QUESTnet Annual Report

For the Calendar Year 2002

The calendar year 2002 was the first full year of operation under the constitution adopted in mid-2001. For this year the objectives were:

- (a) to conduct the annual QUESTnet Conference in July
- (b) to expand the educational activities by running four training seminars/workshops
- (c) decide some projects of common interest to members which could become joint developments.

Office Bearers.

The Office bearers during this year were Kent Adams (James Cook University) Chair, Jeff McDonell (University of Southern Qld) Deputy Chair, Barry Mahoney (University of the Sunshine Coast) Treasurer and John Noad Executive Officer.

QUESTnet Conference.

The annual conference was held at Royal Pines Resort on the Gold Coast from the 2nd to the 5th July. Southern Cross University was the host and Maria Gilliam, ITS Director, chaired the organising committee. Martin Lack and Associates were retained as organisers.

The theme of the conference was Networks across Borders.

Some 250 delegates registered for the conference. Invited keynote speakers were Jonas Birgersson, the CEO of Lab2 in Sweden who spoke on the future development of the Internet and its potential applications, Ian Foster, Associate Division Director of the Distributed Systems Lab Mathematics & Computer Science at the Argonne National Laboratory in Illinois and Dr Ed Kruzins from Defence Science and Technology Organisation Australia.

Topics covered in the workshops on the first day of the conference were BGP, CICSO Router configuration, AARNet IPv6 and Multicasting Implementation.

Technical papers were presented in three parallel streams over two and a half days. Major topics included Wireless Lans, Directory Services, Grid Computing and AARNet Directions.

As usual the conference provided an opportunity for meetings of some groups such as AARNet staff and the AARNet Advisory Committee.

Financially the conference broke even as a result of sponsorship from a number of suppliers.

QUESTnet Workshops.

QUESTnet ran a number of workshops for member's staff during the year. These were funded by QUESTnet. For this inaugural year topics covered were Directory Services, Services Consolidation and IT Project Management. A fourth workshop

on Government IT Legislation was planned but did not eventuate due to other pressures.

The workshop program was well received with attendances ranging from twenty to fifty five.

Projects of common interest.

In the latter part of the year a survey was sent to all members seeking some details of their planned developments for 2003 to determine any areas of common interest. Because of normal planning and budgeting cycles collection and analysis was not completed by the end of the year.

HEBAC Involvement.

In the middle of the year the federal Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) established the Higher Education Bandwidth Advisory Committee (HEBAC) to review the needs for high bandwidth communication links for research and recommend to the government appropriate policy, funding and structures to address problems both now and in the future.

The Queensland Regional Network Organisation (QRNO) prepared a report for the committee on the current Queensland position together with a vision for a Queensland Research and Education network and a costed proposal for a stage 1 development to link campuses north of Brisbane to the AARNet and Grangenet PoPs in Brisbane via fibre.

All members of QUESTnet participated in the development of this report by collecting institution statistics, obtaining indicative costings for tail connections at each site and reviewing drafts of the report.

In the event key elements of the QRNO report were included in the HEBAC report to DEST and resulted in a federal government grant of $5.5M to QRNO towards the first stage development to connect regional Universities.