing and concentrated disadvantage, poverty and alienation results in great unrest and even radicalisation. And as there are common challenges and opportunities, there is a real sense among tropical nations that they are well placed to look to
each other to share expertise and solutions to common problems and to reap the benefit of new opportunities.

The presentation received across the board acknowledgment of the powers of the lateral view, and we were thanked for raising awareness on the growing relevance and contribution that the tropics makes, although recognizing some of the challenges too. There was significant interest from the delegates about the data within the report and how it might assist in the development of appropriate indicators and targets for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Delegates from the tropical region also felt it would be well worthwhile to have a cross regional group at the UN focussing on the tropics. They articulated the difficulty in balancing economic development with valorising natural assets to ensure their long term sustainable future. I referenced Distinguished Professor Bill Laurance’s timely op-Ed piece in the New York Times around infrastructure development and unintended consequences of development for natural resources and the environment.

The challenge of tailor-made solutions to support small populations and how these might be transposed to specific and diverse needs of micro states and large nations was discussed. The interplay of diversity and commonality is intriguing – there are wet, dry and desert tropics but all experiencing urbanisation at a faster rate than the rest of the world. To meet the growing demographic, this health, education and economic development infrastructure needs to be planned and designed to suit the environment. The tropics are not monochromatic and solutions previously provided for temperate-based geographies and climates are often not fit-for purpose. Decisions on infrastructure being made now are 50, 70, and 100 year decisions.

The Permanent Representative from Singapore stated that the future depends on the tropics, rather than belongs to it, and discussed some of the leading work in urban planning and design. He commented that Singapore, having been designed on a temperate zone model, featured buildings that were designed to keep the heat in. Fiji was interested in whether attempts should be made to arrest the expected population growth and whether migration was a solution. I reinforced that the report was not an advocacy document – but having this data, and knowing the geopolitical reality – what we choose to do is now up to us.

The World Wildlife Fund delegate was particularly interested in the valuation of natural assets, and how this report might be used to influence the definition of indicators for the SDGs. The interplay between the human and ecological systems is critically important to ensure sustainable development so we’re not sacrificing the future to sustain the present.

UNESCO enquired about the extent of traditional Indigenous knowledge in the report, and I advised that we simply didn't have the data, but it was an area to explore further. The Permanent Representative from Nauru also asked why that nation wasn’t in the report. This highlights that there are gaps in the data at the nation state level but in other areas too, on which policy is being made. The representative from the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) was interested in mapping the challenges of the tropics against the SDGs and we will progress this.

Ambassador Bird closed the seminar with thanks to all attendees and noted that it wasn't just to Governments, Non-government Organisations, businesses, and research institutions but a role for the UN too.
Meeting with Dr Glenn Denning, Earth Institute, Columbia University

**Purpose:** Dr Glenn Denning is Professor of Professional Practice, School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) and Director Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) Brief. I updated him on the State of the Tropics Report and explored the relevance to the Earth Institute and Masters of Development Practice to this.

**Discussion:** Discussed the Masters of Development Practice Program as it is conducted at Colombia University and at JCU. Dr Denning had attended the At Home in the Torrid Zone Symposium and MDP Summit held in Cairns. I updated him on the G20 Finance Ministers summit and the aligned Future of Tropical Economies event focusing on infrastructure. Much of the intensity around the SDGs will be in the tropics. He advised of a report his Network had produced suggesting 100 potential short-term indicators using real-time data and other earth monitoring systems. These were thematic areas within this and he suggested the tropics could be one too. John Thwaite is the SDSN Chair in Australia and Dr Denning will facilitate a meeting. The SDSN is a growing network with 200 institutions involved, delivering advocacy, education (through MOOCs) and working with governments and public agencies.

17 April, New York

**Alumni Event**

**Purpose:** Engagement with past graduates and study abroad students and update them on the activities of the University including the State of the Tropics Report.

**Discussion:** A chance to connect with the growing New York alumni it was a fantastic event where attendees reflected on their experiences of JCU and updated us on their activities since; 10 attendees. The evening went so well they have formalised their Alumni Chapter through our Engagement Office.

18 April, Travel New York to Boston

**Alumni Event**

**Purpose:** Engagement with past graduates and study abroad students and update them on the activities of the University including the State of the Tropics Report.

**Discussion:** The New England Alumni are an active Chapter with around 30 attendees for the evening, a couple travelling from New York and from the broader region. A good mix of American and expatriate graduates, they were very engaged with the efforts around the State of the Tropics.

19 April, Travel Boston to Washington DC

20 April, Washington DC

**Meeting with Mr Visit Jason Alford, Alternate Executive Director for Australia, Pacific and Asian Nations, World Bank**

**Purpose:** Provide Mr Alford with an overview of the SoTT Report and explore how he can help to promote the Report in his representational role.
Discussion: Mr Allford was particularly engaged with the idea of the tropics given his interests in the Pacific and Asian regions and is very keen to have us back to the World Bank to give a seminar on the Report later in the year. He suggested he would co-host and coordinate the event with an African or South American nation, and felt that this would attract a large audience. I suggested that Dennis Trewin (given his former role on a Board of the World Bank and his expertise in the data) could co-present this with me. He also mentioned the Pacific Islands Forum to be held later this year and suggested a presentation there; he will facilitate an introduction to Meg Taylor, the Secretary General of the Forum in order to coordinate this.

He mentioned that at the Executive Board meetings quite a few Directors say they need better data in order to determine the success of programs and investment. He was particularly interested in the gaps identified in the data; much bilateral intervention was being undertaken for national statistics agencies in order to have appropriate data upon which to formulate policy.

Infrastructure was another other significant interest for Mr Allford, and how funds in Oceania might be directed and in a reliable and fit-for-purpose way. This is a particular issue for the small nation states of the Asia Pacific, as the World Bank invests in projects of significant size (~$100m+). If a more regional or lateral view is considered for areas of similar need, geographic and climatic conditions, then scale becomes more achievable for infrastructure investment. He is keen to facilitate a meeting between Gavin Murray, Regional Manager for the Pacific region at the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the member of the World Bank Group focused exclusively on private sector development, and Franz Drees-Gross, Country Director for Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste and the Pacific Islands - both based out of Sydney.

Interestingly, Jason reflected that when the World Bank thinks of tropical, developing world cooperation it is termed South-South Cooperation, when much of the development in the tropics spans both the north and south of the equator. He also reflected that technical assistance is externally dropped in to those regions rather than thinking of the geographic or climatic context. There is a commonality of problems across that lateral band. I impressed on him that there was significant tropical knowledge, skills and innovation that could be brought to bear from northern Australia, particularly in infrastructure and service delivery (health and education).

Meeting with Dr Alan Tidwell, Center for Australian, New Zealand and Pacific Studies, Georgetown University

Purpose: To discuss potential for increased engagement around faculty and student exchanges and to brief on the State of the Tropics Report and Project.

Discussion: Dr Tidwell was particularly interested in the World Bank’s view of the report and we reflected that India and Indonesia would need to be considered in the expansion of the leadership group to be considered in September. This was very much an introductory visit too, but he was keen on further discussions at the University when we were back for the World Bank presentation later in the year, as they have significant interest in the datasets with a particular focus on conflict in the tropics. The effective rule of law has a direct correlation to economic growth and development. He advised that Joel Hellman, the World Bank’s first chief institutional economist, will begin his tenure at Georgetown University in July to Head of the School of Foreign Service, and would have a keen interest in the project. He was formerly director of the World Bank’s Fragile and Conflict Affected States department, based in Nairobi, Kenya. Dr Tidwell also suggested that Michael Woolcock, Lead Social Development Specialist in the World Bank’s Development Research Group and (part-time) Lecturer in Public Policy at Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government would be one to seek a meeting with when next in Washington.
Dr Tidwell also discussed the work of David Kilcullen, former Australian Army Officer and now scholar focussing on the rate of urbanisation (particularly Lagos and Nigeria) and issues around future security and insurgency from the growing mega-cities. He was a special advisor for counter-insurgency to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and has been a Senior Fellow of the Center for a New American Security and an Adjunct Professor at the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University.

Dr Tidwell suggested that he would sponsor and coordinate a public lecture later in the year. He could see the emergence perhaps of tropical studies as a field, breaking up the traditional dichotomies, and was supportive of faculty and student exchanges between Georgetown and JCU. He agreed that there had been a focus on polar studies, the Frigid Zone, and agreed that a similar focus could be made of the tropics.

Meeting with Dr Scott Miller, the Smithsonian Institute

**Purpose:** Follow up in relation to SoTT and explore possibility of future increased engagement and participation, particularly a physical presence on a JCU Campus.

**Discussion:** Dr Miller passed on Dr John Kress’s apologies and I updated Dr Miller on the Report and discussed infrastructure as the next deep thematic report. With the weight of the future world demographics located in the tropics, a planned approach to urbanisation and infrastructure development in a sustainable way should be the goal. Aid priorities should also be informed by developments in the tropics. I advised him of the meeting with the State Department Fulbright staff and discussions around a Fulbright Group initiative and thought there might be potential for Smithsonian Fellowships focussing on the tropics. Dr Miller advised that there had been discussions between Dr Kress and the former Labor Queensland Government around a hub of the Smithsonian when the Fellowships were first established and he undertook to find out from Dr Kress of any progress on this given Labor has again won government.

Dr Miller advised us of the structure and governance of the Institute, and their activities and locations around the world, particularly in the tropics. There may be scope to look at some greater physical presence in Queensland particularly around the Smithsonian’s Center for Tropical Forest Science - Forest Global Earth Observatories. I updated Dr Miller on the Daintree Rainforest Observatory, the Australian Tropical Herbarium and the Australian Tropical Forest Institute including collaborations with CSIRO. We agreed that there was scope perhaps for a follow up conversation around a physical hub and fellowships later in the year around terrestrial ecology, forestry and marine observation perhaps. There is also potential perhaps for a co-funded joint fellow or Tropical Leader position; Prof Bill Laurance came to JCU as a Tropical Leader from the Smithsonian Institute.

We discussed the ability for governments to fund larger scale science and research infrastructure and the increasing commercialisation and industry focus of the Federal Government in science and innovation, particularly clear in the recent CEO appointment to CSIRO, Dr Larry Marshall, described as an international technology entrepreneur.

Meeting with Matthew McMahon, Chief of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, East Asia Pacific Region, Department of State; and Ms Julia Findlay, Program Officer

**Purpose:** To brief the State Department on the State of the Tropics Project and Report, and discuss a potential group Fulbright on tropical issues.
Discussion: I reminded them both of the continuing engagement JCU has had with the Fulbright Commission including over 50 scholars and hosting the 2010 Australia-America Fulbright 60th Anniversary Symposium in Cairns in 2010 with over 230 delegates attending. Mr Tom Healy, Chair of the William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board at the time, attended the launch of the SoTT report in June last year, and expressed a view that a group Fulbright in the model of the Arctic Initiative was worth pursuing. Mr McMahon was interested in whether we had briefed DFAT and what their view might be. I advised that I had kept Minister Julie Bishop fully briefed of its development and release when in opposition, as I had the previous Minister, and informed him of the focus on Northern Australia, the pending white paper and my role in the PMs advisory group.

Mr McMahon explained the role and function of the Bureau in relation to the Fulbright scholarships, effectively the overall governance, policies and selection process. The State Department is responsible for on-shore management and implementation in conjunction with partner embassies and commissions. When new initiatives are developed, if they are bilateral then they’re worked on primarily within their office with partners for consideration by the Board. The Arctic group Fulbright was implemented as the US became Chair of the Arctic Council.

The US former Ambassador Jeffrey Bleich, a strong supporter of a lateral zone view of the world and, in particular, the importance of the tropics (he opened the Fulbright Symposium in Cairns), is now a member of the Selection Board.

He also felt that this lateral view, and the tropics in particular, would have resonance with Secretary of State John Kerry who is interested in the environment, climate change, food security, and women’s empowerment. He asked how we would formalize cooperation and collaboration between countries within the tropics as there was no equivalent Arctic Council. Securing donor country and organisation sources on very different geographic lines.

The 12 collaborating institutions would be a good start, need to determine how best to leverage benefit/investment and share technology and innovation – eg health care, and construction, to build more self-reliance across the tropics. Mr McMahon felt that this new geopolitic would be very interesting to his Department leadership and he would like us to brief them in a follow up visit. He supported a regional focus working on common set of initiatives. Four areas of focus suggested by them including:

- Environment (including water security, marine and coastal resource management)
- Tropical health and disease (the double burden of Neglected Tropical Diseases and Non-communicable Disease)
- Governance structures (regulatory regimes, the rule of law)
- Urbanisation (tropical and urban design)

Mr McMahon questioned what the policy ‘hook’ might be for a group initiative (such as the US Chairmanship of the Arctic Circle), and several countries contribute to the funding. He mentioned the East West Center based in Hawaii who would have an interest in this too. Julia Findlay also suggested the NEXUS program similarly supporting scholars around the Western Hemisphere mainly working out of DFAT. The third year of NEXUS Brazil for example is jointly sponsored by the US. She also suggested a meeting with USAID later in the year too.

I committed to send a concept paper on how the program might be shaped, what the profile of the scholars might be and the role of the international leadership group. This would then be an opportunity for continued discussion with the State Department.
Centenary of ANZAC function, Australian Embassy

*Purpose:* Invited by the Australian Embassy to attend the concert and dinner as part of the Centenary of ANZAC commemorations.

21 April, Washington DC

Meeting with Mr Ian Shuker, South East Asia Manager, Environment and Natural Resources Management, World Bank

*Purpose:* Follow up in relation to developing relationship between JCU and the World Bank in the fisheries area, the SoTT and explore possibility of future increased engagement and participation.

*Discussion:* After briefing the participants on the State of the Tropics Report we then discussed the work of the team at JCU working with PNG in developing a sports fishing industry around the Nuigini Black Bass which the World Bank is supporting, with potential for significant expansion. The World Bank impressed on me that the project met many of their objectives including providing alternative livelihoods for the current oversupply of fishers, but needed to be an effective case study incorporating appropriate business case and business model development. They are very keen that this is a forward looking and practical application supporting their overarching objective to make resources sustainable and optimise economic benefit. As this is the first of its kind being funded, they’re keen that it is an effective case study.

Mimako Kobayashi, Natural Resources Economist acknowledged that whilst the project was physically possible, the governance side now needed to be articulated, including who has the rights to increased resources, who benefits, impacts of investment and so on. Our documentation and application through ACIAR doesn’t clearly state whether the project is operating as a community owned cooperative or under some other model. If the World Bank funds the project further a contract stipulating deliverables will be documented with the consultant (JCU). The appreciated our collaborations with other NGOs in the proposal as well as the obvious local knowledge input in addition to that of our researchers.

Ian Shuker was particularly interested to hear that Oceania was the only region going backwards on the indicators within the report, and agreed that presenting at the Pacific Islands Forum was an essential step in promoting this; he offered his assistance as necessary to get onto the program. He acknowledged that World Bank programs in the Pacific wouldn’t be possible without the support of Australia, and that delivering projects there was difficulty with such small countries. I stated that scale develops when you understand the common challenges across the region rather than one-off projects. Ian agreed with this and that the Bank too had no individual capacity on technical skills so they were reaching out to others to achieve leverage. I believe there is a significant opportunity for northern Australia and particularly Queensland in this.

Meeting with Mike Reilly, Executive Director American Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)

*Purpose:* Universities Australia is doing work around degree recognition and credit transfer with AACRAO, relationships with Australia and strategic recruitment.

*Discussion:* I updated Mr Mike Reilly on the Digital Student Data Taskforce recently funded by each University within UA that will develop an action plan to meet the Groningen Declaration requirements. This Declaration aims to streamline student mobility by creating a network of
digital student data repositories worldwide and reduce the risk of documentation fraud. The intention is that Australia will sign the Groningen Declaration in May in Malaga, Spain. The recent NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) report was discussed very briefly. Efficacy of documentation he noted was particularly relevant for Australia with 25% students being from overseas, in the US, there are larger numbers of students but they still only represent 4% of the total in higher education.

I updated him on the New Colombo Plan, and we discussed the use of student e-portfolios and diploma or higher education supplements. The US is investigating competency based education and how this might be demonstrated on transcripts, but it is difficult when they use credit hours (rather than credit points) and have a very mobile student body (shifting institutions quite regularly). Mr Reilly asked about the Australian higher education policy environment recently, and I updated him on UA’s support of Generation Study Abroad.

**Meeting with Nichole Johnson, Director of Global Program Development, Institute of International Education**

*Purpose:* To discuss the Generation Study Abroad Initiative and student mobility, update the IIE on JCU as a future partner, and describe the SoTT initiative.

*Discussion:* Ms Nichole Johnson updated us on the development and growth of the Generation Study Abroad initiative which now includes 13 government partners and several Australian universities too. There is a Universities Australian task force around supporting this initiative. I provided Nichole with an update on the New Colombo Plan – a scheme with very similar underlying principles – which has grown from the first year’s pilot of four countries to now 38.

IIE manages over 200 scholarship programs administered through various Departments (including Fulbright) and 45% of its revenue is programs funded by the US Government. Nichole explained that there were a lot of different programs under the Fulbright Hayes Act. For the US, IIE identifies and negotiates with appropriate institutions on behalf of the student to get reduced tuition, and provides orientation and advocacy services. The State Department has Alumni activity and IIE helps to foster cultural enrichment activities for groups of scholars. They help with university affiliation and placement for incoming scholars, and help with placement through Country Fulbright Commissions for outgoing scholars (including assistance tithe promoting programs and recruitment).

I briefed her on my hopes to have a group Fulbright based on the Arctic Initiative. She was ‘excited’ by this prospect and suggested that IIE could assist in promoting this. She felt it was particularly relevant to global issues including climate change, and applauded the interdisciplinary focus and would be pleased to provide support for this development and our involvement in Generation Study Abroad. I committed to keep in touch through the development of the Concept Paper.

**Meeting with Cheryl Stanilewicz, Acting Senior Trade Commissioner; Santiago Foldvari, Investment Director; and Erin Baldwin Assistant Education Manager, Austrade**

*Purpose:* Present the SoTT Report to Austrade and advise on the opportunities for Australian tropical knowledge and innovation expertise.

*Discussion:* I updated Austrade on my involvement with the development of the Northern Australia White Paper, Minister Robb’s Trade and Investment Policy Advisory Committee, and the opportunities within northern Australia around tropical knowledge, skills and innovation and export potential in infrastructure development and service delivery (particularly health services) fit for purpose. I used advances in tropical wound care and construction as examples of fungible tropical expertise. I also provided a summary of my conversations and activities within the US.
Ms Cheryl Stanilewicz asked how southern Australia might engage with this focus and the one thing that might enable that. I explained the six areas of investment identified in the Green Paper, and that there wouldn’t be a single narrative. The north needs to be seen as leading on exploiting opportunities for the tropics – rather than being seen as a ‘developing economy’. Northern Australia’s attention is very much to the north, east and west, not south.

When discussing our expertise in tropical health and medicine, Mr Santiago Foldvari advised that Miami is seen as the ‘capital’ of Latin America in many respects. We had intended to visit the University of Miami as part of this trip but it was unable to be coordinated in the end. He also said that Florida International University established a medical school 4 years ago focussing on tropical health. Dr Hortez from Baylor College of Medicine has been active in promoting US national attention on neglected parasitic infections prevalent to this area; he has labelled them neglected infections of poverty and drawn comparisons between these conditions and the major neglected tropical diseases that occurred in Africa, Asia and tropical regions of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Meeting with Australia’s Ambassador to the United States of America, The Hon Kim Beazley, AC

**Purpose:** Introductory meeting to update the Ambassador on the reason for the US visit and thank him for hosting the Seminar ‘The New Geopolitic: The Future Belongs to the Tropics’ at the Embassy.

**Discussion:** As the Ambassador was not attending the seminar I updated him on the report’s key data and the importance of this lateral view of the world. I also updated him on the feedback from the UN briefing hosted by Ms Gillian Bird, discussions with the State Department and the other visits undertaken. He was aware of the work by David Kilcullen and the future potential security concerns around ghettos in the megacities; I reinforced that all of these are in the tropics.

Whilst Ambassador Beazley said he knew about JCU and its focus, he was pleased to learn of our campus in Singapore, and was surprised that the largest cohort of full degree students at JCU was from the US. I updated him on some of the other work of JCU including the funding commitment by both Federal and State governments to the AITHM.

In discussing the intentions around a Fulbright Group Scholarship on the tropics, he reinforced that DFAT would be the means to have this progressed through the State Department too, particularly if it had the support of Minister Julie Bishop. He reinforced our impression that there is a propensity to focus on traditional geographic lines, and in the US if you say tropics, they tend to think Asia. He concluded the meeting by saying that he felt the trip we had undertaken had certainly “added value to the JCU brand”.

JCU Alumni Meet & Greet and Gallery Tour (Main Hall)

**Purpose:** Engagement with past graduates and study abroad students now working in Washington DC, and update them on the activities of the University. The 19 alumni were able to then attend the Seminar following.


**Purpose:** The presentation addressed the trajectory of the Tropics and the extent to which development challenges can be addressed and opportunities embraced affecting the future of the world. In this presentation I directed attention on the people and issues of the tropical world, revealing a new global dynamic and the basis for a sustainable and prosperous future. I was introduced by Prof Ian Chubb AC, Australia’s Chief Scientist.
Discussion: The Seminar was well attended by members of the State Department, Embassy staff, World Bank, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and other agencies, and was well received. The seminar was followed by a Cocktail Reception. Questions and discussion were around the Tropical Forest Conservation Network’s role in the report, access to water and sanitation, climate change effects and the expansion of the tropics, and the planning required to ensure urban planning and design keeps up with population growth and is sympathetic to the environment.

In the post seminar discussion, I met with Dr John Wellard, Director, North American Liaison Office of Australian National University (ANU) based at the Embassy who offered to assist JCU make arrangements to directly accept donations in the US by setting up a foundation there that qualifies under the Fed 501.3 status as a US charity; he managed this process on behalf of ANU. Our current ability to accept donations is through a website, Give2Asia, which doesn’t allow us to effectively brand ourselves in the market especially given our strong Alumni and other engagement with institutions in the US.

22 April, Travel from Washington DC to North Carolina

Meeting with Dr Liz Losos, Chief Executive Officer and Dr Ed Stashko, Vice President for Global Programs, Organization for Tropical Studies (OTS), Duke University

Purpose: To discuss the outcomes of the presentations so far and the next steps for the State of the Tropics project.

Discussion: Dr Losos was particularly pleased to hear of the excellent discussions had so far, and will be attending the SoTT Leadership Group meeting to be held in Singapore in October. I was presented with a gift from the OTS recognising our membership since 1999.

OTS have also developed a series of courses Semester and Summer Programs which may be of interest to our students, which I will pass on to the Deans, Profs Paul Dirks and Marcus Lane. The next Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation conference will be in Hawaii 12-16th July on the resilience of Island Systems in the Context of Climate Change. Dr Losos also advised that the National Science Foundation (the US government funding body for scientific research) had designated 2015 as the year of the tropics with significant focus on food, energy and water security at the moment.

Joined by Prof Stuart Pimm, Prof of Conservation Ecology, Prof John Terborgh Professor of Environmental Science and Lisa Davenport, Associate Prof in Research, Center for Tropical Conservation

Discussion: Discussion focussed on the infrastructure investment seen as a priority for the World Bank, China Bank, G20 and others and the concerns around how it might be spent, both in terms of the regulatory regime or rule of law that may be poor in some of the regions, as well as the potential for adverse environmental and ecological impact.

There are concerns being raised in several forums about how to valorise the natural assets of regions (I cited the Black Bass sports fishing project in Papua New Guinea as an example of our work here), and that the capacity to do this requires local knowledge and engagement – it can’t be realised from Washington DC or Canberra. There are areas of significant progress and capacity including Latin America and Brazil, although there are still concerns about the data used in environmental impact assessments and business cases supporting some major infrastructure (such as roads). Prof Bill Laurance’s op-Ed piece in the New York Times was discussed.
A new way of thinking about infrastructure is required too – for example for communications, many areas in the tropics have simply skipped poles and wires with mobile telephony prevalent (68% of the population has mobile phones, but only 17% have access to the internet). There was interest too in the role of Indigenous peoples in the tropics; the lack of data sets and their role in infrastructure development.

Seminar: ‘Unique ecosystems, rapid growth and a new global dynamic’, Nicholas School of the Environment, Duke University

**Purpose:** Whilst life is indeed improving on several fronts in the tropics, the region is at a critical juncture. The resources required to sustain larger populations and economic growth are putting significant and increasing pressures on the natural environment. This presentation explored some the critical issues facing the Tropics and how we might work towards a prosperous and sustainable future for the Tropics worldwide.

23 April, Chapel Hill and Durham, North Carolina

Meeting with Mr Allen Chan, Executive Director and staff of the Robertson Scholars Program, University of North Carolina

**Purpose:** To understand how the Robertson Scholars program is administered, brief the staff on SoTT and explore how a similar scholarship program might be set up to support SoTT.

**Discussion:** I briefly described the history of JCU and our research and teaching focus on the tropics, including our involvement in the State of the Tropics project and the details of the Report. I also summarised the meetings undertaken so far in the US. This visit had been at the suggestion of businessman and philanthropist Mr John McCall MacBain to understand the Robertson Scholars program as he felt he might support a similar program enabling scholars to undertake experiential learning in the tropics as part of their program at JCU.

Mr Chan advised that the Robertson Scholars Program was not a scholarship program per se, but rather a leadership development program, so whilst there is support for tuition, accommodation and a stipend, it comes with ‘strings attached’. The idea being that the Robertson Foundation invests in students who are likely to have a ‘future impact’. Students are drawn from around the world through various mechanisms (eg the African Leadership Academy for those from Africa, elite schools in the UK and through the Sutton Trust, and UNSW apparently runs the process for Australia) to study at Duke University and the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. The program started in 2005 and now has around 300 scholars.

It has an exceptionally intense application process including interviews and essays designed to test emotional intelligence as well as academic ability to be shortlisted; usually there are 2,000 applications annually with 200 proceeding to interviews conducted via Skype to test motivation and aspirations, character, leadership and collaborative spirit. The finalists, around 70-80 are then flown to the campuses for 3-4 days of intensive selection including a long panel interview by external leaders of industry and six multi-mini interviews in 1 hour (all scenario based around ethical or critical issues), a team-building activity and then a 3 minute self-reflection or review of the communication used within the activity.

In addition to their studies, students undertake cohort based activities throughout semester including dinners and some professional courses (such as conflict management, leadership, etiquette and financial management). Their summers are then broken into:

- **Community Summer - 8 weeks in a small community in groups participating in community-oriented internships designed to strengthen relationships with each other and make them aware of the social and economic challenges of various geographic regions in the US.**
• Exploration Summer - either a university-sponsored project or a self-designed project exploring a new culture or interest designed to challenge them academically and personally (usually as individuals). They have to then share their experience with the cohort.

• Launch Summer - an independent, self-designed project that allows them to conduct research for an honours thesis, pursue a pre-professional internship and/or expand on work undertaken in previous summers. Projects are supposed to be relevant to their academic and professional goals and students have to build a narrative of their work – what Alan called an ‘elevator pitch’.

We also briefly discussed the behavioural and academic expectations of the Scholars Leadership Program and were given some material to peruse.

Meeting with Dr Ron Strauss, Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

*Purpose:* Originally a courtesy call on the Chancellor, Carol Folt, I updated Dr Strauss on the SoTT project and visits within the US.

*Discussion:* Dr Strauss gave a brief history of UNC-Chapel Hill noting that it was the oldest public university (established 1793) with an imperative to make University education as affordable as possible and serving the North Carolina community. I briefed him on JCU’s history and development as Australia’s national university for the tropics and the State of the Tropics Report. He thought it wonderful to have such a filter on our activities. There were some similarities between our institutions too with a significant proportion of their students first in family in higher education, and they have marine facility on the coast as well as a research station in the Galapagos Islands in partnership with an Ecuadorian University.

I then undertook a tour of the Campus with International Liaison Officer, Melissa McMurray before attending the Chancellor’s public lecture that evening titled ‘Water in our World: Past is present, future is fragile, but we can make a difference’.

24-25 April, Raleigh, North Carolina

Meetings with Prof Jeffery Braden, Dean, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Professor Bill Smith, Head of Sociology and Anthropology Department, Provost Warwick Arden, and seminar, North Carolina State University

*Purpose:* As an alumna of the College, this was an opportunity to visit my old school and discuss the SoTT report and possible connections with work at NCSU.

*Discussion:* Dr Braden agreed that we tend to view the world in traditional geography but that the umbrella of the tropics was an exciting story and would be of interest to the South Asia Studies Group, their Triangle Institute for Security Studies, the North Carolina Coastal Commission and the South East Climate Center (an interdisciplinary centre).

He also suggested discussions with Dr Lori Foster-Thompson (currently working in President Obama’s administration) doing interesting work on skills and knowledge development with a focus on how to prepare for economic development from a human capital perspective through schooling. Dr Braden was interested in visiting JCU potentially in 2016.
This meeting was followed by a tour of the very impressive James B. Hunt Jr Library, a signature building that both enables and reflects NC State’s vision as a preeminent technological research university recognised for its innovative education and research with strengths in science, engineering, technology, and textiles.

I then met with the Dr Warwick Arden, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor (an Australian) over lunch. This was followed by an informal seminar with former colleagues, faculty and graduate students on the State of the Tropics Report.

26 April, Travel Raleigh-Durham to New Orleans

27 – 28 April, New Orleans

Meeting with Prof Michael Bernstein, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost and Ms Tania Tetlow, Associate Provost International Affairs, Tulane University
Purpose: To discuss the State of the Topics report and Tulane University’s possible involvement going forward given their expertise in Tropical Health and Medicine.

Discussion: The visit to Tulane University was at the suggestion of the US Consul General to Australia, Hugo Llorens, given their focus on tropical health and medicine. I advised Prof Bernstein of JCU’s history and focus, and the work around the State of the Tropics Report; Whilst the next depth report will be on infrastructure (expected 2017), it is likely the following depth report would by on tropical health (around 2018/19) prior to the next full SoTT Report in 2020. He agreed that the project and focus resonated with their interests and focus – they are one of the member institutions of the Organization for Tropical Studies also – particularly around environmental science and tropical health and medicine. Their footprint in the tropics extends to the Caribbean Basin and Latin America predominantly. They also have an increasing focus on comparative law.

Prof Bernstein was familiar with JCU and appreciated our strategic visioning, noting that their new President was trying to articulate Tulane’s focus in such a strong and distinct way too, acknowledging the power of place; focussing geographically on the birth of the Mississippi down through Latin America, but they do have a big presence in sub-Saharan Africa as well.

Meeting with Dr Scott Pentzer, Associate Dean for Global Education, Tulane University
Purpose: To discuss the State of the Topics report and Study Abroad relationship with Tulane.

Discussion: Dr Pentzer lived in Costa Rica for five years so appreciated the issues and challenges facing the tropics. He said that Costa Rica produces a State of the Nation report which defined their development agenda. He reported that most of the Study Abroad students choosing JCU were interested in marine biology, with two heading to JCU for their Spring semester and another two in Fall. JCU does not currently have a formal exchange agreement with Tulane at present, but given potential for stronger engagement between the institutions this may be something to look at in future, particularly in the areas of public and allied health and medicine. With the expansion of the State of the Tropics collaboration including potentially with the University of the West Indies in the Caribbean (a follow up email from the Permanent Representative to Antigua and Barbuda), there may also be a role for Tulane University.
Meeting with Assoc Profs Michael Blum, Sunshine Van Bael, Cori Richards-Zawacki, and Jordan Karubian from the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Tulane University

*Purpose:* To discuss the State of the Topics report.

*Discussion:* Both Cori Richards-Zawacki and Sunshine Van Bael have spent time at JCU previously, and are keen to return. Cori in particular will be applying for a 12 month sabbatical to JCU in 2017. The Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology has a strong tropical focus, and the Stone Center for Latin American Studies (based at Tulane) addresses many of the issues of the tropics in a cross-disciplinary way. They also noted the OTS connection too, so there seemed to be many opportunities for future engagement. Formalising our relationship with Tulane at either the Department level or university wide might also facilitate staff and student exchanges, including sabbaticals for faculty.

Prof Blum noted that Tulane is doing a large amount of work in northern Africa around water management, disaster resilience (drought and climate change focussed) and health infrastructure as well as building local capacity. He reinforced the value of a further visit to Tulane to follow up with the public health and medical disciplines, disaster recovery and response (particularly in trauma psychology), and the work of the Social Work school on Post-traumatic Stress Disorder. Tulane also has courses delivered in Singapore using a private provider, and exchange agreements with National University of Singapore.

29 – 30 April, Houston

Meeting with Mr Javier Jativa, Deputy Commissioner, Trade and Investment Commission Queensland (TIQ), with Mr Andrew Bower, President and Mr Greg Foley, Board Member, Australian American Chamber of Commerce

*Purpose:* To discuss the State of the Topics report, JCU’s activities in the US, and explore further opportunities in the US from a Queensland trade perspective.

*Discussion:* The Chamber representatives were particularly interested in the report and the infrastructure opportunities that might present, as well as the issues around scale. Mr Bower is a business development representative with Chevron and has previously worked in PNG. Mr Greg Foley also asked about agriculture production shifting to the tropics, and I advised of the decline in recent years on the back of significant growth.

Javier Jativa reminded me that his responsibilities include Canada, the US and Mexico, and they’re endeavouring to become more proactive in seeking trade opportunities there (particularly in mining) so the brief was very timely and useful to him. He offered his assistance in promoting JCU and other initiatives in Mexico. I did reinforce that there was a significant services industry opportunity too in construction (building resilience for cyclones for example), and health and environmental expertise. Javier provided the contact details for Mr Palo Rojo, Director of Scholarships of CONACYT, the National Council of Science and Technology of the Mexican government who will be visiting Australia shortly. He then provided some background information on the Texas Medical Center which has a renewed focus on commercialisation of drugs and translation of research due to the appointment recently of Dr Robert Robbins.

Meeting with Dr Robert Robbins, President and CEO, and Mr Larry Stokes, Senior Vice President Shared Services, Texas Medical Center

*Purpose:* At the instigation of TIQ, to discuss the State of the Topics report and better understand the Texas Medical Center as an entity.

*Discussion:* Dr Robertson provided an overview of his $2bn infrastructure vision for the Texas Medical Center which effectively acts as a collaboration hub for its members, the creation of a
translational research campus (incorporating five institutes such as health policy, clinical trials, and regenerative medicine), hotel and conference facilities. It is the largest medical center in the world with one of the highest densities of clinical facilities for patient care, basic science, and translational research. The Center contains 54 medicine-related institutions, including 21 hospitals and eight specialty institutions, eight academic and research institutions, four medical schools (including the Baylor College of Medicine), six nursing schools, and schools of dentistry, public health, pharmacy, and other health-related practices.

The Center (through its members) has a combined 7,000 beds and around 7 million encounters with patients per annum and provides all the shared services including HR, cleaning, IT, facility management, security and safety services. His aim is to compete with the Biopolis in Singapore and San Francisco’s Biotech Bay and attract large pharmaceutical companies to Houston collocating fundamental discovery next to big pharma and medical device companies. They hope to break ground on the development in early 2018.

Apart from the datasets available for trials and research (the largest uninsured and most diverse population the US apparently), the Texas Medical Center would add value by providing single point service delivery including one Institutional Review Board, and free land. Their key revenue stream is actually parking (given the over 100,000 employees in the area not including visitors and patients) at $60-80 million per year. Given our colocaction with a large tertiary hospital and aspirations for the Discovery Rise project it was interesting to see what scale and a large vision can look like. The Texas Medical Center has also recently received a visit from Queensland Investment Corporation who are looking for additional forms of investment for the large Superannuation Funds.

Meeting with Ms Kelly Ralston, Consul General and Senior Trade Commissioner, and Ms Daniela Rees, Investment Director, Austrade

Purpose: A courtesy visit to the new Austrade offices and to brief the Consul General on JCU and explore opportunities in North America

Discussion: I briefed Ms Kelly Ralston on State of the Tropics Report and the meetings conducted in the US, reinforcing the potential tropical expertise and knowledge as export commodities. She was interested in the support that Austrade could provide and what industry segments this would be. I advised tropical health and medicine, construction and other services delivery and infrastructure including food, water, and energy. There is no reason that Townsville and Cairns couldn’t be the tropical test-bed for tropical innovation and design, technology and construction (urban planning). Much like the Barcelona Smart City model which is currently formed by about 122 projects classified into 22 programmes that cover all areas of the city management, from Lighting, Water and Waste Management using technology to manage the resources and services to achieve sustainable social, economic and urban development.

Ms Ralston stated that JCU probably has the best brand recognition in the US at the moment, and suggested meetings with the Brookings Institute in further visits to the US (a private non-profit organisation or ‘think tank’ based in Washington DC devoted to independent research and innovative policy solutions).

Alumni function and address to the Australian American Chamber of Commerce

Purpose: The tropics has experienced almost unprecedented economic growth in recent decades; GDP per capita has almost doubled, and trade and investment in the tropics has increased by orders of magnitude. In this presentation titled ‘The New Global Dynamic: insights into tropical
economies’, I explore the economies of the tropics, revealing a new global dynamic and the basis for a sustainable and prosperous future.

Meeting with Prof Maria Elena Bottazzi, Associate Dean, National School of Medicine and Assoc Prof Uli Strych, Paediatric Tropical Medicine, Baylor College of Medicine

Purpose: Provide a brief on the SoTT, tour the Sabin Vaccine Institute and Texas Children’s Hospital Center for Vaccine Development, operated in partnership with Baylor College of Medicine Department of Paediatrics, and present a seminar the health data and implications from the SoTT report.

Discussion: The National School of Tropical Medicine within the Baylor College of Tropical Medicine aspires to unify tropical disease and global health activities across the Texas Medical Center, as well as with other universities and research institutes, through interdisciplinary efforts to enhance Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) and Neglected Infections of Poverty education, R&D, policy, and advocacy to alleviate these global health burdens. NTDs are a group of 17 most common chronic parasitic and other infectious diseases, such as hookworm, schistosomiasis, and leishmaniasis, which represent the most common infections in the developing countries of Africa, Asia and the Americas.

Prof Alex Loukas, based in Cairns, is working with Prof Peter Hotez, Dean of the School (who was overseas at the time of my visit) on the Human Hookworm Vaccine Initiative initially funded by the Gates Foundation. The Associate Dean, Prof Maria Botazzi, explained the organisational relationships between the College, Texas Medical Center, the Texas Children’s hospital and the Sabin Vaccine Institute and provided a tour of the facility.

Seminar: ‘Our tropical future, wealthier but not always healthier’, Baylor College of Tropical Medicine

Purpose: Poverty has halved in the tropics since the 1980s, the rates of infectious diseases are declining, along with maternal and child mortality rates, and life expectancy is on the rise. However, tropical nations also face many health challenges, including the risks associated with the ‘double burden’ of disease where the prevalence of non-communicable diseases is increasing while infectious diseases and under-nutrition remain public health issues. A key sign is that the obesity rate, although generally low is increasing at a much faster rate than most of the world. These trends have particular global significance given that by 2050 two out of every three children under the age of 15 will live in the tropics. In this presentation I explore the tropical world with a particular focus on public health and wellbeing, and include details on the work that James Cook University is engaged in – working towards a healthy and prosperous future for the tropics.

Discussion: Much of the discussion focussed on the reliability of data sources (they work closely with the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation), and the interplay between NTD and Non-communicable diseases. Key work the School is investigating is extracting policy implications on the work being done and how to influence health policy at the national and international levels. There is an opportunity to consider how the State of the Tropics data can be used to support more work on policy development and tropical geopolitics.
The School works very closely with Prof Pierre Buekens, Dean of Public Health and Tropical Medicine at Tulane University and the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. They are very keen to be involved in the State of the Tropics project going forward.

**30 April – return to Australia**

Professor Sandra Harding  
Vice Chancellor and President

Ms Vanessa Cannon  
Chief of Staff

**06 May 2015**

*Attach:* Attendance List – UN Presentation
## State of Tropics Lunch Briefing with Sandra Harding, Thursday 16 April

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<td>David O’Connor</td>
<td>Chief, Sustainable Development</td>
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<td>DESA</td>
<td>Seako Kajima</td>
<td>Associate Expert</td>
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<td>UNEP</td>
<td>Mr. Jamil Ahmad</td>
<td>Deputy Director</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>Ana Peršić, PhD</td>
<td>Science Specialist</td>
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<tr>
<td>World Bank</td>
<td>Ms Lisa Johnson</td>
<td>Research Analyst</td>
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<tr>
<td>WWF International</td>
<td>Ms Céline Beaulieu</td>
<td>Manager Public Sector Partnerships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Convention on Biodiversity Liaison Office</td>
<td>Nandhini Krishna</td>
<td>CBD/UNCCD Liaison Officer</td>
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**Total:** 33
Colleagues,

The long awaited draft national strategy for broadening and strengthening international education and research has been released and we are looking forward to working with you all on a response. We are pleased with its focus on deepening engagement, work integrated learning, the need to invest in collaborative research, and enhancing the global counsellor network in driving greater engagement with Latin America and the Middle East. We be paying close attention to the May budget to see whether these worthy intentions are supported by the necessary resources to support them.

In another illustration of the vibrancy of international collaboration in our sector, applications opened this week for the new Australia-Germany academic research exchange program following the successful negotiation by UA of a sector wide MoU between the two countries late last year.

Cheers,

Belinda
Draft National Strategy for International Education

The Government released its Draft National Strategy for International Education on 1 April, initiating a consultation process to inform a final strategy that represents a shared national vision and responsibility for international education.

The strategy will be finalised and implemented in close consultation with the international education sector and the wider community, including education providers, businesses, students, governments and community groups. It is intended that the final strategy will be released in the second half of 2015.

UA’s response will be developed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellors (International) Committee. Submissions are due by 29 May 2015.

Meeting of Universities Australia Policy Analysts Group

The UA policy analysts group met on Tuesday 31 March 2015 in Canberra. At the meeting UA provided a briefing on trends in university revenue for Commonwealth supported places and in grants for research.

The Minister’s higher education adviser provided an update on the Government’s intentions in respect of the Higher Education and Research Reform Bill 2014 (HERR Bill). He indicated that the Government intends to reintroduce the HERR Bill during the winter sittings of Parliament. He also indicated that the Government remains committed to the demand driven system provided it was financially sustainable.

The group agreed that UA should develop for the Board’s consideration a short principles-based policy document in the form of ‘Advice for an incoming Government’, to provide a high-level policy anchor for ongoing debate and discussion on higher education and research policy and funding. The document would reference the 2013 UA policy statement and, amongst other matters, reiterate the contribution that universities make in the national interest, articulate the level of political acknowledgement of the need for long-term sustainable funding for higher education and research, list the policy principles and make clear the elements of higher education policy that the sector as a whole agrees on, including the demand driven system and the preservation of the integrity of the student loans scheme.

The group also agreed that UA should continue to prosecute the case for higher education as a priority for public investment, and for proper funding of research.

DFAT Roundtable

UA and DFAT convened the first of what will be a series of theme-based roundtables on Thursday 2 April. The purpose of the roundtables is to provide the opportunity for UA and DFAT to share information on programmes and initiatives where there is a common interest and to explore opportunities for working more closely. Both UA and DFAT were well represented at the most senior levels. The discussion served to highlight the depth and breadth of the Australian university offshore enterprise, focus on specific areas of engagement (in Myanmar, The Philippines and Mongolia, alumni relations, student mobility) where DFAT and universities work closely, and discuss opportunities for further cooperation (the InnovationXchange and private sector engagement). UA is in discussion with DFAT on progressing these initiatives.

Release of Tax Discussion Paper

The Treasurer released the tax discussion paper "Re:think" on 30 March, which opened the dialogue on tax reform. The community’s responses to the discussion paper will inform the Government’s tax options Green Paper, due to be released in the second half of 2015. The Government will seek further feedback on those options before putting forward policy proposals for the next election. UA will make a submission in response to the discussion paper, which is due by 1 June 2015. In the submission, UA will address the R&D Tax concession, the proposal to broaden the GST tax base to education, and tax arrangements for Not-for-Profit organisations.

Applications open for new Australia-Germany research scheme
Applications opened this week for the Australia-Germany Joint Research Cooperation Scheme.

The new scheme, building on existing agreements with the Go8 and ATN universities, was established by a Memorandum of Understanding between UA and the German Academic Research Exchange (DAAD) in December 2014.

The scheme will fund travel and living costs, enabling Australian researchers to visit their German counterparts and German researchers to visit Australia. There is also a strong focus on supporting early career researchers.

Thirty six of Australia’s universities have elected to participate in 2015 and have committed more than $1.4 million in funding. The DAAD will provide a similar amount in euros for the successful German applicants.

The scheme is open to Australian researchers at participating Australian universities in all academic fields.

Applications for funding under the Australia-Germany Joint Research Cooperation Scheme are invited from 9 April to 30 June 2015.

Discover Thailand Scholarships

UA will be administering another round of Discover Thailand Scholarships on behalf of the Australia-Thailand Institute. There are 11 scholarships worth $4000 each for Australian students completing credit bearing study in Thailand.

Australia-Indonesia Knowledge Sharing Program

UA will administer an executive knowledge sharing program between Australian and Indonesian universities beginning the week 11 April 2015. The aim of the program is to strengthen existing relationships and help develop new institution level and people-to-people linkages between executives from Australian and Indonesian universities.

Fourteen Indonesian delegates will come to Australia for a two-week period, where they will participate in a bespoke leadership training program, hosted by the University of Sydney South East Asia Centre, and a study tour of various Australian universities.

Australia Brazil Higher Education Forum 2015

UA has been working closely with the Australian Education Counsellor in Brazil to progress the joint Higher Education Forum to be held in Brasilia from Tuesday 9 June to Wednesday 10 June. These dates have been confirmed with our counterpart, the Council of Rectors for Brazilian Universities, and invitations will be sent shortly. UA is pleased to announce that the event will be facilitated by Professor Paulo de Souza. Professor de Souza is the Deputy Flagship & Science Director at CSIRO’s Digital Productivity Flagship and is leading research on micro-sensing technologies and systems. A physicist and miniaturisation expert, Professor de Souza is recognised internationally in field robotics, geochemistry and environmental engineering, and has extensive experience in Brazil and Australia.

Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) Consultation

In November this year the International Telecommunication Union will decide whether to continue with the present system of inserting leap seconds in Coordinated Universal Time (UTC).

The global timescale Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) is the modern-day equivalent of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), kept by a worldwide network of atomic clocks more stable than the rotation of the Earth. From time to time, an extra 'leap second' is introduced into UTC to keep the atomic clocks roughly aligned with the Earth's rotation, just as the leap year system keeps the calendar aligned with the Earth's orbit. The leap second must be introduced at the same instant all around the world, and has in the past caused issues for computer networks or for other applications requiring precise
timing, for example Australian financial markets.

The Department of Industry and Science is consulting stakeholders, including businesses and research institutions, to inform them of the issue and canvass their views.

## Universities Australia Submission Index and Upcoming Events

### Recently Submitted

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Simplification of the skilled migration and temporary activity visa programmes</td>
<td>The review will identify costly and unnecessary processes, and develop a visa framework that is flexible and responsive to the skill needs of Australian business and industry, while also allowing for the broad range of short term activities being undertaken in Australia.</td>
<td>2 February 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching, Training and Research Costing Study</td>
<td>The Independent Hospital Pricing Authority released a consultation paper on this issue.</td>
<td>10 February 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-Budget Submission</td>
<td>Submission to the Department of Treasury on the 2015-16 Federal Budget.</td>
<td>13 February 2015</td>
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<td>Combining Excellence in Research for Australia and the Higher Education Research Data Collection</td>
<td>The ARC and the Department of Education and Training have released a paper on options for combining ERA and HERDC.</td>
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<td>UA offices, Canberra</td>
<td>14 April 2015</td>
<td>Peter Rodely</td>
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Colleagues,

The word that best characterised the fortnight that was? "Storm". First was that created by the confluence of the NSW ICAC advisory report on mitigating risks associated with international education, and the Four Corners report, 'Degrees of deception'. The challenge for organisations like UA in responding to these pieces is the need to balance the expectation of the sector that it will be defended (particularly in the face of evidential gaps, selective editing, and bias), with the need to accept and address legitimate concerns. The latter may be grounded more in anecdote than fact but perception and personal experience will trump defensive 'evidence' (particularly when offered up by those with most to gain) in the public contest, every time. As the public storm abates we have the opportunity to see our way through to filtering the meaningful from the sensationalist dross in considering, and responding as appropriate, to the issues raised. This will be the hottest topic on the agenda of next week's UA DVCs-International meeting.

Many of our members were very seriously affected by this week's dreadful storms. Campuses were forced to close, classes disrupted and considerable damage was inflicted as more than a foot of rain pelted down in Sydney and the Hunter Valley. Securing student and staff safety was the key imperative as our universities leaped into critical incident mode. To those of our members - some of whom are still coming to terms with the damage - we wish you all the best for a speedy return to normal.

Cheers,

Belinda
Universities Australia Board of Directors Meeting

UA’s Board met in Canberra on Tuesday 14 April for their third meeting of the year. Professor Sandra Harding welcomed UA’s incoming Chair, Professor Barney Glover who attended the meeting as an observer.

The Board considered UA action in light of the defeat of the Higher Education and Research Reform Bill. The Plenary had earlier agreed that UA should continue to advocate the need for a predictable and sustainable investment model for universities and the continuation of the demand driven system. Taking into consideration this decision and the subsequent advice from the policy analysts group, the Board agreed that UA should work to position the sector in the lead up to the next election including through the development of a high-level, principles-based policy document in the form of ‘Advice to an incoming Government’ and a reference document on university and research funding. On the latter, a small working group, drawn from the sector, has been formed and met for the first time yesterday.

Other issues discussed were:

- UA meeting with Dieticians Association of Australia on professional accreditation.
- DFAT Universities Australia Engagement Roundtable.
- Recommendation of new UA Constitution for approval at the May AGM.
- Public Awareness Campaign.

2015 Higher Education Research Data Collection Specifications

On 7 April the Department of Education and Training provided UA with a revised draft of the 2015 Higher Education Research Data Collection specifications for the collection of 2014 data. In response to concerns being raised during the consultation process, the Department has delayed the proposed changes to the specifications regarding affiliate research income reporting. In addition, the specifications will not include changes originally proposed that would require universities to apportion publications that involve a consortium of researchers. Following consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellors (Research) Executive, the UA Board endorsed the 2015 specifications and agreed there could be value in establishing a DVC-R working group to address the issues once the next stage of the process commences. The Department is expected to release the final specifications shortly.

Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID) Joint Statement

The ORCID Joint Statement of Principle was launched on Tuesday 14 April by UA, the Council of Australian University Librarians, the Australasian Research Management Society and the Australian National Data Service. The ARC and NHMRC released a parallel statement encouraging all researchers to have an ORCID ID. UA will continue to progress this work with the Working Group members to explore the adoption of ORCID as a common researcher identifier across the Australian research sector.

Public Awareness Campaign

UA’s public awareness campaign, Keep it Clever, continues to strengthen in highlighting the benefits of university education and research. In the lead up to the Federal Budget in May, the campaign is inviting our thousands of supporters to sign a petition and email their local members calling for proper public investment for university education and research.

Examples of university research projects are posted to the campaign website, Facebook page and Twitter profile.
Commonwealth Science Council Meeting

The Commonwealth Science Council met on 13 April and considered a range of issues relevant to the university sector. The Council agreed on a forward work programme, with key items to include:

- the Government's response to the Chief Scientist's report: *Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics: Australia's Future*;
- adoption of science and research priorities, and capability mapping for each of the practical challenges;
- implementation of the Boosting the Commercial Returns from Research strategy;
- implementation of the Industry Growth Centres initiative; and
- the final report of the Research Infrastructure Review.

The Government is expected to finalise the science and research priorities shortly. The implementation mechanism is unclear at this stage, beyond the proposal for a letter to be written to heads of departments and agencies stating that a proportion of their research spend should be directed to the priorities.

UA will continue to engage with the Government and the Office of the Chief Scientist as the work of the Commonwealth Science Council progresses.

Industry Growth Centres

The Department of Industry and Science has now announced Chairs of most Industry Growth Centres. Each Growth Centre is in the process of developing its individual sector proposal for the Government's consideration, with a facilitator assisting the Chair.

The Department is gathering details of organisations that are interested in actively contributing to the development of a Growth Centre proposal - for more information, please see the Department's Industry Growth Centre sector engagement page.

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