

A U S T R A L I A N
S O F T W A R E M E T R I C S A S S O C I A T I O N

N E W S L E T T E R N U M B E R 1 / 9 1



A joint publication

by

ASMA and ASMA (Victoria)

January, 1991

4. PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR 1991

ASMA looks forward to continuing its program of public meetings and SIG activity throughout 1991.

As well as drawing from the growing pool of local computer professionals with expertise and experience in software metrics and productivity issues, ASMA is aiming to have speakers of international standing such as Eberhard Rudolph, Capers Jones and Alan Albrecht speaking at its meetings.

EDITORIAL

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

Welcome, everyone, to a brand new year. The break has certainly everyone in the Executives of both states eager to present to you, our members, a year full of excitement.

And what better way than to have 2 featured speakers at the first meeting for the year in Sydney (at the time of going to press, I have no information about the Melbourne meeting). read about them later on in this issue.

In keeping with the unification of the (currently) 2 branches and creation of a National ASMA, NSW has decided to change its membership year from calendar to fiscal. This brings it in line with Victoria. The bonus to NSW members is that their current membership is now extended till 30th June, 1991. There will be a ballot for the 91/92 Executive at the June meeting.

The other news is that the promised "bumper edition" of the newsletter will also fall in line with the new membership year. Its content will consist of the presentations from both NSW and Victoria since the inception of ASMA, plus other article of interest, if available. Articles from members are encouraged and can be anything from accounts of experience to research reports. For extra info ring or fax the Editor.

2.6 Dissemination to Members

The result of these efforts will be disseminated to ASMA members via periodic meetings and workshops, working papers and other technical publications.

ASMA also produces for its members a Software Metrics Directory covering Products, Services and Awareness/Knowledge sources in this area.

Please contact one of the committee members if you require copies of any of the presentations given at the regular public meetings.

OCTOBER'S MEETING (NSW)

The featured speaker at the October 9th general meeting was **Mr Bernard Wong** of the Consulting Division of the Australian Bureau of Statistics. He discussed the areas of determining the target group for the survey, compilation of the survey, carrying out the survey, analysing the results and where to get help.

Mr Wong spoke to us on the different ways of ensuring correct responses of questionnaires. Personal contact with the recipients is the best way. This can be either by delivering the survey by hand, discussing it and allowing the recipient to send it back upon completion. The other is to send it with the message that you will be picking it up personally and can assist in its completion. Both methods restrict the number of recipients and are also rather time consuming and costly.

Of particular interest was his experience of the success rates of surveys. Contrary to the opinion of many, you cannot simply send out a survey and expect the recipients to return them at all, let alone correctly filled in. The key is follow-ups. Mr Wong stated that return rates of 95% are quite feasible provided that follow-ups are carried out. In the case of ABS, doing up to 5 follow-ups is not uncommon.

Ed.

- * encourage inter-organisational counts in order to calibrate the accuracy of counting practices.
- * encourage members to sit in on actual counts at established sites to become familiar with the practical aspects of counting
- * establish a repository of counts by members for
- * advise members regarding skill acquisition.

2.3 Measures of Development Effort

How can the measurement of development effort be standardised?

Procedures and guidelines are being developed to provide a method for collecting and utilising data on actual effort expended on real projects. They will:

- * define terms such as project start and end dates
- * specify what is included in project effort and how to adjust effort across different sites to enable real comparisons to be made
- * provide the framework for collecting and analysing data on development effort from member organisations.

A S M A D I S C O U N T

Accounting for Software Development

Dr Eberhard Rudolph is taking time off from his busy Sydney lecture tour to be a featured speaker at the February meeting in Sydney.

ASMA has negotiated a discount for his 3 day seminar on function points entitled "Accounting for Software Development". The seminar aims to provide an understanding, together with practical experience, of software evaluation techniques. The rules and practices of the function point techniques will be discussed and case studies will be used to reinforce the material presented.

The cost is \$950 for ASMA members, representing a discount of over 10% on the \$1,100 charge for non-members.

Further information can be obtained from the organiser, Janice Brown of Spectrum Information Services. Phone is 683 3838 and fax is 683 4387. **BE QUICK.**

VICTORIAN CHAPTER OF ASMA

The Victorian Chapter of the Australian Software Metrics Association was established in May, 1990, and currently has a membership with some 40 organisations represented.

1. OBJECTIVES

1. To provide a relaxed forum for the exchange of ideas and experience in the area of software metrics and measurement.
2. To develop products, services, standards, guidelines, etc. which will assist members to implement and develop effective software metrics programs.

2. AREAS OF ACTIVITY

Through its special interest groups ASMA aims initially to develop a model which can be used to compare productivity across a number of organisations. To this end a group of SIGs is focusing on the following areas.

2.1 Selection of Productivity Factors and Ratios

Which set of Ratios will facilitate:

- * simple and practical collection
- * accurate interpretation
- * meaningful measurement and comparison
- * useful management reporting
- * international acceptance?

2.2 Function Point Counting Practices

How can we ensure standardised measuring of application size using the Function Point Analysis technique?

Strategies adopted include:

- * implementing a service to enable members to fax counting problems which will be prioritised and resolved by the group
- * resolutions and clarifications to these queries will be distributed to members as addenda to IFPUG Counting Practices Manual
- * interface to IFPUG to resolve and propose solutions to member problems

1991 PROGRAMME for NSW

The following is 1991 as it is currently planned.

Meetings will still be the second Tuesday of the even months at 5:00pm at Westpac, 60 Martin Place, Level 13, Room 4.

February

Presenting Mr Rob Thomsett and Dr Eberhard Rudolph - details are earlier in this issue.

April

Dr Ross Jeffery will present the results of a HP study into defect measurement.

June

Election of the new Executive followed by a presentation by Logica on successful estimation and measurements.

August

A discussion on databases.

October

A presentation on estimation.

December

A discussion on risk management and Christmas drinks.

In addition, we are negotiating for a joint meeting with the Software Quality Association around the middle of the year.

2.4 Identify Factors Impacting Productivity

Identify the factors which have the most significant impact on productivity so that data on them may be collected with Measures of Development Effort and analysed.

2.5 Implement Productivity Model

Implement the above guidelines and procedures in at least five sites so that methods may be properly tested in the workplace and iteratively improved. A forum will then exist within which the range and sophistication of the productivity factors and ratios used in the model can be further developed.

This model should assist members to:

- * measure their internal software development productivity on a project by project basis
- * compare this productivity to like organisations/projects
- * better estimate and cost proposed software development projects
- * better control their Information Technology resources.

FEBRUARY MEETING

This month's meeting will start the year off in a BIG way with not one, but **TWO FEATURED SPEAKERS**, namely Mr Rob Thomsett and Dr Eberhard Rudolph.

Mr Rob Thomsett is well respected in the productivity world and runs his own consultancy. He will be discussing the differences between system metrics and software metrics and how we can get measurable gains in productivity.

Dr Eberhard Rudolph is an acknowledged authority on productivity in application software development and, in particular, Fourth Generation Languages and the Function Point Technique. He is currently presenting seminars in USA, Europe, S.E. Asia, Japan, Australia and New Zealand. As well as his seminars, Dr Rudolph advises corporations on evaluating and implementing software development environments. He directs research on New Generation Languages and software technology transfer and has co-authored an IBM GUIDE International workbook on "Estimating Using Function Points".

We are extremely pleased that our two speakers have found time from their busy schedules to address our inaugural meeting for 1991 and we urge **all members to attend.**

Mike Berry

3. RECENT ACTIVITIES

During 1990 ASMA held three public meetings covering the following topics.

2.1 Software Metrics - An Australian Perspective

A review by Ross Jeffery, Head of the School of Information Systems at the University of NSW, of software metrics and of measurement initiatives at the University.

2.2 Estimating on Both Sides of the Yarra - Issues and Techniques.

Phil Hain of DMR discussed issues in estimation. John Holt of NAB and Terry Wright from the Attorney General's Department each presented the approaches taken within their organisations to address these issues.

2.3 Implementing Measurement Practices.

Pam Morris of Ferntree Computer Services discussed the issues to be considered when implementing a measurement program.

Peter Butler of BP Australia described the work that BP has done in setting up a productivity baseline.

At this meeting there was also a Question/Answer forum during which selected ASMA members answered questions on software metrics.

2.4 Special Interest Groups

The SIGs were very active in the second half of the year establishing a program to meet the Association's objectives in the focused areas.

OFFICE BEARERS - NSW

Chairman

Ross Jeffery Ph 697 4413 Fax 662 4061

Secretary

Hugo Rehesaar 268 6167 268 8094

Treasurer

Amanda Hawkins 257 5454 257 7886

Program Director

Mike Berry 255 5632 255 5640

Recruitment

Terry Lynch 284 7329 284 7203

Newsletter Editor

Hugo Rehesaar

5. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The activities of ASMA are at present being directed by a Steering Committee pending establishment of its constitution and incorporation. The following are the members on the Steering Committee.

Chairman	Phil Hain
Secretary	Hugh Monypenny
Program Director	Robyn Lawrie
Treasurer	John Holt
SIG Co-ordinator	Terry Wright
Other committee members	Rod Walkerden
	Harold Ross

SIGS

Implement Productivity Model
Terry Wright

Measurement of Development Effort
Rod Dilnutt

Function Point Standards
Pam Morris

Selection of Productivity Factors and Ratios
Peter Butler

All enquiries should be directed to:

Phil Hain on (03) 612 1666, Fax (03) 629 5609

or to any of the steering committee members.

ESTIMATES WORKING GROUP - NSW

The estimates subcommittee has three projects underway at this time:

The first is a survey to investigate what estimation techniques are being used and how effective they are. The report will document the findings under the categories of Small, Medium and Large development in development, enhancement and maintenance. To date the survey has only been circulated to members of ASMA and it will be soon be circulated through the Victorian membership. However, response to date has not been overwhelming with only a 10% return rate. If you are interested to learn the results of the survey then you will need to contribute so fill in the survey form sent in the last newsletter. Extra copies of the survey can be obtained by contacting Terry Lynch on 2847329.

The second project is to produce a paper summarising the various Function Point counting techniques and highlight the their differences. Andy Doldissen is currently preparing this paper and we hope to bring this to you in the near future.

The third activity the estimates working party is to prepare a series of reports around estimation tools. Planned outputs include an inventory of estimation tools, guidelines for the selection of estimating tools and reports on the implementations and utilisation of such tools in development environments.

The Estimates sub-committee meets at 5pm every first Thursday of the month at the 12th Floor St. Martins Tower, 31 Market St, Sydney. Visitors and new members are most welcome. Just call Terry Lynch (2847329) or Steve Harris(#####) during business hours for more information.

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