

Report on APRICOT 2020 and APTLD meetings by Maureen Hilyard 16-21 Feb 2020, Melbourne, Australia¹



(1) Welcome to Australia by Wurundjeri Elder Ian Hunter (2) APRICOT (3) APNIC Director General, Paul Wilson

The APRICOT 2020 meeting was held in Melbourne, Australia, despite alarm bells being raised about the coronavirus issue which alerted Australian border control, at that stage, to reject anyone who had been through mainland China. In the middle of it all, news arrived that ICANN had become a victim to the global reach of the virus and had cancelled its Cancun meeting so that online meetings to discuss the development of a virtual conference became a focus for the week, as well as trying to attend APRICOT sessions.

Dot Asia Board Meeting: My first event on arrival in Melbourne was the Dot Asia Board meeting along with two other members of the APRALO leadership team, Chair Satish Babu from India and Vice Chair Lianna Galstyan from Armenia. DotAsia recently held their elections and now have two new members from Taiwan and Korea, as well as retaining Satish and myself who were up for re-election this year. I currently Chair the Board's Governance Committee and Satish is the Chair of the Community Projects Committee.

AP* Retreat: Another meeting that was held before the APRICOT meeting began was the AP-Star Retreat which is an opportunity for the Asia Pacific IT community to give an update of our activities within the AP region. The AP* meeting was co-Chaired by Duncan McIntyre of the APNIC Foundation and Save Vocea, ICANN Oceania VP Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE). Reports were provided by: APNIC (Paul), APNIC Foundation (Duncan), ICANN (Save), InterLab (Kanchana), APTLD (Hiro), APCERT (Yukako), ALAC (Maureen), APRALO (Lianna), APSIG (Satish), JPNIC (Akinori), ISOC (Adrian & Robert). This meeting was followed by the DotAsia AGM and dinner.



(1) Duncan McIntyre and Save Vocea – co-Chairs of the AP* Retreat; (2) The AP* gathering; (3) The Dot Asia Dinner

¹ Submitted by Maureen Hilyard (PICISOC Board member) whose attendance at the APRICOT conference was sponsored by Dot Asia and ICANN, and for APTLD was facilitated by InternetNZ.

[APRICOT 2020](#): During the 4-day APRICOT meeting, there were several sessions that gave some interesting insights into what was being done in different countries. There were several Pacific participants involved in the week of training as well as a hackathon which took place in the week before the actual conference. A traditional welcome was given by an elder of a local Aborigine tribe. A keynote speaker at the opening plenary was one of the founders of the APRICOT organisation who also helped to create APNIC. This was David Conrad who is now ICANN's SVP and Chief Technology Officer. David visited the Pacific when he attended and spoke about DNSSEC at the PITA meeting that was held on Rarotonga. The main speaker at the closing plenary was Professor Hanna Suominen of ANU, who explained the latest IT developments in eHealth and its application in developing countries - relevant to the Pacific and e-Health services to our isolated outer islands.



Conference participants at APRICOT Melbourne, Australia

One of the highlights of the APRICOT gathering was meeting our newest Board member, Georgina Naigulevu and her husband Andrew, at the ISOC networking event put on by Internet Australia. It was great to be able to introduce Georgina to some other regional ISOC contacts. As for participation representation of the Pacific was significant: [Georgina spoke at the APNIC Next Gen](#) session about career development; Jonathan Brewer explained the [Pacific Islands Peering Landscape](#); in the APNIC Global reports, Rajnesh Singh reported on the regional ISOC events and Save Vocea updated everyone on the ICANN situation; and Saia Vaipuna of Tonga Cert explained how they dealt with business email attacks.

Unfortunately, the announcement of the cancellation of ICANN's Cancun meeting caused several meetings to be called which in Pacific terms are always in the early hours of the morning. On one morning, I had 5 meetings with different ICANN groups between 3am and 9am. (Be warned. For ICANN's virtual conference, this is the same timeframe of most of the 4 main days of the conference – 3am – 9am NZ time where I am temporarily based). Needless to say, I spent several more hours of each morning catching up on sleep when I really needed and wanted to attend these important sessions. Anyone interested in being the ALAC Chair in the future? I can tell you about the pros and cons.



Georgina with other PICISOC Board members; at the Hackathon; and presenting on a panel about career development.

APRICOT celebrated its 25th birthday at this event which was held as a special occasion in a very impressive venue. I was very honoured to be sitting with the Chair of APRALO, Satish Babu, but also the Vice Chair of the Security and Stability Advisory Committee (SSAC), Julie Hammer of Australia. We also had Rajnesh Singh and Adrian Wan from the Singapore Hub of the Internet Society, and their Senior Director of Organisational Members, Robert Maylath. Also, at our table was Asia Pacific's rep on the ICANN Board, Akinori Maemura of JPRS, Japan.



With Satish (APRALO) and Julie (SSAC); Lianna with Raj and Adrian (ISOC); and Akimori (ICANN Board) looking pensive.

[APTLD77](#): I was invited to attend the opening day of the APTLD meeting which was held at a separate Melbourne venue from APRICOT. After the presentations by ccTLD managers present, the finale was a presentation by PICISOC Board member, Cherie Lagakali and the signing of an MOU between PICISOC and APTLD by Board member Andrew Molivurae. It was a great opportunity to meet up with some of our ALS representatives from Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Tonga, Vanuatu and as well as with ICANN's Oceania GSE VP, Save Vocea, and a good friend of PICISOC from InternetNZ, Keith Davidson. During the 2-day meeting at break-out discussions, participants shared their ideas and came up with a set of recommendations as to what could be the role of ccTLDs in the Internet Governance ecosystem. We would encourage PICISOC members to build collaborative relationships with their ccTLD managers and to encourage their support for our work in the region.

At the opening plenary, Rajnesh Singh from ISOC gave an update on ISOC and APRIGF activities; and Cherie Lagakali as mentioned above updated everyone on PICISOC activities before Andrew Molivurae added his signature to the PICISOC MOU with APTLD. Brent Carey (.nz) facilitated a session specifically for Pacific Island ccTLDs. APTLD General Manager Leonid Todorov is very keen to help regional managers to develop their vision and strategies that will enable an expansion of their ccTLDs. There are very few ccTLD members from the Pacific in APTLD.

Presentations were made by Tony Saaga (.ws, remotely), Norman Warput (.vu) and Fereti Atalifo (.fj). Other Pacific representatives who were at the meeting (that I knew) included Bill Tomon (University of Technology, PNG), Per Darnell (.nu), Jordan Carter (InternetNZ), Keith Davidson (Internet NZ), Ellen Strickland (InternetNZ and former PICISOC Board), Save Vocea (ICANN) and Stephen Deerhake (.as).

As additional information, Stephen is the administrator of ICANN's Empowered Community which under California law, has [9 powers](#) which it can use to ensure that the ICANN Board and its staff are accountable. Stephen and I from the Pacific region represent the ccNSO and the ALAC on this specifically empowered group within ICANN. The Board has to do something drastic before we have to take any action.



(1) Cherie Lagakali presenting before the signing of the MOU (2) APTLD Participants, Melbourne, February 2020

Networks: During the week there were some interesting discussions with the Internet Society about the relationship between ISOC and ICANN and how they could collaborate more. We also met with members of ISOC Australia and AuDA who hosted a cocktail event. At the opening APRICOT event we noticed a couple of gatecrashers from the Oceania Cybersecurity conference. They too had noted the hailstone storm of a couple of hours back as we had been walking to the venue. Needless to say, we had to go back to our hotel to change. They came armed with umbrellas. It wasn't just cybersecurity they were looking after. It was a wet welcome to Melbourne but a great time together!



Some of the Pacific Team at the Eureka Skybar; at the APRICOT Opening Social; and at the APRICOT Birthday Party.