2017 ANZAGG Annual Meeting   
Minutes

# 1. Welcome and roll call

## 1.1 present

Leona Holloway (meeting chair) – Monash University

Annette Sutherland (minutes), Josie Howse & Shane Doepel – NSW Department of Education

Vicki Osborne & Simone Paull – Catholic Education, Parramatta

Neil Jarvis & Maria Stevens – Blind Foundation, New Zealand

Deb Lewis – Statewide Vision Resource Centre (SVRC), Victoria

Kathy Reissen – South Australia School for Vision Impaired (SASVI)

Trish Bishop & Karen Stobbs – Blind and Low Vision Education Network New Zealand (BLENNZ)

Sally Balwin – Braille House

Tristan Clare – Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children (RIDBC)

Jordie Howell – Australian Braille Authority (ABA)

Leone Carroll – VisAbility

Pauline Hope – Education Queensland

Kat McGill - ACER

Scott Erichsen, Ramona Mandy and Gaynor Marsh – individuals

Chelsea Bartlett – Blind Citizens Australia (BCA)

## 1.2 apologies

Tom McMahon and Karen Clark – Queensland Department of Education, Narbethong School

Louise Curtin – Vision Australia

# 2. Reports

## 2.1 ANZAGG annual report

Report (Appendix 1) read by Leona Holloway.

## 2.2 Member reports

All member reports are given in Appendix 2.

### 2.2.1 Queensland Tactual Mapping Committee

Report read by Sally Balwin.

### 2.2.2 Feelix library

Report read by Leona Holloway.

### 2.2.3 Vision Australia Accessible Formats Production

Report read by Leona Holloway.

### 2.2.4 Monash University

Report read by Leona Holloway.

### 2.2.5 BLENNZ

Report read by Trish Bishop.

### 2.2.6 Further reports

Further reports were provided verbally at the meeting:

#### Blind Foundation (New Zealand)

Maria Stevens reported that he Blind Foundation accessible formats production team produced five flags in large print and braille for the NZ flag referendum. They used Illustrator to do the graphics which looked good in print, however the proof readers found them hard to read when they were swelled using PIAF. This highlights the need for proofreading graphics by touch.

They have a catalogue of Tactile Masters.

They have not done a lot with 3D printers as the schools have access to them.

They have had trouble with swell paper giving inconsistent results.   
Leona: Has heard from a swell paper producer that they have a product that will give a sharper image and can be run through the heater multiple times. UPDATE: The paper is called "Tangible Magic Paper" and it is produced by Harpo.  
Deb Lewis: Likes when the paper smudges as she can tell it has been read.

#### Statewide Vision Resource Centre (Victoria)

Deb Lewis reported that SVRC supports students in school and have illustrations in all little books to get them used to reading tactile graphics.

Dot Power is a program for very young brailling kids with focus on 3D representation before getting to tactile graphics.

Maths books have numerous graphics.

#### VisAbility (WA)

Leone Carroll is new to VisAbility and transcription. She reported that she is experimenting with thermoprint and tactile graphics.

"For the Lonely" is an art exhibition currently showing in Fremantle with a braille catalogue and some of the artwork has been represented using PIAF thanks to assistance by VisAbility.

## 2.3 Tactile Reading conference

Leona attended this international conference in Stockholm, Sweden, April 2017. Her report is attached in Appendix 3.

# 3. ANZAGG national executive structure (discussion)

* Leona: A Terms of Reference was developed with the idea that the Executive would consist of a Chair and a representative from each of the Regional forums (NSW and Queensland) but this needs to be revised. The TABMAP group in NSW is no longer active and Queensland already have their own structure so shouldn’t change.

Suggest a small Executive with three members and subgroups to work on specific projects.

ACTION: Leona Holloway and Maria Stevens will work on revision of the Terms of Reference. This will allow us to elect an executive for ANZAGG at the next annual meeting.

# 4. Future projects

## 4.1 Revision of ANZAGG Terms of Reference

* Leona and Maria will work on this.

## 4.2 Online repository of accessible graphics masters

* Space may be found in Round Tables platform
* Tristan: Currently is having her graphics downloaded, however with work commitments wouldn’t be able to help
* Maria: starting to share files with other NZ groups
* Kathy: Online repository is a good idea BUT how do we catalogue what we have? How will it be organised?
* Employ someone with library experience?
* Trish Bishop: Vision Resource Centre has shared space, they have an admin person with library experience doing resource catalogue in Word.
* Sally Balwin: Library cataloguing might be the way to go.
* Tristan: Shouldn’t be too complicated to use. If you want “apple” you should just be able to type that in.
* Leona: Does anyone know someone with library experience?
* Karen Stobbs: BLENNZ is just about to employ a librarian to do their catalogue.
* Sally: Is National Library able to be involved?
* Ramona: (ACTION) Use Round Table listserv to ask if anyone with library background would be able to advise on the best steps forward.

## 4.3 Teaching tactile literacy

* Approach Trish, Louise Curtin and Galiema Gool to discuss the issue of teaching children to read tactile graphics and report back to the group
* Deb Lewis was suggested and has accepted

## 4.4 Standards and guidelines

* Annette Sutherland, Pauline Hope and Leone Carroll volunteered to look at this.

# 5. Other business

* Trish Bishop: Enquired if the resources Finland produced are available for purchase. Answer: No

# 6. Meeting close 3 PM

# Appendix 1: ANZAGG Annual Report 2017

## Establishment

The Australia & New Zealand Accessible Graphics Group (ANZAGG) is a standing subcommittee of the Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities Inc. Its Terms of Reference were accepted by the Round Table in October 2015.

The first face-to-face national meeting of ANZAGG was held as part of the Round Table Conference in Melbourne in May 2016. Twenty three people were in attendance. It was agreed that there was sufficient interest to establish a committee, but that it was too early to elect office bearers. This has limited the work done over this time.

## Activities over the 2016-2017 period

### Website

The ANZAGG web page resides on the Round Table website at <http://printdisability.org/about-us/accessible-graphics/>. An Information and Resources section was added to the page in 2016, with a link to Round Table's [Guidelines on Conveying Visual Information](http://printdisability.org/guidelines/guidelines-on-conveying-visual-information-2005/) and three new sub-pages:

* [Best practice guidelines for the production of accessible graphics](http://printdisability.org/about-us/accessible-graphics/graphics-guidelines/). This was identified as an area of interest at the first national meeting. Links are given for recommended resources on tactile graphics, making tactile books for young children, descriptions, 3D printing and teaching tactual graphicacy. Further investigation is required, particularly in the area of teaching tactile literacy.
* [Accessible graphics repositories](http://printdisability.org/about-us/accessible-graphics/repositories/). This was identified as an area of interest at the first national meeting, with the suggestion that ANZAGG could establish a repository of tactile graphics masters relevant to Australia and New Zealand, such as maps and materials relating to the school curriculum. As a first step, this page provides links to existing repositories. An account has also been established for [ANZAGG on Thingiverse](https://www.thingiverse.com/ANZAGG/), a repository of 3D printing masters, with links to accessible models and some original models created within the ANZAGG group.
* [3D printing for vision impaired students](http://printdisability.org/about-us/accessible-graphics/3d-printing/). Basic information on 3D printing for accessibility provided by Monash University.

All new resources were discussed and circulated on the ANZAGG listserv before being published.

### Listserv

The ANZAGG listserv, housed at <http://www.freelists.org/list/accessiblegraphics>, is intended to serve as the primary means of communication between ANZAGG members. The list currently has 64 members. The majority are from Australia and New Zealand but there are also representatives from the UK, France, USA and South Africa. List traffic has been slow, confined mainly to official committee business.

### Facebook

ANZAGG hosts a facebook discussion group under the name "Australia & New Zealand Accessible Graphics Group". To join, new members must be a friend of an existing member or approved by the administrator. As of March 2017, there were more than 90 members, all of whom are able to post to the group. The group has mainly been used to share news items about new developments and resources relating to accessible graphics. Traffic has increased significantly in 2017, with members beginning to post their own news and questions. All news items posted to the ANZAGG facebook page are also shared on the listserv as a monthly or bi-monthly update.

It is encouraging to note the many new technical developments enabling access to graphics, such as:

* [TaME](http://geog.uoregon.edu/maps/tame.html) – free software designed for easy creation of tactile maps with ready-made options for tactile mapping lines, icons and braille font
* [IRIS](http://www.grapheel.com/) – an iOS app for recognition of maths and science graphics. Beta testers are invited.
* [Graphiti](http://www.aph.org/graphiti/) – a refreshable tactile graphics display by APH, now in field testing

## Structure

The ANZAGG Terms of Reference call for the involvement of Regional Accessible Graphics Special Interest Groups, with the Queensland Tactual Mapping Committee (QTMC) and TABMAP group in NSW initially expressing interest in joining. Model Terms of Operation for the Regional Groups were drafted, however further work revealed that the QTMC is best served by remaining under the auspices of Braille House and TABMAP is no longer active, with insufficient interest for revival at this stage.

The ANZAGG Terms of Reference now require revision so that an executive group can be elected in 2018.

## Future plans

It is hoped that the ANZAGG annual meeting will serve as a platform to identify the work of most interest and initiate working groups to address these issues, including the revision of the ANZAGG Terms of Reference.

The foundations have been built over the past year for a strong group linking many practitioners interested in accessible graphics. We look forward to building on these foundations and moving into a more active phase in the year to come.

* Leona Holloway

# Appendix 2: ANZAGG Member reports

## Queensland Tactual Mapping Committee

The Queensland Tactual Mapping Committee (QTMC) has continued to meet regularly over the past twelve months, but no actual new map production has been possible owing to significant changes. Of major significance has been staff reductions and re-focusing of priorities within the Department of Natural Resources and Mines (DNRM) which has always been an integral part of the QTMC and provider of the principal expertise and production of map masters. This work has now transitioned to QBWA which has been the driver and coordinator since QTMC’s formation in the mid 1980s.

This transition has been facilitated by DNRM’s provision to QBWA of a computer and relevant software and map files, as well as subsequent training offered by the Alternative Format Library, Vision Education Services (Narbethong Special School).

Meeting focus has been primarily on discussions relating to:

* DNRM changes and ongoing support they are offering by way of meeting attendance, sharing of information and provision of map source data as required;
* Attracting new members to the QTMC – need for greater numbers, variety of expertise and organisational representation;
* Requests for tactual maps – either impossible to attend to at the time or ones (such as Gold Coast suburbs and light rail network) which are awaiting further investigation;
* Updating of some existing maps, particularly of the Queen Street Mall and North Lakes Shopping Centre;
* new technologies and developments, particularly in the area of 3D printing;
* The formation of the ANZAGG Subcommittee, our involvement, representation, attendance of Round Table Conference, subscribing to the ANZAGG list etc;
* The proposed Monash University 3D printing Project - ways we could be involved;
* The need for some Operational Guidelines and how to proceed with development of these.

We have been happy to welcome Professor Joao Elias from Brazil to our meetings since August and to learn of his work here and in Brazil, and also to have two new committee members come on board in 2017, both highly skilled and experienced orientation and mobility teachers from Education Queensland.

The QTMC looks forward to clarifying its structure, future operations, involvement with ANZAGG, resumption of tactual mapping work and exploration of new methods and technologies over the coming year, commencing with our next meeting on 7 June.

* Tom Macmahon, Queensland Tactual Mapping Committee Secretary

## Feelix Library, Vision Australia

Feelix Library continues to grow. We have over 150 new members from birth to 7 years.

Once children turn 71/2 years we graduate them and they can choose to become members of Accessible Information Services (AIS) where they can access print braille books and audio books.

We currently have 65 Teacher’s Resource members and 30 Kindergarten Resource members.

Borrowing has developed in Tasmania, South Australia and the Northern Territory.

We continue to liaise with the Children’s Services staff and most of our new memberships come through them.

Many of our new members are less than one year old, so we have concentrated on producing books for very young children in this last year.

Some popular titles from our Early collection produced in this last year are:

Baby Boo!; Baby plays Pat-pat; Count my Christmas Kisses; Five little ducks-a press button noisy book; My first 123!; Tweet tweet!; Suzie goes to the Factory- a press button noisy book; Bedtime Baby pops; Chocolate Mousse for Greedy Goose; Kissed by the Moon; My Mum’s the Best; Peppa Pig out and About; Rudie Nudie Smart Aunties; Za-Za’s baby brother; Wiggly Worms.

There have been a number of publications with noisemakers inside them. We are trialling them for durability.

The website [www.visionaustralia.org](http://www.visionaustralia.org) has an up to date booklist. Presently there are 635 titles in both contracted and uncontracted braille, so 1,270 in total. We continue to build up our collection for Kindergartens and Day Care Centres (150 titles).

Robyn Sainsbury-Vale has taken 12 months sabbatical from Feelix and Toni Chilton has taken her role for 12 months. Toni is very experienced in transcription and tactile book production and is also an O&M.

Due to a refurbishment taking place at our Vision Australia premises we have been moved to a much smaller area. We will move back to the area allocated for us, but we have had to cull many of our materials to accommodate this move.

The Book week event in 2016 was Where’s Julius? It is about a young boy’s imaginary adventures. We washed hippos in the Lombombko river, climbed Everest and made cubbies from chairs, sheets and brooms. After every adventure there was a new food to try. So we ate baby carrots, mashed potato, cherry tomatoes, celery, little sausages and sponge pudding. For a number of our children these were new foods.

These Book Week events occurred in August and September in 2016. They were in Sydney, Brisbane, Townsville, and Melbourne.

We also held 5 regional book readings in Victoria to try and reach our country members.

* Louise Curtin, Vision Australia Feelix Library Manager

## Vision Australia Accessible Formats Production

At the moment, all diagrams are produced in Sydney.

We produce diagrams on tiger and swell paper. A4, A3 and braille size. Our diagrams can also include colour with tactile textures.

We also produce documents with a tactile layout such as the census and ballots with braille over print.

Maps are produced for commercial clients and members of Vision Australia. These are usually street maps, building layout and countries.

We have produced tactile images of star charts, animals, flowers, sign language… so pretty much anything that has been requested.

We have produced anatomical diagrams of the brain, cells, eyes, vocal tract, reflexology, nervous system, digestive track, etc. Most of these are for education.

Currently we are producing a large number of university material for maths students and business students: graphs, geometric shapes, probability diagrams, number planes… this is about 95% of our tactuals at the moment.

We are producing 20-50 tactuals a week during our peak periods. At the start of the school year, there were 6 transcription staff working on tactuals, including the team leader.

- Peter Le, Vision Australia Accessible Formats Production Team Leader, Enfield

## Monash University

Monash University's Faculty of Information Technology has a team of researchers working in the field of accessible graphics for people who are blind or vision impaired. They are led by Prof Kim Marriott (Immersive Analytics) and Dr Matthew Butler (sensiLab). Projects over the last year have included:

* Completion of a two year project aimed at improving vision impaired students' access to graphics in higher education. The project resulted in the creation of a website with basic information about accessible graphics at [accessiblegraphics.org](http://accessiblegraphics.org), and culminated in a webinar on strategies for accessible graphics that can be accessed at [www.adcet.edu.au/resource/9580/webinar-new-and-under-used-strategies-for-accessible-graphics-in-higher-education/](http://www.adcet.edu.au/resource/9580/webinar-new-and-under-used-strategies-for-accessible-graphics-in-higher-education/).
* Further development of the [GraVVITAS](http://raisedpixels.com/) [author tool](http://www.raisedpixels.com/author/) and iPad [app](https://itunes.apple.com/US/app/id1018742341?mt=8) for creating and accessing graphics on an iPad with audio labels. Developments have included integration of R so that blind and sighted users can enter data or an equation to automatically create a GraVVITAS line, bar or pie graph; automated conversion of floorplans into GraVVITAS diagrams (still in progress); and integration of GraVVITAS diagrams into epub and ibooks.
* Work with Vision Australia to provide and evaluate interactive 3D laser cut maps of their refurbished head office in Kooyong, Victoria (still underway).
* Two small projects with Insight Education Centre for the Blind and Vision Impaired, trialling the use of 3D printing and GraVVITAS in primary and secondary school education. The projects resulted in the creation of materials for use by the school and training of school support staff for future creation of materials.
* Several student projects looking at techniques to provide interactive audio labels and route-finding information on 3D maps.

We hope to continue our work with a focus on accessible 3D models through a proposed 3 year project in partnership with Round Table and its members.

- Leona Holloway, Research Assistant, Monash University

## Blind and Low Vision Network New Zealand (BLENNZ)

Over the past four years, BLENNZ have led an Inquiry into how and why tactile graphics are taught in New Zealand. The key focus areas have been to assess existing skills and their needs in relation to curriculum demands, and how we are teaching them Tactile Graphics. Our findings led to writing a Pedagogy of Tactile Graphics and, the creation of a scaffolded skills table that relates directly to the NZ Maths curriculum. Our aim was to look at what a learner is required to understand and interpret graphically and backward chain the skills we need to teach them at each curriculum level as they progress through their schooling.

This work is still in draft form and my goal this year is to refine both the Pedagogy, and the Scaffolded Skills table, as well as developing an assessment tool that can inform planning and programming of tactile graphics to better support our learners.

* Trish Bishop, Senior Resource Teacher Vision, BLENNZ

# Appendix 3: report on the Tactile Reading Conference

The first Tactile Reading conference was held in Stockholm, Sweden, in April 2017. It brought together more than 300 researchers, teachers and producers from 28 different countries with an interest in braille and tactile graphics for children and youth who are blind or vision impaired. The conference spanned three days with keynote speeches and three parallel streams with focus on early tactile literacy, braille literacy and tactile graphics. Attendees and presenters from Australia and New Zealand were Skye Jones and Sharon Rattray (SASVI), Leona Holloway (Monash University), Mandy Lau (Reach & Match) and Barry Hughes (University of Auckland).

Some key points relating to accessible graphics:

* A wide array of tactile picture books were displayed, most in local languages. Two notable examples stood out:
  + Dreaming Fingers ([Les Doigts Qui Rêvent](http://www.ldqr.org/)) is a not-for-profit organisation making beautiful high-quality tactile picture books. "A little breath of wind" and "Little paths" are already available in UEB from the [American Printing House](http://www.aph.org/) (APH) and a further range of titles will be added this year.
  + [Colette Pelt](http://www.colettepelt.com/) has launched a series of tactile picture books as a result of her PhD studies. Each tactile book is accompanied by a print book, a toy and a reading guide with strategies for using the book to teach concepts of tactile illustration.
* Several methods were recommended for blind people to create their own graphics:
  + tactile drawing boards such as the [Sensational BlackBoard](http://www.sensationalbooks.com/products.html#blackboard) – drawing raised lines using standard paper and pen on a rubber board
  + [TactiPad](http://www.tactipad.nl/tactipad/en/) – drawing raised lines on plastic sheets with tools for creating geometric shapes, measuring angles and plotting graphs.
  + [HIPP](http://hipp.certec.lth.se/) – computer aided drawing with feedback via the Phantom or printed tactile graphics. Audio labels can be added. The program is being used in three schools in Sweden and is available for free download.
  + [CraftML](https://craftml.io/) and [OpenSCAD](http://www.openscad.org/) are accessible programs for creating 3D models with braille labels via coding.
* Several researchers reported and agreed on haptic perception of tactile graphics. From best to worst, these are:
  1. differing heights (e.g. on a bar graph, the tallest bar is also the most raised)
  2. differing textures
  3. thermoform
  4. raised line drawings
* The Valteri Center for Learning and Consultation in Finland have recently re-evaluated and changed the way they provide tactile graphics. Instead of producing a large number of diagrams for every text book, which teachers reported were being under-used, they have created a set of folders with generic tactile diagrams targeting the curriculum and with teacher instructions on how to use them. Some diagrams have moving parts so they can be used for multiple questions, e.g. clock face with moving hands; thermometer with moving temperature indicator.
* Screen printing is still widely used to create high quality, durable braille and graphics in tactile picture books and on signs.
* Sweden and Japan both have standards relating to tactile maps on public signage. Researchers in Japan have done work to recommend design principles based on tactual acuity.

All presentations were video recorded and will be made available at [http://www.mtm.se/en/tactilereading2017/conference-videos/](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.mtm.se%2Fen%2Ftactilereading2017%2Fconference-videos%2F&h=ATOcF_he_baTxWoVwwI5eG9wpmOiFJOZYgdtN8H696aDvF2CoSuRD60xHPgKeFwk9GthpKzJuqkrJd0cY7Lt-qJU_gLJRER22aRw_tpHHVDo0mMg4JWqd8GLqQhckNOTbTe-WEEy_6Al1enqvg8).

It is hoped that the Tactile Reading Conference will be held every 3 years in different countries. It was an excellent forum for making meaningful connections between people and between theory and practice.

* Leona Holloway, Monash University