

# Australian Nursing Federation



11-12

## Annual Report

Australian Nursing Federation  
Federal Office



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## Federal President's Report

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As President it is my privilege to contribute to this annual report by outlining a number of Federal Executive and Federal Council activities for the last year. Firstly, I am pleased to report the continued overall increase in ANF membership in all state and territory Branches. With a membership of over 220,000 the ANF is now considered the largest union in Australia.

Some of the major issues that have required the attention of the Federal Executive and Federal Council over the past year include:

- our campaign in the aged care sector, 'Because We Care' has succeeded in securing \$1.2b from the federal government for area of most workforce pressure in aged care;
- mounting a low paid bargaining claim for practice nurses;
- participating in the Health Workforce Australia national training plan and other workforce committees;
- participating in the patient-controlled electronic health care record design and implementation;
- exerting influence at the federal government level regarding a range of professional and industrial matters;
- international assistance to our Pacific neighbours, including international aid through Union Aid Abroad - APHEDA; and
- representation on numerous taskforces, alliances and advisory groups to further the professional interests of nursing and midwifery.

In order to deal with the ongoing management of the Federation and discuss matters of importance nationally the Federal Executive and Federal Council continued to meet regularly. These meetings provide the means to address common industrial and professional issues being faced by the State and Territory Branches and also for essential strategic planning for the Federation's future direction.

At the national level, the Federation has continued to foster strong relationships with other peak nursing and midwifery bodies. These important relationships have been forged in order for Australian nurses and midwives to have a stronger, consistent voice at a national and international level in respect to a wide range of nursing, midwifery and health matters.

On behalf of the ANF Federal Executive, Federal Council and the ANF membership, I would like to once again thank all the staff of the Federal Office for their dedication and hard work over the past year. They are clearly committed to the goals of the Federation and the union movement more generally. I look forward to working with all members of the Federal Executive, Federal Council and the Federal Office staff over the coming year to continue to further the interests of the ANF members.



Coral Levett  
Federal President

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## Federal Secretary's Report

I have great pleasure in presenting the annual report for the Federation. The preceding 12 months have been challenging and successful as the Federation has continued to go from strength to strength, now the largest and one of the fastest growing unions in Australia. The Federation's membership at 30 June 2012 was 220,531. I am pleased to present to you the industrial, professional, communications, political and education reports that cover the core business areas of the Federal Office.

In addition to those reports some other highlights are: The ANF remains affiliated to the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) and has participated in the insecure employment campaign and contributed to the climate change agenda. The ANF attends each ACTU Executive meeting and is a member of the finance committee and the growth and campaign committee.

The ANF is the technical advisor to the Royal College of Nursing Australia (now the Australian College of Nursing (ACN)) at the International Council of Nursing (ICN) conferences. Given our close association with the ACN and ICN the ANF will be assisting with the preparations for the 2013 ICN conference to be held in Melbourne, 18-23 May.

The ANF remains the secretariat for the National Aged Care Alliance (the Alliance); an alliance of 30 organisations representing providers, professional groups, unions and consumer groups.

The Federal Office contributes to a number of Inquiries by way of written submissions. All submissions can be found on the Federal Office website at: [http://www.anf.org.au/html/publications\\_submissions.html](http://www.anf.org.au/html/publications_submissions.html)

The ANF will continue to advocate nationally for nurses, midwives and assistants in nursing industrially and professionally and we congratulate you, our members, for your hard work and loyalty.



Lee Thomas  
Federal Secretary

# Federal Industrial Report

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The 2011 - 2012 ANF industrial program continued to focus on the protection and advancement of the industrial rights of nurses, midwives and assistants in nursing (however titled).

The issues covered include:

- Provide effective industrial leadership and representation for nurses at the national level;
- Achieving planned and coordinated salary increases for all nurses in Australia, principally through collective bargaining, and where this is not possible, by seeking review and amendments to the national award covering nurses, midwives and assistants in nursing;
- Maintain and enhance conditions of employment for nurses in Australia;
- Provide support to ANF Branches that enables them to meet their industrial objectives;
- Develop effective and constructive relationships with the Australian Council of Trade Unions and affiliated unions; and
- Develop effective and constructive relationships with the federal government, other political parties and industrial bodies.

## Industrial Regulation – Post implementation review of the Fair Work Act 2009

When the Australian government passed the Fair Work legislation in 2009, it also committed to monitoring the impact of the provisions of the legislation through a post-implementation review. The review commenced in January 2012 and was to provide an objective assessment of the operation of the Fair Work legislation and the extent to which it is operating as intended. The ANF's submission to the review noted the substantial improvements in the industrial rights and entitlements of employees and their unions in comparison to the previous Work Choices legislation. The review also provided an opportunity to put forward further reforms necessary for the Fair Work Act to better meet the objectives of providing fairness and representation at work as well as addressing some inconsistencies in its applications.

## Minimum wages

In 2012 Fair Work Australia increased all minimum award rates of pay by 2.9%. The new minimum weekly entry level wage for nurses are as follows:

Assistant in Nursing	\$662.00
Enrolled nurse	\$719.30
Registered Nurse	\$769.30

## Review of modern awards

The Fair Work Act requires Fair Work Australia to undertake a review of all modern awards two years after their commencement in 2010. FWA is required to consider whether modern awards meet their objectives and whether they are operating effectively without anomalies or technical problems.

As part of the review, the ANF applied for variations to the modern Nurses Award, which sets out the safety net of pay and conditions for nurses, midwives and assistants in nursing who work outside the public sector. The ANF's application included a number of claims such as the insertion of a classification and minimum wage rate for assistants in nursing holding a Certificate IV, and

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## Federal Industrial Report

the introduction of qualifications and in-charge allowances. By the end of the financial year, Fair Work Australia had set out a timetable for the consideration of all modern awards, which is expected to continue into 2013.

### Independent Inquiry into insecure work

The ANF participated in the ACTU's insecure work campaign designed to examine the growth in insecure forms of employment replacing permanent employment arrangements over the past 20 years. The high incidence of casual, part-time and fixed or short term contract work is a persistent feature of nursing work with nurses sometimes working several jobs to make up enough hours to manage financially.

The ANF submission highlighted the impact of insecure work on nurses, the implications for recruitment and retention and the supply of nurses generally.

### Historic equal pay case

The first decision under the Fair Work Act's equal remuneration provisions has delivered increases of between 23 and 45 percent to workers in the social and community services sector. Changes to the rates of pay in the relevant award will be phased in over an eight year period with increases applying to about 120,000 workers. The case was lodged by the Australian Services Union in 2010 to address the gender-based undervaluation of the community services sector and deliver long overdue pay increases to employees in workplaces where it has been difficult to bargain.

### Practice Nurses low paid bargaining application

The ANF lodged an application with Fair Work Australia (FWA) as the first formal step in seeking to improve the wages and working conditions of nursing staff employed in medical centres and clinics. This followed the ANF writing to employers seeking to engage them in negotiations to enter into collective bargaining agreements to cover their practice nurses. The ANF has applied for FWA to make a low-paid bargaining authorisation to cover up to 850 general practice clinics and medical centres in Victoria, New South Wales and Tasmania. An authorisation would force employers covered by it to bargain in good faith with the ANF for collective agreements and provides FWA with additional powers to assist the parties to reach an agreement and, in the last resort, to arbitrate a resolution. At the end of the financial year, FWA was due to hold a hearing to determine the ANF's application in September 2012.

### Occupational Health and Safety

The ANF continued to lobby for improved health and safety and workers' compensation rights for Australian nurses.

2011-2012 saw the continued development of harmonised occupational health and safety (OHS) laws by the national OHS body Safe Work Australia (SWA). These laws are intended to replace the separate OHS schemes in each State and Territory and those covered under Commonwealth legislation. The majority of jurisdictions passed new Acts of Parliament in accordance with the harmonised laws which generally took effect from 1 January 2012. As part of the development of the laws, the ANF made submissions to SWA in relation to the development of model codes of practice including to proposed codes on workplace bullying and fatigue.



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The ANF was also involved in campaigns and lobbying around needlestick and sharps injuries, manual handling, and violence in the workplace. Various national policies were revised and re-endorsed including policies on bullying, violence and no lifting.

Monash University published a report *What Nurses Want: Analysis of the First National Survey on Nurses' Attitudes to Work and Work Conditions in Australia* on issues facing Australian nurses at work including OHS issues which was based on a survey developed in collaboration with the ANF.

## Overseas Nurses

With a low unemployment rate and high economic confidence Australia remains a favourite destination for skilled migrants.

The latest figures available show that in 2011-2012 approximately 3,000 international nurses arrived in Australia to work on temporary employer sponsored visas (subclass 457), with an additional 2,900 being granted permanent residence through the skilled migration program. This brings the total close to 6,000 for the fiscal year.

The Australian government continues to make significant reforms to skilled migration, targeting skills that are considered a priority in order to deliver a more responsive and demand driven program. In recent years this has seen a shift in numbers from independent migration to employer sponsored visa categories, ensuring labour market outcomes for overseas workers.

With the structural shortage that exists in the nursing workforce in Australia, this means that nursing and other health occupations remain as high priorities for Australian employers. The Australian government streamlines and fast tracks applications for overseas nurses seeking to work in Australia given their skills and experience are in high demand.

## Public sector agreement outcomes

Victorian nurses and midwives employed in the public sector campaigned for nine months to reach a new enterprise agreement securing the continuation of the State's nurse/midwife patient ratios and stopping the State government replacing nurses with health assistants. Overall pay increases, including a new professional development allowance, range from between 14 and 21 percent. The new agreement was approved on the 29 June 2012.

Nurses and midwives in Queensland have also been involved in drawn out negotiations for their new public sector agreement. The proposed new agreement is currently under consideration by nurses and midwives with voting to commence at the end of June 2012.

Successful negotiations resulted in the approval of enterprise agreements covering nurses and midwives employed in the public sector in the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory.

The table below details the percentage increases and expiry dates of public sector enterprise agreements that apply over the 2011-2012 period. In addition to the wage increases detailed, several agreements provide for significant increases to base rates of pay and improved classification structures before general wage increases are applied.

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Agreements commonly include a range of improvements to employment conditions including implementation of staffing mechanisms such as nurse to patient ratios; qualification allowances and shift and rostering arrangements.

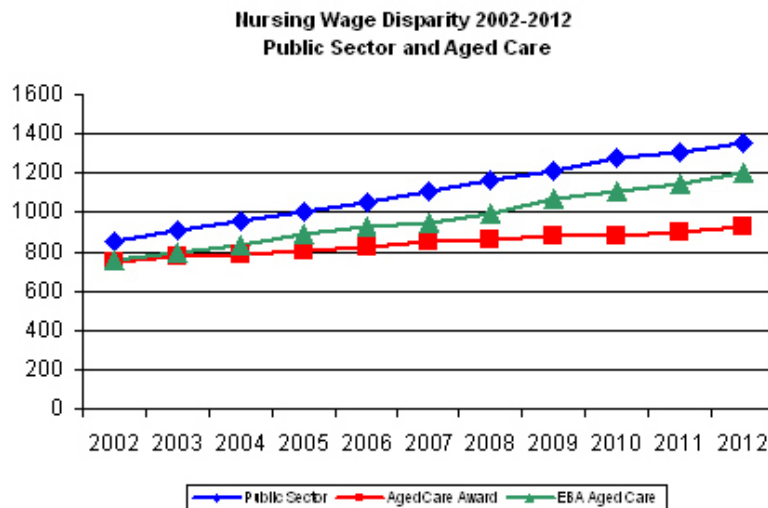
The outcomes achieved in the public health sectors of the states and territories are important as they not only establish a benchmark for ANF negotiations in the private acute and aged care sectors, but also apply to the majority of the nursing workforce.

STATE	OUTCOME
New South Wales	9.4% over 3 years (expires 30.06.13)
Victoria	12% over 4 years (expires 31.03.16)
Northern Territory	9.0% over 3 years (expires 09.08.14)
Tasmania	9.2% over 3 years (expires 30.06.13)
South Australia	10-14% over 3 years (expires 30.06.13)
Queensland	12.5% over 3 years (expires 31.03.12) (New agreement pending)
Australian Capital Territory	7.0% over 2 years (expires 30.06.13)
Western Australia	12.25% over 3 years (expires 30.06.13)

### Aged care

The wages gap between nurses working in aged care and nurses working in the public sector continues to increase. While there are a growing number of collective agreements negotiated in the aged care sector, the wages and conditions outcomes are generally less favourable than public sector outcomes and fail to remove the disparity in wages and conditions.

The ANF is optimistic that the announcement by the Australian Government in April 2012 to introduce major reforms in the aged care sector, including a commitment to address workforce issues such as the growing wages gap, offers an opportunity to begin to address this issue. The graph below demonstrates the wages gap.



Nick Blake  
Senior Federal Industrial Officer

# Federal Professional Report

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The Professional Team in the ANF Federal Office has undertaken extensive policy and advocacy work in 2011-2012. The team has represented the interests of the ANF membership across the broad range of issues that impact the nursing and midwifery professions and subsequently the health and wellbeing of the community. The Federal Professional Team has undertaken national projects, developed and coordinated national submissions, given evidence at Senate inquiries and participated in national conferences, seminars, forums, committees, meetings, working groups, alliances and projects, throughout the past year. The team is responsible for overseeing and coordinating the development and review of ANF national policies, position statements and guidelines in conjunction with the professional officers in the state and territory Branches.

The Federal Professional Officers coordinated the Professional Advisory Committee, which consists of federal, state and territory ANF Branch professional officers. Federal Office has worked closely with our colleagues in the ANF Branches in the provision of advice and submissions to governments and health related bodies on a variety of issues.

Our team has continued to provide secretariat support to the work of the Coalition of National Nursing Organisations (CoNNO), an alliance of over fifty nursing and midwifery organisations. The Coalition represents the national interests of nurses and midwives in all sectors of the health and aged care systems, and provides a forum for collaboration on issues of concern. The Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing has again committed to the provision of funds for CoNNO for the next twelve month funding round to support a face to face meeting twice a year, alternating between Melbourne and Sydney.

This year, Federal Professional Officers prepared and presented papers, participated in panel discussions and workshops at national nursing and midwifery events; and, provided professional advice to national nursing and midwifery organisations and other health related bodies, nursing and midwifery members, as well as the ANF Federal Executive. Through established relationships with other national nursing and midwifery organisations, governments, consumer and carer groups, and relevant health and aged care national bodies, the ANF Federal Professional Team has progressed issues of mutual interest.

On behalf of our members, the ANF has participated in the analysis, development and review of national policy and advocated for a broad range of professional nursing and midwifery issues related to the priorities outlined below. This work has aimed to enhance the safety and quality of health and aged care leading to improved health outcomes and wellbeing for the Australian community.

Priorities for the Professional Team on health and aged care in 2011-2012 included:

- nursing and midwifery practice and professionalism;
- regulation including national registration, accreditation and professional practice frameworks;
- education and continuing professional development;
- health and aged care workforce;
- socio-economic welfare;
- health and aged care reform;
- community services;
- veterans' affairs;

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## Federal Professional Report

- occupational health and safety;
- links with industrial relations;
- social justice and human rights;
- immigration, migration and foreign affairs;
- legislative reform;
- information technology and management incorporating e-health and telehealth;
- Indigenous health;
- primary health care;
- quality use of medicines;
- pandemic surveillance;
- maternity services;
- aged care;
- rural and remote health;
- environmental issues including climate change and natural disaster management;
- disaster planning; and
- mental health

Major work activities of the Federal Professional Team included:

### E-health and informatics

ANF Professional Officers attended National E-Health Transition Authority (NEHTA) and Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) stakeholder discussion forums on the introduction of the Personally Controlled Electronic Health Record (PCEHR); provided submissions to consultations on the legislative framework underpinning the PCEHR operations; and worked collaboratively with DoHA, NEHTA and their national change and adoption partners to provide information, education, training and support in the lead up to the national launch of the PCEHR in June 2012.

The ANF Professional Team has continued to participate as a member of the Australian Government Telehealth Advisory Group (TAG). The Telehealth initiative has provided support for online videoconferencing to connect patients in rural, remote and outer metropolitan areas to specialist services. Funding through this program has allowed health professionals to provide support at the patient-end of the online consultation. Where it is determined that clinical support is required, there is now a rebate for the practice nurse, nurse practitioner, general practitioner, midwife or aboriginal health worker to be in attendance. This has been an important step to improve communication and collaboration by connecting the patient with the broader health care team for the provision of a more accessible and integrated health service.

### Primary health care

The ANF Professional Team worked collaboratively with the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) on the implementation of the new practice nurse funding initiative. The Practice Nurse Incentive Program (PNIP) was introduced in January 2012. The ANF was represented on the Department's PNIP Technical Working Group and the Evaluation Advisory

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Group. The PNIP now enables nurses in general practice to work to their full scope rather than limiting the care they provide to a handful of Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) item numbers.

Work was completed on the adaptation of the Victorian School Nurses School Nursing Professional Standards into a national standards document. The ANF Professional Team worked closely with the Victorian School Nurse Special Interest Group to complete the publication which will be launched in September 2012.

The Australian Medicare Local Alliance, previously the Australian General Practice Network (AGPN), invited ANF to participate in a Steering Group providing oversight for the development of a publication to support the business case for nurse practitioners in primary care. This document, Nurse practitioners in primary care: benefits for your practice, will be available in August 2012.

### Quality use of medicines

The Federal Professional Team has had extensive involvement in issues relating to the quality use of medicines over the last 12 months. Some of the activities undertaken include:

- Representation of ANF on the Australian Commission for Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC) Health Service Medication Expert Advisory Committee (HSMEAG), responsible for oversight of the implementation of the national inpatient medicines chart in the public health sector and advising on health service-based medication standardisation initiatives and health service-based medication safety and quality.
- Representation of nursing and allied health on the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement (5CPA) Programs Reference Group (PRG), providing advice on the policy dimensions of pharmacy programs, including their scope and evaluation requirements. The PRG consists of a number of representatives from peak groups and experts, both within and external to the pharmacy sector.
- Participation as a member of the National Prescribing Service (NPS), the ANF Professional Officer attended the NPS Annual General Meeting held in November 2011. The nurse on the Board of NPS (Dr Kay Price) was jointly nominated for this position by ANF and RCNA. The ANF has worked closely with Kay and the staff of NPS to ensure nursing is recognised as a major player in the quality use of medicines.
- Participation on the Scientific Planning Committee, speaker/panel participant and poster judge for the National Prescribing Services National Medicines Symposium (NMS) held in May 2012.
- Representation of the ANF at the National Medicines Policy (NMP) Partnerships Forum held in July 2011. The purpose of the 2011 forum was for the NMP Executive and Committee to share information on work undertaken in relation to implementation of the five NMP priority areas and to seek stakeholder input and views on a selected priority area. The five priority areas are: integrating the medicines policy framework into health system reform; informed and active consumers; evidence into practice and policy; monitoring medicines in use; and informing the research agenda. The priority area selected for the 2011 forum was monitoring medicines in use, with a focus on medication safety, evidence development, quality use, effectiveness and cost effectiveness.

## Federal Professional Report

### Pandemic surveillance

ANF Professional Officers have undertaken the roles of Chair and Secretariat for the Joint ANF/RCNA Influenza Pandemic Working Group. This group monitored international and national pandemic activity, communicated information to the membership of both organisations, and advocated for the essential role of nurses in promotion and delivery of vaccinations, pandemic planning, frontline care and prevention.

### National registration and accreditation

The ANF Senior Professional Officer was invited to participate as a member of Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC) working group established to review the National Accreditation Standards for courses leading to registration and/or endorsement as a registered nurse. Nursing and midwifery consultation forums were held in October 2011 in Sydney and April 2012 Melbourne to progress this review. The ANF Professional Team developed and coordinated the national ANF responses to the Accreditation Standards review in November 2011 and again in January 2012. The revised standards are currently being considered by the ANMAC Board before they are provided to the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA).

The Federal Professional Team developed and coordinated submission to the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia's (NMBA) consultation paper on a draft policy for re-entry to practice for nurses and midwives. The resultant NMBA Re-entry to practice policy has continued to be of concern to ANF. The Professional Team has held discussions with ANF State and Territory Branches in relation to ongoing issues experienced by members as a result of this NMBA policy.

### Rural health

It is estimated that in excess of 70,000 ANF members live and/or work in rural and remote parts of Australia. The ANF Professional Team has been active on a number of fronts to positively influence policy in relation to nursing and midwifery workforce and health and aged care in general.

Areas in which the Professional Team have represented members includes:

- Health Workforce Australia National Rural and Remote Health Workforce Strategy – representation on the Expert Reference Group for developing the Strategy;
- Telehealth – representation on the Australian Government National Telehealth Advisory Group; partner in the Telehealth Nursing and Midwifery Consortia;
- Personally controlled electronic health record (PCEHR) – participation in National e-Health forums; submissions to the Australian Government in relation to the legislative framework; collaborative work with the National e-Health Transition Authority (NEHTA) on the implementation;
- Practice Nurse Incentive Program (PNIP) – representation on the Australian Government PNIP Advisory Group for the development and implementation of the new funding model;
- Australian Government funded scholarships for nurses and midwives – represent the interests of our nursing and midwifery members on the scholarship advisory and selection committees;

# Federal Professional Report

- Working Safe in Rural and Remote Australia Project – a unique partnership of health professionals, teachers and police, combining forces to develop a national framework for action for a whole-of-community response to working safely (see details below).

The ANF is one of the 32 national organisations in the National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA), which continues to work collaboratively to improve the health and wellbeing of people in Australia's rural and remote areas. The Alliance has lobbied the Australian Government on a range of health care inequities experienced by country people. The ANF has been represented on the Council through the Senior Federal Professional Officer. Through the NRHA, the ANF has contributed to the discussion and development of broad Government policy to effect health and social change for rural and remote communities.

## Social justice

The ANF is a national organisational member of ACOSS, the peak body of the community services and welfare sector, and, the national voice for people affected by poverty and inequality. ANF has lent the Federation's support to national ACOSS campaigns, forums and conferences which have raised awareness and debated sustainable policy reforms seeking to provide opportunity, justice and equity for all Australians.

With an alarmingly high number of Australians on waiting lists for dental care and many delaying or avoiding dental treatment due to affordability, the ANF continues to advocate for better oral health by participating as a member of the National Oral Health Alliance (NOHA). This Alliance represents community, dental and health organisations seeking solutions to the poor access to services and oral health outcomes experienced by many Australians. The ANF has represented members, who see in their daily practice, the effect that poor oral health has on overall health and wellbeing.

NOHA has campaigned for clear, direct and effective action to be taken by Governments to address key priorities in oral health. The Alliance has maintained that an improved oral health system must be a part of a more equitable and effective health system.

The ANF continues to participate as a member of the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) which advocates for social justice for children and adolescents.

## Climate change

At the front line of health care delivery, the nursing and midwifery professions will be increasingly affected by climate change in their professional capacity. The ANF recognises climate change as a significant issue for health and has participated in activities to promote mitigation of its effects. In 2011-2012, the ANF endorsed a national position statement on climate change to guide members on this issue. An accompanying fact sheet is currently under development.

The ANF is a member of the Climate and Health Alliance (CAHA), with a representative on the Committee of Management. This alliance of health related organisations seeks to educate the health sector about climate change and assist health and aged care facilities to improve their environmental sustainability. CAHA communicates to governments and the wider community about climate change and health.

## Federal Professional Report

The ANF is also a member of the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) Climate Action Group.

### Workforce professional issues

ANF Federal Professional Officers have participated on the following HWA project committees in 2011-2012:

- HWA Standing Advisory Committee for Health Professions;
- HWA National Training Plan (Health Workforce 2025) Governance Committee;
- HWA Nursing and Midwifery Graduate Jobs Portal Expert Reference Group;
- HWA National Rural and Remote Health Workforce Strategy Expert Reference Group;
- HWA Health Professionals Prescribing Pathway Project (HPPP) Expert Reference Group;
- HWA Expanding Workforce Scope Initiatives: Extended Scope of Practice Nurses in the Emergency Department Project Advisory Group; and
- HWA Expanding Workforce Scope Initiatives: Advanced Practice in Endoscopy Nursing Project Advisory Group.

At the invitation of Health Workforce Australia (HWA), the ANF Federal Office was represented on the Governance Committee for the development of the National Training Plan, a project later renamed Health Workforce 2025. HWA released the report, Health Workforce 2025 (HW2025), in April 2012. This report models expected workforce demand and supply for nurses, midwives and doctors to 2025. Projecting a significant shortfall of nurses, the report was considered and signed off by the State and Federal Health Ministers (Standing Council on Health) before its April release.

The only scenario in the report that substantially impacts the projected shortfall of nurses is that of Workforce Retention. This scenario reduces the projected 109,490 shortfall of nurses by 82% to slightly less than 24,846. The report states that an improved nursing retention rate may stem from changes to the practice and workplace environments. ANF is continuing to work with HWA in relation to national nursing and midwifery recruitment and retention strategies.

At the beginning of 2012, HWA commenced work on a project to develop a nationally consistent approach to prescribing by health professionals that supports safe practice, quality use of medicines and effectiveness of healthcare services. The Health Professionals Prescribing Pathway (HPPP) project plans to deliver a consistent platform by which health professionals, other than medical practitioners, may undertake prescribing of medicines consistent with their scope of professional practice. The HWA HPPP Expert Reference Group (ERG), which met for the first time in March 2012, consists of representatives of consumers, health professionals, higher education sector, jurisdictions and regulators. ANF Federal Office is represents nursing and midwifery on this ERG. The ANF Federal Professional Team developed and coordinated the national ANF response to the HWA consultation paper for this project in May 2012.

ANF participated as a member of a HWA Expert Reference Group providing advice on the development of a web-based Nursing and Midwifery Graduate Jobs Information Portal. The aim of the portal has been to support new graduates seeking employment, as well as those employers



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with unfilled vacancies suitable for graduates. The portal is designed to complement employers' usual recruitment processes by offering a site to post information about vacancies suitable for graduates and application processes. The portal has also offered nursing and midwifery graduates a one-stop shop for linking with employers and identifying where vacancies may exist in the public and private health sectors across Australia. The free portal was made available to employers and nursing and midwifery graduates from February 2012. ANF has assisted HWA with distribution of the fact sheet to nursing and midwifery stakeholders, seeking their participation and use of the portal.

## Policies and position statements

In 2011-2012, the Professional Team managed the revision and updating of 40 ANF national policies and position statements, to ensure currency.

## Submissions

The Federal Professional Team has analysed policy documents and discussion papers from a range of external sources. During the 2011-2012 financial year the team prepared and coordinated over 25 national submissions on behalf of the nursing and midwifery members of the ANF.

## Projects

### National School Nurses Professional Practice Standards

Work has been completed on adaptation of the Victorian School Nurses *School Nursing Professional Standards* into a nationally applicable set of standards. The ANF Professional Team worked closely with the Victorian School Nurse Special Interest Group to complete the publication which will benefit school nurses throughout Australia.

### Nursing Guidelines for the Management of Medicines in Aged Care

The revision of the *Nursing Guidelines for the Management of Medicines in an Aged Care*, 2002 edition was completed. This joint publication between the Australian Nursing Federation and Royal College of Nursing, Australia is now titled the *Nursing Guidelines for the Management of Medicines in Aged Care*. This publication is primarily focused on care provided in residential aged care settings, however it is also applicable to aged care services provided in the community.

### Telehealth Professional Practice Standards and Clinical Guidelines for Nursing and Midwifery

In 2011-2012, the Australian Nursing Federation formed a Nursing and Midwifery Telehealth Consortia with the Australian Practice Nurses Association, the Australian College of Midwives, the Australian College of Nurse Practitioners and CRANApplus. The consortia received funding from the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, under the Telehealth Support Component, to undertake the Telehealth Nursing and Midwifery: Education and Support Project. The project aims to provide more equitable access to specialist services for patients in regional, rural, remote and outer metropolitan areas by enabling nurses and midwives to facilitate and

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contribute effectively to safe, high quality Telehealth consultations. The ANF is undertaking a key component of the Project, namely the development and distribution of nationally agreed telehealth professional practice standards and clinical guidelines for nurses and midwives. This part of the Project commenced in June 2012 and is due for completion by March 2013.

### Working Safe in Rural and Remote Project

The Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA), the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM), the Police Federation of Australia, the Queensland Teacher's Union, CRANApplus and the Australian Nursing Federation (ANF) received funding from the Australian Government to conduct a Working Safe in Rural and Remote Australia project in 2011. The project aims to establish a national framework for whole-of-community action which builds safer workplaces for people delivering key services in rural and remote Australia. The ANF, as the union representing workplace interests of nurses and midwives in Australia, has a core interest in the provision of occupational safety and wellbeing. This Project progress is developing community wide strategies for managing workplace violence experienced by health professionals, teachers and police. The Working Safe in Rural and Remote Australia project work is scheduled for completion in the second half of 2012.



Julianne Bryce  
Senior Federal Professional Officer

# Campaign and Political Report

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## Because We Care

The National Because We Care Campaign – Quality Care for Older Australians, moved into its third year. ANF Branches have continued to co-ordinate activities and our objectives remains the same – real and tangible reform for the aged care industry so the quality of care of older Australians is the priority.

## Final Productivity Commission Report

The final Productivity Commission (PC) report – Caring for Older Australians, was tabled in Parliament by the Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, the Hon Mark Butler MP, and released on 8 August 2011. The ANF was disappointed with the final recommendations of the report, and stated the PC had failed to put the 'care' into aged care.

Significant media events were held in Canberra on the release of the Productivity Commission final report. Efforts were concentrated into lobbying federal politicians on the shortcomings of the report, which included the following concerns:

### Staffing levels and mix

The ANF submitted there needed to be a guaranteed 4.5 hours per day of nursing and personal care for each resident per day.

### PC Report recommendations

There were numerous recommendations that included the establishment of a statutory body called the Australian Aged Care Commission (AACC). Its purpose amongst other things is 'pay regard to fair and competitive wages and to consider appropriate mix and level of skills when setting their care charges'. The Report recognised that staffing levels and skills were an issue in aged care, but did not want to be prescriptive for providers by regulating how many 'high skilled (or low skilled) workers' they employ.

As such, there was nothing of substance in relation to staffing levels or skills mix included in the Report. Other issues not addressed included:

- 24 hour registered nurse cover in residential care.
- full time Director of Nursing in all aged care facilities.

### Wages gap

The Productivity Commission Report acknowledged that:

- working in aged care is labour intensive;
- demand for aged care workers is high, and is expected to significantly increase over the next 40 years;
- there are problems attracting and retaining workers in aged care;
- a comprehensive workforce strategy needs to be developed;
- paying fair and competitive wages, developing career paths and improving access to education and training are issues;

## Campaign and Political Report

- registered and enrolled nurses and assistants in nursing (AIN's) are relatively poorly paid compared to those performing similar roles in the public system, and the gap has been widening;
- the Report again proposed that the Australian Aged Care Commission (AACC) be established as an independent mechanism for assessing the efficient cost of care and the cost of wages in this care (including competitive wages, skill mix and staffing levels).

### Aged Care Can't Wait

ANF rebadged the Because We Care campaign as Aged Care Can't Wait.



A ten page Aged Care Can't Wait lobbying document was produced by the ANF and distributed to providers, consumers, members and federal politicians. This document outlined in detail the wages gap, the growth over the last ten years of the wages gap, the shortage of 20,000 nurses in aged care right now, the decline of the number of registered and enrolled nurses in aged care, and the need for the federal Labor government to inject funds to ensure that quality of care is the priority for the aged care industry.



Aged Care Can't Wait postcards were produced and distributed at worksites and in the ANJ and subsequently sent to Prime Minister Julia Gillard. A similar message was also produced on the Because We Care website for members and supporters to email directly to Prime Minister Gillard.

Thousands of Aged Care Can't Wait postcards and booklets were distributed in aged care facilities, sent to members, and used by officials to put pressure on the federal government, the Prime Minister and Minister for Health and Ageing, as well as other senior Ministers and Cabinet members.

Meetings were held with the Prime Minister, the Minister for Mental Health and Ageing Mark Butler, a range of other Ministers and Backbenchers, including the Greens and the Independents. At each of these meetings, the ANF's concerns in relation to aged care and the final Productivity Commission report was discussed.

### Budget 2012 – Why aged care had to be a feature

The ask developed for this stage of the campaign via the aged care can't wait tagline was that Budget 2012 had to be the year of aged care funding. Via the ANF's work with the National Aged Care Alliance, all members of the groups – providers, consumers and unions agreed that Budget 2012 was the year the federal government had to make a start on aged care. This target date was reinforced in all ANF's online and local campaigning.

The ANF filed a formal submission with the Economic Review Committee who oversees the federal budget process. The Submission, titled Aged Care Can't Wait, again focused heavily on more funding for aged care, included costings to close the wages gap, and was distributed to all federal members of the government.

## Campaign and Political Report

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### Tony Windsor MP community meeting

In conjunction with the NSW Nurses Association, a community meeting on aged care was organised in the federal electorate of New England held by Tony Windsor MP.

A leaflet was distributed by members along with a local petition which stated: *'Please support us Mr Windsor.'* *'Please help us achieve aged care reform and an increase to aged care funding. This will deliver benefits to so many local people you represent, older Australians, their families and dedicated nurses and AiNs throughout your electorate.'*

- Irene Neyle, Enrolled Nurse, Werris Creek.

Nurses and assistants in nursing (AIN's) working in aged care and public health in the Federal electorate of New England banded together to seek Tony Windsor's support for Budget 2012.

The petition asked Tony Windsor to:

1. make Budget 2012 the aged care budget;
2. ensure quality of care by guaranteeing a minimum number of nurses to residents on every shift; and
3. ensure that Budget 2012 commits the funds to close the wages gap and guarantee nurses remain in aged care.



At a community meeting on the 7 March at the Tamworth Community Centre the petition with over 4,000 signatures was handed to Tony Windsor.

### National Aged Care Alliance (the Alliance) Age Well Campaign



The ANF have heavily supported the Alliance Age Well campaign and attended a range of events held by the Alliance.

As part of the Age Well Campaign, the ANF along with over 100 nurses and aged care residents, attended question time at Parliament House, Canberra to show support for aged care reform.

Lee Thomas, ANF Federal Secretary, along with other members of the Alliance, spoke at the National Press Club on the importance of aged care reform for registered, enrolled, and assistants in nursing (however titled).



### Budget announcements on aged care

Just prior to the federal 2012 budget, the Gillard Government announced significant reform for aged care and included \$1.2 billion to address workforce pressures.

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## Campaign and Political Report

This announcement was a real victory for the Because We Care campaign. For over three years the campaign has been advocating for significant funding and workforce improvements in aged care, to ensure that quality care can be delivered to older Australian's.

The Government has recognised that an "appropriately skilled and well qualified workforce is fundamental to the delivery of quality aged care", and has listened to the Because We Care campaign.

### Aged care – a career of choice

The Government has acknowledged that aged care needs to be promoted as a career of choice, and to do this, qualifications, competency standards, access to career development and skills training must be addressed.

The Government will provide an additional \$1.2 billion to providers who take steps to improve the terms and conditions of their workers.

### Workforce Compact

A Workforce Compact, developed by an independently chaired Advisory Group in consultation with the sector, and endorsed by the Government will ensure that workforce reforms lead to improvements in terms and conditions for the aged care workforce.

This Workforce Compact will be finalised by September 2012. ANF Federal Secretary Lee Thomas and Leigh Hubbard are representing ANF on the Compact.

### Getup Campaign – End Mining Handouts

The ANF and the NSWNA assisted in the production of an ad with Get Up, which featured a number of nurses pleading with Treasurer Swan to put more funding into nursing, aged care and health care. This was produced in the lead up to the federal budget and was shown on pay TV and free to air TV.

### New ANF National Campaign

The ANF undertook focus groups of members, non-members and the community in Queensland, NSW, Tasmania, South Australia and Victoria throughout January and February in 2012.

The purpose of the focus groups was to provide strategic guidance into the development of a compelling ANF brand proposition that champions nursing in the eyes of members, prospective members and the general public.

Secondly and more specifically, the purpose was to assist in the development of strategy and messaging to raise the standing and worth of qualified nursing in the community in the face of the growth of unqualified nursing in our hospitals and aged care facilities.

Following the focus group analysis, it was recommended that the ANF coordinate a national positive nursing campaign. The campaign will be called **Australia's nurses and midwives, you couldn't be in better hands**, and will raise the awareness of the wonderful contribution nurses and midwives make to Australia's health system each and every day.

## Campaign and Political Report

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**Nurses and Midwives.**  
**You couldn't be in better hands.**  
[www.anf.org.au](http://www.anf.org.au)

This new campaign will be officially launched in August 2012 and will showcase the amazing work nurses and midwives do every day. Featuring a recut version of the song "she's got the whole world in her hands", our ad will also appear on free and pay to air TV, metropolitan and regional radio, and outdoor bus stop advertising.

The ANF believes now is a crucial time for the community to focus on the work nurses and midwives do every day and every night, around Australia. Throughout this campaign ANF will be asking for support from the community and nurses and midwives.



Sue Bellino  
Federal Political Co-ordinator

## Education Report

The Australian Nursing Federation's (ANF) national Continuing Professional Education (CPE) online continues to grow in sales from members, non-members and corporate clients. Visits to the site during the 2011-2012 financial year have exceeded expectations and user feedback has been extremely positive. Use by members, non-members and corporate clients has more than doubled since the 2010-2011 financial year.

The ANF recently released a sister website to the CPE specifically for aged and community care nurses. The Aged Care Training Room (ACTR) houses over 50 modules tailored to aged care and community care nursing. Modules are written to address the aged care accreditation standards and the community care common standards. These modules cover topics relevant to health issues affecting older people. All mandatory competencies are included such as elder abuse and mandatory reporting. The ACTR is designed to be a one-stop-shop for the learning needs of aged and community care nurses and their organisations by providing the learning modules, a learner needs analysis, generating a relevant training plan and providing reflection and evaluation tools. Modules within the ACTR can be customised to meet organisational needs such as imbedding policies and procedures within the learning content.

Due to the growth of the CPE website we were able to release two more free tutorials to members now providing them with three free tutorials which equates to 11 CPD hours.

The CPE site currently has 25 topics available with another 16 topics in various stages of development. Below is a list of topics currently available on the website [www.anf.org.au/cpe](http://www.anf.org.au/cpe):

- Advanced Life Support Update
- Asthma Management
- Basic Life Support Update
- Blood Transfusion Safety
- Cardiac 1 - Chest Pain Assessment and Management
- Cardiac 2 - Acute Coronary Syndrome
- Cosmetic Nursing
- Diabetes Mellitus
- Discharge Planning for Midwives
- Drug Calculations and Administration
- ECG and Rhythms 1
- ECG and Rhythms 2
- Emergency Drugs
- Fire and Emergency Training
- Hand Hygiene
- Infection Control
- Manual Handling
- Occupational Violence and Aggression
- Oral Health Palliative Care
- Respiratory 1 - Upper Airway Obstruction
- Respiratory 2 - Respiratory Failure
- Vision Care
- Women's Health
- Wound Care Update



Jodie Davis  
Federal Education Officer



# Communications and Australian Nursing Journal Report

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The communications and Australian Nursing Journal (ANJ) team cemented its position as the country's most read nursing and midwifery journal and source of information for the professions.

The 2011-2012 year consolidated the second term leadership team of ANF Federal Secretary Lee Thomas and Assistant Federal Secretary Yvonne Chaperon which was reflected in the journal and communications teams' work.

The team was heavily involved in raising members' and the public's awareness of the ANF's Because We Care campaign in aged care which led to the culmination of a win for the ANF. The ANJ continued to keep abreast of the latest happenings.

Communications team members provide a range of publications, news and media resources to update the ANF Federal Office and Because We Care websites and worked closely with the ANF Political Coordinator, Professional and Industrial staff and State and Territory Branches. With ANF membership growth exceeding 200,000 for the first time, ANJ circulation hit 88,419 in March 2012 showing an increased need for news and features to be relevant to meet the industrial, professional and educational needs of nurses, midwives and assistants in nursing, who work in diverse areas, both clinically and geographically.

There has been a substantive increase in positive membership feedback, in terms of seeking general information, and wanting to contribute to the journal and campaigns. ANJ Mailbag has seen an increase in letters, confirming the journal's relevance to members.

The ANJ continued to cover state and territory stories in the news section of relevance to members in their own jurisdiction and of fellow members around Australia.

## ANJ feature articles in 2011-2012:

- Workplace aggression and violence: nurses and midwives say no
- Indigenous health taking the next step
- Mental health 2011: where are we headed?
- Strength in unity ANF Biennial National Delegates conference
- SEATO nurses in Vietnam: fight for care
- 2011 activism triumphs through record growth
- Working rural and remote: rewards and challenges
- Changing the face of health care electronically
- Our older Australians: worth caring for
- Closing the gap: support for Indigenous loss
- Nurses in general practice: entering a new era

## Focus topics 2011-2012:

- Alcohol and other drug nursing
- Wound care/infection control
- Primary/community care

## Communications and Australian Nursing Journal Report

- Mental health/education
- Indigenous health
- Sexual health
- Education
- Complementary therapies
- Aged care
- Children and youth
- Women's health

Education has always been valued as a priority by members and ANF research shows nurses and midwives use clinical updates to remain up to date in their practice. However with the introduction of national registration, members have highlighted increased need for information and assistance in the preparation of formal portfolios in the event of audit. The ANF Federal Education Officer has provided articles to inform members on the website and in a regular column in the ANJ.

### Focus topics 2011-2012:

- Case study: the emergency nurse practitioner caring for the patient with a urinary tract infection
- Enhancing nursing practice potential: breast free flap reconstruction following mastectomy
- An evidence-based guideline for polycystic ovary syndrome
- Exploring the hormone replacement therapy debate
- Dabigatran versus warfarin for patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation: is the patient the winner?
- Clinical review: universal antenatal chlamydia screening by rural midwives
- Clinical review: tackling obesity in adolescence
- Care of the type 1 latex allergy patient
- Dementia care mapping as a tool for person centred care



Natalie Dragon  
Editor, Australian Nursing Journal

## Australian Nursing Journal Covers



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## Submissions

The below submissions were prepared during the 2011-2012 financial year and are available on the Federal Office website: [www.anf.org.au](http://www.anf.org.au).

### July 2011

- Australia's Health Pty Ltd consultation paper on the Medication Management in Residential Aged Care Facilities Project

### August 2011

- Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia consultation on a draft policy for re-entry to practice for nurses and midwives
- Department of Health and Ageing Personally Controlled Electronic Health Record (PCEHR) System Legislation Issues Paper

### September 2011

- Australian College of Midwives consultation on the Position Statement on Homebirth

### October 2011

- PCEHR System: Exposure Draft Legislation
- Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency on consultation for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Board

### November 2011

- Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC) consultation paper on the review of Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards

### December 2011

- Australia's Health Pty Ltd second round consultation for Medication Management in Residential Aged Care Facilities Project

### January 2012

- ANMAC Review of the Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards second consultation paper
- Department of Health and Ageing in response to the Home Medicines Review hospital referral pathway consultation paper
- Independent Inquiry into Insecure Work in Australia

### February 2012

- Fair Work Act Review
- Productivity Commission on the Impacts of COAG reforms on business regulation and VET

### March 2012

- Senate Inquiry on Palliative Care in Australia

### April 2012

- Department of Health and Ageing draft Terms and Conditions for the PCEHR system registration

### May 2012

- Inquiry by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health and Ageing into dementia early diagnosis and intervention

## The Federation

### Federal Office Staff | Current

Federal Secretary

Assistant Federal Secretary

Senior Federal Industrial Officer

Federal Industrial Officer

Federal Industrial Officer, Research

Senior Federal Professional Officer

Federal Professional Officer

Federal Professional Research Officer and Librarian

Federal Political Co-ordinator

Federal Education Officer

Federal Finance Officer

Editor, Australian Nursing Journal

ANJ Journalist

Administrative Officer, ANJ

Administrative Officer, Accounts

Administrative Officer, Communications and Campaigns

Administrative Officer, Executive | Canberra

Administrative Officer, Executive | Melbourne

Administrative Officer, Education and AJAN

Administrative Officer, Industrial

Administrative Officer, Professional

### Federal Office Staff | Former

Federal Graphic Designer (to August 2011)

**Lee Thomas**

**Yvonne Chaperon**

**Nick Blake**

**Andrew McCarthy**

**Debbie Richards**

**Julianne Bryce**

**Elizabeth Foley**

**Elizabeth Reale**

**Sue Bellino**

**Jodie Davis**

**Sotiria Stefanis**

**Natalie Dragon**

**Kathryn Anderson**

**Cathy Fasciale**

**Anne O'Toole**

**Kristy Male**

**Anne Willsher**

**Kerrie Fitzpatrick**

**Rebecca Aveyard**

**Anna Amatangelo**

**Anastasia Shianis**

**Krista McClelland**

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## The Federation

### Federal Council

Federal Secretary  
Assistant Federal Secretary  
Federal President  
Federal Vice President

**Lee Thomas**  
**Yvonne Chaperon**  
**Coral Levett**  
**Paul Nieuwenhoven**

### Australian Capital Territory

Secretary  
President

**Jenny Miragaya**  
**Athalene Rosborough**

### New South Wales

Secretary  
President

**Brett Holmes**  
**Coral Levett**

### Northern Territory

Secretary  
President

**Yvonne Falckh**  
**Shirel Nomoa**

### Queensland

Secretary  
President

**Beth Mohle**  
**Sally-Anne Jones**

### South Australia

Secretary  
President

**Elizabeth Dabars**  
**Marisa Bell**

### Tasmania

Secretary  
President

**Neroli Ellis**  
**Julie Driver**

### Victoria

Secretary  
President

**Lisa Fitzpatrick**  
**Maree Burgess**

### Western Australia

Secretary  
President

**Mark Olson**  
**Patricia Fowler**

### Federal Council Meetings - From 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012

17-18 August 2011

16 April 2012 in writing

24 May 2012 in writing

## The Federation

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### Federal Executive Members

Federal Secretary

Assistant Federal Secretary

Federal President

Federal Vice President

Australian Capital Territory

New South Wales

Northern Territory

Queensland

South Australia

Tasmania

Victoria

Western Australia

**Lee Thomas**

**Yvonne Chaperon**

**Coral Levett**

**Paul Nieuwenhoven**

**Jenny Miragaya**

**Brett Holmes**

**Yvonne Falckh**

**Beth Mohle**

**Elizabeth Dabars**

**Neroli Ellis**

**Lisa Fitzpatrick**

**Mark Olson**

### Federal Executive Meetings - From 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012

29 August 2011 by teleconference

17-18 November 2011

20 November 2011 by teleconference

16 - 17 February 2012

24 February 2012 by teleconference

26 February 2012 by teleconference

19 April 2012 by teleconference

10-11 May 2012

24 May 2012 in writing

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