

REPORT OF NATIONAL SUMMIT

**Studies of Asia in Australian
schools at a crossroad:
Strategic Directions 2004-6**

**November 26 and 27, 2003
National Convention Centre, Canberra**

**An Initiative of the
Asia Education Foundation**



Asia Education Foundation

The National Summit was partially funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training.

The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training.

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
THE SUMMIT	7
PAPER 1: STUDIES OF ASIA IN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS IN REVIEW 1992–2003	8
PAPER 2: STATE AND TERRITORY REPORTS	13
PAPER 3: STAKEHOLDER STATEMENTS	16
GENERAL COSGROVE'S ADDRESS	20
MAJOR OUTCOMES OF THE SUMMIT	23
APPENDIX 1: SUMMIT PROGRAM	42
SUMMIT SPEAKERS	46
SUMMIT PARTICIPANTS	50

“I believe Australia needs to view itself as a combination of east and west and acknowledge where we are situated in the world. We gain a lot from the cultures that exist within and in close proximity to Australia. It’s quite naïve not to look at alternatives and just believe that what we’ve always done is the best thing.”

Ian Thorpe, Olympic champion and young Australian
Message sent to the Studies of Asia National Summit, November 2003

INTRODUCTION

The National Studies of Asia Summit was held at the National Convention Centre in Canberra on Thursday 27 November 2003, and was precluded by a Summit dinner at the National Museum of Australia on November 26.

The Asia Education Foundation is a foundation of the Asialink Centre of The University of Melbourne and Curriculum Corporation with core funding of \$1.2 million per annum from the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) to promote and support the studies of Asia in Australian schools.

Since 1992 the AEF has worked in partnership with all education sectors, schools, universities, corporate and philanthropic sectors to:

- promote and support the studies of Asia across all curriculum areas in Australian schools
 - develop Asia related print and electronic materials for Australian school children
 - promote and support the studies of Asia in teacher education
- educate the broader community about the importance of school students undertaking studies of Asia.

This report was prepared
by Zbar Consulting Pty. Ltd.
on behalf of the Summit organisers
the Asia Education Foundation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Schooling should ‘assist young people to: contribute to Australia’s social, cultural and economic development in local and global context’, and understand and acknowledge the value of cultural and linguistic diversity, and possess the knowledge, skills and understandings to contribute to, and benefit from, such diversity in the Australian community and internationally.’

The Adelaide Declaration of National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century
Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (1999), Canberra.

The National Studies of Asia Summit was an initiative of the Asia Education Foundation (AEF) Advisory Board to bring together key education stakeholders, including senior representatives of education systems, sectors, teacher education, parent, principal and subject organisations, plus peak business, government and community groups to:

- report on and discuss the current status of studies of Asia in Australian school education;
- discuss the rationale for studies of Asia in today’s changing global context;
- recommend future directions for the studies of Asia in Australian schools; and
- recommend specific strategic directions and priorities for the work of the Asia Education Foundation, 2004–6.

Input was provided in the form of detailed background papers from key stakeholders including all State and Territory Departments of Education, national education bodies and professional associations. Further input was provided during the Summit by keynote presentations from such eminent speakers as: Carrillo Gantner AO, Chairman of Asialink; the Head of the Australian Defence Forces, General Peter Cosgrove, AC, MC; Chris Evans, Acting Group Manager of the Schools Division of the Department of Education Science and Training (DEST) representing The Minister, the Hon Brendan Nelson; Philip Flood AO, Chair of the Australia-Indonesia Institute; business leader, Tony Hallam, PricewaterhouseCoopers; renowned journalist, Greg Sheridan, The Australian’s Foreign Editor; young community leader, Jason Yat-sen Li and more.

The Challenge

Both formal evaluations and anecdotal feedback from States and Territories reveal that much has been achieved over the last ten years, and the studies of Asia has come a long way through a national, collaborative approach supported by the Asia Education Foundation (AEF) and the National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools (NALSAS) Strategy.

This reflects a growing understanding within Australia that studies of Asia are in the national interest for tolerance and harmony in Australia, for their intellectual value, and for reasons of security of our people, the environment and our economy. For all of that, studies of Asia are at a crossroad with the cessation of NALSAS, an 80% decrease in funding support in 2003 resulting in a 75% reduction in participation in teacher professional development, a 35% decline in the sales of the Access Asia series, and great uncertainty about funding in 2004.

It is a crossroad we face in the knowledge that: 50% or more schools are not integrating studies of Asia across the curriculum and studies of Asia are relatively marginalised in curriculum policy. Beyond this, less than 5% of pre-service teacher education programs focus on Asia and there is uncertain commitment from State and Territory government and non-government sectors in 2004. AEF funding of \$1.2 million per annum is in Australian government forward estimates until 2006.

It was acknowledged that the processes and materials to assist schools have been established and the 'supply' side of the strategy is fairly well developed. The need now is arguably to focus on the 'demand' side, so as to move beyond the committed schools into the mainstream.

The challenge the Summit faced in this context, can be summed up in the key questions:

- How do we best achieve system legitimisation?
- How do we capture teachers other than the 'enthusiasts'?
- How do we best ensure studies of Asia are included in school curriculum discussions?
- How do we ensure that new teachers are exposed to studies of Asia in their training?
- What role can AEF, as a national organization, best play?
- What role can state, territory and Commonwealth systems best play?

Studies of Asia are in the national interest for tolerance and harmony in Australia, for their intellectual value, and for reasons of security of our people, the environment and our economy... For all of that, studies of Asia are at a crossroad with 50% or more schools not integrating studies of Asia across the curriculum.

“Language skills and cultural sensitivity will be the new currency of this world order” – General Peter Cosgrove AC MC

The Summit revealed strong agreement on the rationale for studies of Asia – based on economic, social and cultural arguments, long recognised, but now strengthened by a changed and heightened security environment which necessitates a more informed and sophisticated response from Australia ...

The Response from Stakeholders

Prior to the Summit all State and Territory Departments of Education provided a statement indicating their achievements in relation to the studies of Asia over the past 10 years and priorities for the future. These statements charted significant change in relation to curriculum and professional development. All States and Territories indicated the difficulty of maintaining a profile on the studies of Asia in a post-NALSAS environment.

In addition, 14 national professional associations and organisations representing the non-government education sectors, parents, principals, teachers, teacher educators and curriculum leaders contributed statements which demonstrated the relevance of studies of Asia to their mission and goals. These statements refer to the need to increase students’ knowledge and understanding of Asia to equip them for a world which is rapidly changing, and interconnected – a key challenge for educators in response to the issue of globalisation.

General Cosgrove, AC, MC opened the Summit by saying that ‘Language skills and cultural sensitivity ... will be the new currency of this world order’. His presentation stressed the benefits that the Australian Defence Forces gained from staff that possess intercultural and language skills and have participated in exchanges with their Asian counterparts. He went on to state that: *The corporations of the most advanced nations are doing business on every continent ... (but) Commercial links, alone, will never render war unthinkable. What will, however, are mutual understanding and respect and the banishing of prejudice. That is why your deliberations at this conference are so important ... kids are our future. If that future is to be one of peace and prosperity, our kids will need the capacity to engage in a dialogue with others of different cultures and creeds. And that applies both within Australia and abroad.*

General Cosgrove’s views were reinforced by the Summit’s key speakers who outlined further imperatives for Australians to engage more actively with Asia. These included the notion of developing workers who are ‘culturally intelligent’ and an Australian community that has a sophisticated understanding of Asia.

Discussion during the Summit revealed a strong agreement on the rationale for studies of Asia – based on the same economic, social and cultural arguments as have long been recognised, but now strengthened by a changed and heightened security environment, changes in the Asian region which necessitate a more informed and sophisticated response from Australia and the rapid and inevitable impact of connection to Asia on our own culture, the way we live our lives and our population. Together, these link closely to the ongoing discussion within our country about what it means to be an Australian, and to the fact that being Asia literate can privilege Australia in Europe, the United States and throughout the world.

The current context for reaffirming this rationale and progressing it in education is, it was suggested, particularly conducive because of discussions across the nation about what it is young people need to know and be able to do, and hence should learn. There is the opportunity to insert studies of Asia directly into these deliberations thereby ensuring its place as a mainstream and not optional issue. And there is a willingness to do just this.

One issue to emerge in this context, was whether or not studies of Asia should be promoted quite explicitly, or whether it supports other education initiatives such as civics and citizenship within a regional or global context. **In general it was felt that what it means to be a good citizen in Australia, our region and the world inevitably requires studies of Asia content. This fits with broader discussions of identity and values, which are occurring within Australia.**

In summary two key messages emerged from the discussion, that there is now a strengthened rationale for studies of Asia in Australian schools (not a diminishing rationale) and that there is a central place for studies of Asia in current education debate about what Australian children need to know and be able to do in an interconnected world.

Notwithstanding the above, Summit participants outlined a number of issues that must be considered when planning future strategies. These include the diversity of curriculum frameworks around Australia, competing priorities at national and State and Territory levels and the level and nature of the resources available to support studies of Asia into the future.

A Way Forward to Consider

Working groups from systems, schools and external agencies then identified a possible way forward from the crossroad we confront.

Systems

The response from systems centred on a proposal that DEST convene a meeting of systems and sectors to consider further collaborative action for the improvement of the studies of Asia in Australian schools. This proposed Commonwealth-hosted conversation is, it was suggested, one possible answer to the question about what happens when the Summit is over and the report prepared by the AEF Board. It is a means of injecting the studies of Asia onto the agenda of national groups with the power to move forward. This proposal provides a way of engaging key players more systematically.

External agencies

It was acknowledged that sitting behind this must then be an enhanced relationship between professional associations and the AEF to create more synergies and enhanced networking.

Schools

The schools response emphasised that much of the real action can actually be located at the school level itself, drawing on the support schools can get from external agencies such as the AEF and the new partnerships brokered with professional associations. Central here is coordination and ensuring better alignment of resources and professional development made available to schools.

The AEF's Response

The outcomes of this summit will be circulated to all participants and Ministers of Education.

The AEF will conduct a national consultation with Government, Catholic and Independent sectors in all States and Territories in March/May 2004 as a follow-up strategy to the Summit. This consultation will inform the development of the AEF's Strategic Plan 2004-6. The consultation will build on the Summit and facilitate dialogue at State and Territory level concerning the future opportunities for studies of Asia.

The AEF will strengthen its priority to work in partnership with key national professional associations and organisations. Discussions have initially occurred with principal and parent organisations as to how this might best occur and potential outcomes of such partnerships.

The AEF Board will continue its discussions with the Commonwealth on future strategies for studies of Asia and the potential of a follow-up meeting with State and Territory Education Departments.

The AEF thanks all Summit participants for their time and commitment to this issue. Your participation and input was vital to the success of the Summit and will impact on this important area of school education – Australia's future is dependent on it.

THE SUMMIT

The National Studies of Asia Summit was an initiative of the Asia Education Foundation (AEF) Advisory Board to bring together key education stakeholders, including senior representatives of education systems, sectors, teacher education, parent, principal and subject organisations, plus peak business, government and community groups to:

- report on and discuss the current status of studies of Asia in Australian school education;
- discuss the rationale for studies of Asia in today's changing global context;
- recommend future directions for the studies of Asia in Australian schools; and
- recommend specific strategic directions and priorities for the work of the Asia Education Foundation, 2004-6.

Background papers prepared for the Summit provided:

an overview of key messages drawn from studies of Asia research and reviews; reports from each State and Territory on its achievements to date, current challenges, opportunities and future plans; and statements from relevant stakeholder organisations.

These papers provided the baseline input for Summit participants and are summarised in the 'Prelude to the Summit' below, along with an introductory address from General Peter Cosgrove AC MC, to provide the context for the discussion which ensued.

The Summit program, along with a full list of summit participants, is included as Appendix 1 to this report.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

The purpose of this report is to summarise the contributions of Summit presenters and any agreed positions developed by small work groups, for distribution by the Asia Education Foundation Board to the Commonwealth and State/Territory Ministers for Education and all Summit participants.

PRELUDE TO THE SUMMIT

Participants in the Summit were provided with background material which considered the experience of studies of Asia to date and options for the future, along with state/territory reports and statements from stakeholder groups.

PAPER 1

Studies of Asia in Australian Schools in Review, 1992–2003

Studies of Asia are crucial for the future education of the citizenry of Australia, given imperatives fashioned by location, economic ties and the need to co-exist with other countries in our region.
(Owen, J. & Andrew, P., 2003, Curriculum Outcomes in Access Asia Schools, DEST; 31)

The nation urgently needs to improve the way students are prepared for the world awaiting them. Enhancing teaching about Asia is central to this task. Our vision for the coming decade: Every child, from elementary through high school, will encounter intellectually challenging material about Asia and Asian American topics integrated into diverse subjects at appropriate grades... Every teacher will have a wealth of opportunities to build knowledge about Asia through formal studies, pre and in service programs and through travel and exchange programs...

(Asia in the Schools: Preparing Young Americans for Today's Interconnected World, Asia Society, 2001.)

The background paper argued that changing trade and migration patterns, military conflicts and shifting strategic alliances have seen Australia's economic, social and political relationships with Asia take on increasing importance in the last two decades. Close engagement with Asia is now an abiding priority in Australian external policy, based on mutually beneficial relations in regard to economic and security interests. The growth and proximity of several Asian economies, for example, and the increasing reciprocity of trading arrangements between Australia and many nations in Asia indicates that our future economic strength requires Australians to be more knowledgeable and confident in relationships with the peoples of Asia. The increasing component of the Australian population from Asian countries also provides a strong justification for greater cultural awareness of the diverse history, values and beliefs of Asian societies.

It is within this broad context of globalisation and trade relations, and the desire to sustain external and internal security and harmony that studies of Asia stakes a special claim for inclusion in the learning experiences of all young Australians.

However, its claims are not restricted to national economic and strategic considerations. **Studies of Asia will also assist young people to make sense of and engage more effectively with an increasingly complex world.** It will enable them to 'understand and acknowledge the value of cultural and linguistic diversity, and possess the knowledge, skills and understandings to contribute to, and benefit from, such diversity in the Australian community and internationally' (The Adelaide Declaration of National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century, Goal 3.5).

The inclusion of Studies of Asia in school curriculum is not only an issue for Australia. Many 'western' countries are also acknowledging that their current curriculum has a limited perspective.

Studies of Asia To Date: A National Overview

Australian schools have included the studies of Asia in the curriculum for many years and the position of these studies has been significantly enhanced since the commencement of the National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools (NALSAS) strategy. AEF programs has evolved and adapted to changing circumstances over the last decade. In the earliest days the focus was on raising awareness of the need for an Asian perspective in Australian curriculum and on supporting a limited network of schools to develop and deliver studies of Asia. Gains from these early initiatives were consolidated and expanded in the subsequent phases of support. The number of Access Asia schools was expanded, high quality resources were developed and professional development programs were offered to increasing numbers of teachers.

Funding has played a critical role in helping to establish studies of Asia in schools. There has been considerable activity in expanding both the range of print and on-line material and the number of Access Asia schools has grown to over 2800 from a base of 80 a decade ago. Research also reveals that while Access Asia schools may initially rely on the interest of an individual teacher to introduce studies of Asia, over time the majority of teachers become involved.

Recent research reveals, however, that about 25% of schools do not teach about Asia at all and a further 25% do so in only superficial ways. So even though there has been an ongoing growth and consolidation of studies of Asia in schools, studies of Asia is still a relatively marginalised area of study in half of Australia's schools and the task of ensuring the inclusion of studies of Asia across the curriculum remains incomplete.

Further evidence of the relative fragility of studies of Asia in the curriculum is that, whilst generally supported at system level, studies of Asia does not appear to be a current priority area for any state or territory jurisdiction – only in a few instances has it been mandated and generally it is considered to be an optional area of the curriculum. Beyond this, there is almost no system monitoring of whether or how schools are implementing studies of Asia, nor assessment of student learning in this area; the majority of schools do not have school policies to support studies of Asia programs nor a study of Asia teaching program; 40% of schools teaching some level of studies of Asia have no-one who is responsible for the program in the school; and pre-service teacher training courses generally do not include studies of Asia content in methods as a component of training courses.

Each of these factors is a point of vulnerability for studies of Asia in the longer-term. They also indicate where opportunities for further strengthening of studies of Asia in schools exist. The means for responding to these opportunities are in place – quality resources and professional development programs have been developed and school networks have been established – and the task for the future is to sustain the momentum that has been established and to mainstream studies of Asia within school curricula.

Continuing national support for studies of Asia would seem to be essential.

(Owen, J. & Andrew, P., 2003, Curriculum Outcomes in Access Asia Schools, DEST; 31)

Further work in this area will need to focus on national curriculum, leadership, ... and more direct support for schools in developing school-based programs. (Erebus Consulting Partners, 2002, Review of Studies of Asia in Australian Schools, a report to DEST; 29.)

Further Needs in the Studies of Asia

The primary curriculum goal for studies of Asia is that students should have Asia-related learning experiences in all curriculum areas. Whilst this is a challenging task, evidence suggests that a sound start has been made and that with continued effort the goal is achievable in the longer term. It appears that AEF's curriculum reform strategy has been hitting the right targets. From a starting point where there was no unique recognition of the need for Asian studies or even Asian perspectives in the curriculum, each State and Territory now supports the possibility of studies of Asia being provided at every level. Schools are also more aware of the need to provide students with studies of Asia curriculum.

However, work devoted to the achievement of the primary studies of Asia curriculum goal is not yet complete, and the reforms in schools are not yet at a stage where the momentum established can be self sustaining. It is also apparent that while substantial progress has been made, there is a need to be realistic about what can be achieved with limited resources, and when system priorities generally lie elsewhere.

Research into students' knowledge of Asia reveals that students who are exposed to formal and structured studies of Asia are more knowledgeable about Asia than are students who undertake more informal learning activities such as excursions and festivals.

Whilst the latter activities may enhance levels of interest, they do not of themselves improve students' depth of understanding about Asia. This research also reveals that those teachers who made frequent use of a wide range of Access Asia teaching materials, professional development, excursions and advice from consultants were most successful in promoting student knowledge about Asia.

As with any change program, there will be a group of early adopters and enthusiasts. Not surprisingly, schools with high proportions of Asian students have been more inclined to teach studies of Asia than have schools with few or no Asian students and those schools with the most comprehensive programs are ones that have had the longest involvement with the Access Asia program. The AEF in conjunction with jurisdictional authorities has been successful in attracting the teacher enthusiast, and providing appropriate curriculum guidance and financial incentives to generate leadership and other support for the enthusiast to implement or extend studies of Asia within the school. It has worked on a broad front to garner system support for studies of Asia, to deepen teachers' knowledge of Asia and to support teachers to develop and deliver appropriate programs of Asian studies.

Curriculum reform and renewal requires changes to school policies and practices and this takes time, as does curriculum development and teacher skilling. So, whilst those schools that opted into and stayed with the Access Asia program have made significant progress, they will need to be further supported to ensure that the work they have commenced is sustained and that models of best practice evolve and provide inspiration to others not yet strongly committed to the area.

The task of deepening the study of Asia within schools and of broadening the base of schools that are committed to delivering studies of Asia is not as easy as the task of capturing the enthusiasts. And yet, this is what is required to position studies of Asia as an accepted focus for curriculum activity across school levels. This suggests that the AEF will need to continue its work of promoting strategies that enable schools to:

- recognise where studies of Asia can be fitted in to what is already perceived as a crowded curriculum;
- understand the expected standards and goals to be achieved in relation to the teaching and learning of studies of Asia; and
- be sufficiently convinced that studies of Asia deserves to be included as a component of the mainstream curriculum.

Strategic Directions: Asia Education Foundation

A review of the various evaluation reports prepared for the AEF reveals that establishing a commitment to teaching about Asia is a complex undertaking and that achievements in the area to date have been highly dependent on the change strategies developed by the AEF.

Whilst not wanting to undermine the work that has been accomplished it may, however, be time to review the context in which the NALSAS strategy operated and consider whether an adjustment in strategy might be required to further broaden schools' desire and commitment to teaching studies of Asia.

Programs, processes and materials to assist schools have been established and the 'supply side' of the strategy is fairly well developed. The need now is arguably to focus on the 'demand side', so as to move beyond the committed schools and recruit new schools too. In this context, it seems worth considering re-positioning studies of Asia within a broader strategy of promoting regional or global citizenship. All schools have an interest and a desire to assist students to understand recent events that continue to dislocate societies and raise concerns about the future of the world and the relationship between different cultures. Whilst not discounting the various other factors that provide the educational rationale for studies of Asia, it seems at this time **the factor of globalisation has emerged as the greatest driver for studies in this area.** If this is so, then this presents an opportunity for reinvigorating and redefining the work of the AEF and for positioning studies of Asia in the mainstream of curriculum.

Regardless of how studies of Asia is framed within curriculum discourse, the various research studies commissioned to review the outcomes of the Commonwealth Studies of Asia in Australian Schools program attest to the critical role performed by the AEF in stimulating and supporting the adoption of studies of Asia in schools.

More specifically, the AEF has:

- established itself as a strong, visible champion of the studies of Asia in an environment where there are many competing agendas;
- established a legitimacy for studies of Asia within the curriculum of Australian states and territories;
- developed a strong support base for studies of Asia comprising both resources and people;
- established strong links with decision makers and support personnel in each State and Territory;
- established strong links with the Asian region and the local Asian community; and
- gained a reputation for the delivery of high quality teacher resources and support arrangements.

Beyond this, research reports advise that broad-based reform takes time to achieve and that, whilst substantial gains have been made, the goals in relation to studies of Asia remain to be fully met and the sustainability of achievements to date is not guaranteed. Thus, in order to keep advancing the agenda, the AEF considers it critical that it continues to be supported to maintain its role as a highly visible advocate and agent of influence for studies of Asia.

To fulfil this key function, the AEF is seeking increased Commonwealth funding for the next three years and proposes that key priorities include:

- gaining formal system legitimisation for the importance of curriculum that includes studies of Asia at national and state/territory levels
- strengthening the links between studies of Asia and the broader education agendas of globalisation, citizenship (national, regional and global), community harmony, values and multiculturalism
- developing school leaders as strong advocates for studies of Asia
- fostering strong advocates for studies of Asia in the wider community including parents, community leaders and opinion makers, media and government
- providing professional development programs to Australian schools and educators to support them to infuse studies of Asia in the curriculum
- collaborating with education associations to include studies of Asia in a broad range of educational programs
- working with all schools to promote and support the inclusion of studies of Asia in all curriculum areas at all levels
- profiling and rewarding schools and teachers who have developed exemplary programs in this area
- promoting and supporting studies of Asia in teacher pre service programs.

PAPER 2

State and Territory Reports

Whilst each State and Territory has undertaken its own unique set of activities to promote studies of Asia in its government and non-government schools (outlined in their individual reports), there is substantial commonality in approach.

This is perhaps best summed up by the Access Asia story in Queensland where the program:

- provided a support network to schools;
- provided professional development for teachers;
- disseminated information about resources;
- advocated for the inclusion of the studies of Asia in syllabuses and support documents; and
- highlighted opportunities for students to learn more about Asia – its strategic, geographical, economic, historical and cultural significance to Australia.

Similarly, Western Australia explained how its program has, like most other programs, focused on ‘establishing a network of schools in educational clusters, each being managed by teachers based in schools with overall coordination occurring through the Asia Education Foundation State Advisor. Cluster coordinators have provided advice to new schools joining the network as well as providing teachers with after school hours professional learning opportunities. All additional professional learning has been provided centrally by the State Advisor.’

Central to this sort of activity within States and Territories has been the development of strong partnership arrangements, such as partnerships developed in South Australia by the Department of Education and Children’s Services with the AEF, the School of Education at Flinders University, the Catholic Education Office, the SA Association of Independent Schools, the Korean National Commission for UNESCO and Gyeonggi Provincial Office of Education in Korea, and the various ad hoc partnership programs initiated with such bodies as the Art Gallery of South Australia, the Botanical Gardens and the Open Access College. In a somewhat similar vein, network leaders and school coordinators from across the three sectors in the ACT ‘work together in a spirit of cooperation to create locally produced units of work and resource materials’ for use in all ACT schools.

As a result of all this activity, significant numbers of schools around Australia have become involved in Access Asia networks, substantial numbers of teachers have been trained in studies of Asia professional development programs, including in many cases Graduate Certificate programs delivered in partnership with universities, grants have been provided for in-school curriculum initiatives, and curriculum materials have been written and disseminated.

In addition, State and Territory teachers have had the opportunity to participate in Asia In-Country experience programs both through the AEF study tours and through complementary programs offered by some states, such as Victoria’s support for teacher study tours to Japan, Vietnam, India, The Philippines and Indonesia. That state, like others, also provided funding to a number of subject associations to ‘support the provision of Asia-focused professional development/conferences for their members’, to spread the reach of studies of Asia within the curriculum.

The common challenge outlined in all State and Territory reports in this context is really to extend the reach of studies of Asia beyond the significant number of schools involved to include all other schools as well. As the **New South Wales** report typically explained: 'There are almost 3500 schools in NSW across the three sectors. To date the program has only involved 550 in its networks, although a further 1500 have been engaged in at least one of the professional development programs. As schools are volunteers, it would seem that the program has engaged all the schools that have sought direct involvement. **If the program continues, a different form of engagement is needed to impact on the other schools and extend the studies of Asia.**'

In some cases, this also involves a major focus on ensuring that studies of Asia meld effectively with new curriculum developments, such as **Tasmania** where **'the key imperative ... is the infusion of studies of Asia in the context of the (Essential Learnings) Curriculum Program ... (and) providing advocacy and leadership for studies of Asia in Tasmanian schools'**. In the same way, the ACT Department of Education, Youth and Family Services expects to use its impending Curriculum Renewal process to 'encourage a commitment from schools with a statement about inclusion of studies of Asia in the curriculum through links with primary literacy programs and important national projects such as Civics and Citizenship and Values Education'. In effect, Curriculum Renewal will 'provide school leadership teams with the impetus and desire to investigate studies of Asia further and move some programs out of superficial levels of practice to achieve deeper levels of understanding.' And the Northern Territory already has built on its *Studies of Asia Policy* in the *Northern Territory Schools Policy Statement* of 1997 to 'explicitly' include studies of Asia as 'a cross curriculum perspective throughout the learning areas, especially in SOSE, English, the Arts and Mathematics ... (and) Studies of Asia is introduced in the Overview and features in the EsseNTial Learnings' in the territory.

In a somewhat more expansive vein, the **Queensland** state report explained that the major challenge facing that, and other States and Territories as well, is **to move teachers and schools beyond: 'starting points such as dragons, kites and Asian Food Festivals to content that recognises the contemporary and historical civilisations and diversity of the countries and cultures of the Asian region;** ad hoc inclusion of studies of Asia in a school's curriculum offerings to inclusion in whole school curriculum offerings that are sustainable; and the separation of "Studies of Asia" from a discrete area to seamless inclusion in mainstream curriculum.'

This, the report continued, requires a focus on each of:

- teacher development – both in and pre-service;
- provision of quality materials that challenge stereotypes and meet teachers' needs in all learning areas and at all levels;
- effective inclusion of studies of Asia in curriculum documents;
- promotion at the school, community and state level through sustainability of exemplary school programs and policies; and
- research that furthers knowledge and practice in this area.

Meeting these challenges does, however, depend upon continued access to funding for studies of Asia according to all State and Territory reports. To illustrate the point, the WA report noted that 'the cessation of NALSAS funds had an immediate impact on the Western Australian Access Asia program. The number of funded professional learning workshops and the team of cluster coordinators has decreased by a third. Funded Teacher In Country Fellowships have ceased and the number of Graduate Certificate modules delivered has decreased by two thirds.'

This is not to suggest that activity has ceased. The state is, for instance, currently contributing the State Advisor's salary and on-costs and is funding other continuing, albeit reduced programs. Similarly, Victoria has provided a final grant of \$50,000 to the AEF 'to support the work of the State Advisor during 2003'. Rather, it is to:

- recognise, as Victoria put it, that 'funding provided through the NALSAS strategy (1995-2002) has been critical to the establishment of highly effective studies of Asia support programs in ... government and non-government schools'; and
- demonstrate the view of States and Territories in their reports that, to quote WA again, 'funding will determine the level of professional learning opportunities offered to teachers during this triennium' at a time when a critical mass of teachers has been developed, but there is also both a 'burgeoning clientele' and, as NSW explained, a need 'to draw a wider selection of schools into developing an Asia focus to school curriculum implementation'.

The need is only strengthened in jurisdictions such as the Northern Territory, where reduced funding 'impacts on the ability of the Asia in Schools Project to maintain equitable professional development and support' in an environment where many teachers are located in remote and isolated areas and cannot readily travel to urban centres, other than at substantial cost.

The greatest challenge, as South Australia observed is, therefore, 'continuing the momentum by maintaining engagement with studies of Asia in curriculum in a post-NALSAS environment', and 'mainstreaming studies of Asia across all learning areas in all schools' – a statement echoed in the Tasmanian report which indicated that, although considerable progress has been made, there is a need to maintain the 'support and impetus ... at a national level'.

PAPER 3

Stakeholder Statements

A number of national education bodies provided brief statements regarding the relevance of studies of Asia to their mission and goals, and each is briefly summarised below.

NATIONAL CATHOLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION (NCEC)

The NCEC ‘supports a strong and broad focus on the studies of Asia in schooling in these early years of the 21st century. With increasing realisation that Australia needs to look beyond financial and economic purposes for its interaction with Asian countries comes an acceptance of the need for Australians to better engage with the diversity and richness of Asian cultures. This **engagement comes through deep understandings, sustained interactions and genuine valuing of Asian countries, cultures and people.** The NCEC supports this engagement with students in schools by governments, school authorities and other bodies associated with this important work.’

THE INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA (ISCA)

ISCA believes it is ‘vitaly important to strengthen the links between Asia and Australia for social, cultural, geographic, and economic reasons’. The studies of Asia program has played ‘a vital role in this regard, enhancing language development, cultural understanding and broadening of the curriculum, providing a rich context for learning in many learning areas’. **The independent schools sector recognises the contribution made by studies of Asia in ‘developing globally responsible citizens through greater understanding and cultural awareness,** and strongly supports any initiatives that will encourage schools to integrate studies of Asia into the curriculum. Given the ending of NALSAS funding, ISCA would urge the Australian Government to again provide funding to support studies of Asia. What is more, ‘fast action ... is required, as the impetus created ... is now being lost.

AUSTRALIAN PRIMARY PRINCIPALS’ ASSOCIATION

The APPA recognises **the important contribution that studies of Asia make to our children and our country, especially in promoting ‘the knowledge, understanding and relationships we need to live as a civil, cosmopolitan, democratic nation, on the doorstep of the Asian continent.’** Integrating studies of Asia into schooling ‘enhances and contributes to the evolution of our Australian identity and citizenship for the 21st century and beyond. It helps us to know and understand our region – its nations and its peoples. It promotes tolerance towards different cultures, customs, traditions and beliefs, within whole school communities. It supports the place of LOTE programs in the school learning environment, along with other initiatives – notably Civics & Citizenship Education.’ Key issues that need to be addressed in promoting studies of Asia include ‘how to encourage schools (and school communities) to implement, what is for many of them, a new initiative in an already overcrowded schedule; how to effectively and sustainably embed the studies into school curricula and policy; and how to access sufficient support from jurisdictions and pre-service providers.’

AUSTRALIAN SECONDARY PRINCIPALS’ ASSOCIATION

ASPA is a long-standing advocate for ‘initiatives that support the studies of Asia and Asian languages in the nation’s government secondary schools’. In this context, it believes **there is a real need for government secondary schooling to ‘add to the social capital of the nation by providing students with an awareness of the complexities of the world that they are about to inherit’.** In schools, this means the development and implementation of learning programs that develop cultural understanding and awareness of the peoples in the Asia-Pacific region, providing the foundations required for them to build their ability to thrive both socially and economically in the region.’

ASSOCIATION OF HEADS OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS OF AUSTRALIA

There is substantial variation between schools in terms of the ‘strength and breadth’ of studies of Asia offered, reflecting the independence that is so valued in the sector. In this context, the fact that many independent schools have many overseas students within their schools ‘adds impetus to the interest in learning about Asian countries, cultures and languages’. Learning about Asia in independent schools occurs, AHISA explained, mainly in five ways— within the core curriculum and in the elective program, through LOTE, via the Visual and Performing Arts, through general cultural programs (including sister school and exchange programs), and through the use of targeted resources and activities.

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF STATE SCHOOL ORGANISATIONS

ACSSO regards understanding of Asian countries, cultures and languages as ‘a vital part of the education of all Australian students. All children must be prepared for the ever expanding horizons which they will experience both locally and globally, and equipped to face this future of ongoing change and diversity with confidence.’ Young Australians will, they believe, ‘play an increasingly interactive role in Asia. Australian schools must, therefore, provide their students with an informed understanding of the rich variety, diversity and interconnectedness of our region ... (and) **Rapid global changes and recent events in our own region, have only accentuated the urgent need to provide an effective Asian studies program in schools.**’ ACSSO recognises, therefore, ‘that our children’s understanding of the Asian region is a vital step towards ensuring future peace and prosperity for Australia and its neighbours.’

THE AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF EDUCATORS

While ACE membership and activities are primarily based in Australia there is, it was explained, ‘increasing involvement by ACE in overseas countries. ACE has a growing membership overseas, with ACE members based in other countries or working and participating in programs of varying lengths of time’. In this context, ‘ACE strongly supports the studies of Asia in Australian schools and welcomes the opportunity to work in partnership with the AEF to improve the quality of learning and teaching at all levels about Asia.’

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF DEANS OF EDUCATION

‘Australia’s present education system is’, according to the Australian Council of Deans of Education, ‘simply not prepared to meet the demands of the new economy. It requires a set of “new basics” which set out to shape new “kinds of persons” ... better adapted to the kind of world we live in now and the world of the near future. **“Good learners”** in the new educational environment **will have multiple skills and understandings which include: being open to diversity and change** ... (and) being able to take the many different kinds of raw material in the world and to work out the different interpretative frameworks within which that information sits’. Including studies of the countries and cultures of Asia in Australian school curriculum ‘works to achieve these goals – both within Australia, and as globally engaged learners.’

HISTORY TEACHERS’ ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

‘While the Australian past is being widely debated, less attention is paid to the teaching of Asian history in primary and secondary schools, which is ironic, given our present relationships with Asian nations such as Indonesia, China and Japan, and how these relationships will impact on our future.’ Curriculum decision-makers are, the HTAA argued, ‘often faced with difficult choices about inclusion of content. Decisions may depend on the expertise/content knowledge of the teacher, the resources available to that teacher and, sometimes, the rationale for inclusion of a topic within the work program. In some cases, the effort and time required to make changes to a program are too demanding. Many useful and attractive resources for teaching Asian history exist, but a

number of history teachers still cling to topics within their comfort zones. This has made the promotion of Asian history in schools a continuing battle for those who believe that studies of Asia should have a more prominent place in the teaching of history.’ The HTAA sees this Summit as an important source of ‘practical ideas which will help to promote the teaching of Asian history in Australian schools’.

ASIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA, INC.

In its 2002 report ‘Maximising Australia’s Asia Knowledge’, the ASAA drew attention to ‘the need for study of Asia to be part of all levels of schooling’. The society deemed it ‘particularly important “to ensure that study of Asia becomes a significant component of Year 11 and 12 curriculum in all states” and that “every teacher-in-training studies some aspects of Asia” (Recommendations 14 and 15)’.

AUSTRALIAN GEOGRAPHY TEACHERS’ ASSOCIATION

Whilst there has been substantial focus on Australia’s economic connections to Asia, geography teachers see studies of Asia ‘in much richer and diverse contexts’. More specifically, geography teachers ‘draw from many fields to develop their lessons using cultural, economic, political and historical geography to interpret the changing geographies of Australia and the Asian region’. Teaching about Asia in this context ‘tends to be issues based, structured around key geographical pedagogy, inquiry based, extremely well resourced, literate, and values inclusive.’

AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

The teaching of English seeks, the AATE suggests, ‘to promote multicultural education by valuing cultural diversity (ethnicity, race, culture and religion) and encouraging respect for others’ heritages. A multicultural education requires that students learn about different cultures so they can begin to understand them and become aware of the commonalities of and interdependences between different cultures in our world.’ Studies of Asia broaden students’ understandings of some of the different ways of thinking and being of our nearest neighbours. ‘In secondary English, this is most often done through text selection and choice of topic/ theme/ issue’. A study of Asian literature ‘will enrich students’ experience and open them to new structures and some different ways that language is used’. Successful teaching requires access to literature about a range of places and peoples, written by people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds (and often translated into English) as well as by those who learned English as their first language. ‘A greater emphasis on studies of Asia in teaching English will facilitate the availability of quality resources and enable students to better understand and value people from other cultures who are, or will soon become, their peers, families, neighbours and colleagues.’

AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Environmental education, which traditionally was built on the three pillars of education about the environment, education in the environment and education for the environment, increasingly is ‘evolving to incorporate the conceptualisation of sustainability’, and hence education for sustainability. **The AAEE has worked in partnership with the Asia Education Foundation to produce resources for teachers that focus on biodiversity and ecologically sustainable development in Asia.** These resources deliver the learning outcomes that education for sustainability outlines. ‘Understanding the complex cultural and environmental dilemmas facing ourselves and our regional neighbours are essential if we are to work together to resolve these issues and build sustainable futures. Our curriculum and our pedagogy in our schools need to examine the local and global issues that face our region so that our students, our citizens that will build our futures, can critically understand the interconnectedness with our neighbours.’ This is a vision which requires ‘not only quality education for our students’, but professional learning for teachers as well; and that is a task for the AEF and all of its partners.

THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM STUDIES ASSOCIATION (ACSA)

ACSA works to 'support educators so that all students have access to a meaningful, relevant and engaging curriculum. It is committed to curriculum reform informed by the principles of social justice and equity and respect for the democratic rights of all'. In this context, ACSA is 'highly supportive of the inclusion of the studies of Asia in the curriculum of Australian schools and, more particularly, of the need to make links between the studies of Asia and the broader educational agendas of globalisation, civic values and multiculturalism'.

“I cannot imagine a future in which people of all cultures and nations are not increasingly connected by ties of travel, commerce and migration... Through this conference your profession has recognised that trend... and (through promoting and supporting studies of Asia in Australian schools) you are performing a vital service to the nation.” – General Peter Cosgrove AC MC

GENERAL COSGROVE’S ADDRESS

Summit participants were provided with an introductory address from the Chief of the Australian Defence Forces, General Peter Cosgrove AC. MC, on the evening of November 26 at the National Museum of Australia.

Addressing the theme ‘Understanding Asia Culture: Helping the ADF Achieve in the Region’, General Cosgrove began by recording his ‘deep and genuine respect’ for the teaching profession. Having noted that the teaching profession ‘derives its ethos and strength from enduring values, its relevance is’, he advised, ‘contingent upon constant modernisation. The frontiers of human knowledge have never been more porous. Our knowledge of the universe we inhabit is expanding at a dizzying rate ... (and) Teachers are vital mediators of this phenomenon.’

The content of a curriculum is, in this context, very important. ‘But the qualities of discrimination and discernment, which you impart to your students, are vital. Through acquisition of a thirst for knowledge and critical faculties, they will have the basis for navigating a life-long learning journey. In an era when life employment in a single career, much less a single job, is increasingly becoming an anachronism, a capacity for life long learning is the foremost quality you can instil in a pupil.’ And this is, he argued, largely attributable to that ‘overused term “Globalisation.”’

‘Since Marshall McLuhan coined his brilliant aphorism “The Global Village”, we have indeed become more interdependent, more closely linked to our fellow human beings than at any time in recorded history.’ As the American writer, Thomas Friedman has observed in his seminal work *The Lexus and The Olive Tree*, ‘the events of the past decade are *distinguishable* from any other period in history. Both in their scale and their cultural significance, the proliferation of linkages among nations is without precedence. It is a phenomenon that is inexorable.’

Certainly Cosgrove himself indicated that he ‘cannot imagine a future in which people of all cultures and nations are not increasingly connected by ties of travel, commerce and migration ... (and) Through this conference your profession has recognised that trend.’ In pursuing the goal of promoting and supporting the studies of Asia across all curriculum areas in Australian schools ‘you are’, he commented, ‘performing a vital service to the nation’.

‘As a nation that occupies a continent we labour’, he argued, ‘under a disability. We do not share a land border with any other nation. Our isolation militates against the routine acquisition of multiple languages by our young people that is taken for granted throughout Europe. Throughout much of our first century this was not a fatal disability. But, as the world enters a second millennium, and as Australia enters its second century, that state of affairs cannot continue.’

'Language skills and cultural sensitivity will', he continued, 'be the new currency of this world order. Along with computer literacy they will provide the keys to participation in the global economy.' And here we need to take the long-term view. 'While the Asian economic crisis of 1997 dashed the most optimistic predictions as to Australia's future in the Asia-Pacific, it is inevitable that our interests in this region will expand. Japan has long been our major trading partner. Our nearest neighbour is Indonesia, which is entering an especially challenging period in its evolution as a nation. And China has emerged as the next area of economic focus for the West – and is an area where we still need to do a lot more work. Our future prosperity and security will', he argued, 'depend on our ability to understand these cultures and to build bridges to the citizens of these nations and all our immediate neighbours. For that reason I am especially encouraged to learn that Japanese, Indonesian, Korean and Mandarin are the priority languages designated under the Commonwealth National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools Program (NALSAS). And I am delighted that the most rapid growth in language education in the past decade has been driven by increased take up of these languages.'

Certainly the Australian Defence Force (ADF) is acutely aware of 'the case for expanding our individual and societal awareness of the languages and customs of our neighbours'; which General Cosgrove illustrated with two anecdotes from his experience as Commander of INTERFET in East Timor.

The ADF, and the Defence Organisation as a whole has, in fact, been actively engaged in Asia, particularly Southeast Asia for more than a generation; 'assiduously building links to our regional neighbours long before it became an imperative for business'. 'While our early engagement was associated with military action our presence has, for the past thirty years been', he explained, 'about cooperation and building relationships to improve regional security ... (and) An important aspect of this is building the cultural understanding that facilitates cooperation.'

The ADF is represented in most capitals in Southeast Asia by Defence Attaches who have undertaken extensive language training and cultural awareness. 'This is, however, the tip of the iceberg. The men and women of the ADF have been working as exchange officers within the armed forces of regional countries and in some cases attended staff officer training courses of up to 12 months. This immersion has helped build a considerable understanding of Asian cultures within the ADF and facilitated a reciprocal understanding of Australia and Australians.' And it is further supplemented by a Defence Cooperation Program, which annually spends in the order of \$40m in the region. This level of working together 'builds understanding and friendships not only between Australia and our regional partners but also between each of the nations represented, helping to strengthen ties and cooperation'.

“Japan has long been our major trading partner. Our nearest neighbour is Indonesia... and China has emerged as the next area of economic focus for the West. Our future prosperity and security will depend on our ability to understand these cultures and to build bridges to the citizens of these nations and all our immediate neighbours.” – General Peter Cosgrove AC MC

“ Our kids are our future. If that future is to be one of peace and prosperity, they will need the capacity to engage in a dialogue with others of different cultures and creeds. And that applies both within Australia and abroad ...Your role in guiding them on the path to that future is a vital and honourable one.” – General Peter Cosgrove AC MC

The Defence Cooperation Program has ‘assisted considerably in raising the levels of understanding and cultural sensitivity among the militaries of the region. It is this understanding, built at the individual level, that enables nations to form coalitions and act in concert to maintain stability and security in the region.’ And without ‘this focus on understanding the culture of the different peoples in our region, the Australian Defence Force would not have enjoyed the success we did in East Timor’.

‘We all want’, General Cosgrove concluded, ‘to live in a peaceful, secure and civil society, one in which human endurance can flourish. So one of our key contributions to peace and national security is expanding our links to other regional states, and shaping our strategic environment through building confidence and understanding ... If globalisation has meant one thing it is this: no man or woman – to paraphrase John Donne – is an island.’

‘The corporations of the most advanced nations are’, he continued, ‘doing business on every continent ... (but) Commercial links, alone, will never render war unthinkable. What will, however, are mutual understanding and respect and the banishing of prejudice. That is why your deliberations at this conference are so important ... It is a truism – which is nonetheless true – that our kids are our future. If that future is to be one of peace and prosperity, our kids will need the capacity to engage in a dialogue with others of different cultures and creeds. And that applies both within Australia and abroad.’

‘Your role in guiding them on the path to that future is’, he ended, ‘a vital and honourable one’.

MAJOR OUTCOMES OF THE SUMMIT

The full day program on 27 November was designed to build on the preliminary material outlined above, and take it to the next stage by identifying some clear propositions to guide activity over the next three years in relation to systems, schools and providers of external support including the AEF.

To achieve this, the morning session broadly focused on exploring the rationale for a continued emphasis on studies of Asia and its importance in Australian school education (the 'why'), and the afternoon broadly examined what this means for schools, systems and the AEF over the period 2004 to 2006. (the 'how' and 'what')

Introduction

Carillo Gantner, AO (Chairman, Asialink) welcomed participants to the Summit and introduced Chris Evans (Acting Group Manager, Schools Division, Department of Education, Science and Training) representing the Minister for Education, Science and Training, The Hon Brendan Nelson, to deliver the opening speech.

Addressing the theme, 'in the national interest: knowledge and understanding of Asia', Gantner challenged participants to 'make this important national gathering really count'.

The events of the last couple of years have, he suggested, 'made it all too clear how interconnected the world has become, and how knowledge and understanding of our own region are vital to Australia's future. The explosion in communication, travel, and information that we call globalisation has opened the nations of the world up to each other in ways never before imagined – literally collapsing time and space in the creation of a new global village and marketplace ripe with new opportunities, and also with new threats.'

Today there is a new level of uncertainty and instability in the world. Education Minister Brendan Nelson recently pointed out that education will be our best weapon in the fight against terrorism ... If we are going to understand how to work cooperatively with other nations in this fight we must speak Chinese and Indonesian, understand Islam and know about the cultures and histories of other regional partners.'

'Our children and grandchildren will be continually working with countries and cultures very different from their own, with potential for both fruitful interaction and destructive misunderstanding. As General Cosgrove pointed out last night, the challenge of global terrorism and arms proliferation impel Australia and the countries of Asia to work closely together to achieve peace and stability in our region.'

The last 100 years have witnessed 'the gradual transformation of Australia from an overwhelmingly Anglo-Celtic, homogeneous population ... to one of the world's most multicultural societies'. This is, he posited, 'the challenge for educators – to maximise the benefits of this new reality'.

'Geography and global growth patterns combine to make Asia the most important region of the world for Australians ... (and) There is no more important issue facing Australia's future than the quality of our engagement with this region. We have an

enormous economic stake in Asia but, he asked, ‘how do you maximise business opportunities in China or Korea if you don’t speak their languages and comprehend their cultures?’

The challenge for all at the Summit is, therefore, ‘to ensure that the next generation has the knowledge and understanding to get on with their neighbours, to solve global problems, and to build a shared and prosperous future. It must start in our own front yard – Asia. **We don’t need to “Asianise” our curriculum. We need to “Australianise” it**, but that means recognising that Asia should have a natural place in curriculum content’, just as it does in our security and economic well being.

In 1990 Asialink’s founding board, Gantner explained, identified education as the top priority for establishing effective and sustainable engagement with Asia; ‘and 13 years later that view still prevails’. Much has been achieved. ‘The building blocks are in place. We have award winning curriculum materials, we have teacher professional development programs in Asia, in our universities, in our schools. The qualities of our Studies of Asia resources are not only seen as a benchmark here in Australia, but also internationally ... We also have the support of peak education organisations – principals, curriculum bodies, parents.’

Despite these important gains, however, ‘**Australia now finds itself at a crossroad in its “Asia-literacy” with decreased federal and state government funding. If we want Australia to win, it will need a team effort from all levels of government, all running together, all in the same direction.**’

‘I assure you’, he continued, ‘the big challenges still remain. Less than 5% of any teacher pre-service education course in Australia includes any content relating to Asia. A recent review revealed that about 25% of Australian primary and secondary schools do not teach about Asia in their classrooms at all and a further 25% do so in only superficial ways. Despite the work of the AEF and its partners, studies of Asia remains highly marginalised and lacks clear priority in our nation’s education agenda. What we need is renewed commitment from Liberal and Labor governments alike.’ ...We need the commitment of our nation’s leaders in government, business, academia, the media, unions the community and cultural sector’ – a commitment which currently appears ‘to be waning’.

There can, however, be a better vision for Australia’s future. ‘**It is my hope**’, he concluded, ‘**that by 2020, we will live in a radically different Australia; an Australia in which our children can speak with respect and knowledge about Islam; an Australia that can communicate with its largest and nearest neighbour – Indonesia; an Australia that can take up the opportunities offered by the intellectual and economic powerhouses of China and India.** An Australia in which all teachers have the knowledge and resources to provide their students with Asia-related learning experiences. An Australia in which a unique, vibrant, creative culture has blossomed, a culture that understands its Indigenous connectedness to land and is fed as much by the influences of the great civilisations of Asia as by those of Europe.’

Such a vision will, however, be ‘just a pipe dream leading to a nightmare unless we afford the studies of Asia the highest priority in our national and State and Territory education agendas’.

Opening on behalf of the Minister of Education, Science and Training, The Hon. Brendan Nelson

Mr Chris Evans, Acting Group Manager, Schools Group, Department of Education, Science and Training, representing the Minister, Dr. Brendan Nelson who was detained by parliamentary commitments, stated that this National Summit is a particularly 'important step in determining future directions for this critical area'.

Mr Evans noted that the Asia Education Foundation was established some ten years ago with successive core funding of \$1.2 million each year from the Australian Government. Some of its notable achievements so far include:

- the development of the document, *Studies of Asia: A Statement for Australian Schools*, a framework to inform the infusion of Studies of Asia across the curriculum in schools;
- the release of more than 50 resources under the Access Asia series;
- the growth of the schools development program to include 2,800 schools in the Access Asia Schools program; and
- the thousands of teachers annually who have benefited from its professional development activities, including 1,000 unit enrolments in the Graduate Certificate level courses and another 1,000 or so educators who have participated in the Access Asia Educational Study Tours overseas.

He went on to note that from 1994 to 2002, studies of Asia was also supported by the National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools (NALSAS) Strategy. The Australian Government contributed over \$200 million to this Strategy which was meant to be matched by equal funding from the States and Territories. The Australian Government contribution was important 'seed funding' and NALSAS succeeded in introducing Asian languages and studies into the Australian school curriculum. Evans explained that the Australian Government also recognises the value of languages education and continues to support the study of Asian languages in schools through the School Languages Program, the Endeavour Language Teacher Fellowships and the Asian Languages Professional Learning Project.

Evans observed that it is clear from a range of research that 'these efforts have raised students' deeper knowledge and understanding of Asia' and that **the challenge now 'is to bring all schools on board and strengthen studies of Asia in schools that have already made a start'**. Evans acknowledged that this has become more pressing in recent times. 'Success in combating threats of terrorism will depend on how we get along with others in terms of understanding and becoming involved as regional and global citizens'. As the Minister often says, 'the greatest support of terrorism is ignorance'.

Evans stressed the need to pay close attention to our relations with the countries in the region, our neighbours in Asia and acknowledged that our involvement in East Timor and the Solomon Islands demonstrated the positive contribution that we can make to these countries. 'The region provides us with a massive opportunity for our role as a good citizen'. Our success will, to a great extent, depend on 'our willingness to be involved in, and have an understanding of, the region – in other words, learning and respecting the peoples, their customs, their cultures and living and working among them'.

'As General Peter Cosgrove has said', Evans noted, 'good neighbours are countries who learned to speak each other's languages, learned to respect each other's religious and cultural beliefs, learned to allow for differences and learned to be inclusive'.

In this broad policy context, **Evans was pleased to announce on behalf of Minister Nelson a \$500,000 funding boost to the AEF to expand teacher professional development on studies of Asia in 2004**, and thereby further broaden Australian students' knowledge of Asian cultures.

'Our relationship with the countries and peoples of the Asian region must', he argued, 'have a significant place in the school curriculum if our students are to be well prepared for the world around them. Studies of Asia, rather than being a separate school subject, can be developed within the existing key learning areas. It is a matter of how to win the hearts and minds of education policy makers, principals, teachers and school associations which have not yet accepted or included studies of Asia in the school program. At the same time, governments must continue to provide good resources and leadership. As educators we also need to consider the relevance of new initiatives such as values education and civics and citizenship for studies of Asia. It needs to move from the margins of Australian school into the mainstream. In doing so, studies of Asia can 'access the \$26 billion provided each year by the Australian and State and Territory governments in funding for Australia's schools'.

'Some recent strategic moves have', he added, 'been made to involve a wider range of key education groups in the AEF Advisory Board' and this is to be welcomed. 'The future of studies of Asia in Australian schools is', he concluded, 'a promising one and your deliberations here today will further shape that future'.

Summit Overview

In thanking Chris Evans for his address, Professor Brian Caldwell (Chair, AEF) outlined the aims and anticipated outcomes of the Summit program, and Summit moderator Tony Mackay (Director, Centre for Strategic Educational Thinking) provided an overview of the program.

The commitment of the Australian and in fact all State and Territory governments has, Caldwell suggested, 'been pivotal' to the success of the NALSAS strategy and the promotion by AEF of a national collaborative approach to this area of school reform; and he particularly welcomed the additional funding which Evans, on behalf of the Minister, announced.

'But today', he argued, 'we are at a crossroad – in a new funding environment and uncertain times for all governments. The progress made to date is in jeopardy without renewed commitment'.

The Summit brings together key education stakeholders including senior representatives of education systems, sectors, teacher education, parent, principal and subject organisations plus peak business, government and community groups.

The Summit provides, he explained, an important opportunity to:

- report on and discuss the current status of studies of Asia in Australian school education;
- discuss the rationale for studies of Asia in today's changing global context;
- recommend future directions for the studies of Asia in Australian schools; and
- recommend specific strategic directions and priorities for the work of the Asia Education Foundation, 2004-6.

The Report of the Summit will be presented by the AEF Board to a range of decision making and influential people and groups in Australian education including:

- the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, or MCEETYA, Taskforce;
- the Australian Education Systems Officials Committee (AESOC);
- Federal and State and Territory Ministers of Education;
- The Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training;
- The Business Council of Australia; and
- a range of other interested groups.

‘Our goal is’, he concluded, ‘that the Summit Report provides a blueprint for the next three years of the work of the Asia Education Foundation and that it informs strategies at Commonwealth State and Territory levels.’

The crossroad

In explaining why we are at a cross-road, Kathe Kirby (Director, AEF) pointed again to the research findings that we are only half way with the infusion of studies of Asia in school curriculum. **Our primary goal is, in this context, to ‘infuse studies of Asia in all schools, K-12, and all learning areas’.**

There is, of course, much that has been achieved over the last ten years, much of it charted in Background Paper 1 which is summarised above; and the Erebus Review has demonstrated that ‘we really have come a long way through our national, collaborative approach’.

Sitting behind these achievements is, she explained, the understanding that studies of Asia is important because:

- it is in the national interest;
- of our geographic proximity;
- for economic reasons;
- for inclusivity of Asian Australians;
- of its intellectual value;
- of security – of people, the environment and our economy; and
- for tolerance and harmony in Australia.

The cross-road we now confront though, is constituted by:

- **the cessation of NALSAS;**
- **an 80% decrease in funding in 2003;**
- **a 75% reduction in participation in professional development;**
- **a 35% decline in the sales of the Access Asia series; and**
- **great uncertainty about funding in 2004**, though a bit less so after the announcement in Chris Evans’ address.

It is a cross-road we face in the current knowledge that:

- 50% or more schools are not integrating studies of Asia in the curriculum;
- studies of Asia are relatively marginalised in curriculum policy;
- less than 5% of pre-service teacher education programs focus on Asia;
- there is uncertain commitment from State and Territory government and non-government sectors in 2004; and
- there is AEF funding of \$1.2 million per annum in Australian government forward estimates until 2006.

So, our challenges today are, according to Kirby:

- How do we best achieve system legitimisation?
- How do we capture teachers other than the ‘enthusiasts’?
- How do we best ensure studies of Asia are included in school curriculum discussions?
- How do we ensure that new teachers are exposed to studies of Asia in their training?
- What role can AEF as a national organisation best play?
- What role can state, territory and Commonwealth jurisdictions best play?

She ended her presentation by showing a brief video entitled ‘Putting the World into World Class Education’ made by the Asia Society in the United States and featuring among others, Secretary of State Colin Powell, and Secretary of Education, Roderick Paige, outlining the importance of studies of Asia in schools.

Australia now: a new Asia agenda

The world is undoubtedly changing. In 1950, Jenny McGregor (Director, Asialink) explained, one third of the world’s GDP was accounted for by the US. Today the figure is one fifth, as a result of the major and growing importance of the Asian region. And that is an indication of ‘the challenge our panel speakers will address.’

Professor Tony Milner (Dean of Asian Studies, Australian National University) and Tony Hallam (National Assurance Partner, PriceWaterhouse Coopers) then commented on the new agenda from their respective points of view.

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Australia is not, according to Milner, turning its back on Asia. There are changes occurring, but ‘we have by no means retreated from our engagement with the Asian region’. Much of our trade, international education, growing regional role, tourist trade, etc. all still focus heavily on Asia. Then, there are strong security relationships, especially in the context of the war on terror, and visits to Asia by our senior politicians. And that is only the tip of the iceberg.

What is changing however, is that the ‘business of engagement is often tough’; which impacts on Asia education, in particular, because ‘the more you do, the more potential for disagreement’. But it is more than just this. Our earlier engagement was ‘headier’ – Australia building APEC, believing we were solving the problems of Cambodia, and so on, with only Mahathir as a negative voice. Liberal democracy was ‘on the move everywhere’ and we had come to ‘the end of history’ as Fukuyama had put it. ‘Asian societies were becoming more and more like our own. Integrating ourselves into such a region presented relatively little challenge. Or, so it seemed to many a decade ago.’

Today, however, the situation appears to be ‘far less benign’. It is clear now that Mahathir was not, and is not such a solitary figure and history is, in a sense, ‘everywhere’ in the tensions across the region and beyond. History is there in the form of ‘Asian values’ which pre-date those imposed by colonialism, and which are seen to have the capacity to sustain a new Asia. ‘There is the desire’, he explained, ‘to create an Asian regionalism that can match European regionalism’.

The 'exclusive regionalism' of ASEAN and ASEAN plus three (China, Japan and Korea) competes with the 'inclusive regionalism' of APEC and other bodies in which Australia can participate; and this does present real challenges for us.

It is a situation which is, he argued, in turn paralleled in Australia in the growing focus on Australian values, and the 'the need to link even our foreign policy to our domestic values. Think of the way Prime Minister Howard explained our change of policy on Timor. Look at the stress on Australian values in this year's White Paper on Foreign Affairs and Trade. The Hansonist movement was a dramatic expression of domestic values – or, at least, some domestic values – a reminder that they cannot be continually ignored.'

A sharper awareness of Australian values and heritage could, he suggested, partly be seen as 'a consequence of closer engagement' because the more you engage, the more you focus on your own identity. 'The convergence thinkers of a decade ago got it wrong – globalisation might well bring a wonderful integration of economies, but is capable of doing so without bringing a corresponding convergence of values. In some senses, the enhanced human interaction can actually sharpen difference, or at least the sense of difference'; and we sense this difference most of all with respect to Muslim terrorism.

Today, then, engagement has changed, and the difficulties are more obvious. That said, 'we have no choice but to move forward'. Our old partners (the UK and the US) expect us to engage positively and it is ultimately 'what gives us stature and interest in their eyes'.

Given it's getting tougher, and yet we have no option but to advance, one implication is that our knowledge base of the region becomes even more important than before, as General Cosgrove argued the previous night. The Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP), in which Milner is personally involved, provides a case study of what is required. People involved travel to Asia regularly, building relationships, learning about the cultures involved and investing the time to build a critical 'architecture' for the ongoing, effective engagement which is central to our long term security in the region'.

The task we face, Milner concluded, **is to communicate to a wider public that it is engagement with Asia that 'will define Australia'**. We don't need a community where all will be Asia specialists, but we do need one that is 'relatively sophisticated in Asia matters; a community with a potential to provide many more specialists: a community that will consistently demand of Government and Opposition that they develop effective, creative policy for regional relations; a community that will understand the need (at times) to balance Australian values against the claims of good regional policy – a community, for instance, that will show sympathy toward our massive neighbour Indonesia in its great struggle to develop a democracy, and one that will in some sense or another incorporate all Indonesians, including regional separatists and Muslim fundamentalists.' And above all, **we need a community which views the region not in 'simple-minded terms', but which understands 'the complexity of our Asian engagement and the need for patience'**.

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Referring to Kathe Kirby's list of imperatives to pursue studies of Asia, Tony Hallam reflected that it probably would not have been the same ten years ago, when it all was about positioning ourselves from an economic perspective. This suggests to him that we ought sometimes step back and take a longer term view and, in particular consider, 'in terms of Asia, why bother?'

For Hallam, it comes back to **the sort of workforce we will need in 10 or 15 years time – one which is ‘emotionally intelligent and culturally intelligent** as well, especially to the degree of difficulty which Tony Milner outlined’. **We need, in this context, to be attuned to the fact that ‘Asia is not Asia’. It’s more complex than that, and ‘doing business in Malaysia is different to doing it in China’. And this requires more exposure in our schools so we don’t enter these relationships on the basis of stereotyped views.**

As services become a more important component of our exports, knowing and understanding our customers assumes more importance which again, for Hallam, comes back to knowing your customer ‘is not Asian, but Thai, or Vietnamese, or whatever’. And this again brings us back to ‘education in schools’. The opportunity is, in this context, ‘to build the knowledge that sparks the interest and the passion which makes the difficult task of engagement that much easier’.

We have, he suggested, started ‘the investment and the journey ... But **make no mistake, from a business perspective, this region already is critical and will become even more so over the next ten to fifteen years**’. Our coming generation must, therefore, be ready to engage in the region. ‘The nature of the engagement is not clear; but the need for engagement is certain.’

Australia’s future: *our youth*

Introducing this session, Jason Yat-sen Li (National Manager, Sustainable Development, Insurance Australia Group) sought to address two interrelated questions: how does Asia belong, and how does Australia belong in Asia, since ‘it’s all about belonging’.

He did so by first outlining his own background in suburban Sydney which was ‘typically Australian’, but still strongly influenced by the ‘Chineseness’ of his family; as much as anything else, evident in their powerful commitment to education.

How, in this context, do we answer the question about how Asia belongs in Australia, especially since there are, he suggested, still strong pockets of racism within our nation, and very different responses to ‘difference’?

Certainly ‘**diverse streetscapes do not mean diversity has permeated where it matters most**’, especially to:

- the sources of power including, very powerfully, the media which portrays an earlier, more white, anglo-saxon, protestant Australian than arguably really exists – there is, for instance, still not one actor of Asian descent cast in an ongoing role of significance; and
- the national identity and its icons, to underpin a real sense of ‘belonging to the nation ... which goes to the heart of civic engagement and social capital’.

Related to this is, he argued, the loss of language amongst so many young people in Australia with the result the question becomes not so much how to get young immigrants to learn English, as how to get them to retain their own languages?

What is missing, he suggested, is ‘the anchoring of a serious cultural and intellectual representation of Asia in Australia’.

So, how does Australia belong in Asia?

As an observer he noted the emergence of a range of free trade agreements, positive regional security roles and so on. 'But does that mean we are pursuing an holistic foreign policy in the Asian region?' Events over the last decade have in Yat-Sen Li's view, 'like dominoes' undone much of the good work – dominoes which include:

- the rise of Hansonism and its interpretation in the region;
- the Asian economic crisis of 1997 which saw statements indicating a desire to focus more on Europe and the US which were interpreted as turning our back on Asia;
- the 1999 claim that Australia is the 'deputy sheriff' in the region;
- the failure of the Republic referendum reinforcing the perception of our continued connection to Europe;
- the failure to reach reconciliation with our Indigenous peoples;
- the politicisation of the Tampa issue; and
- the war in Iraq and the perception of compliance with the US.

Whether or not perceptions would have been different if the choices made were different is uncertain, though he suspects the answer is 'yes'. We now need, he observed, to move beyond 'quick wins' in studies of Asia, to broaden levels of leadership, so we can 'dream the big dreams' and pass them on to the next generation.

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Eight table groups of participants then heard and discussed the story of one Asialink young leader each with a focus on how their work connects to Asia, some of their background and their vision for Australia. Input for this session was provided by Dolone Chakravati (Freehills), Haidi Willmot (PwC Legal), Sally McGeoch (Wollemi Pines), Maher Magrabi (Awareness Education Australia), Dorjee Sun (cvMail), Lee Kinsella (Australian War Memorial), Sasha Hampston (IDP) and Alexander Balas (Invest Australia).

Some of the flavour of the stories discussed can be seen in the contribution of Dolone Chakravati who built on Yat-Sen Li's address by outlining her background as the child of Indian parents who also was very much brought up as a young Australian. She and her family 'love and appreciate life in Australia' and have promoted the central value of education as the 'gateway to everything'; especially from a culture which expects people to take care not only of themselves, but also later in life their parents and grandparents as well.

As a lawyer now at Freehills, involved in construction law, much of her work includes involvement in Asia. She deals with clients in Asia daily and has been effective not because she has language skills, but because she has 'the cultural understanding required'

During her school years, Chakravati moved frequently because of her father's work, and experienced systems in four states. A pervading factor in each was the experience of 'ignorance and racism in the schoolyard' which was both demoralising and, according to her mother's recollections, depressing as well. Looking back, she realises it reflects 'a lack of education about Asia and Asian issues in what was then, a very Eurocentric curriculum'. This can, she argued, also occasion pressures to 'lose one's cultural heritage'; though in her case her parents worked 'really hard' to sustain and value it and reinforce the view 'you never should be ashamed of your background'. In this context she did, however, acknowledge her own need to know more about countries in Asia other than India because, as Hallam pointed out, 'Asia is not Asia'. And certainly one of the challenges for education is 'to convey to young people the diversity of Asia'.

Having worked overseas for a period of time, Chakravati saw first hand the damage done to Australia by 'Hansonism and the lack of government response'; though she also feels it may, to some extent, have been 'a debate we had to have'. Apart from anything else, it created 'a context where people more readily ask questions about my background and discuss it in different ways'.

As a corporate lawyer, Chakravati believes there is a lack of 'cultural intelligence', as Hallam put it, **reflected in 'ignorant comments at times' which, although ostensibly innocent and minor, cause offence including to clients in key markets.** She is, in this context, directly involved in a program in her own firm aimed at building cultural understanding among its own staff. This is consistent with her desire to build her own knowledge and experience of the diversity of Asia, to get the message across to the next generations from where the leadership, which Yat-San Li called for, will come.

Australia now: *imperatives*

A panel of contributors provided three contrasting, but also complementary views on Australia in relation to Asia to inform participant thinking on where the imperatives lie, and what this might mean for studies of Asia in Australian schools.

In addressing relations in the region with a particular focus on Indonesia and Islam, Philip Flood AO (Chair, Australia-Indonesia Institute) began by paying tribute to the work of the AEF and 'how much you have done with such a modest budget'.

The Australia-Indonesia Institute was, he explained, established as a bi-partisan initiative in 1989 founded on the belief that, although we have a substantial relationship with Indonesia, we don't understand Indonesia and its diversity very well, beyond perhaps what comes from a holiday in Bali.

The Institute is not concerned with day-to-day problems of relations, but rather issues looking ten, 15 and 20 years ahead, with a focus on building understanding amongst young people in particular, including even a schools exchange program in response to proposals from schools.

Over the last couple of years, the Institute has conducted a Muslim exchange program for young (and sometimes not so young) Indonesian Muslim leaders to come to Australia so they can understand the nature of Islam here, and can explain to Australians something more about the nature of Islam in Indonesia. This reflects the Institute, and Flood's own belief in the importance of young people having a better understanding of Islam, especially in light of recent events and the dangers associated with people equating Islam with terrorism.

'To live harmoniously with our Islamic neighbours we need', he argued, **'to urgently have a better understanding of Islam'**. In a shorthand sense we can, he explained, categorise Muslim groups into three:

- terrorists – no-one knows how strong they are in Indonesia, but probably less than 2000; though even a small number can do great damage
- radical Muslims ('Islamists') – they mostly do not condone terrorism, but have a very literal view of Islam and many espouse beliefs and practices 'we would find unacceptable in Australia'. Whilst they occupy important positions in the Middle East, they are not so significant in Indonesia where 'relatively few subscribe'
- moderate Muslims – the bulk of Muslims in Indonesia.

Australia, and the Indonesian government have a 'strong interest' in ensuring that radical Islam does not gain more of a foothold in Indonesia. It is interesting to note, in this context, that a recent public survey of attitudes to Islam in Australia conducted by the Australia-Indonesia Institute (which will be released in the near future and hence is not available for quoting at this stage) did reveal some positive outcomes about Islam in Indonesia, but also substantial confusion about Islam vis-à-vis terrorism and a conflation of the two.

'Improving Australia's understanding of Islam begins', Flood concluded, **'in schools'**. Our success in strengthening our security depends on better understanding of Indonesia and Islam so we can work together more effectively in the region, and with our largest neighbour.

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Professor Robin Jeffrey (President, Asian Studies Association of Australia) provided an update of studies of Asia since the publication of his association's report on *Maximising Australia's Asia Knowledge* in June 2002, as the basis of reminding us of the civilising aspects of studies of Asia to complement the range of economic benefits already noted through the Summit.

In 1998, he noted, fewer than 3% of Australian university students did any studies of Asia, out of a total undergraduate population of 400,000 and fewer than 2% took an Asian language. Despite goals set at the time to increase these levels to 20 and 10 percent respectively, **the June 2002 report found that fewer than 5% of the** (by then 800,000) **undergraduate population pursued a study of Asia and less than 3% were taking a language.**

Certainly, he explained, there was growth and development in the 1990s, but by 2001 it had 'stalled'. Since the 2002 report was published there have been 'isolated gains', but the general picture still applies. 'The systematic repositioning of studies of Asia hasn't really begun' and this occasions two significant concerns for schools. The first relates to the training of teachers, and the fact that **no teacher education program in Australia in 2003 requires studies of Asia.** The second is that studies of Asia is 'mostly missing' in the senior years of school... (and) Whilst it can be done, it takes a determined student and teacher', and limits the chance of students pursuing studies of Asia in school or university. It also effectively 'relegates studies of Asia to younger students, which is a bad signal in status terms'.

This brought Jeffrey to the 'civilisational' aspects to which he alluded at the start. **Studies of Asia**, he argued, **'matter' beyond the economic and security factors already cited, and are 'important for our very humanity ... so we can see the world as others see it ... A capacity to see the world differently, but still see human commonality.'**

This, he contended, 'assumes even more importance' when the existence of a 'top group' of nations, of which we nominally are part, can lead us to forget that history is very long and, over time things change so that those on top can slide.

We benefit, he concluded, from seeing the world outside our own frame and 'binding and bonding' as a result.

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Rounding off the session, Greg Sheridan (Foreign Editor, The Australian) spoke on the importance of understanding Asia to Australia and the way in which our 'peculiar national identity' dictates this.

Most countries, he observed, are defined by their neighbours. Australia is, as General Cosgrove also had observed, 'not like that'. Our history is predominantly European; our security alliance centres on the US; our trade is dominated by North Asia; and our security environment by South Asia.

We therefore need 'cultural understanding' of all four regions, though there is a danger here of just dabbling and becoming dilettantes.

The necessity for this 'cultural literacy' is, according to Sheridan, 'overwhelming', as already fully canvassed by others who had spoken to the Summit. Our nation has, he suggested, 'moved ahead' in this regard, and an Asian dimension exists in all aspects of our life — what he previously has called 'Asianisation of Australian life'. But, for most of us, it has lacked 'an intellectual dimension'. You cannot, for instance, have a debate about the quality of Asian leadership in the same way as you can about US leadership; and Philip Flood's outline of the 'battle for the soul of Islam' is a case in point. 'Nothing could be more important for the future of Australia, but it is basically neglected in our discourse'; and he cited other examples to illustrate the point.

In this context, Sheridan does not think 'we have just discovered Asia'. Australians have been interacting with Asia for a long time. Similarly, he would not overplay the aspects of Australian identity referred to by Jason Yat-Sen Li, in the thinking of people in Asia. Most Asian societies, he suggested, have similar debates to the sorts of identity debates we have, and we ought not 'project this onto their views of us'.

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In response to a question from the floor, Flood suggested there is, in Australia now, a need for 'much stronger leadership from government' in relation to the imperatives that all have been addressing — a role which Jeffrey observed is also symbolically important throughout the nation. Sheridan agreed on the need for much stronger government leadership, but noted that there are other 'big, autonomous systems in this country' which can't just sit back and blame government; and he cited as examples state Education Departments, business organisations, and universities who 'all can act without being told by the Commonwealth government'. Beyond this, he argued, there is a need to find a way of relating to governments which melds with 'their political interests and values' and which, of necessity, must be 'bi-partisan to be sustained over time'.

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Summit participants were then invited to reflect briefly in table groups chaired by AEF Board members on the 2–3 key messages of the morning, with responses collated over lunch to inform deliberations that afternoon.

Review

Tony Mackay began the afternoon session of the Summit with a summary of the key messages to emerge from the pre-lunch table groups.

MESSAGE 1: a strengthened rationale for studies of Asia

There is no doubt an agreed rationale for studies of Asia which can be identified, which arguably is enlarged from the past, and which broadly can be expressed in the following terms – the rationale for studies of Asia remains based on the same economic, social and cultural arguments as have long been recognised, but is now strengthened by a changed and heightened security environment and rapidly escalating globalisation, plus the fact that Australia itself is arguably becoming more influenced by Asian cultures both in terms of its own population and the way we live our lives. Together, these link closely to the ongoing discussion within our country about what it means to be an Australian, and to the fact that being Asia savvy can privilege Australia in Europe, the United States and throughout the world.

MESSAGE 2: the central place of studies of Asia in current education debate about what Australian children need to know and be able to do

A second message was that the current context for reaffirming this rationale and progressing it in education, is particularly conducive because of discussions across the nation about what it is young people need to know and be able to do, and hence should learn. We have the opportunity to insert studies of Asia directly into these deliberations, and to confirm its place in the mainstream.

MESSAGE 3: strong agreement on the importance of this

The third key message was that the willingness to do this is there at every level; and the afternoon sessions of the Summit were directly focused on ‘how’, in terms of the opportunity and willingness he outlined.

One issue which did emerge in group discussions and which needed further discussion, however, was whether or not studies of Asia should, tactically, be promoted quite explicitly, or whether the political climate requires it to be less overt.

Some participants considered that if you go in with a studies of Asia headline, then they won’t progress very far. A better approach, which still is ‘explicit about studies of Asia’, involves ‘going in under the heading of citizenship which is cross curricular and whole school’, and then break it down into what it means to be a good citizen in Australia, our region and the world; which inevitably requires studies of Asia content. So, ‘studies of Asia is explicit, but you don’t actually start there’.

Supporting the approach, other participants observed that it fits with broader discussions of identity which are occurring within Australia, though noted they do sometimes go beyond the notion of citizenship per se.

Education perspectives

Participants were provided with a series of short 'witness statements' from the national curriculum perspective, the Australian government, state/territory systems, teacher education, schools and the AEF outlining their views on the key strategies and issues in meeting the needs of Australia's young people in relation to the new agenda outlined.

NATIONAL CURRICULUM PERSPECTIVE

'Curriculum in Australia has', according to Pamela Macklin (Curriculum Corporation) 'been in a bit of a sorry state in recent years, as there has been such great diversity between curriculum frameworks, content and standards in each education jurisdiction'. As a relatively small developed country we should, she argued, 'be a lot better organised than we currently are and have much higher quality curriculum programs than we currently have'. And the ways in which curriculum is organised and delivered in Australia 'have made it very difficult for the AEF to ensure that the studies of Asia has the profile it deserves in our schools'.

The good news however is, she observed, 'that the need to improve curriculum consistency is beginning to receive the attention it deserves and there are some great emerging opportunities for us to ensure the position of the studies of Asia is strengthened'. At the July 2002 MCEETYA meeting, for instance, Ministers expressed concern at the lack of curriculum consistency among States and Territories and sought advice about the current status and use within States and Territories of nationally developed Statements and Profiles and how jurisdictions might collaborate further on consistent curriculum outcomes. Curriculum Corporation then undertook this work on behalf of the Student Learning and Support Services (SLSS) Taskforce, with advice from a Steering Committee representing all States and Territories, the Commonwealth, the ACACAs and the Catholic and Independent School sectors.

Subsequently, at the July 2003 MCEETYA meeting, the Ministers endorsed the recommendations of the Taskforce for the development of Statements of Learning in the four curriculum domains of English, Maths, Science and Civics and Citizenship. These Statements of Learning would be used over time by education jurisdictions to inform the development of their curriculum documents. The development of the English statements of learning are already underway and are being developed in close consultation with all key stakeholders.

'Any opportunities for this new national work to provide a vehicle for the studies of Asia should', she argued, **'be identified and explored** by this Summit group and other key stakeholders'. But this is only one example of important national curriculum related work which could be used to assist in raising the profile of the studies of Asia. 'This committed group of people should be examining the MCEETYA agenda and identifying priority areas which could be strengthened by having a studies of Asia focus. It is not just about identifying a vehicle for the studies of Asia, it should be also about being very clear about the great deal of value that a studies of Asia focus adds to other national priorities.'

The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the 21st Century notes that national goals of schooling will assist young people to contribute to Australia's social, cultural and economic development in local and global contexts. A key national goal is that 'all students understand and acknowledge the value of cultural and linguistic diversity, and possess the knowledge, skills and understanding to contribute to, and benefit from, such diversity in the Australian community and nationally.'

'This Summit group needs', Macklin concluded, 'to clearly identify the ways in which the studies of Asia can contribute to various national education agendas, and use every formal and informal means to ensure that the studies of Asia is given a profile wherever possible.'

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE

The Australian government has, Noel Simpson (DEST) explained, **been actively pursuing a studies of Asia agenda since 1992**, initially through core funding for the AEF, which is continuing, and with a second 'resource impetus with NALSAS from 1994 to 2002 which is now concluded'.

One interesting thing in this context is that it has been a 'mixed agenda' between languages and studies of Asia which 'wasn't always a happy marriage'; with studies of Asia feeling at times that 'they got a raw deal'. Languages are now being pursued by MCEETYA, with committed Commonwealth funds and a national four year plan. Studies of Asia has a core Commonwealth commitment of \$1.2 million to AEF, with some additions in the post NALSAS environment including the \$500,000 grant announced earlier that day, and 'that is the given ... The rest is speculation'.

Currently, Simpson explained, the Commonwealth is evaluating the Discovering Democracy program for civics and citizenship (due to conclude in June 2004), with specific attention to how civics and citizenship can, in future, link to history education, studies of Asia ('quite specifically') and values education. Values education is, he noted, a particular initiative of Minister Nelson who recently included it as part of his ten point framework for education and released the Values Education Study which includes a draft framework for values education and a set of ten core values, some of which link closely to studies of Asia. For all of that, he ended, the actual outcome of the evaluation of Discovering Democracy is, as yet unknown, and will have to await budget night in 2004.

STATE/TERRITORY PERSPECTIVES

Speaking on behalf of States and Territories, Pam Moss (Department of Education and Training, Western Australia) observed that there is 'intrinsic value and importance in having an Asia literate society, and schools have an important role'. The question is how schools can do it, which is part of the task the Summit has set itself. **The fact that 50% of schools do incorporate studies of Asia to some extent is**, she observed, **'an enormous achievement ... (and) We should be proud of that'**. We have a significant number of teachers with knowledge and commitment, who we can draw on as a resource. We also have a significant number of schools who 'wouldn't give up studies of Asia for anything'. All of this achievement comes from the national collaborative work, including the significant contribution of States and Territories, which has 'built an impetus for studies of Asia'.

'So', she asked, 'what stops us going further still?' Some of the barriers she cited in response include:

- the crowded curriculum;
- the increased involvement of schools in curriculum development which can result in some disparity of coverage of curriculum areas such as studies of Asia; and
- the trend to prescribe less, and be more generic, though she did concede there may be some swinging back from this.

The key imperative is, in this context, **'to sell studies of Asia in terms of what's good for individual students as well as what's good for the nation and the region'** – eg, its contribution to citizenship, generic skills, cultural sensitivity, etc. This, rather than mandating is, she argued, the way to go.

Some of the strongest advocates of studies of Asia are, she advised in conclusion, principals who have taken it up, and principal associations are important allies we ought not neglect. **In sum, for Moss the question is, 'what constitutes an appropriate curriculum for Australian schools and students, and then studies of Asia can be addressed in that context'.**

TEACHER EDUCATION PERSPECTIVES

Deans of Education are, according to Dr Andrew Harvey (Australian Council of Deans of Education), 'very interested in collaborating and getting outcomes on this issue, and are keen to be involved.'

Their justification for studies of Asia is similar to the points made during the day, 'and emphasising that people in the future will need a broader range of skills to which studies of Asia can contribute in a positive way'.

Studies of Asia are, he acknowledged, only explicitly addressed in teacher education 'to a limited extent'. To solve this is, however, 'complex, and requires an inter-disciplinary focus'. There are, he explained, lots of curriculum pressures and demands on teacher education, and integrating studies of Asia will require 'innovation and creativity', perhaps along the lines Noel Simpson outlined. It also requires cooperation between faculties in universities, rather than the competition that often exists.

For all of this, **teacher education is**, he concluded, '**limited in how much it can do**', so there is a need to be 'realistic about what can be achieved' and to recognise that just as important, or perhaps even more important than pre-service education, is the continuing professional development in which teachers engage.

PRINCIPALS PERSPECTIVES

APAPDC, its chair Tom Croker explained, is 'well placed to support the professional development' of which Andrew Harvey spoke; along the same lines as it did for Discovering Democracy and Indigenous Education programs.

The Primary Principals' Association covers some 7,000 schools and hence has a big stake in studies of Asia. Endorsing the rationale outlined at the Summit, Croker explained that **principals often suggest a need to 'embed studies of Asia into the whole school curriculum and have it reflected in whole school policy'**.

There is a variety of approaches to this in primary classrooms, and schools as a whole and, he suggested, the reach of studies of Asia may be better than some of the figures suggest given anecdotal evidence he has heard. Regardless, though, 'we do need to link to values, civics and literacy programs as suggested to maintain the momentum; ... (and) **We do need greater levels of endorsement from jurisdictions to support principals and teachers promoting it in their schools, because principals do take close note of what their employers endorse.**'

Croker is keen to see the existing support structures maintained, as they are 'a major component of the good stories out there related to Asia education ... good stories we really ought promote and ensure they are shared'. Funding is, in this context, 'clearly critical if we want to make further inroads, as is teacher education as more young teachers start coming into schools'. And certainly 'more consistency nationally, as outlined by Pamela Macklin, would help.'

ASIA EDUCATION FOUNDATION PERSPECTIVE

Concluding the session, Maureen Welch (Manager, AEF) provided an overview of what the research tells us about effecting change in relation to studies of Asia in schools.

Studies of Asia is, she explained, **‘a complex innovation which takes significant time;** which usually occurs after a critical mass of teaching practice has been effected in a school’. Studies of Asia programs are, in this context, ‘commonly driven by individual teacher interest’.

Implementation of studies of Asia, the research tells us, **needs to be supported by system legitimisation, external support via agencies such as the AEF and education sectors, and professional development along with access to extensive resources and school policy.**

It appears from the research, she explained, that what makes the difference to student knowledge is a combination of:

- whole school commitment, which tends in turn to translate into programs and action;
- teachers’ access to a wide range of resources and professional development; and
- above all, formal structured classroom teaching.

The key factor then impacting on student attitudes is the use of a wide range of resources by teachers and their access to professional development.

The commitment exhibited by Access Asia schools ‘significantly contributed to increased student knowledge of Asia and positive attitudes towards Asia’.

It is clear from the research, Welch argued, **that ‘professional development is the key to increasing teacher knowledge and understanding of Asia and teachers’ capacity to establish and sustain programs’**. Pre-service teacher educators also, she observed, require professional development in the studies of Asia domain.

On top of this, she ended, **‘extending our reach to schools beyond the early adopters and enthusiasts, requires incentives and explicit policy’** right throughout the nation.

The suggested response

Three working groups (schools, systems and external support/AEF) then developed 2-3 strategic directions to take us forward over the next three years, each of which, together with key aspects of the ensuing discussion, is briefly summarised below.

SCHOOLS

The schools group proposed four actions related to the areas of curriculum, teachers and the wider community. These involved:

- bringing school and general communities into the dialogue about studies of Asia;
- developing resources relevant to the existing curriculum that enrich, rather than replace it;
- developing an advocacy role as a means of engaging the community, and working with the media to develop more of a 'groundswell of acceptance'; and
- recognising and acting on the 'absolute necessity of professional development'.

There was, it should be noted, some wariness in this context about how much schools can take on, which suggests a need to integrate these actions with the suggestions emerging from the other groups.

SYSTEMS

This group agreed on one, superordinate action which, it acknowledged, does imply many more that need to be further discussed and addressed.

It considered that **it would be strategic for DEST to convene a meeting of systems and sectors to consider further collaborative action for the improvement of the studies of Asia in Australian schools.** This proposal embodies issues about explicit commitment, resources required to take action, and who auspices such action. There needs, the group argued, to be 'a champion, or advocate to MCEETYA.

A move to embed studies of Asia in MCEETYA raises questions about the role and relationship of the AEF. In some senses the AEF could, in this context, be seen as analogous to Curriculum Corporation in relation to national collaborative efforts around curriculum consistency – as the AEF is a body which has credibility and a track record of achievement, including in collaborative work across all jurisdictions, which can contribute to the proposed forum in a powerful, supportive way.

This proposed Commonwealth-hosted conversation is, it was suggested, one possible answer to the question about what happens when the Summit is over and this report is prepared, considered and refined by the AEF Board.

The question that sits behind this, of course, is how to achieve the level of Ministerial commitment that ultimately will be required to move it to an even further stage. Getting systems and sectors involved at a higher level, discussion could well be the next stage.

EXTERNAL SUPPORT / AEF

This group proposed what amounts to a communication/business strategy between professional associations and the AEF in the context of the new funding environment.

The question is, how to build on the sort of national initiatives to which Noel Simpson alluded, and how to draw on the resources professional associations already have including, most notably, journals with significant reach? The group could, for instance, envisage a whole issue of a journal on studies of Asia which potentially could go to a whole new client group. Conversely, the AEF could also take the lead and provide high

level content for association conferences and other activities. There is potential, in this context, to look for opportunities on-line to be exploited and to make much more use of Asia EdNet.

Essentially, **the group was proposing an approach involving much more cooperation between professional associations, including the AEF, and the development of more productive partnerships.** They also observed that the new national institute for quality teaching and school leadership, together with State and Territory institutes, and their respective focuses on professional learning, open up real opportunities to explore, along with links to other government departments where the whole agenda can be promoted.

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The Summit finished with a brief discussion of the full set of suggestions advanced, and whether or not they constitute an adequate set of strategies to advance the agenda to the next stage.

The general feeling seemed to be that the systems group proposal provides a way of engaging key players more systematically in a different form of advocacy beyond what the AEF Board can do on its own.

Sitting behind this must then be a higher level relationship between professional associations and the AEF to create more synergies and enhanced networking.

And then, much of the real action can actually be located at the school level itself, drawing on the support schools can get from the new partnerships outlined above. Central here is coordination, and ensuring better alignment of resources and professional development available; though schools need not wait for other processes to proceed to pursue their own path. They can commence the promotion and advocacy themselves, and build on actions that many of them have taken over several years.

Perhaps the key message to emerge from the three groups was, then, that **there is a major opportunity right now to really step up the collaboration at all three levels (systems, external support sources, and schools) to underpin and support the agenda** the Summit addressed – an opportunity which provides a path forward for the AEF Board to consider, as it seeks to advance from the cross road at which it currently finds itself.

APPENDIX 1: SUMMIT PROGRAM
National Summit on Studies of Asia
in Australian Schools at a Crossroad:
Strategic Directions 2004–6

PROGRAM

27 November 2003, Canberra

Schooling should ‘assist young people to contribute to Australia’s social, cultural and economic development in local and global context’.

The Adelaide Declaration of National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century, Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (1999), Canberra (Preamble)

AIMS OF SUMMIT

The National Summit is an initiative of the Asia Education Foundation Advisory Board and brings together key education stakeholders including senior representatives of education systems, sectors, teacher education, parent, principal and subject organisations plus peak business, government and community groups. The Summit will provide an important milestone opportunity to:

- report on and discuss the current status of studies of Asia in Australian school education
- discuss the rationale for studies of Asia in today's changing global context
- recommend future directions for the studies of Asia in Australian schools
- recommend specific strategic directions and priorities for the work of the AEF, 2004-6.

The AEF is a foundation of the Asialink Centre of The University of Melbourne and Curriculum Corporation with core funding of \$1.2 million per annum from the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) to promote and support the studies of Asia in Australian schools. Since 1992 the AEF has worked in partnership with all education sectors, schools, universities, corporate and philanthropic sectors to:

- promote and support the studies of Asia across all curriculum areas in Australian schools
- develop Asia related print and electronic materials for Australian school children
- promote and support the studies of Asia in teacher education
- educate the broader community about the importance of school students undertaking studies of Asia.

Asialink is a centre of The University of Melbourne, initiated by the Myer Foundation. Asialink promotes public understanding of the countries of Asia and Australia's role in the region. It works in partnership with business, government, education and the arts to provide information, training and professional networks.

Curriculum Corporation works in the education sector and is owned by all Australian, State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers of Education. The company develops products and services to help schools improve students learning. It is the premier national Australian organisation providing curriculum support to schools and school systems. Curriculum Corporation publishes the AEF's award winning Access Asia series of curriculum resources for students and teachers.

NATIONAL SUMMIT PROGRAM

- 8.30 AM **Registration and Coffee**
A short biographical note on each Speaker is included in the Program Notes
-
- 9.00 AM **Welcome**
In the national interest: knowledge and understanding of Asia
Carrillo Gantner AO, Chairman, Asialink
-
- 9.10 AM **Summit Opening**
Chris Evans, **Acting Group Manager,**
Schools Group, Department of Education, Science and Training.
Representing **The Hon. Brendan Nelson,**
Minister of Education, Science and Training
-
- 9.25 AM **The Program**
Aims and Outcomes
Overview of day
Professor Brian Caldwell, Chair, Asia Education Foundation Board
Tony Mackay, Summit Facilitator
-
- 9.35 AM Studies of Asia in Australian schools at the crossroad
Kathe Kirby, Director, Asia Education Foundation
-
- 9.45 AM **Panel 1: Australia now – a new Asia agenda**
Australia and Asia – changing times
Australia and Asia – the business perspective
Chair: **Jenny McGregor**, Director, Asialink
Professor Tony Milner, Dean of Asian Studies, Australian National University
Tony Hallam, National Assurance Partner, PricewaterhouseCoopers
-
- 10.30 AM **Morning Tea**
- 10.50 AM **Panel 2: Australia's youth: our future**
Generation Asia – our world
One young 'leader' will address each table and raise issues for discussion around their vision for Australia's future.
Chair: **Pamela Macklin**, General Manager, Curriculum Solutions, Curriculum Corporation
Jason Yat-sen Li, National Manager of Sustainable Development, Insurance Australia Group
Asialink Young Leaders:
Dolone Chakravati (Freehills) Haidi Willmot (PwC Legal)
Sally McGeoch (Wollemi Pines) Maher Magrabi (Awareness Education Australia)
Dorjee Sun (cvMail) Lee Kinsella (Australian War Memorial)
Sasha Hampson (IDP) Alexander Balas (Invest Australia)
-
- 11.30 AM **Panel 3: Australia now – imperatives**
Indonesia, Islam and Australia
Maximising Australia's Asia Knowledge
Why *Asia* Matters
Chair: **Tony Mackay**
Philip Flood AO, Chair, Australia Indonesia Institute
Professor Robin Jeffrey, President, Asian Studies Association of Australia
Greg Sheridan, Foreign Editor, The Australian 12.15
-
- 12.30 AM **Discussion**
Whole Group
What's new about this agenda for Australia?
What implications does it have for school education?

	<p>Table Groups Each table to agree on 3–4 propositions about the implications Asia/Australia engagement has for school education in Australia.</p> <p>Chair: Tony Mackay</p> <p>Chairs: AEF Board members:</p> <p>Prof. Brian Caldwell, Ted Brierley, Ross Kimber, Pam Macklin, Tom Croker, Jenny McGregor, Robin Jeffrey, Kathe Kirby</p>
12.50 AM	<p>Lunch Indonesian Dance Performance: Floreys Primary School, ACT</p>
1.30 PM	<p>Review</p> <p>Consensus of group propositions from morning session</p> <p>Afternoon Task Overview</p> <p>3 working groups: Systems, Schools, External Agencies/AEF Tony Mackay</p>
1.45 PM	<p>Panel 4: Education Perspectives</p> <p>National curriculum context</p> <p>Australian government</p> <p>State & territory systems</p> <p>Teacher Education</p> <p>Schools</p> <p>Asia Education Foundation</p> <p>Chair: Tony Mackay</p> <p>Key strategies and issues in meeting the needs of Australia’s young people in this area.</p> <p>Pamela Macklin, Curriculum Corporation</p> <p>Noel Simpson, Department of Education, Science and Training</p> <p>Pam Moss, Department of Education and Training, WA</p> <p>Dr Andrew Harvey, Australian Council of Deans of Education</p> <p>Tom Croker, Australian Principals Associations Professional Development Council</p> <p>Maureen Welch, Asia Education Foundation</p>
2.30 PM	<p>Working Groups</p> <p>An Agenda for Action</p> <p>Working Group Chairs: AEF Board Members</p> <p>Systems – Ross Kimber</p> <p>Schools – Ted Brierley</p> <p>External Agencies/AEF – Pamela Macklin</p>
3.10 PM	<p>Plenary</p> <p>Working Groups report</p> <p>Summary of Summit Outcomes Tony Mackay</p>
4 – 4.30 PM	<p>Afternoon tea and close</p> <p>A courtesy bus will depart the venue for Canberra Airport at 4.10pm</p>

SUMMIT SPEAKERS

IN ORDER OF PRESENTATION

CARRILLO GANTNER AO

Carrillo Gantner is Chairman of the Myer Family Company, Vice President of The Myer Foundation and Chairman of The Sidney Myer Fund; Chairman of The Asialink Centre at The University of Melbourne; President of the Victorian Arts Centre Trust and Chair of the Performing Arts Board and a member of the Australia Council 1990-1993. He is a member of the Australian International Cultural Council (chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs) and served as a member of the Cultural Network of the Australian National Commission for UNESCO. In 2002 he was appointed by the Victorian Government to the State's Innovation Economy Advisory Board. From 1985 to 1987 Carrillo was Counsellor (Cultural) at the Australian Embassy in Beijing responsible for bilateral programs in the arts, science and technology, education, sport, conservation and the environment, agriculture and the China based programs of the Australia-China Council. He was appointed a Governor of the Federation for Asian Cultural Promotion in January 1995 and was Deputy Chairman from 1999-2001. He was a member of the Australia-China Council 1989-1994. Carrillo Gantner has a BA from the University of Melbourne, a Master of Fine Arts from Stanford, California, and a Graduate Diploma in Arts Administration from Harvard. He trained as an actor and worked professionally in the USA before returning to Australia to work with the Adelaide Festival. He was Founding Director of the Playbox Theatre Company. He was appointed an Officer in the Order of Australia (AO) in June 2001 for service to the performing arts and for fostering cultural exchanges between Australia and Asia. In August 2001 he received the Dame Elisabeth Murdoch Cultural Leader of the Year Award.

CHRIS EVANS

Chris Evans is Acting Group Manager, Schools Group, in the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST). Since 1995 Mr Evans has been in Commonwealth Schools education with particular interests in intergovernmental issues, funding, legislation and educational accountability. Prior to this Mr Evans has been engaged in Commonwealth agencies responsible for employment programs, residential and community care for the aged and for public housing and spent several periods on social policy issues in the Commonwealth Department of Finance.

PROFESSOR BRIAN CALDWELL

Brian J. Caldwell is Professor and Dean of Education at the University of Melbourne and Chair of the Asia Education Foundation Advisory Board. His chief interests are in the fields of leadership, policy and the management of change in education. He was included among 10 educators in a list of 100 Australians who are leaders in the field of

innovation in the 2003 survey of *The Bulletin*. His international work over the last decade includes presentations, projects and other professional assignments in or for 31 countries on six continents.

TONY MACKAY

Tony Mackay is Executive Director of the Incorporated Association of Registered Teachers of Victoria (IARTV) and Director of the Centre for Strategic Educational Thinking (CSET). He is a Senior Fellow, Faculty of Education, The University of Melbourne; Vice President of the Australian Curriculum Studies Association; Governing Council Member and Think Tank Chair, National College for School Leadership, UK; Chair, Innovation Unit Strategy Group, UK; OECD Consultant, Schooling for Tomorrow Project; DEMOS International Associate; Visiting Fellow, London Leadership Centre. Tony is a Member of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority; Chair, National Reference Group on Teacher Quality, Standards and Professionalism; and a Governing Body Member of two Prep to Year 12 Melbourne Schools. Tony's consultancy work at school, state, national and international levels focuses on conference and think tank facilitation; strategic directions in education; strategic planning for government bodies, education agencies and boards; school leadership; school effectiveness, improvement and review; teacher professionalism; and curriculum and assessment policy P-12.

KATHE KIRBY

Kathe Kirby has been with the Asia Education Foundation since its inception in 1993. She currently holds the positions of AEF Director and Associate Director, The Asialink Centre of The University of Melbourne. She has a long background in school education having worked as a secondary school teacher, university lecturer in education and as a senior policy officer in the Department of Education, Victoria, prior to joining the AEF. Her key interest is in implementing educational change and innovation in areas of national importance. In 2001 she was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to investigate the studies of Asia in school education in the USA, UK, Japan and Korea.

PROFESSOR ANTHONY (TONY) MILNER

Tony Milner is the Dean of Asian Studies and Basham Professor of Asian History at The Australian National University. He was previously Director of the Australian-Asian Perceptions Project and Editor of the three volumes (*Australia in Asia*, Oxford University Press) produced by that Project. A member of the Commonwealth Government's Foreign Affairs Council, he was for four years a Panel Member of the Australian Research Council. He has been Editor of the *Asian Studies Review*, President of the Canberra Branch and Research Chair of the Australian Institute of International Affairs, and Editor of the Southeast Asian

Publication Series of the Asian Studies Association of Australia. He is currently Co-Chair of Aus-CSCAP (Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific). Professor Milner's publications are concerned with Southeast Asian (especially Malay) history, as well as Australia's regional relations. He studied at Monash University, Cornell University and the University of Malaya and is a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia. Formerly a Member of The Institute of Advanced Study, Princeton, in 2002 he was Raffles Visiting Professor of History at the National University of Singapore. Professor Milner is a member of the Asialink Council.

TONY HALLAM

Tony Hallam is the National Assurance Leader and Senior Partner of PricewaterhouseCoopers. Tony joined the firm in 1986 and has worked in Houston, Perth and Indonesia. His experience includes working in the petroleum, natural gas and petrochemical sectors of the industries. Currently, Tony's major responsibilities at PwC include supporting revenue growth, implementation of IFRS through to 2006, measuring client satisfaction of Top 100 Audit Clients, and ongoing implementation of PwC audit approach. He is the lead partner on ExxonMobil in Australia and he is a member of the Australian Institute of Chartered Accountants.

JASON YAT-SEN LI

Jason Yat-sen Li is an international lawyer and corporate social responsibility specialist. He has an Arts/Law degree with first class honours from the University of Sydney and a Masters of Law from New York University Law School. From 1996 – 1998, Jason worked for the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, in The Hague, the Netherlands. Jason worked with Sir Ninian Stephen on pioneering cases in international law on genocide and war crimes. In 1998, Jason was elected to the Constitutional Convention and was instrumental to drafting and brokering support for the model of republican government that was put to Australian voters in the 1999 national Republic Referendum. A passionate believer in social capital, Jason was Co-Chair of the Australian Yes Coalition for the Republic, Youth Chair of the NSW Ethnic Communities Council, Chair of the Community Aid Abroad International Youth Parliament and cultural spokesperson for NSW Tourism during the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. Jason is presently Deputy Chair of the Australian Republican Movement, a board member of the Sydney Institute and the Asia-Australia Institute (UNSW), as well as a Governor of the Smith Family. Jason was awarded the 2002 Eisenhower Fellowship to travel to the USA to study corporate social responsibility. Jason speaks fluent Cantonese, German and Dutch. He is currently the Manager of Corporate Sustainable Development at Insurance Australia Group Ltd where he is leading the company's initiatives in sustainable business.

DOLONE CHAKRAVATI

Dolone Chakravarti has a Bachelor of Economics and Bachelor of Laws from the University of Adelaide, and is a solicitor at Freehills in Sydney specialising in construction and engineering dispute resolution work in Australia and Asia.

SALLY McGEOCH

Sally McGeoch is Marketing Manager for Wollemi Pine – an ancient conifer species discovered in Australia. She travels regularly to Asia, especially to Japan, which is a major market for the rare Pines. She completed a Community Management Masters in the Philippines on social entrepreneurship and establishing a nonprofit community seed bank with a remote island village community there.

HAIWI WILMOTT

Haidi Willmott is a solicitor working with PricewaterhouseCoopers Legal, Sydney, and deals extensively with advice upon changing business environments in Asia. Haidi is co convenor of the Asialink Young Lawyers Forum. She spent a year in Vanuatu as an AusAID Youth Ambassador. Haidi completed an internship at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and studied international law in Geneva.

MAHER MAGRABI

Maher Magrabi is the National Coordinator of Awareness Education Australia Inc, a volunteer-based network that runs youth education and personal leadership training within the Muslim communities throughout Australia and New Zealand. He is currently an Asialink Leadership Fellow and has successfully designed and run a Sensitivity Training Course on Islam as part of the leadership program. He is a former President of Sydney University Muslim Students' Association and is actively involved with community-education, strategic planning, rights advocacy, media relations, leadership training, inter-faith/cross-cultural dialogue, humanitarian fundraising and environmental-activism. Maher Magrabi currently works as a Mechanical Engineer with Sonacom Systems Pty Ltd.

DORJEE SUN

Dorjee Sun graduated from the University of NSW with Law and Commerce degrees and post-graduate study in Mandarin. He also studied for 2 years at Peking University. He is the Co-Founder and Director of: Elevate Education - Winners of the Nestle Big Break 2002, youth leadership and education company; and www.Cvmail.com.au - a global recruitment software firm based in Melbourne and London. Dorjee is Federal Youth Chair of the Ethnic Communities Council of Australia and NSW Youth Chair of the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW.

LEE KINSELLA

Lee Kinsella is currently an art curator at the Australian War Memorial. She has been involved in the development of exhibitions of Asian cultural material, and has worked in regional, state and national cultural institutions throughout Australia, including the Art Gallery of Western Australia, The National Screen and Sound Archive and The National Library of Australia. She is Vice-President and Editor for the Australia-Japan Society (ACT) Inc.

SASHA HAMPSON

Sasha Hampson is the Program Manager, Testing Services in the Global Examination Services Branch at IDP Education Australia. She has regional responsibility for the operation of 35 IELTS exam centres in the Asia Pacific region. Sasha graduated from Monash University in 1990 with a BA in Asian Languages and Politics. She spent five years living in South Korea.

ALEXANDER BALAS

Alexander Balas is the China desk officer at Invest Australia where he's currently researching investment flows and technology transfer in the Asian region. Prior to working at Invest Australia, Alexander spent two years living in Japan working for Sony and teaching English. Alexander graduated from Australia National University with a Bachelor of Economics (Honours) with a focus in Japanese studies.

PHILIP FLOOD AO

Philip Flood is currently Chairman of the Australia-Indonesia Institute. His previous appointments include Australian Ambassador to Indonesia, High Commissioner to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Minister in the Australian Embassy to the United States Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Director-General of the Office of National Assessments, Director-General of the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), Chief Executive Officer for Special Trade Negotiations, and Diplomatic appointments in Australia's Embassies in Paris and Mission to the OECD, Brussels, and Mission to the European Community. He is a member of the Australian Trade Commission and of the Council of the Asia-Australia Institute. Mr Flood was made an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in 1992.

PROFESSOR ROBIN JEFFREY

Robin Jeffrey is President of the Asian Studies Association of Australia, 2002-2004, and a Professor of Politics at La Trobe University. He worked as a sports writer while going to university in Victoria, British Columbia, and went to India to teach English in a government school in Chandigarh for two years in 1967. He later did a D.Phil. at Sussex University in modern Indian history and came to the ANU in 1973. He moved to La Trobe in 1979. His most recent book is *India's Newspaper Revolution* (OUP, 2nd edn, 2003). He

coordinated and helped to write *Maximizing Australia's Asia Knowledge: Repositioning and Renewal of a National Asset* (ASAA, 2002). Robin is a member of the AEF Advisory Board

GREG SHERIDAN

Greg Sheridan, The Australian's foreign editor, is the most influential foreign affairs analyst in Australian journalism. After 25 years in the field, he is a veteran of international affairs who has interviewed leaders all over the Asia Pacific and America. Greg began journalism in the late 1970s at The Bulletin magazine. His first trips into Asia were to cover the Vietnamese refugee stories in the early 1980s. In 1984 he joined The Australian as an editorial writer. In 1985 he was appointed Beijing correspondent, and in 1986 and 1987 was Washington correspondent. He came back to Sydney in 1988 as chief editorial writer then in 1990 went to Canberra as the foreign affairs writer. In 1992 he returned to Sydney as the paper's foreign editor. He has had a life-long love affair with Asia and knows its leaders and societies, intimately, having interviewed presidents and prime ministers in Japan, South Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, The Philippines, Thailand, New Zealand and numerous other countries. His work has appeared in newspapers around the world, including The Sunday Times of London, The Asian Wall Street Journal, the Jakarta Post and the South China Morning Post. He is a frequent foreign affairs commentator on radio and television and is a sought-after speaker at conferences around the region. He has produced four books on Asia: *Living With Dragons, Australia Confronts Its Asian Destiny*, (editor and co-author), Allen & Unwin, 1995; *Tigers, Leaders of the New Asia Pacific*, Allen & Unwin, 1997; *Asian Values, Western Dreams, Understanding the New Asia; Cities of the Hot Zone, a Southeast Asia adventure*, Allen & Unwin, 2003.

PAMELA MACKLIN

Pamela Macklin is General Manager, Curriculum Solutions, at Curriculum Corporation. Curriculum Corporation is owned by all Australian Ministers for Education and provides education services, consultancy and resources to schools and systems. Pam is an experienced teacher, education consultant, writer and manager. She has significant experience in the development and management of studies of Asia curriculum and professional development projects. Pam's interests lie in educational leadership, educational policy, curriculum, school improvement and the management of organisational change and improvement. Her national and international work focuses on education reform and has included the development of policy and implementation strategies in areas such as ICT in education, literacy, numeracy and gender equity. Pam is a member of the AEF Advisory Board.

PAM MOSS

Pam is currently Director, Curriculum with the Department of Education and Training in Western Australia. Previous to this she was a District Director and Director of the Office of the Director General. She has long experience in the Asian context, both as a teacher of Japanese and curriculum writer for that subject. Pam was a writer of the National Statement and Profile for LOTE and was part of the group that developed the NALSAS Strategy. She played a significant role in the NALSAS work and was instrumental in implementing the LOTE 2000 Strategy which aimed for all students in Years 3 to 10 in Western Australian Government schools to be studying a language other than English by 2000. This has been substantially achieved.

TOM CROKER

Tom Croker has a long history in education including 23 years as principal in both rural and urban schools including primary and central schools. Tom is the Past President of the New South Wales Primary Principals' Association and is currently the President of the Australian Primary Principals' Association and Chair of the Australian Principals' Association Professional Development Council. In 2001 he was the recipient of the Director-General's Award (NSW).

NOEL SIMPSON

Noel Simpson is Director of Languages and Civics Education in the Schools Group of the Australian Government. Since late 1999 Noel has had responsibility for the Studies of Asia area, along with a range of other school humanities responsibilities such as history and values education. He has worked for the Commonwealth Education Department since 1989. Prior to that he worked in adult and community education in Victoria. Noel began his working life as a secondary school teacher.

DR ANDREW HARVEY

Dr Andrew Harvey is Executive Officer of the Australian Council of Deans of Education, and is based at RMIT University. His research interests are education and nationhood, identity, and lifelong learning. He has authored or co-authored a number of publications including 'A Public Curriculum' (Kalantzis, Cope & Harvey in A Public Conversation, Reid and Thomson (eds), Post Pressed 2003) and 'The Vital Role of Educators in Developing a Knowledge Economy' (Kalantzis & Harvey in the Australian College of Educators Year Book, Crowther (ed.) 2003).

MAUREEN WELCH

Maureen Welch has been with the Asia Education Foundation since 1993 and is currently the Manager of the AEF. Prior to taking-up this position she was responsible for the management of the AEF's national professional development and partnerships strategies. She has a strong interest in teacher professional development and program

evaluation and is responsible for managing the AEF's evaluation strategies. Maureen has worked as a secondary teacher and regional curriculum consultant implementing one of the first national policies in education.

Performance**FLOREY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Floreys Primary has an enrolment of 410 students coming from a diverse mix of languages and cultures. The school creates and maintains a safe, caring environment by promoting positive interactions between children, teachers, and parents. The school seeks to foster in its students a positive and realistic self concept that open the way to the development of informed decision makers who actively participate in their community. Four students will dance a traditional Indonesian dance: Tari Payung (The Umbrella Dance). Floreys Primary School is a member of the ACT's Access Asia Schools Network.

**National Summit on Studies of Asia in Australian Schools
at a Crossroad: Strategic Directions 2004-6**

SUMMIT PARTICIPANTS

Mr Alexander Balas, China Desk Officer, Invest Australia
Dr John Bennett, General Manager, Office of the Board of Studies, New South Wales
Mrs Debbie Best, Assistant Director-General, Curriculum, Learning and Development, Education Queensland
Mr Ted Brierley, President Australian Secondary Principals Association
Mr Mark Brown, Director, Curriculum Council of WA
Mr David Brown, Partnerships Manager, Asia Education Foundation
Mr Peter Bulkeley, Project Manager, Australian College of Educators
Prof Brian Caldwell, Dean of Education, University of Melbourne
Ms Dolone Chakravarti, Solicitor, Freehills
Ms Yu Lan Chan, AEI Group, Department of Education, Science & Training
Mr Peng Chew, Project Manager, Languages and Civics Education Section, Department of Education,
Science and Training
General Peter Cosgrove, Chief of the Defence Force, Department of Defence
Mr Tom Croker, President, Australian Primary Principals' Association
Mr Bill Daniels, Executive Director, Independent Schools Council of Australia
Ms Hazel Day, Executive Officer, Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia
Mr Tom Dery, Executive Chairman - Asia Pacific M&C Saatchi
Prof Peter Drysdale, Australian National University
Mr Leo Dunne, President, Australian Parents Council
Mr Chris Evans, Acting Group Manager, Department of Education, Science & Training
Ms Helen Flaherty, Australian Association for the Teaching of English and ALEA
Mr Trevor Fletcher, Executive Director, Schools and Children's Services, Department of Education and
Children's Services SA
Mr Philip Flood AO, Chair, Australia-Indonesia Institute
Ms Irene Forostenko, Senior Deputy Chair, Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils
Mr Carrillo Gantner, Chairman, The Asialink Centre
Mr Tony Hallam, Senior Partner, PricewaterhouseCoopers
Mr Ian Hamilton, President, Australian Institute of Arts Educators
Ms Sasha Hampson, Project Manager, IDP
Mr David Hanlon, Director Office for Curriculum, Leadership and Learning Department of Education TAS
Dr Andrew Harvey, Executive Officer, Australian Council of Deans of Education
Mr Nick Hutchinson, Vice President, Australian Geography Teachers Association Inc
Prof Robin Jeffrey, President, Asian Studies Association of Australia
Mr Philip Jones, Director, Curriculum Services Department of Employment, Education and Training NT
Mr Ross Kimber, Regional Director, Department of Education and Training, VIC
Ms Lee Kinsella, Assistant Curator of Art, Australian War Memorial
Ms Kathe Kirby, Director, Asia Education Foundation
Ms Ros Korkatzis, President, History Teachers' Association of Australia Inc
Dr Alan Laughlin, Deputy Director General of Schools, Department of Education and Training, NSW
Ms Jane Leifman, Vice President, Australian Association for Environmental Education
Prof Kam Louie, Board Member, Australia China Council
Mrs Dora Luxton, Board Member, Association Of Principals of Catholic Secondary Schools of Aust.
Mr Tony Mackay, Summit Facilitator
Ms Pamela Macklin, General Manager, Curriculum Solutions, Curriculum Corporation
Mr Syed Maher Magrabi, National Coordinator, Awareness Education Australia
Mr Alister Maitland, Asialink Board
Ms Sally McGeoch, Wollemi Pines
Ms Jenny McGregor, Executive Director, Asialink
Ms Megan McLaughlin, Treasurer, Australian Federation of Modern Languages Teachers' Associations Inc
Ms Rosemary McLoughlin, Deputy Chairperson, KLA, National Catholic Education Commission
Ms Therese Mercader, Office of Teaching and Learning, Department of Education and Training, VIC
Mr Tony Mercurio, Manager, Curriculum Development, Senior Secondary Assessment Board of SA
Prof Tony Milner, Dean of Asian Studies, Australian National University
Mr Paul Montgomery, Asialink Board
Ms Pam Moss, Director of Curriculum, Department of Education and Training WA
Mr Kurt Mullane, Manager, Professional Development, Asia Education Foundation
Ms Rosalie Nott, Coordinator, Equity Policy and Programs, National Catholic Education Commission
Mr Roger Peacock, Vice Principal, International, The University of Melbourne

Dr Thelma Purso, Manager of Curriculum, Department of Education, Youth and Family Services ACT
Ms Christine Reid, Chair, Australian Federation of Societies for Studies of Society and Environment
Ms Suzanne Rentsch, Chair of Geography Panel, Australian Capital Territory Board of Senior
Secondary Studies
Mr Leslie Ring, Member, Australian Council of State School Organisations Inc
Ms Carol Robertson, Executive Director, Australia-India Council
Mr Malcolm Salier, Chief Executive Officer, Tasmanian Secondary Assessment Board
Mr Greg Sheridan, The Australian
Mr Noel Simpson, Director, Languages and Civics Education Section, Department of Education, Science
and Training
Mr Dorjee Sun, CVMail Services
Ms Joan Warhurst, President, Australian Curriculum Studies Association
Ms Maureen Welch, Manager, Asia Education Foundation
Ms Jane Weston, Senior Project Manager, Curriculum Corporation
Mr Michael White, Chief Executive Officer, Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
Ms Haidi Willmot, Graduate Solicitor, PricewaterhouseCoopers
Mr Jason Yat-sen Li, National Manager of Sustainable Development, Insurance Australia Group
Mr Joseph Yoon, Australian Federation of Ethnic Schools Association
Mr Vic Zbar, Director Writer, Zbar Consulting Pty Ltd