



AFA Membership Officer Report

Annual General Meeting 2016

Current Membership Statistics

Membership numbers

Membership numbers have been steady throughout the period March 2015 – February 2016; however, the average membership application number of 13 per month is significantly lower than last year's figure of 22 new members per month.

Month	New Members
March	33
April	14
May	13
June	12
July	17
August	13
September	8
October	7
November	12
December	13
January	13
February	12
TOTAL	167

The biggest month for new membership applications was March 2015, with 33 new membership applications. This large application rate can be mainly attributed to the Unholy Trinity Tour held in March 2015 and the Robin Ince Tour held in April 2015.

Whilst we gained 167 new members in the period March 2015 – February 2016, we lost 341 members in the same period. This appears to be an ongoing problem for the AFA in that we are not “replacing” members that we lose. An attempt was made to address this in September 2014, where members were sent a printed third reminder that their membership renewal was due. This worked for a short period of time, but started to lose its effect around June 2015, resulting in costs to the AFA (stationery, stamps, time) that were not creating benefits. The third letter ceased being sent to members in October 2015, and members now receive a third reminder email or letter as per their contact details.



Membership distribution

Members are predominantly from Australia. The breakdown is in the table below:

State	Members	Percentage
Australian Capital Territory	43	4.3
New South Wales	326	32.3
Northern Territory	8	0.8
Queensland	148	14.6
South Australia	75	7.4
Tasmania	26	2.5
Victoria	292	29.0
Western Australia	81	8.0
International	11	1.1
TOTAL	1010	100

The AFA's largest membership base is in New South Wales (32.3%), followed by Victoria (29.0%) and Queensland (14.6%). 1.1% of our members currently reside overseas.

Membership type

On 1 January 2015, the membership types available to members changed. This was the first significant revision of membership type since 2004.

The AFA now offers nine (9) types of membership options:

- Single with PDF magazine
- Single with printed magazine
- Couple with PDF magazine
- Couple with printed magazine
- Pensioner Concession Card Holder with PDF magazine
- Pensioner Concession Card Holder with printed magazine
- Student (PDF magazine only)
- Sustaining
- Sponsorship

Whilst the new membership change has been welcomed by most of our members, there have been a few issues raised:

- i) The couples membership option: This membership type allows for two people to join together as a couple. Since the price increase, especially for members who opt to receive the printed magazine, members have been changing from *couple* to *single* membership when they have renewed.
- ii) Yearly membership renewals: several members have lamented the loss of the previous 5 year membership option, and have enquired as to whether it will be re-instated.

- iii) The slow uptake of the *sponsorship* and *sustaining* membership options: Currently, only fourteen of our members have chosen this option. Members appear to prefer to donate their own amount rather than be locked into these types of membership.

There continues to be a positive trend towards members opting for the PDF version of the magazine when applying for or renewing their membership.

Membership drivers

An optional question on the AFA membership application form is “How did you find out about the AFA?”

The members that answered this question provided the following figures:

Found AFA through	Members	Percentage
AFA Forum	2	0.9
Atheist Alliance	1	0.5
Billboard 2015	5	2.3
Cosmos Magazine	1	0.5
Documentary	6	2.8
Facebook	13	6.0
Family/Friend	21	9.8
Global Atheist Convention (2010 & 2012)	16	7.4
Google	31	14.4
Internet (general)	64	29.8
Magazine	1	0.5
Neil DeGrasse Tyson Tour 2015	1	0.5
Newspaper	4	1.9
Radio	2	0.9
Richard Dawkins Tour 2014	10	4.6
Robin Ince Tour 2015	2	0.9
Sam Harris Tour 2015	2	0.9
Sydney Atheists	3	1.4
Twitter	5	2.3
Unholy Trinity Tour 2015	20	9.3
Women Without Religion	1	0.5
You Tube	4	1.9
TOTAL	215	100

From the table above, it is clear that electronic media (Facebook, Google, Internet [general], Twitter) comprises of a significant proportion of where new members learn of and decide to join the AFA.

Another significant driver is AFA run events, with the Unholy Trinity Tour of 2015 accounting for 9.3% of members joining the AFA. An interesting point to note is that the GAC is still having an impact more than four years after the last GAC in 2012. This would imply that when the AFA runs and promotes a professional event, it has a positive and lasting impact which translates in the long run to attendees becoming active members of the AFA.

Membership Projects

The Membership Officer has been working on several projects throughout 2015-2016.

Completed projects for 2015 - 2016

- Membership numbers assigned to all members.
- Membership database updated with new membership types.
- New welcoming letters for members.

Projects for 2016 - 2017

- New “Welcome from the President” letter
- New AFA History/Information fact sheet.
- Creation of a comprehensive membership pack for new members, which will include the President’s letter, AFA history fact sheet and membership card.