



THE ANU OBSERVER

Meeting of The ANU Observer Board

Date: 7/10/2020

Open of Meeting: 1730

Item 1 - Attendance and Apologies

Present: Angus, Anthony, Konstantine, Sam, Tristan, Hayley

Absent:

Item 2 - Acknowledgement of Country

By Konstantinos

Item 3 - Previous Action Items

8.1 Ordering Shirts (!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!)

8.2 Actionable: Anthony to write procedures on 'Who, what, how early and how soon' and risky story management.

8.3 Hayley to post tonight along with announcement of OGM, RO and regulation changes.

8.4 Reporters/Other Officers to be informed of openings in all Elected Officer positions → Anthony to inform reporters at next meeting, Tristan to inform Visual Team members.

8.5 Looking into drafting Onboarding/Offboarding policy and an Event Handover Policy → Hayley

8.6 Changing wording of policies where necessary → Hayley and Konstantine

Item 4 - Reports

Chair Report: Konstantine Katsanis

Late with apologies

Generally, there has not been much activity over the past month. We got our survey report out and we set our OGM date for the 22nd of October. I've had a couple of meetings with PARSA in regards to auditing, SSAF, and reporting PARSA-related topics. They suggested that it would be good to have frequent meetings with other SSAF-funded organisations and discuss how we can improve student experience. Competing for SSAF can be daunting and not productive, which is why ANU is switching their approach in how to administer it. Meeting with the ANU and the other SSAF-funded organisations for a working session every once in a while could be productive. We should request that from the ANU, and, perhaps, a training, as new committees only learn about the SSAF process through their own organisations. There are not clear guidelines. Documents sometimes might need interpretation from more experienced staff. In general, we do not want to go in the process unprepared. This is unfair, especially when some organisations have experienced paid staff to deal with finances, administration, and external affairs. I am planning to have another meeting with PARSA and then welcome other organisations to join us.

Chair passes to Angus.

Moved by Anthony, seconded by Tristan. Passes unanimously.

Konstantine: Others don't agree SSAF survey will be a good indication of where money is going. Even student media has only one category and people might not understand what it is or how important it is for them. They might not understand where their needs lie, e.g how would it be if Woroni or Observer didn't get any funding. I told Anastasia that Observer needs at least \$40,000-\$45,000 to function, going below that would be insane. The \$50,000 is not much, \$75,000 would be ideal but I didn't really get much of a recommendation or discussion. I told her this is how much we need at least, that post from ANUSA is not really nice because the move from the university to have this survey and then have a non-competitive SSAF was to make us collaborate which is something that PARSA wanted to see too. The thing ANUSA put out just then is a bit aggressive, this is not what the university wants us to do it is completely the opposite. Utsav wanted to organise meetings with other organisations, and not do what we used to do in the SSAF process [shouting at each other]. The process we followed last year was the best one, and I'm not saying that because it was good for us but it was very reasonable. ANUSA lost a lot of money for clubs funding/decided it was their lowest priority, but they also asked e-sports to be a thing. I think ANU Sport got a lot of funding this year in response to being a competitive gym on campus but it was way too much. Bottom line is I agree with Utsav that we should be meeting and working together with other organisations.

Hayley: I think contact ANUSA about this and get their response, and if not satisfactory we can put up our own post.

Actionable: Contact ANUSA/PARSA regarding their post, if response not satisfactory discuss making own post and contacting Anastasia.

Finance Executive Report: Konstantine Katsanis

Late with apologies

Not many expenses have taken place. I have not received a clear verdict in relocating money to next year. For that reason, I reckon we just spend as much as we can before the end of the year. It is frustrating that the auditing company has not provided me with an auditing report. We have not been invoiced, yet. For that reason, I have withheld asking ANU to provide us with the remaining money for the year, as this would require us to acquit the unspent money from last year. Another thing, because auditing is more likely to be submitted in December, we should be budgeting to pay them the year after. We have not been doing that. The way it has been planned is that the auditing budget for 2020 is only going to pay the auditing expenses for the 2020 financial year. However, we should have planned to pay our auditing expenses for 2019 with our 2020 auditing budget. It is very possible that the auditing budget for 2020 will go unused because we won't be starting the process until December.

Konstantine: Everything is there, I'll take it as read.

Moved by Tristan, seconded by Anthony. Passes unanimously.

Secretary Report: Hayley Hands

Late with apologies

I haven't had time to do much due to moving. I posted the event and all relevant information for our upcoming GM (thanks Tristan for the graphics) and Konstantine helped me amend the Team and Electoral regulations, and did the Payment Policy on his own (absolute legend). As I hope you have seen, we've shifted the GM a day back to the 22nd because the SRC was on. Not much else to report.

LET YOUR TEAMS KNOW ABOUT THE SSAF SURVEY!! We need support, everyone should be filling this out.

Moved by Anthony, seconded by Tristan. Passes unanimously.

Visual Content Executive Report: Tristan Khaw

Not submitted.

Tristan: Want to commend news for being super [on to] news meetings, and doing things they wouldn't usually do. Was great that James helped with F5. We were thinking that once things start to slow down I could hold a seminar with Newsteam [for cross training] like how to use a camera, photojournalism. People are pretty keen to do that. Otherwise, F5 was published and... last thing is regarding VCE for next year, I don't know what the deal is now, Sam might want to speak to this, a bit of debate where Sam was going to take a break from uni or continue to do a minimal load while working at Observer. I recommend that we should have a decision or something certain so that I can start the handover process. If you have any questions go ahead.

Hayley: You're having leave 1st Semester Sam?

Sam: It's looking that way, Bec is not keen on it so I might have to do at least a part time load. Either way I think it would be fine for Tristan to do a handover to me so even if I do go on leave I'll have the knowledge there because I'll still be with Observer as a photographer so I don't think the transfer of knowledge wouldn't hurt.

Tristan: I just wanted to comment on it to make sure it's written down somewhere.

Konstantine: Have a think about it, obviously your decision. Just make sure doing 2 courses will grant you time off from uni.

Sam: Either way it's a pretty stark difference between doing 4 courses for the last 3 years. I will endeavour to have a decision by Friday.

News Content Executive Report: Anthony Lotric

I was satisfied with our output over the break, which was only one under our KPI for the fortnite (especially considering how labour intensive some of them were, such as the Johns Racist Incident and Nazi Stickers articles). I have also been happy with our Week 7 output, as it exceeds our KPI (if one includes the liveblog). Week 9 was one under our KPI, which is slightly disappointing - however it was mostly due to factors outside of our control, such as sources not replying to us.

At previous editors meetings we have discussed re-assigning reporters to editors. We are planning to finally do this next Monday.

We also discussed having 'on call' days for editors so that someone is always ready to coordinate breaking stories or graphics when they occur.

At our Executive meetings so far this term, we have been able to constructively discuss the news items of the week and the graphics that they will require. We were also able to constructively work collaboratively on the F5 script, a process which will likely be even more effective in the future.

During the break, we discussed the need to make collective editorial decisions whenever possible, both to get all possible viewpoints, and to ensure that we are jointly responsible for our decisions. We briefly discussed our risk appetite, and agreed that we should both be aware that we can never totally protect ourselves from liability if we are writing hard hitting stories, while also taking all possible precautions to

prevent any negative legal or other repercussions. We also agreed that it would be a good idea to show potentially inflammatory articles to a lawyer if possible, and that we should be abreast of new developments in defamation law.

There was an occasion during the last week of last term where we missed a story because no-one was able to go to CRC. While there is no perfect way to resolve this at busy times during the year, we should be willing as editors to step up to fill these gaps when needed. Over the last few weeks, we have been diligent in ensuring that someone has gone to such events, which has been to our benefit.

As has been discussed at previous meetings, the disruption this year has made it more difficult for us to train our reporters to publish independently. We are currently trying to ensure that they all can and will do so, as it is a lot of extra work for editors. Fortunately, the publishing guide Bec made is thorough enough that once they have logged in, most reporters have found it reasonably easy to figure out with minimal assistance.

I am also going to be getting everyone access to facebook ASAP, as it is easy to do, and would cut the amount of work that reporters have to do significantly. We have a new reporter in the news team, James Day. He seems really enthusiastic and has read many of our articles, so I have high hopes.

We have also been sent an application by another student, who sent through a very impressive trial article. I will almost certainly be hiring her.

I am not going to be standing for election as an editor next year, as I am graduating halfway through the year. Even so, I have great confidence in the editor that is continuing on to next year, and the reporters that will be stepping up.

Anthony: I will take it mostly as read. We're going to be reassigning editors because it makes the communication process better. On call days relates to what we were talking about earlier in terms of [shorter/breaking articles]. Doing long stuff means we haven't been as good at the short term stuff as we should have been. We've worked really well at executive meetings and I thank Tristan for being prompt and we've all attended them so far. We were able to collaboratively work on the F5 script. Ongoing decision in the editorial board about risk appetite that we can revisit later in the semester. James coming on, and Eleanor's application was very promising, [lots of effort]. We definitely need more reporters because Hayley is not doing reporting anymore and Helena has stepped up. Some reporters have not been doing much recently, have taken leave. Anticipating people leaving/moving to different roles it would be good to get more people.

Moved by Hayley, seconded by Tristan. Passes unanimously.

Web Administrator Report: Angus Brooks

I have very little to report. The much awaited Google Drive replacement project should be rolled out soon, after repeated delays due to ANUSA Election, myself being on leave, and subsequently a very busy period of exams and work. Apologies for the delays. The website seems to be performing better recently, although there was one minor blip last week when the site was unavailable. This is a significant improvement from earlier this year when outages were quite common. I'm still looking into ways to improve it but various tweaks and enhancements made to our existing system seem to have had a positive impact.

Angus: Take it as read.

Anthony: I've noticed we've had a lot less problems than last semester, would there still be use in moving to new server?

Angus: I'm not sure, I would eventually like to move to a different system but it is a lot of work. Site would have to be taken offline, URLs [??]. We could find time over the summer, not as much urgency.

Anthony: Might be related to Wordpress as well.

Angus: There was a vulnerability in Wordpress which allowed people to access it through a different system that was being exploited to put a huge deliberate load on the server so I disabled that. It's very common. Every website has this, we're not special but it was malicious.

Moved by Tristan, seconded by Sam. Passes unanimously.

Item 5 - Items for Decision

Item 6 - Items for Discussion

Item 7 - Other Business

7.1 - Social

Anthony: We can organise one after OGM.

7.2 - Office Expenses

Konstantine: Need to brainstorm about spending.

Hayley: Use my dang spreadsheet.

Tristan: We need to fix Hayley's mistake with blinds first. I want a TV for F5 to read script off as teleprompter.

Konstantine: Do you want a TV or monitor?

Sam: 85 inch flat screen?

Anthony: Can use it to show off our work.

Sam: Are we allowed to get rid of desks?

Anthony: Let's investigate it.

Tristan: Camera for event stuff.

Actionable: Konstantine investigate furniture stuff.

7.3 - Survey

Item 8 - Recall Actionables

8.1 Contact ANUSA/PARSA regarding their post, if response not satisfactory discuss making own post and contacting Anastasia. → Konstantine ASAP

8.2 Konstantine investigate furniture stuff.

8.3 Ordering Shirts (!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!)

8.4 Actionable: Anthony to write procedures on 'Who, what, how early and how soon' and risky story management.

8.5 Looking into drafting Onboarding/Offboarding policy and an Event Handover Policy → Hayley

Meeting closed at 18:12.