



THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Division of Recruitment  
&  
Student Services

RSSInfoline & SAPG Website Survey  
Report

2008

Division of Recruitment & Student Services  
RSSInfoline & SAPG Website Survey Report – 2008

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>- 3 -</b>
Summary	- 3 -
Survey Methodology	- 3 -
<b>DETAILED REPORT</b>	<b>- 4 -</b>
<b>RSSINFOLINE</b>	<b>- 4 -</b>
Introduction	- 4 -
Graphs	- 4 -
Findings	- 6 -
Conclusions & Recommendations	- 7 -
<b>SAPG WEBSITE</b>	<b>- 9 -</b>
Introduction	- 9 -
Graphs	- 9 -
Findings	- 10 -
Conclusion and Recommendations	- 11 -
<b>CONCLUSIONS &amp; KEY FINDINGS</b>	<b>- 12 -</b>
Key Strategies to Improve the RSSInfoline & SAPG Website:	- 12 -
<i>RSSInfoline:</i>	- 12 -
<i>Student Administrator Practitioners Guide:</i>	- 12 -
<b>APPENDIX A – SCREENSHOTS FROM SURVEY</b>	<b>- 13 -</b>
<b>APPENDIX B – CURRENT FORMAT OF RSSINFOLINE UPDATE</b>	<b>- 15 -</b>
<b>APPENDIX C – ALL COMMENTS</b>	<b>- 16 -</b>

# RSSInfoline & SAPG Website Survey 2008

## Executive Summary

### *Summary*

The RSSInfoline is a brief weekly email update available to subscribers that is an accompaniment to the Student Administrator Practitioners Guide. The RSSInfoline was initiated by Deputy Registrar Nathan Asher from Student Administrations Services and uses the ANU mailman software for managing the subscribers of the electronic update. Subscription to the RSSInfoline is available to any staff member that is involved with student matters. Subscription is voluntary and encouraged as it provides a means of accessing people across the divisions simultaneously to provide them with information about Student matters impacting on College Administrators and those staff involved with students at ANU. The information ranges from Student Recruitment through to Graduation. The RSSInfoline is an accompaniment to the Student Administrator Practitioners Guide website. This website contains information about all student administration departments, staff contact details, organizational charts, guides on administration processes, important dates, etc.

There are currently 167 subscribers to the RSSInfoline across campus.

An Apollo anonymous online survey was opened on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May 2008 and was left open for 3 weeks to gauge the effectiveness and usefulness of the RSSInfoline updates and the SAPG website. There were 57 responses to the survey.

### *Survey Methodology*

All RSSInfoline subscribers were offered the opportunity to complete an online questionnaire (see Appendix A for screenshots). The questionnaire was promoted using the following media:

- Email to all RSSInfoline subscribers

The Questionnaire asked 11 questions in total and included several options to leave comments (See appendix C for a list of all comments). Questions 1-7 focused on the RSSInfoline, while questions 8-11 focused on the SAPG website.

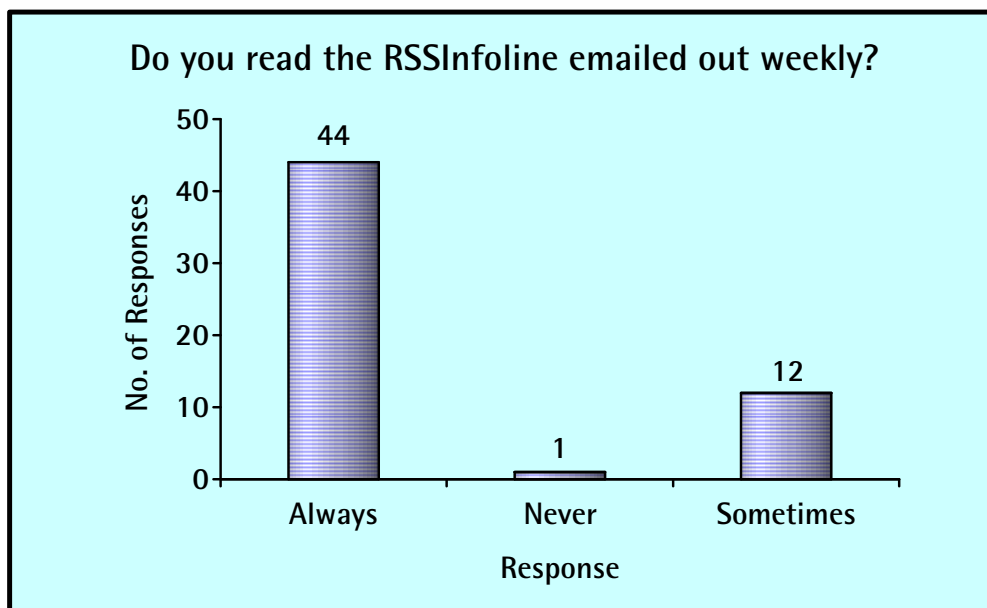
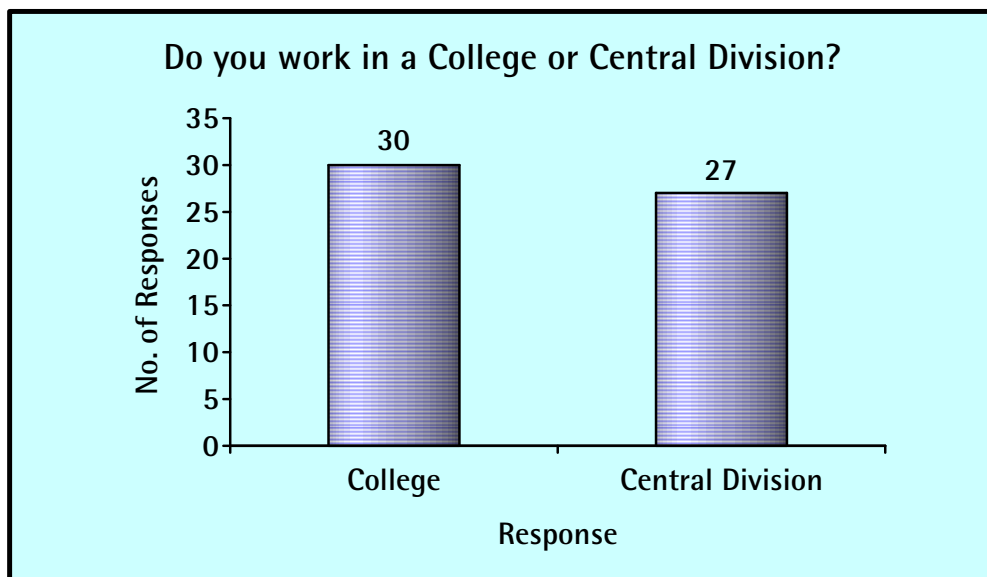
The questionnaire was offered online using the APOLLO polling software. A total of 57 or approximately 34.1% of the RSSInfoline subscribers completed the survey.

## Detailed Report RSSInfoline

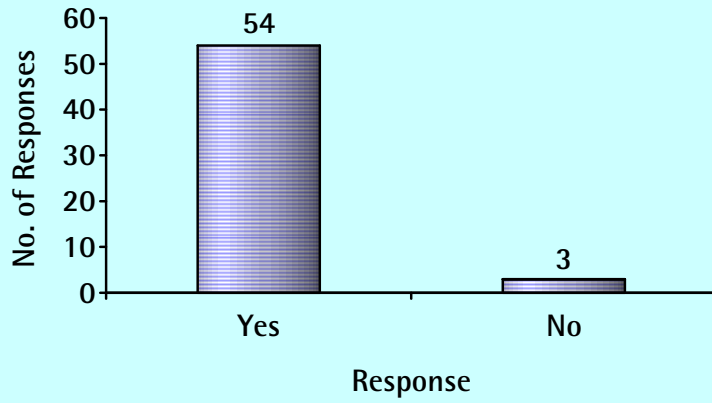
### *Introduction*

The RSSInfoline is a weekly emailed update for the student recruitment and Student services divisions across campus as a general communication of student matters. Questions 1-7 are focused on the demographic of subscribers, their perception of the update, most likely reason people might hypothetically unsubscribe, and suggestions for improvement.

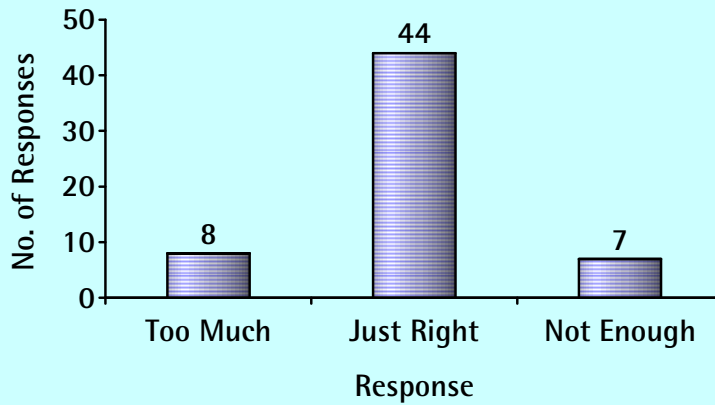
### *Graphs*



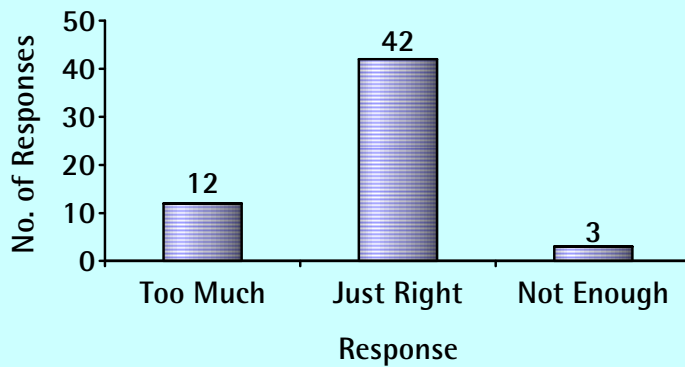
Do you find being a subscriber to the RSSInfoline useful?

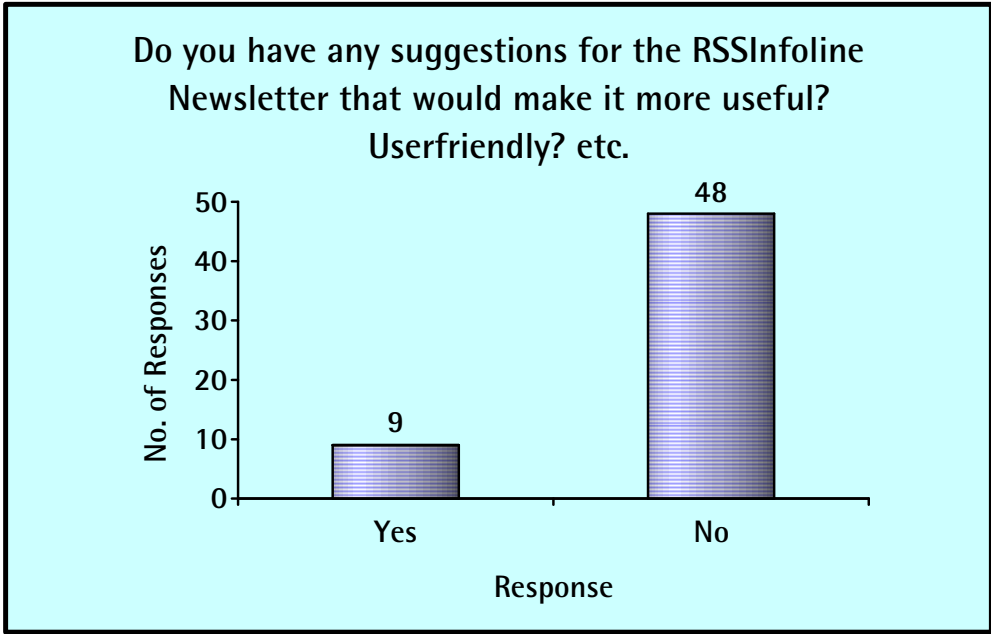
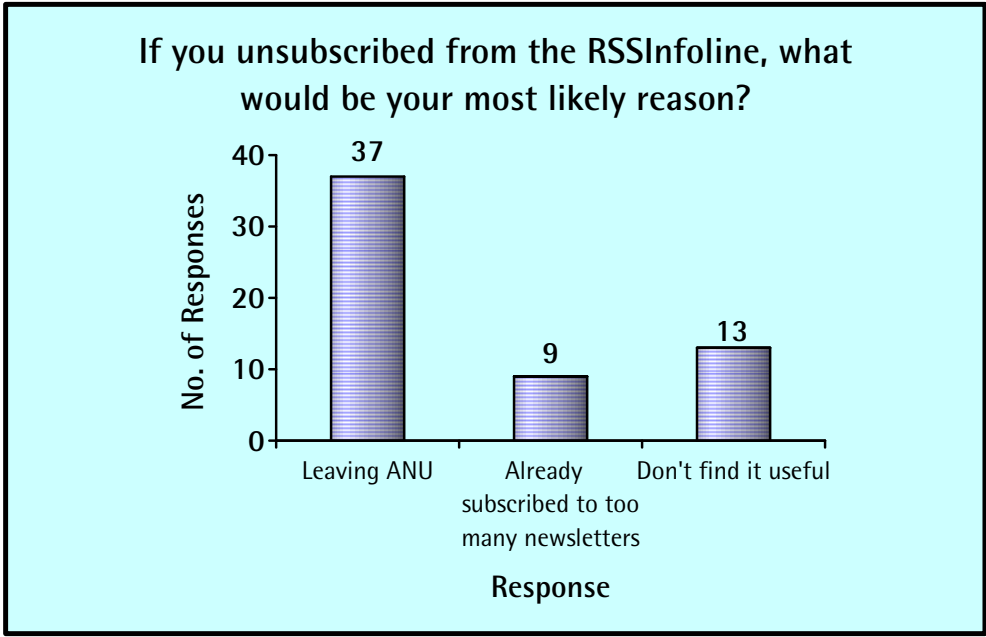


How do you rate the amount of information in the RSSInfoline?



The RSSInfoline provides subscribers with a weekly update newsletter. Do you find once a week is:





**Findings**

- ❖ Of the 57 survey participants, 30 were from colleges and 27 were from central division student administration.
- ❖ 77% of respondents say they always read the RSSInfoline weekly update, and 21% say they sometimes read it, and only one respondent saying they never read it. This response indicates that people value the information they receive in the

updates, a conclusion affirmed by the top response in relation to the question on as to what reason they would see themselves unsubscribing to the RSSInfoline, which was only if they left the ANU.

- ❖ 95% of people found the RSSInfoline useful and worth subscribing to.

*"I don't go to the Admin Meetings any more now that we are in the College, so this is the only way I know some of what is going on."*

- ❖ 74% of people think the amount of information provided in the updates is enough. 21% say there's too much.
- ❖ The frequency of the update is currently weekly. 74% of subscribers find once a week is suitable, 21% said too much.

### ***Conclusions & Recommendations***

Subscribers value the RSSInfoline, illustrated by the number of voluntary subscribers it has.

- ❖ The frequency of once a week seems adequate and I would suggest not changing this. Once a week enables the author of the RSSInfoline to keep the updates short. If they were less frequent, then the quantity of information would be greater, which may in turn dissuade subscribers from reading it. Weekly distribution enables information to be current, which is essentially one of the greatest aspects of the weekly update.

*"It's the same info as at the various meetings I attend - but because it's weekly sometimes it's more timely."*

- ❖ Format of the RSSInfoline (See appendix B for current format) has the potential to be more visually-appealing and clearer. Several suggestions were made for a HTML formatted update, which I would strongly support. The HTML format is a much more visually-appealing and would also provide a clearer appearance.
- ❖ Subscribers want to be updated on issues that are relevant to them with respect to the overall student administration area. There are many different sources of news communications already available to ANU staff, in the form of ANU staff newsletters, Divisional updates and newsletters etc. Because there are only a small percentage of people that believe there is too much information, I recommend that the quantity of information remains unchanged. The updates are ultimately flexible in size, depending on the amount of information needed to be shared. The structure of the update is such that if people find there is too much to read, they can identify the areas of the update that may be relevant to them and just read that. When catering for a large group, there is inevitably information that will be more relevant to some than others. If information is kept succinct and appropriate, then people will continue to appreciate the news letter, it's when

information provided is too comprehensive that they are less likely to read it. If there are long informative articles, a link would be more appropriate to enable subscribers to elaborate on specific items if they so wish.

- ❖ Suggestions were made to send out emails to subscribers requesting article submissions. I do not believe this would be ideal, as people already get enough emails to sift through and would probably find it more irritating than effective. Perhaps subscribers should be made to feel welcome to submit article suggestions that the author who will use their discretion in putting them into the update.
- ❖ In my opinion, This is a general update that is available to all staff that have interactions with students, suggestions for more specific information regarding news, policies and deadlines, it should be kept in mind that the update must aim to be most useful and appropriate information for all users. More user-specific information should be sent out via other outlets such as the SASInfoline etc.

*"Depends on what information you want to get out there to staff, what is relevant or not to keep staff in touch"*

- ❖ Grammatically, there are occasionally a few small grammatical and spelling errors, which would for the most part be avoidable by getting one of the other administrators to proofread it before dispersion.
- ❖ But essentially, as a matter of ease and efficiency, all information supplied in the RSSInfoline should remain at the discretion of the author.

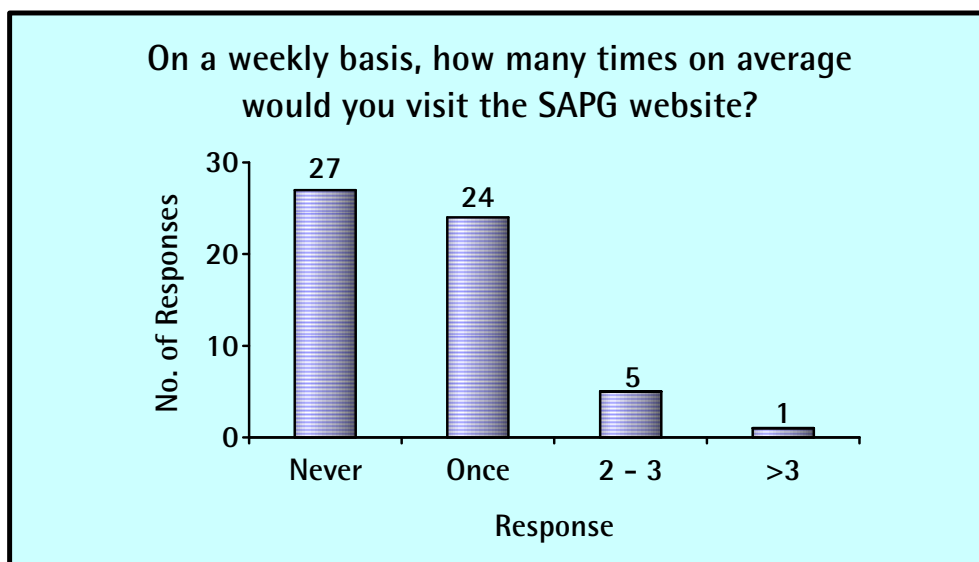
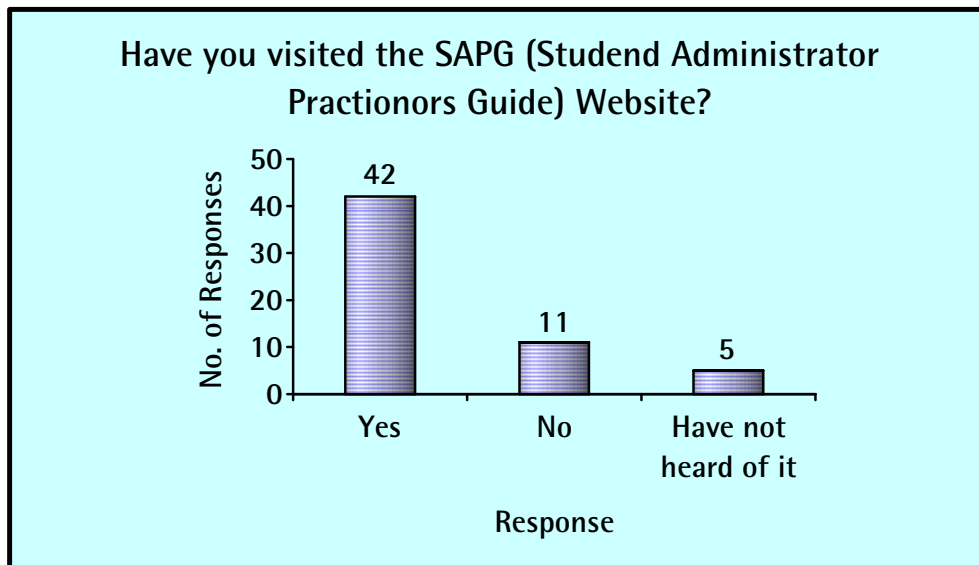
## SAPG Website

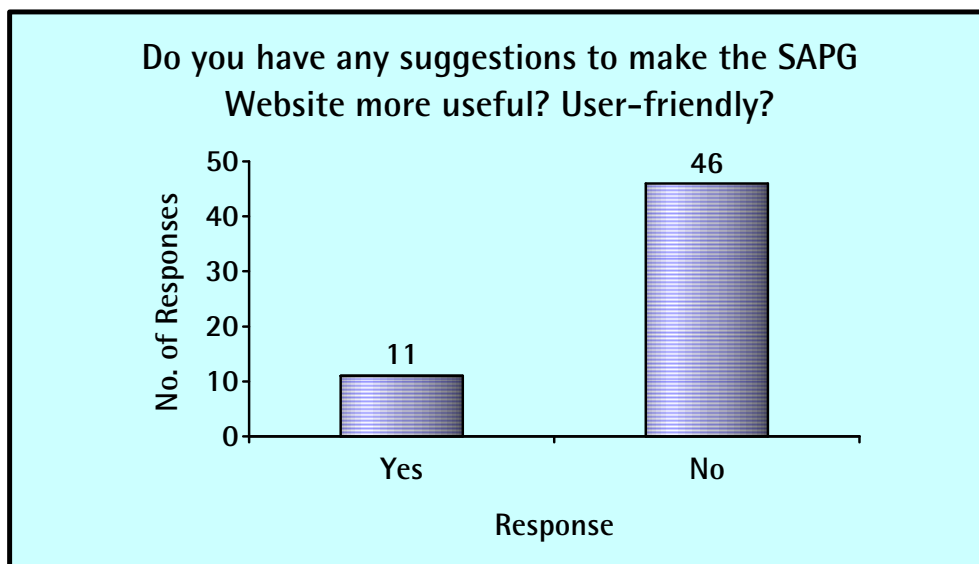
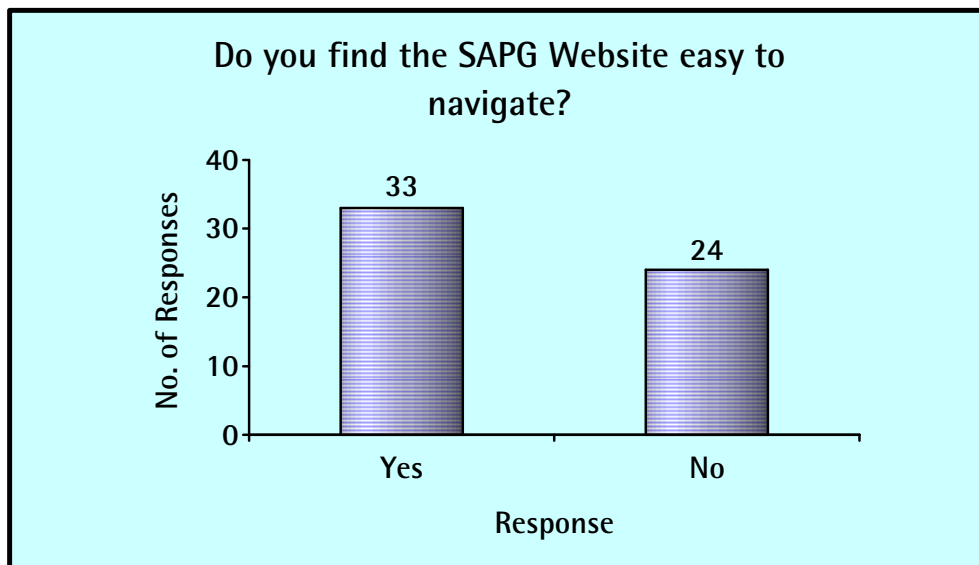
### SAPG – Student Administrator Practitioners Guide Website

#### *Introduction*

The Student Administrator Practitioners Guide is an online based resource that is designed to assist all staff who are involved in the administration of ANU students. It provides a range of workflow, procedural and contact information.

#### *Graphs*





### *Findings*

- ❖ 74% of respondents said they have visited the SAPG website. 19% hadn't, and the remaining 7% had not even heard of the website.
- ❖ 47% of respondents do not visit the website on a weekly basis, while 42% visit it once a week, while the remaining 11% visit the website more than once a week.
- ❖ 58% of readers find the site easy to navigate while the remaining 42% didn't.

## *Conclusion and Recommendations*

Most respondents said they have visited the website, but only around half visit the site on a weekly basis. The site is a valuable staff resource. In order to make it the best resource it can be, attention must be paid to the following:

- ❖ Keep the site up to date. As contacts are often changing, lists must be maintained even in a constantly changing environment.

*"Keeping the information up-to-date would be a challenge given our changing environment"*

- ❖ More consistent format throughout the "Information Pages"
- ❖ More comprehensive information, guides, on the SAPG website to help staff with their departments. But this is more the responsibility of individual colleges and departments.

*"Lot of College staff would not even know about the SAPG, especially new staff, include all college in the receiving the newsletter, include a segment in the newsletter on where to find administrative procedures, forms policies work flows dates, etc on a weekly basis."*

- ❖ Because of the relationship between the RSSInfoline and the SAPG website, it would be useful to correlate the two more and have any links found in the RSSInfoline to be attached to items in the SAPG website.

## Conclusions & Key Findings

### *Key Strategies to Improve the RSSInfoline & SAPG Website:*

#### *RSSInfoline:*

- ❖ Encourage staff subscription
- ❖ Maintain weekly updates
- ❖ Convert email RSSInfoline updates to HTML format
- ❖ Encourage suggestions from all subscribers
- ❖ Proofread RSSInfoline before distribution
- ❖ Maintain relative quantity of information

#### *Student Administrator Practitioners Guide:*

- ❖ Increase awareness of SAPG website to staff
- ❖ Maintain updated organizational charts and contact details
- ❖ Create standardized format across divisions
- ❖ Have colleges provide updated processes and information on their respective pages
- ❖ Keep the 'What's new' page current

# Appendix A - Screenshots from survey

Area: ANU-DRSS

## RSSInfoline Feedback Survey

### Section 1. RSSInfoline Weekly Newsletter (Questions marked \* are mandatory)

This section will give you a chance to voice your opinion on the usefulness or otherwise of the RSSInfoline weekly newsletter.

**Q1.\*** Do you work in a college or central division?

- College
- Central Division

**Q2.\*** Do you read the RSSInfoline newsletter emailed out weekly?

- Always
- Never
- Sometimes

**Q3.\*** Do you find being a subscriber to the RSSInfoline useful?

- Yes
- No

Comments

**Q4.\*** How do you rate the amount of information in the RSSInfoline?

- Too much
- Just right
- Not enough

Comments

**Q5.\*** The RSSInfoline provides subscribers with a weekly update newsletter. Do you find once a week is:

- Too much
- Just right
- Not enough

Comments

**Q6.\*** If you unsubscribed to the RSSInfoline what would be your most likely reason?

- Leaving ANU
- Already subscribed to too many newsletters
- Don't find it useful

Comments

**Q7.\*** Do you have any suggestions for the RSSInfoline Newsletter that would make it more useful? Userfriendly? etc. If yes please use the comments box to elaborate.

- Yes
- No

Comments

**Section 2. SAPG Website** (Questions marked \* are mandatory)

**Q8.\*** Have you visited the SAPG (Student Administrator Practitioners Guide) Website?

- Yes
- No
- Have not heard about the SAPG Website

**Q9.\*** On a weekly basis how often would you visit the SAPG Website?

- Never
- Once
- 2-3
- More than 3

**Q10.\*** Do you find the SAPG Website easy to navigate?

- Yes
- No

**Q11.\*** Do you have any suggestions for the SAPG Website that would make it more useful? Userfriendly? etc.  
If yes please use the comments box to elaborate.

- Yes
- No

Comments

## Appendix B – Current Format of RSSInfoline Update

Welcome to the weekly brief update from the RSSInfoline, an accompaniment to the SAPG  
<http://www.anu.edu.au/sas/studentadminpractitioners/index.php>

PLEASE DO NOT REPLY TO THIS EMAIL ADDRESS

**DO YOU HAVE NEW STAFF IN YOUR AREA WHO WOULD BENEFIT FROM RSS INFOLINE? IF YES PLEASE CONTACT [renee.farnham@anu.edu.au](mailto:renee.farnham@anu.edu.au) AND RENEE CAN ADD THEM TO THE RSSINFOLINE SUBSCRIPTION LIST**

Admissions

Staffing

SAS Admissions staffing has been further strengthened with the appointment of [Violetta Bontes](#). Forward to the team. A vacancy has been posted at [http://info.anu.edu.au/hr/Jobs/General\\_Positions/index.asp](http://info.anu.edu.au/hr/Jobs/General_Positions/index.asp) for the vacant level 6/7 Team Coordinator position.

Semester 2, Outlook

Admissions continues to focus on second semester applications. The main "pressure" point has been international undergraduates and impact on Accommodation. As at yesterday we have 52 undergraduates who have accepted their offer (i.e. paid a deposit). Last year we enrolled in total around 149 international undergraduates into ANU in semester 2.

We currently have around 80 unresolved international undergraduate applications, most of those are CBE applicants. Applications for students coming from Category 3 & 4 countries like China and India are now closed. Applications for category 1 & 2 countries close 20 June. We are noticing now a slow down of applicants.

On the domestic undergraduate front, Admissions staff will be meeting with College Student Administration Managers and Statistical Services staff next week to discuss strategy on UAC applicants for semester 2. The UAC offer process commences soon with offers being made around 30 June 2008.

On the graduate research front for semester 2, International Research applications and offers and acceptances are higher than same day last year (i.e. 2 June). There are 14 who have accepted their offer compared with 11 on the same day last year. In total second half of last year we had a total of 66 international research students commence. So at this stage you could (very cautiously) predict similar numbers this year. *!! highlight the very cautious!!* It is not as positive an outlook for domestic research students. Number of applications is down when compared with the same day last year and there have only been 10 offers made to date. I will say it's really early days for research students because they have until 31 August to enrol. Last year in the second half of the year around 63 domestic research students enrolled.

On the graduate coursework front for semester 2, Domestic offers as at 2 June total 57 compared with 39 on same day last year. We enrolled around 261 graduate coursework students semester 2, 2007 and we know domestic applications typically come in closer to commencement dates. International offers total 634 compared with 477 same day last year. 36 have accepted as at 2 June. That is significantly down on same day last year. International coursework enrolments semester 2, last year were about 205.

I hope this provides a useful outlook for semester 2 so far. We have provided individual College data to Student Administration Managers and will do so again next week.

Fees

We have completed looking at all the mid year potential graduands for outstanding fees.

We are in the process of organising the bricks for semestertwo so an email will be going out in the next week about brick information for semestertwo. If you are aware of staff in your area who should be receiving this information but may not be on our list of contacts ask them to get in touch with us and we can add them on. Brick payments will be taken at the MCC from 17 July 2008 to the 1 August 2008 inclusive. *We should note that a number of Colleges are now utilising the Coop Bookshop, Electronic Methods and other methods and we encourage use of those alternative sources.*

Semester two fees will appear on the students accounts by the end of June and invoices will start to go the students email account after the 7 July 2008. If you are aware of any students who are experiencing problems with paying their fees please encourage them to contact us immediately as it is much better for us to know there is a problem before the due date rather than after. The due date for semestertwo fee will be Friday the 8 August 2008.]

## Appendix C – All Comments

### Q3. Do you find being a subscriber to the RSSInfoline useful?

It's nice to know what is going on in other areas.

Somewhat useful.

But I can't always find the time to read it

keeps me informed of upcoming deadlines and other items

It's been a great help - until I started reading it, I was fed up with being surprised to learn that people I had noted as being the contact person for a certain issue had moved on!

Sometimes

I don't go to the Admin Meetings any more now that we are in the College, so this is the only way I know some of what is going on.

Usually. Good to know what is going on.

### Q4. How do you rate the amount of information in the RSSInfoline?

That is unless there is more information that could be being shared..

Depends on what information you want to get out there to staff, what is relevant or not to keep staff in touch

Not enough however this is changing as more people start using it

### Q5. The RSSInfoline provides subscribers with a weekly update newsletter. Do you find once a week is:

I would like to see more single article postings so that you don't read so much in one sitting

Once a fortnight or once a month would be better

Some weeks there has been little or no news. On those weeks there might not be a need to send out an update.

Depends on what information you want to get out there to staff, what is relevant or not to keep staff in touch and how important it is

It could be fortnightly instead.

not relevant

**Q6. If you unsubscribed to the RSSInfoline what would be your most likely reason?**

I haven't actually unsubscribed but I had to tick one of the answers.

A lot of it duplicates information I get from other sources

the checkbox here should not be compulsory as none of them apply - too much to read

Or leaving an area with direct need for student enrolment information.

It's the same info as at the various meetings I attend - but because it's weekly sometimes it's more timely.

**Q7. Do you have any suggestions for the RSSInfoline Newsletter that would make it more useful? User-friendly? etc. If yes please use the comments box to elaborate.**

It gives what is happening now and what is coming up.

Information on Networking of Student (related) officers +/- information sharing sessions.

Encourage Colleges to submit news items

At times I feel it could be better written - in terms of layout, but also in matters like spelling, grammar and adherence to ANU Editorial Style policy: RSVP's - wrong forward this message onto any interested staff - wrong staff out there who would - wrong share to the group - wrong ensuring it's correctness - wrong and particularly ironic... I know we all make mistakes, particularly when hammering out emails in a hurry, but with something like this, I would normally expect a higher standard than is found in those quick, individual communications.

A more 'view-friendly' format - HTML perhaps?

More information relating to student administration news/policy/deadlines and perhaps information about new staff.

The information came in plain text and doesn't look very attractive. Messages should go directly to the news with all the garber cut out and Send RSSInfoline mail info etc should go to the bottom.

No comments at this stage

Send an email asking people if they would like to add anything, rather than just getting info from the managers

But I'll let you know if I think of anything.

Even though they don't emanate from DR&SS, I would find information re staff changes in Colleges very useful.

It is sometimes too generic/general and is not that helpful to research student administrators.

**Q11. Do you have any suggestions for the SAPG Website that would make it more useful? User-friendly? etc. If yes please use the comments box to elaborate.**

Not sure but I think your organizational charts are out of date

Keeping the information up-to-date would be a challenge given our changing environment

Enrolments pages are good, I would like to see the other areas of SAS provide similar information

Flow charts are not enough - we need specific process details - HOW TO's. It is also very difficult to find. A direct link in the resources' box on the staff homepage would be useful.

More up-to-date org charts

It needs to be updated more frequently

Lot of College staff would not even know about the SAPG, especially new staff, include all college in the receiving the newsletter, include a segment in the newsletter on where to find administrative procedures, forms policies work flows dates, etc on a weekly basis.

No comment at this stage although I do like the 'click here for important dates' calendar!

I haven't used it enough to be able to comment. But from what I recall, I think it would be invaluable for a new member of admin staff. I only refer to it when the RSSInfoline directs me to it.

I don't have any problems navigating the site. However, there used to be links to thesis submission information, reporting requirements and the Graduate Research Guide which I can never find know and which I used to find very useful.

Layout of webpages could be improved visually and font size increased; Contact list not up-to-date; Have to click on a lot of options to find what you want, especially if you're

new - perhaps have a key word/s next to each option to help users

I probably would but have no time to devote to this at present due to increasing devolution of functions from centre to College level

Would be better if flow charts were in a standard format - ie I prefer the format used by Enrolments than the format used under the 'Info for Research Practitioners' section.

Make it more useful and relevant