

THE STATISTICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

New South Wales Branch inc.

Registered number Y1920037

<http://www.geocities.com/statsnsw/>

The next meeting of the New South Wales Branch will be held on

Wednesday, 19 May 2004

6.00 pm for refreshments, 6.30 pm for the talk

at the Coghlan Room, Australian Bureau of Statistics

Level 5, St Andrew's House, Town Hall Square, Sydney

Mark Bartlett

Communicable Disease Surveillance and Outbreak Decision Support

The NSW Health Department, Communicable Diseases Branch, and NSW Public Health Units are responsible for monitoring and responding to notifications of scheduled medical conditions, both sporadic and clustered. A state-wide surveillance system aids in the monitoring process. It is relatively common that decisions need to be made regarding the existence of unusual patterns of disease occurrence (clusters, outbreaks, epidemics) and the required public health response. This is not always straightforward and decision support tools may provide additional assistance in making the decision.

This talk will describe the existing surveillance system and plans for the future, present a few examples of disease trends that have caused concern (with or without being considered clusters/outbreaks) and introduce some areas of decision support that are being explored.

Mark Bartlett is the Surveillance Manager with NSW Health Department and was previously the Director of the Northern Rivers Public Health unit. During 2000 he was Olympic Public Health Manager for greater western and south-western Sydney.

Dinner

Dinner with the speaker will be held after the meeting at a nearby restaurant. Please tell Caro Badcock at caro.badcock@covance.com if you wish to come.

President Alun Pope	Secretary Neville Weber	Treasurer Shelton Peiris	Membership Secretary Jos Beunen
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Getting to the venue – please note

Access to level 5 of St Andrew's House is not possible after 6.30pm so please be on time.

St. Andrew's House is located behind St Andrew's Cathedral in Sydney Square (also known as Town Hall Square), in the CBD. If approaching on street level, approach through the food court at the back of the square. Once inside turn left, proceed to the lift lobby and take the lift to Level 5.

The nearest railway station is Town Hall and the nearest bus stop is the Queen Victoria Building in George Street. If travelling by train, exit Town Hall station into Town Hall Arcade (below street level). Walk to the end and take the escalator up to the food court. Once there, turn left and proceed to the lift lobby beyond the left side of the food court. Take the lift to Level 5.

If travelling by car, note that St Andrew's House is on the corner of Kent and Bathurst Sts. Pay parking is available underneath the QVB building (enter via York St.), the Cinema Car Park in Kent St. and underneath St. Andrews House (enter via Kent St.)

Recent meetings

The SSAI President, **Neville Bartlett**, spoke to the NSW Branch in February, at a meeting specially arranged to discuss the question of whether the *ANZJS* should become an electronic-only journal. Neville explained the advantages of this line of approach and also the disadvantages. Members were very appreciative of Neville's willingness to speak to the Branch and there was a lively discussion after his presentation. It was clear that many of those present were not favourably disposed to the idea of electronic *only*, although they could see the advantages of having electronic as well. It was also clear that quite a few were unaware that electronic access was already available to members. Neville assured us that the Society would not rush into this without the support of the members.

At UNSW in April, **Ann Eyland** spoke to the Branch about *Measuring Justice: a statistician's journey through justice land*. This was a lively and well-attended meeting on a useful and sensitive topic. Look out for a more detailed report later.

New Council

The Annual General Meeting of the NSW Branch was held at the Sydney office of the ABS on 30 March. The outgoing President, John Rayner, announced the incoming council for 2004:

President: Alun Pope

Immediate Past President: John Rayner

Continuing Councillors: Caro Badcock, Jos Beunen, Ian Nivison-Smith, Fred Osman, Shelton Peiris, Neville Weber

New Councillors: Frankie Chan, Chris Howden, Scott Sisson.

Annual Report

The Annual Report for 2003 was presented at the AGM and will appear soon on the Branch's web-site <http://www.geocities.com/statsnsw/>.

Next meeting – Graham Wood on 22 June

At the June meeting of the Branch, Professor Graham Wood of Macquarie University will speak about *A new angle on the t-test*. This will take place at Macquarie University.

Bring a friend!

As with all meetings, you are most welcome to bring visitors: students, colleagues, friends, anyone who might get something out of the talk or just having the chance to meet other statisticians.