

**EXMSS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31ST 2008
September 2009**

Contents

Massey University Extramural Students' Society	1
From the President	1
Organizational structure as at end 2008	3
Reporting against the 2008 Strategic Plan.....	4
Operational Highlights – from key staff members.....	5
Financial Performance	7
MOTION:	8

Massey University Extramural Students' Society

EXMSS is committed to representing and providing useful services for Massey extramural students in an exemplary manner. EXMSS seeks to be acknowledged as a caring and personal, yet professional organization that delivers high quality and valued services within a culture of inclusiveness, responsibility and maturity.

From the President

It is with great pleasure that I write the annual report for my first year as President. I feel the Executive Committee and I have achieved a great deal in 2008. The extensive groundwork achieved in 2008, such as our strategic plan, has formed the foundation of new initiatives introduced in 2009.

A notable issue during 2008 was the clarity of the role of the President. Extensive discussions revealed the historical context of the role as well as some of the tensions surrounding the Governance/Management interface. The Executive Committee and I spent time clarifying the role of the President who is both the manager of operations and the representative of the membership. The President's reporting template and review systems have now been redefined providing improved transparency, reporting and assurance. In alignment with goals of transparency I decided to return all meeting fees I am paid to the membership in the form of a scholarship. This decision stemmed from clarification that the President's role (and therefore salary) included attending Council meetings and other paid meetings in Wellington. These meeting fees, which amount to approximately \$3,000 per year, will fund the Trade to Tertiary scholarship from 2009.

The strengthening of our service provision to ensure clear benefits of membership has also been a priority and has been embedded in the strategic plan. Operational systems are also an area tagged for development with the aim of ensuring continuity and quality in times of change. It is my intention to

further document our operating policies and procedures as we roll-out new initiatives and processes.

Engagement with the EXMSS membership is recognized as a key area of activity. One of the first initiatives was to make changes to the website. The office now has full control of the site allowing for an enhanced information flow as well as the ability for our members to have their voice heard.

Financially EXMSS performed well. Operations matched budget with the exception of several areas of under-spending. This resulted in a surplus of just over \$50,000. The key areas of under-spend were the free-phone service, the EAR's conference, and the funds set aside for lawyers.

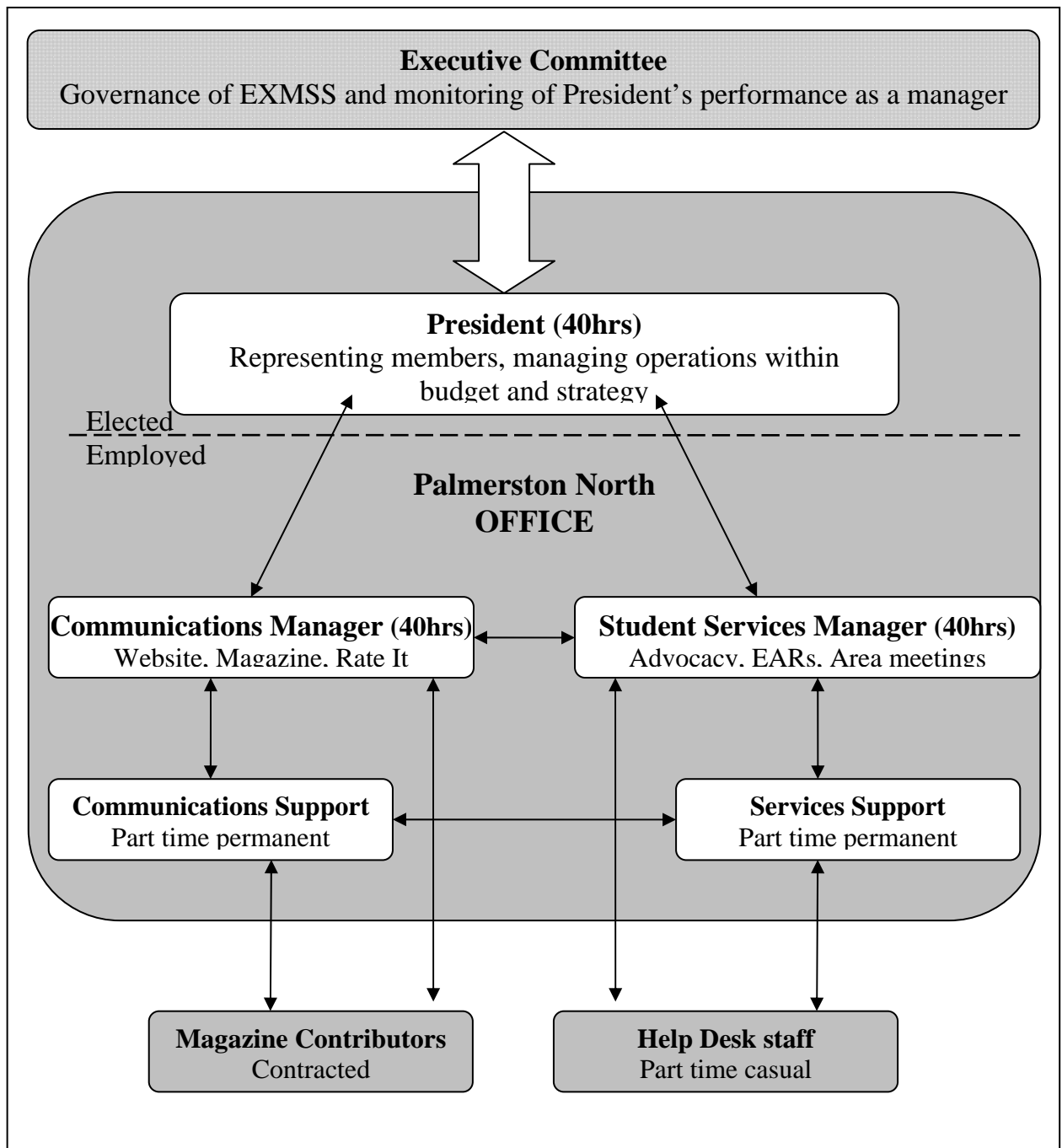
Within Massey distance study continued to increase in priority. Several projects including improvements in web delivery of courses commenced. In the Council and senior management arena I was vocal and supportive of initiatives in this area as they include electronic assignment submission, improvements to library services and improved teaching delivery online. Steve Maharey took up the role of Vice-Chancellor mid-year resulting in a further prioritization of distance delivery at Massey. Fee setting followed past trends resulting in a 5% increase for 2009. This has been tempered somewhat by the connection of fee rises to Massey's 2020 strategy which should allow students, over time, to realize tangible benefits from future fee rises.

EXMSS continues to be held in high regard by the Massey community as well as external stakeholders. Representational work has focused around ensuring distance students are included in Massey's strategic the planning. 2009 will see improvements in services for our membership through the implementation of the strategic plan developed in 2008. The future of EXMSS and distance education at Massey continues to look very strong and our planning for the future is robust.

A huge thank you to the staff and executive of EXMSS who have worked professionally and conscientiously to constantly improve our organization and make it not only a great service provider for our members but a fantastic place to work.

Yours sincerely
Ralph Springett
President, EXMSS

Organizational structure as at end 2008



Reporting against the 2008 Strategic Plan

BROAD GOAL/AIM	Agreed Actions	Key Milestones	Statement of Performance
To re-develop our network of support for all members with a focus on social and study support.	<p>Redesign the website for two-way communication and user interest.</p> <p>Find out what our constituents want.</p>	<p>May-Nov 2008: Research web-site design and web2 communication tools.</p> <p>Jan 2009: Roll out the website and promote heavily to our members.</p>	<p>The EXMSS website has been transferred to a more suitable platform. First blogs and news feeds into the site occurred in December.</p> <p>Scholarships budget reviewed and new scholarships outlined for 2009.</p>
Incorporate the magazine into the communication strategy	<p>Review the magazine medium.</p> <p>Review the magazine's goals both communication and financial.</p>	<p>Mid 2008: Analyse the spend/benefit balance for appropriateness and opportunities.</p> <p>Reduce total cost to \$110,000 in 2008 and to \$100,000 in 2009</p>	<p>Budget achieved. Total cost of publications \$108,000</p> <p>Advertising revenue over budget without compromising agreed maximum advertising content %.</p>
To fully utilise the EXMSS EARs and Executive	<p>Create an environment where EARs can engage with members and each other</p> <p>Create an environment where EARs can assist in promoting EXMSS and facilitate local meetings.</p>	<p>2008 conference: Discuss future role of EXMSS EARs.</p> <p>End 2008: Prepare a strategy that includes web2 as well as traditional media for communication</p> <p>2008 conference: Offer training and support for EARs to use local media to help promote EXMSS and facilitate local meetings.</p>	<p>Successful EARs conference</p> <p>Agreement on EARs networking and engagement solutions for 2009</p> <p>Local meetings initiative prepared for roll-out in 2009</p>
To ensure that perceived risks are managed professionally	<p>Review risks associated with</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tangible benefits to members 2. Independent revenue 3. President I powers 4. Election process 	<p>Mid 2008: Define how the C.E.O. reports to the executive</p> <p>2008: Explore the delivery of Rate It to other student associations</p> <p>Through 2008: develop strategy for increasing the relevance of benefits to members</p> <p>2009: explore potential for independent revenue streams</p>	<p>Presidents reporting to executive clarified. Executive review of Presidents performance completed.</p> <p>First draft of expanded Rate It discussed with Massey and potential funders.</p> <p>Strategy for expansion of shuttle service to include all regions and all times.</p>

<p>To operate in a transparent and financially responsible and efficient manner</p>	<p>Formalise the minutes into part I and part II</p> <p>Constant drive towards efficiency</p>	<p>Through 2008: Review governance consultants role</p> <p>Mid 2008: Place minutes on the web</p> <p>Mid 2008: Place the President's report (or part of) on the web</p>	<p>Governance consultant role disestablished at end of 2008.</p> <p>Minutes formalised into part 1 and Part 2. Minutes now on website. President reporting through web-blog.</p> <p>Executive conducted first self-review</p> <p>Events Support position changed from full time to part time</p> <p>Council meeting fees for President to be channelled into new scholarships</p>
<p>To maintain independence while developing strategic partnerships with Massey and other Stakeholders in order to pursue the EXMSS goals</p>	<p>Ensure continuing activity of President</p> <p>Foster an environment of trust between the executive and the President. That allows President to implement strategy</p>	<p>End 2008: Exec and President to develop an environment of trust.</p> <p>End 2008: President to meet as many representatives as possible from Massey, TEC and in the distance education arena to ensure a well informed position.</p> <p>End 2008: President to be active politically.</p>	<p>Clear reporting and review process have created an environment of trust and strategies have been implemented with executive support.</p> <p>Work has begun on implementing a strategy for improving the representation and services for Maori members</p>

Operational Highlights – from key staff members.

Murray Kirk: Communications Manager

2008 was a year of fresh initiatives and consolidation in EXMSS' communications strategy.

Off Campus

Off Campus, the highly regarded quarterly magazine, remained EXMSS communications flagship, being distributed to all 15517 members. In addition EXMSS strengthened its online presence with the upgrade to a content management system; Wordpress.

Off Campus continued to highlight the extramural experience with regular features such as regional profiles, the review of the EXMSS graduation dinner; with stories of graduates' paths to success and the President's column. Cover stories reflected current issues of the day such as: **Peak Food**, a look at the conflict of priorities between bio-fuels and food, **Heads or Tails**, an examination of the Labour and National parties' post election plans for the tertiary sector, **Super Steve Returns**, an interview with the new Vice Chancellor, Steve Maharey and **Extramural Olympians**, a feature introducing Massey's sports people of the year Hamish Bond and Catherine Cheatley.

WWW.EXMSS.org.nz

The EXMSS website underwent an upgrade with a move from html to a content managed system, using the blog platform, Wordpress. This move allowed innovations such as the Captain's Log a regular blog from the President, student comments, polls and an event calendar etc to be developed. In addition, EXMSS retained the existing interactive online services such as the classifieds and Rate It surveys.

Rate It

Throughout 2008 EXMSS surveyed extramural students on their experience of papers with the Rate It survey. All Massey students taking extramural papers were surveyed at the completion of each semester and results were collated and published on the EXMSS website. Return rates were steady with a 13% return for semester 1, 12.3% for semester 2 and 12.9% for semester 3.

Anne Moretti: Student Services Manager

Advocacy

EXMSS has an important role to play in providing an independent advocacy service for students seeking to resolve problems or disputes with the university. Issues presented are categorized into quality, experience of teaching, assessment, administration and support. Demand for the EXMSS advocacy service were steady throughout the year, 180 difficult issues were resolved for extramural students by December. This work is in addition to the many lower level cases that were resolved over the telephone or via a quick email message. EXMSS also belongs to a nationwide collective of tertiary advocates, Student Advocate Network NZ) and co-hosted with MUSA the SANNZ annual conference.

Student support

The student services manager is chair of the EXMSS committee which processes applications to the Study assistance programme fund. In 2008 37 applications were accepted by EXMSS, granting a total of \$12,426.56. The average grant was \$335.85.

The EXMSS EARs network

The student services manager administers the group of 38 volunteer Area Representatives (EARs) throughout the country (and 3 overseas) who support their local extramural students. EARs attend the Student Learning Centre-run Study Skills seminars at the beginning of Semester One, in order to introduce EXMSS services (including themselves), distribute supporting Orientation booklets and alert first time students to the EXMSS website's plethora of services. A highlight of the EARs year is the bi-annual EAR Conference, held in May in Palmerston North. In 2008 twenty EARs and two Kaiako pono (Massey support for Maori students) attended the EARs conference. Discussion focused on the student association role in the tertiary education community, the Kaiako pono mentoring system, EXMSS's commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi and using the media. The objective being to help EAR's engage meaningfully with their local extramural communities.

Contact courses

The three contact course seasons during 2008 were successfully serviced and administered by the Service Support staff member Thérèse McCrea. Feedback

from the EXMSS Contact Course Survey showed a 95% satisfaction with EXMSS help desk services on campus. During 2008 the efficiency of the shuttle services was reviewed and a decision was made to use *Supershuttle* and a voucher system, to operate the shuttle service for students attending contact courses from 2009. This will enable an extension of the service to Wellington and Auckland in the future.

Graduation Dinner

The annual EXMSS Graduation dinner was held in May at Rydges Hotel in Palmerston North. Entertained by our guest speaker, Hon Steve Maharey, there were 13 graduates supported by a total of 78 guests.

Scholarships

The five EXMSS Scholarships for Excellence of \$1000 each were awarded to highly accomplished recipients. During 2008 the EXMSS Exec and staff made a decision to increase the future scholarship pool to \$10,000 and increase the range of scholarship types. These new scholarships were open for application for the first time in November 2008, for study in 2009.

Representation

The Student Services Manager represented students on several committees: Safety Committee, Library Committee and Marketing & Recruitment Committee. These committees inform EXMSS of practices within the university and provide the opportunity for students to impact on the operational matters that concern these committees. Student Support also acts as a watchdog and advocate for contact course operations and areas such as enrolments and examinations.

Financial Performance

Audited accounts are contained in this agenda and are also available from the EXMSS office.

From the audited accounts it is observed that EXMSS is operating close to budget. The surplus in 2008 can mostly be attributed to under-spending on four budget lines.

EARs conference – less numbers were able to attend. 25 participants from a possible 40.

History of EXMSS – less progress than expected. Only one progress payment made.

Accounting support and Lawyers – not required.

Free-phone – less cost due to very good contracted rate and small decline in use.

Looking forward and considering the more flexible operating structure (created by increasing the part time component in our staffing structure) there is potential to increase the level of service in the coming years as well as cope with the projected increase in enquiries and use of services that will follow increased enrolments.

The 2008 Audit Report highlights two areas of concern. I can report that the issue of overpayments of fees that require reimbursement has been resolved with Massey. The second issue, relating to the committee secretary, has also been discussed and a new process put in place in compliance with taxation requirements.

EXMSS is now well placed to springboard off the planning of 2008 and begin to deliver a higher level of service and benefits to its membership in 2009-10. It is recommended by the EXMSS executive committee that the Membership Fee for 2010 remains at \$40.00.

MOTION:

**THAT THE EXMSS MEMBERSHIP FEE FOR 2010 REMAINS AT \$40,
AND \$20 FOR PACE AND ASSOCIATE MEMBERS.**

Ralph Springett
PRESIDENT