

VISION FOR THE '90s

AAP TO BE MARKET LEADER IN COMMUNICATIONS AS WELL AS NEWS AND INFORMATION

AAP will be looking hard at all opportunities in communications leading up to 1997 when there will be open carrier competition with AOTC and Optus, Chief Executive Lee Casey said.

The AAP Group aimed to build on its current success and be recognised as a market leader in communications as well as news and information.

"Our vision for the future goes far beyond being recognised as a successful news and information service with an interest in communications," he said.

"It is to ensure that AAP – having done much already to change the future of the communications industry in Australia – will continue to be at the forefront in developing and providing innovative services and products both here and in the rapidly developing Asian region and be recognised as a market leader in both communications and information."

Mr Casey said AAP has invested in excess of \$40 million as part of a strategic plan to diversify into communications.

The Group's gross revenue had risen over the past 10 years from around \$17 million to a projected \$170 million this year and it was now looking to return good profits.

"We're looking to continued substantial growth, but more important it's now time for us to be reaping good profits from those investments so that we can continue to look for and take advantage of new opportunities both in Australia and increasingly the Asian region," he said.

Mr Casey was outlining his vision for the '90s in a speech to the national conference of AAP Communications Services Pty Ltd at the Nikko Hotel, Potts Point, on February 1.

A full text of the speech is on pages 10 and 11.

ALSO INSIDE • Centre page spread on the golf day
• AAP on the election campaign trail
• Customer Services • Quality Standards
• New Premises for AAPCS • AAP in Port Moresby

GOLF DAY RAISES \$750,000

Twelve leading Australian charities will share \$750,000 from the proceeds of this year's AAP Group Financial Markets Annual Charity Golf Event.

The money was raised from a golf day at the Pennant Hills course in north-western Sydney, an art union and an auction conducted at a black tie dinner The Regent of Sydney.

A full field of 270 paid \$300 each to play golf and 520 attended the \$250 a head dinner.

They were supported by over 200 companies which helped sponsor the day.

Major beneficiary is the Financial Markets Foundation for Children, which is more than halfway to its target of raising a capital fund of \$2 million dollars to promote the health and welfare of Australian children.

Other charities include the Smith Family, St Vincent's Hospital Bone Marrow Transplant Unit, Odyssey House, Child Flight, and Arthritis, Muscular Dystrophy, Diabetes and Alzheimers research organisations.

The AAP Group has been running the annual golf event since 1987 and this year's contribution brings the total raised for charity so far to over \$3.5 million.



David Hagley – Qantas, John Bowie-Wilson – Hambros Equities, David Jensen – AAP, Wayne Nutbeen – Waterford Wedgwood
 pictured before their round of golf.

Three Views on Life on the Election Campaign Trail

Life hasn't been the same for journalists in AAP's Canberra bureau since the Federal election was called. Bureau Chief Don Woolford estimates the total number of miles logged by staffers shadowing the three major party leaders would be the equivalent of several trips around the world.

They travel non-stop, albeit aboard the RAAF's VIP fleet, stay in the best hotels but rarely have time to enjoy them, and are linked to the office by their laptop computers and mobile telephones.

Don writes:

The atmosphere on Paul Keating's 707 is a little odd. Most of the journalists at the back of the plane know Keating and his staff reasonably well and, generally speaking, relations are good.

Keating himself invariably comes down the plane to talk. He's relaxed, friendly and while there's usually a bit of spin on his conversation, he never presses overtly for support.

On the other hand, most if not all of the journalists doubt that he'll win.

We stay in flash hotels each night, but get little time to enjoy them. Our real home is the plane.

One reporter sank back in his seat after a hard day and murmured gratefully, "Back into the womb".

That's where you can stop thinking for a while, or at least think less frantically. That's also where you'll get something to eat and drink.

The only trouble is, once the plane's in the air, you can't use your mobile. If the plane's the womb, the mobile phone is the umbilical cord.

Sometimes, you're not sure which city you're in, or what day it is. And at times you feel more like a medieval theologian, searching for new nuances.

Is that a new emphasis? Is that a retreat? Or most commonly, is it new? Both sides are wonderful at repackaging old promises.

So far I've only been with Keating, but by the time this goes to press I will be travelling with Hewson.

By all reports I've been lucky. That's not a partisan comment, just a preference for a less frantic pace.

At least Keating doesn't start with dawn jogs to his first performance of the day.

Most of Keating's activities have been fairly orderly.

But as soon as he does get and about, there's the inevitable chaos from the TV crews and other accompanying jackals.

Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail

Tony Vermeer writes:

You've got to feel sorry for some people during an Australian election campaign.

Not politicians, not journalists or cameramen. Not the party hacks. But the poor average Joe or Joanne whose misfortune it is to be in the wrong place at the wrong time – in the way when the circus following one of the leaders comes to town.

Campaign fodder they call these people who find themselves getting 15 seconds of fame whether they like it or not. Sometimes they make the news, sometimes they don't. Nonetheless they have to put up with a lot.

The media pack, when hungry, has little respect for convention or the normal niceties of life. Take the down-on-luck Australians who thought they were going to have a quiet lunch at Bill Crews' soup kitchen in western Sydney and found instead that every bite they took was being videotaped for the rest

of the nation to digest in that night's evening news.

Then there was the poor woman in traction at one hospital whose pain was not helped by a backwards walking cameraman trying to get shots of Paul Keating bumped into her.

Pick the wrong time to go down to the local shop and you could end up trampled under before getting in the door. Sometimes just going to McDonald's for a burger can pain. Especially if Big Mac and John Hewson decides to lunch there as well. Suddenly there no room at the counter.

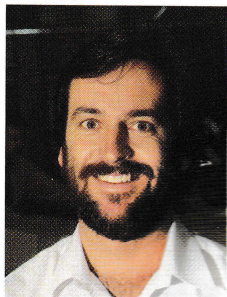
When to eat is one of the problems facing journalists on trail. The media stampede is never more terrifying than when a new tray of scones appears at afternoon tea just as the bus driver starts his engine up.

In fact on one occasion during the campaign, Paul Keating postponed his departure from a nursing home so that journalists who had not had



Canberra journalist Karen Noack (left) with other members of the Canberra press gallery on the election trail at Rockhampton, Qld.

All Aboard the Pony Express



Tony Vermeer.

that day could have into the complimentary chocolate eclairs and fruit cake on offer. A few thank-yous to the hosts later and the rat pack has disappeared leaving bewildered residents to get their life back to normal.

Madness becomes a way of life on the campaign trail. Sometimes the scene to an outsider must look surreal. What to make of an Indian file of journalists, dressed for business and each with mobile phone glued to an ear, marching off a bus and into the middle of a surf carnival on a Queensland beach.

Then again, in an election anything goes.

Karen Noack writes:
If it's Tuesday, it must be Cairns. Or is it Rockhampton, or maybe Wangaratta?

Sometimes it's hard to tell when following National Party Leader Tim Fischer around rural Australia. In one day, the dateline changed from Broken Hill to Orange to Brisbane and beyond.

Once known as the Wombat Trail, under Tim Fischer's leadership the Nationals' campaign entourage was renamed the Pony Express due to his penchant for going from post office to post office around Australia.

He figures it's a focal point for people in the country, but let's face it, once you've licked one stamp ...

After a while, the main joy from the familiar red and white Australia Post logo was the prospect of a phone if the mobile happened to be out of range.

But the frenetic Fischer schedule wasn't exactly geared to delays.

The Pony Express almost lost its legs when our RAAF Falcon 900 aborted a takeoff at Cairns airport due to an engine failure light appearing on the control panel.

But that did not deter "two-minute Tim", who had a long-standing appointment at Charters Towers and immediately chartered a private flight to take him to a public meeting there.

With just myself and his press secretary David Kelly in tow, we braved a flight through rain and thick cloud in a rickety old Cessna.

It didn't help when Fischer opened a newspaper on the way, only to find the first clue in the crossword was "3 Across - Panic stricken flight".

But we made it to Charters Towers, spent another hand-shaking, GST-explaining hour there, then promptly flew back to Cairns to a new RAAF jet and the rest of the journalists and crew.

From there we immediately took off for Darwin, after Mt Isa had to be dropped from the itinerary because of the flight delays.

It was just another breathless day on the campaign trail. Unfortunately it didn't leave much time to see the sights.

As a first-time visitor to Cairns and Darwin, my main impressions were those of radio studios, electorate offices and those ubiquitous post offices.

We hadn't yet discovered how crook things were in Tallarook or if there was work at Bourke by the time I handed over to Andrew Stokes for the next leg of the campaign, and by then a good night's sleep at home was welcome.

But I could always go back for a drop more of the Penfolds Bin 707 on the RAAF flights.

Quotable Quotes

Each day throughout the campaign, AAP has been running a series of the best quotes to emerge from our political leaders. Some samples:

"No tomatoes please, I've only got one suit with me." National Party leader Tim Fischer before yet another meet the people session in Perth.

"Strictly unbelievable." Fischer on what he termed the Prime Minister's "strictly ballroom" launch.

"I give you an absolute guarantee that we will deliver on that in real terms and if we don't you can dunk me over the side of the Walla Weir on a return visit." Fischer assuring Queensland cane farmers the Coalition would deliver its new sugar policy.

"A dirty dog of a tax change." Prime Minister Paul Keating describing the GST.

"I want to be around when it comes good." Keating on participating in Australia's opportunities for growth in the 1990s.

"Arts to the Liberal Party is like a wooden cross to Dracula."

Keating releasing Labor's arts policy.

"Just as cancer cells multiply and break down someone's body, these GST cells will multiply and break down the Australian economy." Keating at an Adelaide rally.

"We are not going to buy our way into government." Opposition leader John Hewson promising that his policy speech would contain no additional spending.

"I'm not about making you worse off. I wouldn't be right in the skull." Hewson to rail workers in Port Augusta.

"Send them a message by voting to keep them in line, to keep them honest, to keep their disputes relatively dignified, to provide checks and balances that are the necessary watchdogs of power." Australian Democrats leader Senator John Coulter in his policy speech.

"Small businesses should realise that voting for a GST is like a turkey voting for Christmas." Treasurer John Dawkins.

"You don't have to persuade Victorians that a government running a bank is not such a good idea," Shadow Treasurer Peter Reith on privatisation.

Satellite loss causes 130 dishes to be realigned

The loss of the new Optus satellite over southern China last December has provided a major technical challenge for Communications Services with all of AAP's satellite dishes around Australia having to be realigned.

General Manager, Customer Field Services, Jeffrey Roll, estimates the project will cost around \$300,000 with all of the work to be completed in a matter of weeks.

Each of the 130 dish sites has to be visited to make the minute but delicate adjustment that will lock them on to a different satellite.

National Radio Frequency manager Garry Dawson says the repointing in most cases will be a matter of centimetres in azimuth and elevation, and a total of 15 staff will be involved in the operation around the country.

The satellite B2, which crashed, was launched as a replacement for A2, which is fast running out of fuel and will soon fall out of its geostationary orbit.

The need to replace A2 still exists and the recovery plan is to relocate the A3 satellite to A2's orbit.

All of the services using the A3 satellite, including those of AAP, Sky Channel and the ANZ network, now have to be duplicated on to the failing A2 satellite during this transition period.

"It is a labour-intensive task," Mr Roll said. "We have to physically go to each site, and the window for the program to be completed is only open up to April 5."

AAP has five capital city earth stations and 10 Sky Switch clients that have to be reprogrammed because of the change of frequencies, plus some 115 VSAT dishes around the country from Hobart to Port Douglas, Darwin and Perth and in remote areas of the Tanami Desert in the Northern Territory.

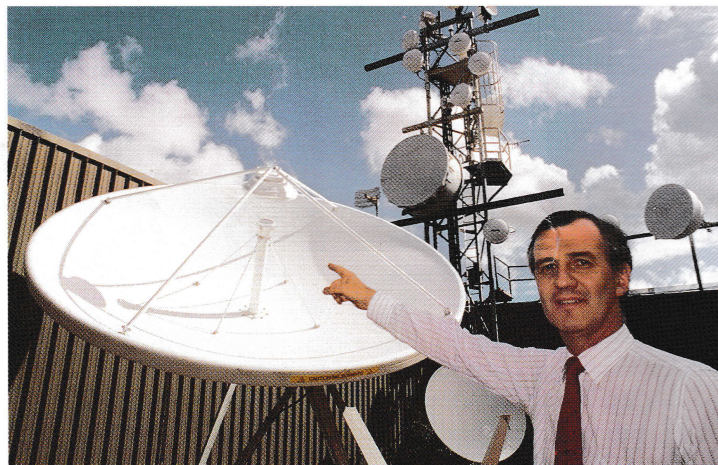
The dishes are used to supply news and picture

services to regional daily newspapers, radio and television stations, mining camps, the Tanami network and to carry the AMQ and IDN services.

AAP has also had to install two additional 3.7 metre dishes – one at Glebe and the other in Perth – to provide a parallel feed to the A2 Satellite.

One side benefit of the exercise has been to test the disaster backup system designed to link all subscribers to AAP via dialup modems, or to ensure they can be serviced via fax or telex in case of future satellite failure.

Mr Roll said Optus would be meeting a portion of the cost of repointing the dishes.



Ron Scaife, Installation Supervisor with the Radio Frequency Unit, points out the new dish at Glebe.

Vista offers business a clearer picture

Two new products have been released by AAP Telecommunications to broaden its coverage of the business telecommunications market.

The Vista service replaces the former CityDial and gives more companies access to a wider range of discounts on national and international distance calls through the AAPT network.

Vista has been designed to cater for business customers with medium to heavy telecommunications traffic volume.

Chief Executive Barry Wheeler said Vista offered all customers immediate savings of around 10 per cent on long distance calls.

Extra discounts would depend on call volume.

"Vista will enable customers with sufficient calling volume to make savings in excess of 30 per cent over standard long distance call costs," Mr Wheeler said.

High volume clients using their own dedicated access line to link to the network could achieve even greater savings.

Vista is part of AAPT's growing product line, joining the highly successful FirstChoice service.

A refinement of that service, FirstChoice Total Service Option, means businesses can now choose AAPT to handle all their call traffic.

It would give them "one-stop shopping" and a single invoice for line costs and local and long distance calls.

AAPT's new products, along with others soon to be announced mean the entire business spectrum from small business to large corporations can take advantage of reduced telecommunications costs, Mr Wheeler said.

Quality certificate to set new standards

One of the most important tasks now underway in AAP Communications Services is the quest for Australian quality standards certification.

Chief Executive Terence Nickolls describes it as an exciting venture and one that will have immense benefits for the company, and the AAP Group, in the long term.

"The certification process is not an easy one," he said.

"There is a tremendous amount of work and expert knowledge required to ensure that a company gets certification."

Certification is the process whereby an internationally – accredited, independent agency certifies that a company has implemented a system to ensure that quality products and services are delivered to its customers in line with specifications set by the International Standards Organisation.

A quality system consists of organisational structure, responsibilities, procedures, processes and resources for implementing quality management.

The standard AAPCS is seeking is AS 3901/ISO 9001 Quality Assurance in design/development, production, installation and servicing, which is the most comprehensive of all the quality system standards.

It details quality requirements in 20 separate areas in a form which can be used in a contract between two parties.

"It means that our customers – without having to inspect and check all of our procedures themselves – can be certain that we have a quality system in place which will deliver to their requirements," Mr Nickolls said.

Its key importance is that from the end of 1993, a company must have accreditation to the applicable Australian standard to be eligible to tender for certain government contracts.

"There are enormous other benefits to be gained from the exercise of obtaining certification," Mr Nickolls said.

The British Standards Council estimates that companies which obtain certification gain efficiencies of at least 10 per cent.

"All procedures dealing with sales, procurement, installation, maintenance and servicing of equipment must be clearly documented so that staff are fully aware of, and trained in the procedures used within the company, without duplication, overlap or omission.

"This leads to improved morale because we know what our responsibilities are and we have the knowledge and authority to carry them out."

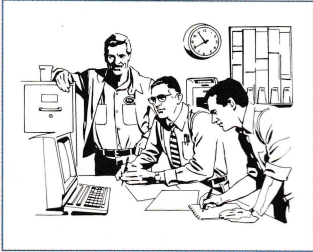
The Quality Team, formed last November, will:

- identify all the procedures used in the company to supply a service.
- document them.
- train staff in the use of the procedures.
- audit each department to ensure all procedures are in place.
- compile a set of job descriptions for each task.
- write the quality manual for submission to the Standards Association for auditing.



Members of the Quality Team, pictured from left to right are: Owen Keogh, Quality Manager, Charles Bailey, Financial Controller, Graham Saunders, Systems Support Manager, Voice Messaging and Video Conferencing, Jeffrey Roll, General Manager, Customer Field Services Division, Martin Salmon, Quality Consultant, Colleen Daymond-King, Personal Assistant to Customer Services Manager Jeff Rollason, Garry Dawson, Radio Frequency and Microwave Systems Manager, Jim Haasnoot, Manager Group Purchasing and Supply AAPIS, Peter Firth, Business Development Manager Third Party Maintenance, Network Services, Paul Peters, Sales Representative, Video Conferencing, David Backley, Client Systems Manager RES and Client Systems. Other team members absent when the picture was taken are Jeff Rollason and Brendan Harvey, Third Party Maintenance and Repair Centre Manager.

Customer Services wants to hear from you



Customer Services is seeking suggestions from staff on ways that AAP Group products and services to clients can be improved.

It has initiated a comprehensive Suggestions Program aimed at flushing out new ideas and forms will be sent to all departments.

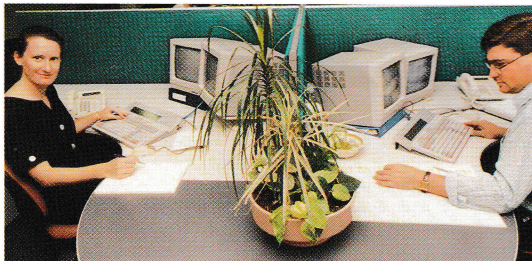
"We consider all AAP employees or departments to be our internal customers," Program Co-ordinator Colleen Daymond-King said.

"We need to hear from you.

"We need to understand your expectations and your requirements so that we can design or re-design methods or systems to best suit you.

"Suggestions will be sent to the appropriate managers for review. They will be asked to detail reasons for and against implementation and recommend a course of action to be taken.

"They will be treated confidentially if desired, and anonymous suggestions are also welcome."



Colleen Daymond-King and Andrew Meagher.

As a measure of how successful suggestions programs can be, Colleen points out that when Northwest Airlines invited cost-cutting suggestions from its 46,000 staff, it received 15,500 replies and made savings of well over \$100 million.

One simple suggestion that saved Northwest \$2.6 million a year was to serve bananas instead of fruit salad in economy class, thus removing the need to distribute, collect and wash thousands of dishes and cutlery items daily.

Colleen can be contacted on extension 1999 if you need further details.

A small committee headed by Customer Services Manager Jeff Rollason will award a prize arranged by the Group Corporate and Public Affairs Department to the staffer who submits the best suggestion.

Following is a brief outline from Colleen of some of the projects Customer Services is now working on:

Dealing 2000

Dealing 2000 is a global dealing system for electronic matching and confirmation. The Customer Service Assistance Centre is working closely with project manager Graeme Hicks to establish a Dealing 2000 Help Desk at 88 Pitt Street.

The Help Desk is expected to be fully operational by July 5, servicing 17 customers and 34 key stations.

Fault Analysis

A quarterly analysis of RES faults by service groups has been initiated and will help us to identify specific problem areas and clients who are experiencing frequent faults. We will investigate the nature of the faults and how we can prevent recurrences. An AMQ analysis is currently provided on a monthly basis.

PABX Upgrade

Automatic Call Distribution is part of the PABX upgrade and is designed to monitor incoming calls and action taken on those calls, enabling us to better manage and plan workloads. ACD has many outstanding features, such as prioritising calls, identifying callers on display, evenly distributing calls among agents, announcements to customers, as well as a "trouble" button which can signal for assistance with a call without the caller knowing.



Achievement awards

Winners of the inaugural CEO Achievement Awards in AAP Telecommunications were Pietro Fu, Mark Robinson and Rosemary Robinson.

AAPT Chief Executive Barry Wheeler said they represented a wide cross section of staff whose efforts on behalf of the company and its customers symbolised the exceptional performance of all their colleagues.

He said the quarterly awards were designed to recognise employees who surpassed the high expectations of their managers, and indeed their colleagues, by contributing extra effort to achieve the common goal.

The three were chosen by a panel of managers headed by Financial Controller John Stevenson, which considered submissions from various echelons within AAPT.

New South Wales Switching Engineer Pietro Fu won his award for his achievements with the GDC network and the SL1 Sydney switch involving extensive voluntary hours and effort; Mark, Project Manager in Victoria, for an outstanding commitment to customers as evidenced by unsolicited letters of commendation, and Rosemary, secretary to the senior executive group in Sydney, for her successful handling of the office relocation.

Each received an engraved plaque and a cheque for \$250.

Two other personal success stories in AAPT Finance were Jennie Sparke and Jill Triggell, who passed their accountancy exams at the Sydney Institute of Technology despite their heavy workload.

The Glebe technical and communications centre is bursting at the seams, and AAP Communications Services will move to its own premises at 24-26 Junction Street in Glebe next month.

All divisions, business units and operations will be centralised in the new building, with only the Satellite Maintenance Unit headed by Garry Dawson, the workshop and the Group Service Assistance Centre remaining at 30 Ross Street.

"The move has been predicated on the basis of growth for both Communications Services and AAP Telecommunications and, specifically, allowing each company its own individual premises enabling clear focus and independence," AAPCS Chief Executive Terence Nickolls said.

"The space that becomes available at Ross Street will be quickly filled by AAPT operations and expansion of the computer room and allied facilities."

The present building, on the corner of Ross Street and St John's Road, was first occupied by AAP in August, 1984.

Only 38 staff then occupied the building, members of the Field

Services Division of AAP Technical Services, which later became AAP Reuters Communications – better known as Comco.

There are now almost 300 people in the Ross Street building

Just over 100 people will make the move to Junction Street.

"The new building will not only enable Communications Services to build showrooms and demonstration rooms for its products and services, but extend the training facilities for both its technical operation and hardware sales operations particularly the Aspen range of voice information processing equipment, which requires extensive user training," Mr Nickolls said.

"The building will include a large centralised store facility with a LAN running throughout the building, giving key information

on-line to all senior managers, including an on-line sales prospects reporting procedure for immediate reference by Sales Executives of customer information, thus cross referencing potential opportunity within existing and new accounts."



The technical and communications centre at 30 Ross Street, Glebe.

Charity golf event total is now \$3.5 million



Fiona McDonald strikes a pose on the vintage MG, which was first prize in the art union, while other AAP helpers at the dinner look on.

It's already won a place in the Guinness Book of Records as the most successful one-day charity golf event staged in Australia, and is quite possibly the biggest anywhere in the world.

The AAP Group Financial Markets Len Evans Charity Golf Event, to give it its full title, last year raised \$1 million and this year's figure of \$750,000 brings the total amount raised since it was first staged in 1987 to \$3.5 million.

"We are very pleased with the result," said AAP Corporate and Media Services General Manager, David Jensen, who is also Chairman of the Organising Committee.



Neil and Margaret Hope and Diana and Mick Connolly.

"Given the current tough economic conditions, the response has been tremendous.



Group shot at the Golf Day sponsors lunch at Bilsons.

"We will be going for the million dollars again next year.

"Over 200 sponsors are involved in the event compared with 23 seven years ago, and it's now recognised as the major charity fund raising event on the social calendar for the financial markets."

Many people who wanted to play in the golf day at the Pennant Hills course had to be turned away when the capacity field of 272 was quickly filled.

Ticket sales for the art union were down substantially this year, as was bidding at the auction at the black tie dinner at The Regent of Sydney, with several buyers picking up items at bargain prices.

They included an uncut sheet of \$5 notes from the Reserve Bank with the serial number AA 00 000000, which sold for only \$25,000, and a complete collection of Grange Hermitage vintages from 1951 to 1987, which went for \$36,000.

Top bid of the night was for two rarely-available tickets to the US Masters golf tournament and a playing place in the pro-am for the MCI Heritage Classic the following week complete with luxury hotel stays and first class air travel.

The package was sold for \$41,000.

The main beneficiary of the day was the Financial Markets Foundation for Children, which is now more than halfway to its



The ninth hole at Pennant Hills

target of raising a capital fund \$2 million to promote the health and welfare of Australian children.

Other charities were St Vincent's Hospital Bone Marrow Transplant Unit, Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame and Outback Heritage Centre, The Sunnyfield Association, The Smith Family, Odyssey House, McGrath Foundation, Arthritis Foundation of Australia, Royal North Shore Hospital and Community Health Services K Morris Fund for Drug and Alcohol Services, Child Flight, Muscular Dystrophy Association of NSW, the International Diabetes Institute and the Alzheimers Disease and Related Disorders Association of NSW.



Golf day funds will aid chronic illness research



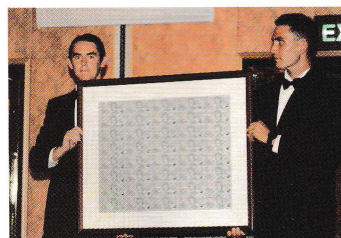
Reserve Bank Governor Bernie Fraser (standing) and AAP Group chairman Lyle Turnbull at Bilsons.

The \$750,000 raised by the AAP Group Financial Markets Len Evans Charity Golf Day will be used to aid sufferers from several chronic illnesses – and perhaps even help find a cure.

St Vincent's Hospital, for example, will put the money it receives towards development of a magic bullet for the treatment of leukaemia.

The Bone Marrow Transplant Unit at St Vincent's Hospital is rated in the top eight units of more than 200 throughout the world in terms of volume of patients treated and outcome.

Major projects being undertaken in its haematology research laboratory include development of a new cytotoxic agent by genetic engineering – the so-called magic bullet – for treatment of leukaemia.



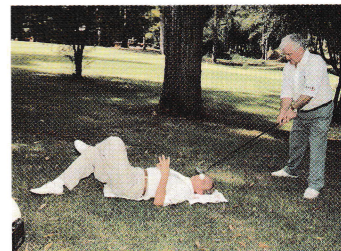
Dean O'Connor and Michael Andrews hold up the Reserve Bank \$5 notes.

The research will also attempt to define the role of oncogenes responsible for the development of the disease and methods to turn off the effect of the oncogenes and reverse the leukaemia process.

Major research projects will also be funded by the Muscular Dystrophy Association, the Arthritis Foundation and the International Diabetes Institute.

The diabetes project relates to the early detection and ultimate prevention of insulin dependent diabetes, with a new blood test offering the best hope yet of a cure.

The test indicates on a simple, mass screening basis a person's predisposition to insulin dependent diabetes as much as seven years before contracting the disease.



Len Evans attempts a risky drive off Jeff Hobson's nose.

It has also shown that at least one in every six adults who contract mature onset diabetes have actually been suffering from childhood diabetes.

Professor Paul Zimmet, Chief Executive Officer of the Diabetes Institute and Professor of Diabetes at Monash University, who was awarded an AM for his work in this area on Australia Day, said the significance of the finding should not be underestimated.

"Now that we can study the early stages of insulin dependent diabetes, we may soon be able to halt the process altogether," he said.

Insulin dependent diabetes affects more than 80,000 Australians, while diabetes in all its forms is estimated to cost the national health system in excess of \$1.5 billion per year.

A 25-year-old researcher at the molecular genetics unit at the Prince of Wales Hospital at Randwick, which is supported by Muscular Dystrophy, last year won a \$10,000 national award for her research.

Elizabeth Rapley won recognition for perfecting a test which can identify women who carry a mutation of the gene called dystrophin, which causes two terminal muscle wasting diseases.

The Alzheimers Association will use its funding to establish Help Line to provide advice and counselling for sufferers and the family carers.

The service, available on 008 810 604 throughout New South Wales, will be staffed by expert carers.

The association will also produce some 30 Help Sheets to complement the telephone service which will outline the various stages of the disease and its clear definable progression, and provide advice on some of its other aspects including wandering, sexuality and communicating.

The watch is about to disappear... there it goes into his pocket... and hey presto all is revealed. Comedian-magician Jeff Hobson demonstrated his sleight-of-hand skills by removing the watches from Warren Beeby and Malcolm Colless of News Ltd and several other corporate executives at the dinner.



Chief Executive's Address to AAP Communications Services Conference

AAP was founded in 1935 because of communications – the cost of communications. The major newspapers in Australia decided to combine their efforts to bring in overseas news because the cost of cablegrams was so high.

It's no good gathering news and information if you don't have the communications to deliver it. That's why news services such as AAP have been at the forefront of innovations in the use of communications.

AAP was the first commercial organisation in Australia to establish a nationwide leased teleprinter network. It was the first to lease capacity in the new COMPAC cables in the '60s, it was the first to introduce Time Division Multiplexing, it was the first to introduce the so-called "silent" teleprinters, it was the first to introduce electronic dissemination of information, it was Aussat's first commercial customer and the first to establish a private satellite network, and it was the first to introduce data dissemination via microwave at speeds of up to five million words a minute.

Ten years ago we decided we needed to restructure the organisation to take advantage of what we considered to be inevitable – the deregulation of the Telecommunications industry.

As a major user of telecommunications, and to a large degree a pioneer in the introduction and use of new communications technologies, we

were very aware of the bottled-up opportunities waiting to be released if you could remove the restrictive regulatory cap.

Our rationale was that as a major user, we knew what improvements in telecommunications were needed in the business community. We decided that rather than wait for someone else to provide these services, we would make it happen ourselves.

We put in place a strategic plan to diversify into telecommunications, invested in excess of \$40 million and positioned ourselves to take advantage of the inevitable. This positioning has largely been done through your company and we have been fortunate in developing a very good business in the marketing of satellite technology, video-conferencing and voice messaging and installation and maintenance services.

As you know, we are now in the switched long distance telephone business through AAP Telecommunications and we have a strategic alliance with Vodafone and the third cellular telephone licence.

We also have what a lot of carriers would very much like to have – a market-leading news and information business that complements communications.

We've invested heavily in building a news, information and communications structure with gross revenues over the past 10 years rising from around \$17 million to a projected \$170 million in this current year.

We're looking to continuing substantial growth, but more important, it's now time for us to be reaping good profits from those investments so that we can continue to look for and take advantage of new opportunities both in Australia and increasingly, the Asian region.

The opportunities are enormous if we are innovative, technically sound, quality conscious and above all customer responsive.

Across the Group, we'll be looking at maximising profits from existing product lines and services, while at the same time carefully assessing investments in new products and services.

We will be looking for AAP Communications Services to increasingly become a communications solutions company, bringing together – as we did with the Tanami Network – hardware technology to provide specific solutions, which can be



Mr Lee Casey
Chief Executive, AAP Information Services Pty

applied both here and in the region. The opportunities are enormous if we are innovative, technically sound, quality conscious and above all customer responsive.

At the same time, we have continue to develop markets for our established hardware line in an increasingly competitive market.

I believe we have major opportunities in the technical services installation and maintenance area, where we are increasingly less reliant on in company business.

The Vodafone alliance, which involves us as a preferred supplier, should result in substantial mutual benefits.

The title of this talk is "AAP's Group Vision", so I'd better make some visionary statements. This is not easy in a world that is still in the throes of a recession that would cloud the crystal ball.

However, I'm encouraged by the fact that we had a vision in the mid-'80s about the way communications were developing and we've been reasonably successful in opening up the opportunities.

Experts told us we were too optimistic about satellite and microwave technology, Telecom's monopoly couldn't be broken, mobile telephones were only for the "upwardly mobile executives" and would never succeed in a wider market, video-conferencing was only useful during airline strikes, and voice information processing was only a glorified answering machine.

They also told us we didn't have the resources to develop our own computerised financial and general news information service technology, and that it would be a long time before executives would accept a PC on their desks.

Fortunately, events have supported our optimism and we are proud of the breakthroughs we have achieved. Through a lot of hard work, we have helped create market awareness of the benefits of these new technologies, but now we have to keep looking ahead and prepare to capitalise on future developments.

PCs are now commonplace in the executive office and will become increasingly so.

Competition for access to that PC will also increase. Nobody wants two PCs on his desk.

Therefore our vision is to have a single board slotting into a PC that will provide access on demand to any AAP Group product.

As the Golden Girls' Sophia says, "Now picture this - Sydney 1995".

A PC with Windows technology on an executive desk that provides at a stroke of the keyboard:

- Automatic access to the AAP Telecommunications network
- A video telephone
- Dialup video conferencing
- Video store and forward
- Voice information processing store and forward
- Facsimile store and forward and multi destination fax distribution
- Pay TV access
- Data store and forward
- AAP NewsTrack
- AMQ
- AAP Racing Services
- AAP MediaNet
- And other services we haven't yet thought of.



Terence Nickolls Chief Executive, AAP Communications Services.

The aim is to be able to activate services by down line loading authorities. Should make it an easy sell if you can say, we'll switch you on to such and such a service - have a look at it for a week - if you like it, we'll add it to your bill.

Combine these services with the unparalleled billing capability we have access to through the AAP Telecommunications Billing

System and we have something to look forward to. And it could all be delivered on a LAN installed and maintained by AAP Communications Services.

Our vision is to have a single board slotting into a PC that will provide access on demand to any AAP Group product.

The first step is to develop the one-stop or multi-media card for our established business client base and we're already working with a number of people on this.

The next step is to look at ways of providing the same level of service economically to the home.

I believe that the '90s will see the business community particularly, and gradually the wider community, demanding more and more timely and relevant news and information, and embracing cost efficient solutions for communicating that and their own information. They'll want one-stop service and good service at that.

Cellular telephone technology will continue to advance and the personal communications network concept - where your personal telephone number will travel with you wherever you go - is not too far away.

Our joint venture with AAP Telecommunications and our alliance with Vodafone is to ensure that we are part of this future.

We will be looking hard at all opportunities leading up to 1997 when there will be open carrier competition.

Our policy is not to try to do everything ourselves. We will continue to develop our expertise

in specific areas and forge alliances with suitable and like-minded suppliers and joint venture partners.

We will continue to explore longer range opportunities in Southeast Asia and particularly southern China and generally broaden our activities regionally.

I was particularly pleased the other day when I heard that an overseas consultant preparing a report on developments in the telecommunications industry, having made his calls on AOTC and Optus, was told in effect, "It's essential that you talk with AAP - they're not as big but they're effective."

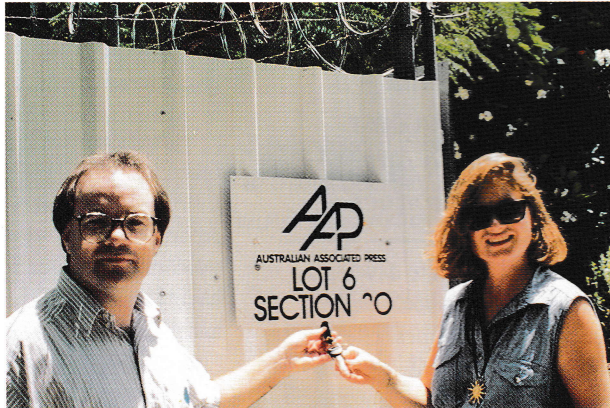
We're building a reputation as being effective innovators, which is good. But it's important to remind ourselves that we've been able to do this from a very sound base - having built a reputation for reliability and independence in the information industry and more recently with our communications products. To use an old journalistic maxim - you're only as good as your last story.

It's no good having visions for the future if we don't continue to do well what we do now - and that's up to you and me.

Our vision for the future goes far beyond being recognised as a successful news and information service with an interest in communications.

It is to ensure that AAP - having done much already to change the future of the communications industry in Australia - will continue to be at the forefront in developing and providing innovative services and products both here and in the rapidly developing Asian region and be recognised as a market leader in both communications and information.

AAP's first woman in PNG post



James Grubel is pictured handing over the keys to the AAP house, office and car in Port Moresby to his replacement Belinda Goldsmith, who writes:

"It is the first time AAP has appointed a woman in the two-year PNG posting and so far so good, perhaps due to the razor wire running along the top of the perimeter fence that you can see in the photo.

The company's office is on the

ground floor of the house with the living quarters upstairs.

The average day in PNG involves an hour or so first thing collecting post, newspapers and other supplies and then getting down to work in the office. Press releases come through on the fax machine, stories in the local newspapers may have to be followed up and there are always calls from various contacts or from AAP bureau chiefs in Australia seeking stories on a variety of topics.

Although always on call, there is the odd moment here or there to squeeze in a bit of waterskiing, tennis or a swim at the local sports club.

Nightlife? Well, there are two discos in town which are lively to say the least. During one of my first visits to one of the discos, there were two fights. Hotel bars are also a favourite haunt as they are well guarded. Eating out is not

so common as in Australia as the prices are pretty steep. PNG is not a cheap place and rents here are astronomical. It is said to be the world's third most expensive place to rent.

The main disadvantage of PNG is the security. Car doors have to be locked at all times, gates secure, and you don't go walking the streets alone. Some people live here for 20 years and never have any trouble. Others aren't so lucky. I'm aiming to be among the first group."

Belinda, 29, joined AAP in September, 1988, and her last major assignment before Port Moresby was the Olympic Games in Barcelona.

AAP opened the Port Moresby office in 1957. The first correspondent appointed was Richard Myerscough for a six-month trial period and the bureau has been staffed continuously ever since.

R Region a delight for divers

James Grubel found time in PNG to explore some of the best dives there and in the Solomon Islands, where sunken war relics attract divers from all over the world.

James says the clear tropical waters are a delight for divers, who can leave their wet suits at home without ever worrying about being cold. He writes:

A favourite destination is the volcano town of Rabaul, where more than 40 Japanese ships and aircraft lie on the bottom of the harbour.

The most impressive dive, only 10 minutes from shore, is the Hokkai Maru, a 5,000 tonne

Japanese engineering ship sunk by allied dive bombers in 1942.

The ship is in pristine condition in about 45 metres of water, with the only damage a torpedo hole in its side. Divers not wishing to go too deep can explore the upper decks of the ship and swim into the bridge, captain's cabin and his opulent bathroom.

The machine gun turrets on the deck are still intact and there's a live torpedo sitting there still waiting to be fired off. For the more adventurous, the lower holds contain all kinds of relics, including skeletons of some of the crew.

The Solomon Islands has war wrecks equally as accessible and spectacular.

The ocean off Honiara, on the main island of Guadalcanal, is so littered with US, and Japanese wrecks it has become known as Iron Bottom Sound.

Many are too deep for recreational divers, but several are simple shore dives, as both US and Japanese forces attempted to run their vessels aground once they had been hit so they could offload troops and supplies.

One such wreck is the 7,000 tonne troop carrier *Hirokawa Maru*, which sank on November 14, 1942.

This spectacular wreck lies on its port side, with what remains of the bow in only three metres of water and less than 10 metres from the shore.

The wreck is intact from midships to the stern, which lies in about 50 metres of water, providing huge cavernous holes to explore.

This is a perfect wreck for deep dive. You can go as deep as you like and still have plenty of decompression stops on the way back to the surface.

Pigs and Pidgin were among the local hazards

Former correspondent James Grubel looks back on his posting and recalls some curious experiences not covered by the AAP reporter's guide:

The motto on the tourist brochures proudly proclaims Papua New Guinea as the land of the unexpected. But not even that mild warning can prepare a journalist for the rigours of work in the Port Moresby office.

Anything from helping to catch a wild pig, or being asked by intelligence officers to speak more clearly on the phone so their phone taps work more effectively, can add flavour to another dull day in the office.

One of the biggest stories I covered during my stint in PNG was a constitutional crisis which saw both the Deputy Prime Minister and the Governor General driven from office.

For almost a week, the future of PNG's Westminster democracy hung in the balance until the then Prime Minister Rabble Namaliu sent an envoy to Buckingham Palace to ask the Queen to intervene and sack her representative in Port Moresby.



Pictured with James and Helen are Ian Williams, Steve Connolly, Tim Dornin and best man Mark Battistich.

But while that political crisis was reaching its climax, I was busy with the sort of domestic crisis you can only find in PNG – trying to lasso a pig left in the front yard.

After a solid day filing stories on the political developments, I had to tell the editor-in-charge that a news analysis of events would have to wait until I had helped my household staff capture the porker delivered by mistake to our home instead of that of our neighbours.

But the AAP pig episode is only one of a host of problems anyone planning to work in PNG can face.

Take problems with the local Pidgin language.

In early 1992, I attended a media conference with senior Bougainville leaders and the then Foreign Minister Michael Somare, only to find the whole show was being conducted in Pidgin.

I eventually plucked up the courage to ask a question in Pidgin, and when Somare and the other dignitaries realised I could understand their language, they returned to English, obviously a little disappointed they could not put one over on the foreign media.

I did not have as much success a few months later in the Solomon Islands, where an embarrassed waitress thought I wanted her to bare her breasts – when I had thought I was making an innocent request for more milk for my coffee.

My Pidgin also confused local authorities who rang me one day only a few moments after a phone conversation with a key

Bougainville contact.

They were listening in to the phone conversation but they weren't clear on a few sentences, so they politely rang me up to check the quotes.

Adelaide Bureau Chief Steve Connolly adds:

James learnt many things during his 18 months in Port Moresby, including some of the local culture and traditions.

When he married long time partner Helen Bach in Adelaide on January 30, he introduced one special custom at his own wedding.

Much to the surprise of the 100 or so guests, James produced two porcelain pigs as a token to the family of the bride.

Although a bit smaller than the porkers usually offered at PNG wedding ceremonies, James' gift was gratefully accepted by Helen's mother Margaret during the reception at Fernilee Lodge.

After a brief honeymoon touring the wine districts north of Adelaide, James and Helen have now moved to Canberra.

James joined the AAP Canberra bureau just in time for the final weeks of the Federal election campaign, while Helen is working as a librarian at the University of Canberra.

AAPT Telecommunications introduces telemarketing



Pictured left to right are telemarketers Glen Norris, Roseanne Roelink and Tanya Mottl.

AAPT Telecommunications has begun a telemarketing campaign with a new in-house group set up to expand its business opportunities.

The aim of the telemarketing group is to help its sales force achieve more face to face contact with customers, leaving the cold calling to the telemarketers.

In trials recently with an external telemarketing group,

AAPT's sales representatives achieved a 35 per cent close on appointments arranged as a result of the campaign.

With an in-house team devoted solely to AAPT, even better results are expected.

Initially, the campaign will focus on Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane, but it is expected that it will expand into other areas as success continues.

AAPT helps get The Australian out on time

AAPT has initiated a new service for one of its biggest customers, News Limited.

News Limited has chosen AAPT to provide a Press Fax service to enable the organisation to transmit the vital page layouts for The Australian from Sydney to the other capital cities and regional centres where the national daily newspaper is printed.

The new AAPT system is the first time software switching has been used in achieving the task with News Limited expected to make significant savings in time and money with the new facility.

Gold Coast comes on line

AAPT Telecommunications has opened its first non-capital city office to cope with a rapid increase in telephone traffic on the Gold Coast.

The office, incorporating a new toll switch and a regional sales and technical centre, was officially opened by Queensland Deputy Premier Tom Burns on February 12.

The new facility was built from scratch to meet AAPT's specific operational needs and as such will be even more efficient than its established facilities.

"We have captured a large share of the Gold Coast business market in the past 12 months and this has led to a massive increase in long distance and overseas call traffic for AAPT in the region,"

AAPT Chief Executive Barry Wheeler said.

"Until now, AAPT's Gold Coast business has been directed through our state office and the switch in Brisbane.

"The new Surfers Paradise facility will bring further efficiencies as well as freeing capacity for expansion in the region.

"AAPT already handles national and overseas call traffic for several of the Gold Coast five star hotels as well as for Bond University and a major telemarketing operation base there."

SMICS fondly remembered by those who knew it well

For many who worked with it, the dismantling of SMICS was a sad time, even though it was replaced by a much superior system.

It had a character of its own and programmer Andrew Marwood, describing what he calls "the impending death of an acquaintance" writes:

"In the Glebe Data Centre, there lives a computer which is now only part of what it once was, a shadow of its former self. Time and technology have overtaken it.

"In its prime, its output was read by millions of people all round the country. It had many functions, but most of these have now been taken over by newer, more sophisticated systems.

"The first programs for SMICS were written in 1978, the most recent in 1989. It was also modified and changed to handle the dramatic changes which took place in the financial markets during that time.

"Even during the hectic trading days of the stock market crash of '87, the computer didn't crash, it just got a bit slow. (Thankfully new software had been released to the system the day before).

"The whole system consisted of four PDP 11/44 computers with 128 switches to control the communications lines – machines

which by today's standards could not process their way out of a paper bag. But it's an indication of the efficiency of the software that the system kept going as long as it did."

Production Manager Garry Anderson says AAP has actually been providing financial information tables to newspapers since 1968, and the first system to provide the service was called Stockset.

In 1978, a new system was designed to take on this role as well as provide data updates to the QRS service, the AAP-Reuters Monitor service and the Stock Exchange Ticker service. This system was called SMICS – an acronym for Stock Market Information Capture System.

Its designers included General Manager Financial Markets Services John Lowing and Rob Bradburn, who is now with AAP Telecommunications.

Everyone who was involved with SMICS has a favourite story to tell about it. Julia Bale recalls that during the equities boom in '86 when it had difficulty keeping up with the volume, it sometimes "left things out."

"One particular stock that it seemed to have difficulty with and often neglected to include in newspaper tables was Quintex.

"In hindsight, we have come to the conclusion that SMICS was in fact light years ahead in the

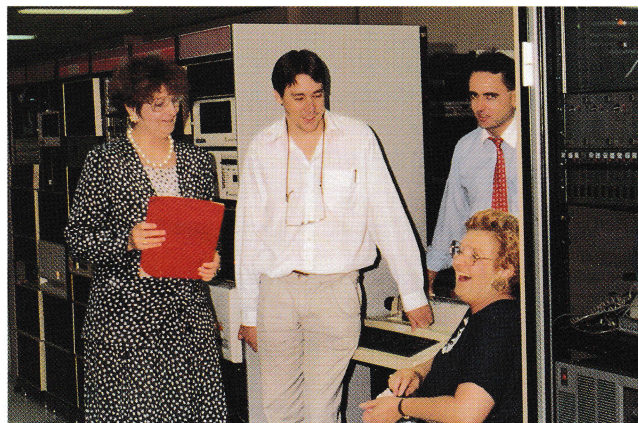
field of financial forecasting."

Jan Kulsiewicz from AAP Engineering likened the system to a maturing wine.

"First it was sour with many headaches. Later the system stabilised, became more reliable, matured and left our worries far away."

The replacement system, STOCKSET – yes, back to the original name – now does automatically what it took at least two computer operators each day to complete. It also occupies about one-tenth of the floor space.

A part of the SMICS system is still operating, providing a data feed for the QRS system until that also is fully replaced by AMQ.



Pictured between the SMICS and STOCKSET computer systems are Jenny Parkes, Andrew Marwood, Len Cuthbert and Jo Parkes.

Character building day at Cape Schanck



Pictured at the AAP Group's Melbourne Financial Markets Golf Day are Des Shady of ANZ, Graeme Hicks and Robert Mead of AAP RES and Ray Russell of the Capital Building Society.

Benign weather conditions did little to help the scoring at the AAP Group's Melbourne Financial Markets Golf Day played at The National at Cape Schanck.

The tournament was won by Peter Norman, Manager Money Market Operations at the ANZ Treasury in Melbourne, with a stableford score of 35 points.

Part of his prize was a trip to Sydney to play in the big charity golf day at Pennant Hills, where he failed to reproduce his fine southern form.

The winning score was an indication of how hard it was to

play to your handicap on the notoriously tough course, bounded by deep rough and ti-trees, even though the often fearsome Bass Strait winds seldom rose above a dull roar.

The AAP RES sales team achieved a combined total of 22 balls.

The field was limited to 50 golfers who teed off in a short start and stayed on for an informal dinner afterwards.

It is traditionally held as a curtain raiser to the Sydney golf day to give the full range of Melbourne financial markets clients a greater sense of involvement in the national e

AAP Today will now be produced every two months in full colour.

The next issue is due out at the beginning of May, and it will then appear in July, September and November.

Its future success depends on your support. Staff contributions – with pictures – are always welcome.

The newsletter is intended not only to provide news of important company events but also as a forum for the exchange of views among staff. It will also be used increasingly to promote the AAP Group to clients and prospective clients.

Letters to the editor are welcome, as are social items on births, marriages, awards, postings and adventure stories.

AAP Today is also a good place to publicise sporting fixtures and results and other upcoming events.

Contributions and any suggestions for changes or new features should be sent to

Les Murphy

at 88 Pitt Street, Sydney, 2000.

Tel (02) 224 8112 or Fax (02) 231 6929

Mauled by a Cheetah

Sydney Journalist Shani Keane went to Africa on a feature assignment and was bitten by a cheetah.

"I returned to work and told one person in the office and the word spread: 'Shani Keane was mauled by a cheetah.'

"People seemed almost disappointed when I told them it was just a cheetah cub at a research farm, having imagined me being stalked, then chased screaming across the African savannah, only to survive a thorough mauling.

"Still, most people were impressed by the two tiny bite marks on my leg and I got plenty of mileage out of the story at parties."

The cheetah that bit Shani about the size of the one pictured and is one of about 400 that have been bred at De Wildt, a rare and endangered species breeding centre in the Northern Transvaal of South Africa.

Shani visited the centre with a group of four Australian journalists as part of a trip to South Africa to write travel features.

