



**AUSTRALIAN
ACCESS FEDERATION**

www.aaf.edu.au

ANNUAL REPORT 2009





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Australian Government

**Department of Innovation
Industry, Science and Research**

The Australian Access Federation is supported
by the Department of Innovation, Industry,
Science and Research.

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The report includes the activities and outcomes since Incorporation and the Financial Report for the same dates.

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Paul Sherlock, President, Australian Access Federation

Executive Summary

This is the first Annual Report of the Australian Access Federation (AAF) Inc. which covers the last six months of 2009. The challenge of progressing the AAF has been taken up and I'm happy to report that good progress has been made on all the activities that were the focus of the Interim Executive Committee's attention this year. For many, 2009 has been the beginning of an exciting journey of discovery about the AAF and the benefits it has to offer the Australian Research and Higher Education sector.

We are now focused on 2010 and beyond to specifically concentrate on growing the Federation with a view to becoming self-sufficient and self-funding and entering into cross-federation arrangements to support international collaboration.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Project Manager, the Project Team and my fellow Interim Executive Committee members for their hard work during the year and their commitment to the future of the AAF. I would especially like to thank Clare McLaughlin and her staff from the Science and Infrastructure Division at DIISR for their ongoing support and encouragement.

Paul Sherlock
President, Australian Access Federation

The Australian Access Federation

The Australian Access Federation (AAF) Inc. is sponsored by the Australian Government's Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (DIISR).

The AAF provides a framework and support infrastructure to facilitate trusted electronic communications and collaboration within and between universities and research institutions in Australia and overseas. The AAF uses cutting edge technologies to provide a range of automatic identification services, which will allow authentication of people (researchers, teachers and students) and resources (servers, services, networks, instruments and data). It enables resource owners to identify and authorise a researcher to access online resources, such as computer facilities, data and other research infrastructure, at their home institution, at other Australian institutions, and around the world.



**The AAF is funded by the Department of Innovation,
Industry, Science and Research to support trusted electronic
communications and collaboration within the Australian
Research and Higher Education sector.**

2009 Interim Executive Committee

The Australian Access Federation Inc. was incorporated in New South Wales under the Associations Incorporation Act (1984) on 23 June 2009 and is governed by an Interim Executive Committee consisting of members of the Council of Australian University Directors of Information Technology (CAUDIT) and various other stakeholders from DIISR, AeRIC, AARNet, ARCS and CSIRO. The 2009 Interim Executive Committee Members are:



Mr Neil Thelander
President, AAF Inc.

Neil was Director of Information Technology Services at Queensland University of Technology (QUT) for eleven years before his resignation in early 2010. Neil has thirty-two years experience in IT with the last twenty-two years in executive positions in the public sector, health and education. Neil is a certified professional grade member of the Australian Computer Society specialising in project management and served four years as an elected member of the Board of Directors of AARNet and 5 years as a member of the Teaching Faculty for the CAUDIT Institute. He was elected Chair of CAUDIT in October 2008.



Mr Paul Sherlock
Vice President, AAF Inc.

Paul has been Director of Information Strategy and Technology Services at UniSA for the past 8 years. Prior to joining the University, Paul held senior ICT based management roles at the Defence Science & Technology Organisation (Adelaide) and BHP Billiton (Whyalla). Paul is Deputy Chair of CAUDIT and has been Director and Chair of SABRENet Ltd since its formation in September 2006. He is also a member of the Australian National Data Service (ANDS) Steering Committee. Paul has formal qualifications in Engineering (Electrical), Computing, Business (MBA), and Finance. He is a chartered professional member of the Institution of Engineers and a graduate member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Mr David Toll
Treasurer, AAF Inc.

David has worked with the CSIRO for close to 7 years and his current role is Acting Chief Financial Officer. David has held a number of senior positions at CSIRO, including Chief Information Officer from 2007 with responsibility for Information and Communication Technology and library functions and General Manager of Finance and Property. David is a member of the VERNET Board and the Australian National Data Service (ANDS) Steering Committee and is a Certified Practising Accountant (CPA).



Mr Bruce Callow
Secretary, AAF Inc.

Bruce is the current Director of Information and Communication Technology Services for Griffith University, a position he has occupied since January 2009. Previous to this, Bruce was the Associate Director of Enterprise Information Systems for Griffith. During this period he was on the Board of Directors for the global Higher Education Users Group and Chair of the ANZ Higher Education Users Group. Bruce has spent some 30 years in the IT industry including 14 years as an Army Officer in various IT related roles, a number of years as an IT Manager in large Local Government Authorities and as a business manager with AWA Computers.



Mr Richard Northam
Public Officer, AAF Inc.

Richard Northam currently holds the role of General Manager of the Council of Australian University Directors of Information Technology and has been with CAUDIT for 6 years. Richard has more than 20 years experience in the ICT industry in higher education and the public sector including senior management appointments as the IT Manager at the University of New South Wales @ the Australian Defence Force Academy, Network Manager at the Insurance and Superannuation Commission, Associate Director of the Information Management & Technology Branch at the then Department of Primary Industries & Energy and has served as the Director of Information Systems within the Headquarters of the Australian Air Force Cadets. Richard holds a degree in Engineering (Electronics) and is a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Ordinary Members

Mr Alan McMeekin	Monash University
Mr John Parry	University of Tasmania
Mr Nick Tate	University of Queensland
Mr Garry Trinder	Edith Cowan University
Professor Anthony Williams	Australian Research Collaboration Service (ARCS)


Co-Opt Non-Voting Members

Dr Rhys Francis	Australian eResearch Infrastructure Council (AeRIC)
Ms Clare McLaughlin	Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (DIISR)
Mr Peter Nicholson	Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (DIISR)
Mr Peter Nissen	Council of Australian University Directors of Information Technology (CAUDIT)
Mr James Sankar	AARNet
Mr Stephen Whiteside	University of Auckland

AAF Inc. Project Team

The AAF Project Team was set up to manage and co-ordinate activities on behalf of the AAF Inc. Interim Executive Committee. The 2009 Project Team members are:

Project Manager	Mr Heath Marks
Technical Program Manager	Mr Terence Smith
Change and Communication Manager	Ms Glenys Kranz
Senior Project Officer	Mr Steven Beagley
Policy, Process and Strategy	Ms Patricia McMillan
Technical Specialist (MAMS Migration)	Mr Bruc Liong
Technical Specialist (Advanced Technical Development)	Mr Bradley Beddoes



From a researcher's point of view the main advantage of the AAF is in having a system that provides a single sign-on for whatever system or research service they wish to use — no more managing a huge number of separate access accounts.

David Toll, Chief Information Officer, CSIRO



2009 In Review



2009

Our first six months have been extremely successful and active. The AAF has experienced rapid Participant growth, championed by a comprehensive marketing and communications strategy and renewed sector interest. Conference presentations, workshops and a new online presence have planted the seed for strong community involvement and the growth of technical communities of practice. The first two rounds of the AAF Mini-grant scheme have also seen promising interest and will deliver valuable AAF enabled services to the Higher Education and Research Sector over the next 12 months.

A snapshot of our first six months:

June

AAF Inc. Registered as an Incorporated Association

AAF Inc. was registered as an Incorporated Association on 23 June 2009.

Appointment of the AAF Interim Executive Committee

An Interim Executive Committee was appointed consisting of members from the Council of Australian University Directors of Information Technology (CAUDIT) and various other stakeholders from the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (DIISR), Australian eResearch Infrastructure Council (AeRIC), AARNet, Australian Research Collaboration Service (ARCS) and Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO).

July

Appointment of an AAF Project Manager to run the operations of the AAF

Heath Marks from Griffith University was appointed as the AAF Project Manager.

First Participants Join the Federation

The first six Participants joined the Federation.

August

Inaugural Meeting of the AAF Inc. Interim Executive Committee

The Interim Executive Committee held their Inaugural Meeting on 25 August 2009.

October

AAF Mini-grant Scheme

A Mini-grant scheme was initiated to assist current and potential Service Providers with the deployment of their service(s) to the Federation.

AAF Inc. Operator Appointment Process

In October and November 2009, the AAF advertised nationally for suitably qualified and experienced companies to respond to a Request for Information (RFI).

November

Transition of the MAMS Testbed Federation

MAMS Testbed Federation Participants were migrated to the AAF Production Federation.

2009 AAF Participants

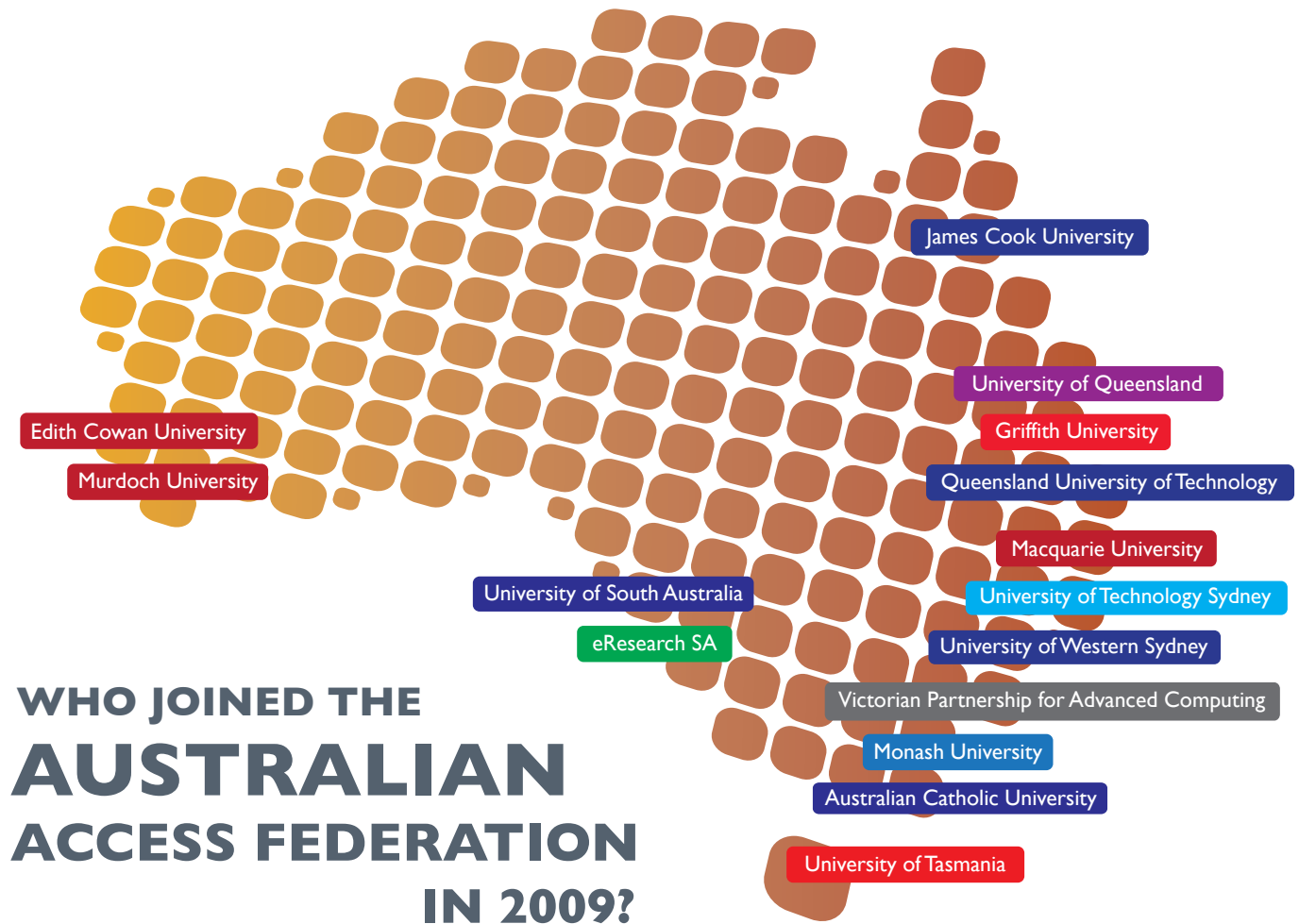
The transition from the Pilot AAF to Production AAF completed in June 2009. All organisations joining the Production Federation have signed the Federation 'Commitment to the Rules for Participants' on a 'best endeavours' basis. As of 31 December 2009, 18 Members and 1 Affiliate have joined the Production AAF (see table 1 and 2 for a list of Federation Members and Affiliates as of 31/12/2009).

Institution	Join Date
Australian Catholic University	November 13 2009
Australian Commonwealth Scientific and Research Organisation	July 27 2009
Australian Research Collaboration Service	August 6 2009
Edith Cowan University	July 27 2009
eResearch SA	December 22 2009
Griffith University	July 27 2009
James Cook University	October 1 2009
Lincoln University (New Zealand)	December 3 2009
Macquarie University	December 2 2009
Monash University	July 27 2009
Queensland University of Technology	August 3 2009
University of Auckland (New Zealand)	November 10 2009
University of Canterbury (New Zealand)	November 18 2009
University of Queensland	December 16 2009
University of South Australia	July 27 2009
University of Tasmania	July 27 2009
University of Western Sydney	October 6 2009
Victorian Partnership for Advanced Computing	November 24 2009

Table 1: Federation Members as at 31 December 2009

Institution	Join Date
Pebble Learning	November 25 2009

Table 2: Federation Affiliates as at 31 December 2009



Transition of the MAMSTestbed Participants to the AAF

The transition of Identity Providers and Service Providers from the Meta Access Management System (MAMS) Level 1 and 2 Federations to the AAF Production Federation was carried out with the support of staff from the Macquarie University eLearning Centre of Excellence (MELCOE). The MAMS Level 1 and 2 Federations were decommissioned by MELCOE on 14 December 2009. Below is a summary of the transition activities:

- 27 institutions were successfully migrated;
- 4 institutions delayed their migration until after the decommissioning of MAMS;
- 7 institutions were not migrated either through choice or their Identity Provider was not operational in the MAMS federation;
- 22 Services were migrated; and
- 24 Services were not migrated (many services were not migrated as they were only test services).



Operator Request For Information

The primary purpose of the Australian Access Federation (AAF) Inc. is to put in place systems and services in order to create what is effectively a Single Sign-on environment for researchers, educators and students who wish to use shared information, communication and technology based facilities and services both within Australia and globally.

The AAF is looking to appoint an Operator(s) to deliver many of the AAF services to Federation Participants on its behalf, including support for long term planning and growth and the day-to-day business functions of the Federation. The appointment process is two-phased.

The first phase has been completed and consisted of an initial Request for Information (RFI) designed to enable the AAF to assess the market. The RFI closed on 30 November 2009. The AAF has reviewed the responses and will begin the second phase, a Request for Offer (RFO) process, in 2010.

AAF Mini-grants

A Mini-grant scheme to stimulate development and deployment of AAF enabled services opened on 1 October 2009. Grants of up to \$40,000 were to be awarded for projects that had the potential to promote growth of the AAF across the sector and would:

- be likely to be used by participants;
- facilitate the AAF uptake by new members;
- be developed and deployed quickly;
- benefit Australian research, teaching and learning effectiveness; and
- involve collaboration and/or can be used more broadly across the research and education community.

Round 1 and Round 2 closed on 30 October and 27 November 2009 respectively. Although only one application was received in Round 1, the number of enquiries we received as a result of actively promoting the Mini-grant scheme through a myriad of advertising channels was more than encouraging. Consequently, 10 applications were received in Round 2. All indications are that Round 3 will be just as successful – perhaps more so. The AAF has been delighted with the diversity and range of projects put forward for consideration.

Mini-grant Recipients

Successful Mini-grant applications for Round 1 and Round 2 were:



Organisation Awarded	Project	Grant
Round 1		
CSIRO	AuScope Grid Portal Project	\$37,000
Round 2		
Monash University	Access to ARCS Nimrod Services	\$40,000
Queensland University of Technology	Advanced Shibboleth Integration with Blackboard	\$39,600
RMIT Publishing	Informit AAF Integration	\$36,000
University of Queensland	Phenomics Ontology Driven Data repository (PODD) AAF Enablement	\$35,271
University of South Australia	University Benchmarking	\$20,000
Tasmanian Partnership for Advanced Computing	TPAC Portal AAF Implementation	\$40,000
Total Mini-grants Awarded:		\$247,871

Marketing and Communications

Following the appointment of a dedicated Change and Communication Manager for the AAF in September, a comprehensive communication and marketing strategy has been developed to accelerate uptake of the AAF initially within the Higher Education and Research sector. The key strategies include:

Engagement Packs

Different Engagement Packs for each group of stakeholders have been developed to specifically meet the needs of, and provide information to, each identified group.

Promotional items

A project brochure and posters and flyers for key messages have been developed to support the planned communication activities. AAF promotional items have also been produced for distribution at conferences and events (polo shirts, pens, post-it note pads). All material ensures easy recognition of the AAF 'brand'.

AAF Website

The AAF Website, which provides on-line access to information about the AAF, including governance, how to Join, the Mini-grant Scheme and News & Events, was launched in September 2009. An AAF Wiki also provides a collaborative space for the sharing of information between the AAF Community, including Mini-grant recipients, technical support and documentation and acts as a resource hub. A snapshot of AAF website statistics from September to December 2009 can also be found on the Wiki.

Micro-blogging

The AAF has also been engaging with interested parties through the Micro blogging website Twitter and Social Networking website Facebook.

Conferences and Roadshows

2009 AAF conferences:

- eResearch Australasia Conference 2009 - joint workshop with ARCS and an AAF Information/promotion booth
- CAUDIT Annual Meeting
- Innovation 2009 Summit

A series of interstate Roadshows are planned for the Project Team. The first Roadshows were held in Sydney in November 2009 at universities from the immediate area and plans are in train to hold further Roadshows in Melbourne and State regional areas in 2010. A number of different channels have been utilised to communicate with stakeholders. In the 4th quarter 2009, the AAF released 34 news articles through enewsletters and the AAF website. The focus of these releases included publicity regarding major activities, such as new members joining the AAF, the Mini-grant Scheme and the Operator appointment process.



...as more institutions utilise software as a service, they need assurance that the authentication data they share with service providers is securely and safely managed. Being part of the AAF helps PebblePad meet institutions' evolving needs through a trusted community

Shane Sutherland, Director of Pebble Learning





Building Trust, Providing Access for the Future

2010

Supporting and growing the AAF is a critical step in ensuring that the Federation meets its goal to be self-sufficient in the future. In 2009, the AAF has particularly targeted universities and research support organisations with a specific engagement strategy which will provide us with significant opportunity to grow the AAF into the future. We understand the challenges ahead but believe the AAF is ready to progress to the next phase of operation.

The Year Ahead

Appointment of an Operator(s)

The AAF Inc. will begin Phase two of the Operator(s) appointment process in 2010. Respondents to the Request for Information (RFI) will be invited to submit a full Request for Offer (RFO). The AAF Inc. will work closely with the appointed Operator(s) to implement a seamless Migration Plan to guarantee minimal disruption to delivery of Federation services to its participants.

AAF Inc. Sustainability

The AAF Inc. Interim Executive Committee will continue to review a number of Federation charging models and scenarios at other research and education federations in operation internationally. The AAF's objective is to work towards being self-sustaining through subscription fees levied on Participants from 2011 onwards. Fees in 2010 will continue to be waived, allowing the AAF to grow the Federation and provide a mechanism for its Participants to focus on full compliance to the AAF's Federation Rules for Participants.

Growth of the Federation

Growth of the Participant base is one of the primary goals for the AAF in 2010. The need for growth is both to increase the usefulness of the federation to its Members and to establish a Participant base large enough to sustainably fund the future of the federation through subscription fees.

During the year ahead, AAF Inc. will continue to execute a number of strategies to engage actively with the following three groups of organisations:

- Australian universities and research support organisations such as the Members of ARCS (MARCS)
- Existing AAF Members to identify other potential Participants with whom they are currently collaborating, ensuring that the federation grows in a way that is most useful to its Members; and
- Organisations and groups associated with the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) process. These organisations and groups represent the shared use of research infrastructure, facilities and resources throughout Australia.

Engagement with the International Community

The AAF will continue to engage with the international federation community through the Research and Education FEDerations (REFeds) group coordinated by TERENA. REFeds includes representatives from 23 existing research and education federations from Europe, North America, Asia and Australia and several federations in the process of forming. REFeds meets twice per year in Europe to discuss and harmonise federation policy, technical and business approaches. The group communicates actively at other times through a discussion list and wiki. The AAF also participates by invitation in ECAM, the European Committee on Academic Middleware, which is TERENA's coordinating committee for federation and middleware activities. ECAM meets monthly via teleconference. Participating actively in these groups gives the AAF a voice in influencing international federation directions, provides an avenue for input and assistance from the international community and paves the way for future co-federation arrangements. AAF Inc. will send a representative to the next REFeds meeting in June 2010.

Advanced Technical Developments

The AAF has employed a dedicated staff member to work on advancing the technical developments of the Federation in 2010. A roadmap of activities will see the AAF collaborating with the international Federation community to ensure best practice with enhancing and further developing the Federation.

Income Statement

For the year end 2009.

	NOTES	
REVENUE		
Commonwealth Grants		
Department of Innovation, Industry, Science & Research	I	2,000,000.00
TOTAL REVENUE		\$ 2,000,000.00
EXPENSES		
Advertising, Marketing & Promotional Expenses		16,980.48
Consultants - Professional		3,681.39
Contributions to External Collaborative Projects		51,894.00
Employee Benefits & On Costs		117,475.56
Fringe Benefits Tax		115.79
General Supplies & Services		158.90
Non-Capitalised Equipment		819.26
Postage, Freight & Courier		147.37
Printing & Stationery		1,919.38
Rental, Hire & Other Leasing Fees		45.45
Telecommunications		1,369.82
Travel & Related Staff Development & Training		8,633.29
TOTAL EXPENSES		203,240.69
PROFIT/(LOSS)		1,796,759.31
RETAINED FUNDS		
Opening Retained Funds		
Profit/(Loss)		1,796,759.31
CLOSING RETAINED FUNDS		1,796,759.31

Note I Interest revenue for the period June 2009 to December 2009 has been journalled to the project in February 2010

