

**REPORT TO THE COUNCIL OF THE INTERNATIONAL EPIDEMIOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION from  
Stephen Leeder  
The Editor-in-Chief  
The International Journal of Epidemiology**

**August 23<sup>rd</sup> 2017**

**The Transition**

This is my first report to the IEA Council as Editor-in-Chief of the *International Journal of Epidemiology*. I begin by acknowledging what a privilege it is to have been given this opportunity by the IEA, thanking you for your confidence in my team and me and for your continuing support.

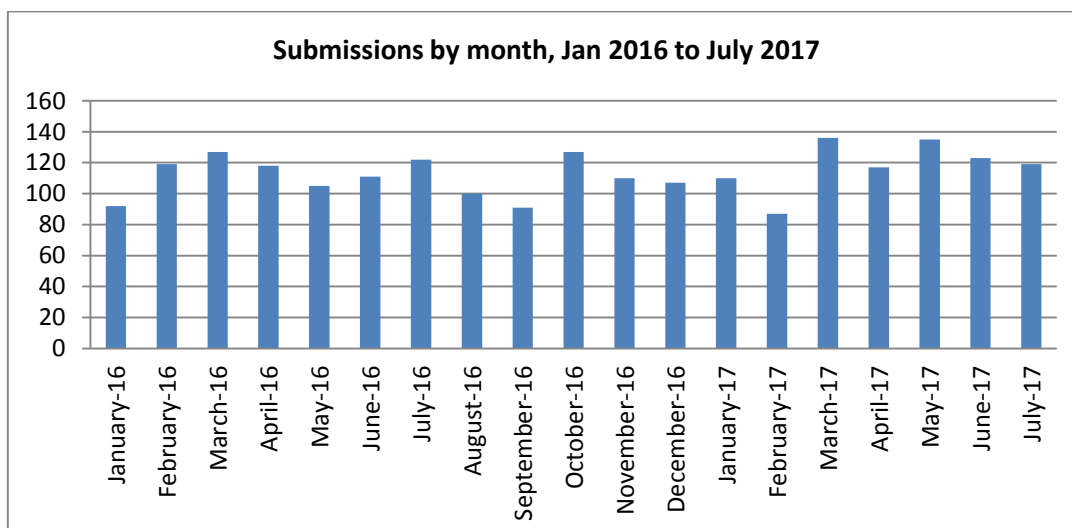
I also acknowledge the great assistance and guidance provided to us by Dr Allen Stevens and his team from Oxford University Press, the substantial infrastructure support received from the NSW Health Ministry's Western Sydney Local Health District and the encouragement of the University of Sydney. We have also benefited greatly from the patient and informative backing and goodwill of the Bristol team, especially Ms Edwina Thorn and Ms Audrey Hayes, who have patiently instructed us in all aspects of the editorial work of the *IJE*. The *IJE* had an impact factor in 2016 of 7.7, and ranks fifth among public health and epidemiology journals.

The Sydney team commenced work in late May 2016 and all new submissions received after 1 August 2016 have been handled by us. We operated in parallel with the Bristol team for five months until the end of 2016. Since January 2017 we have been 'on our own'.

**Performance data**

The number of submissions has remained relatively steady at about 120 per month (see figure below). Of these, about 25% have been sent to our Editorial Board members to assess and, if appropriate, obtain peer reviews. Of these, 37% have been accepted for publication and as of the end of July this year, we have accepted 142 submissions for publication (9.4% of papers submitted during our tenure).

The country of origin of submissions is listed in the Appendix.



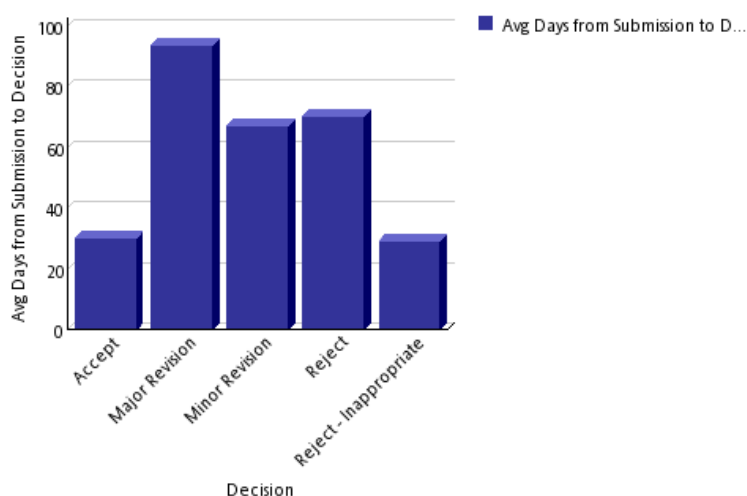
## Manuscripts received by type

Information based on all manuscripts whose submission date is Between Aug 1, 2016 and Jul 31, 2017

Manuscript Type	Original	Revised	Total
<b>Book Review</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Cohort Profile</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>Commentary [Invited]</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Data Resource Profile</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Editorial [Invited]</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Education Corner</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Health &amp; Demographic Surveillance System Profile</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Letter to the Editor</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Obituary</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Original Article</b>	<b>1290</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>1481</b>
<b>Photo Essay</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Software Application Profile</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1516</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>1805</b>

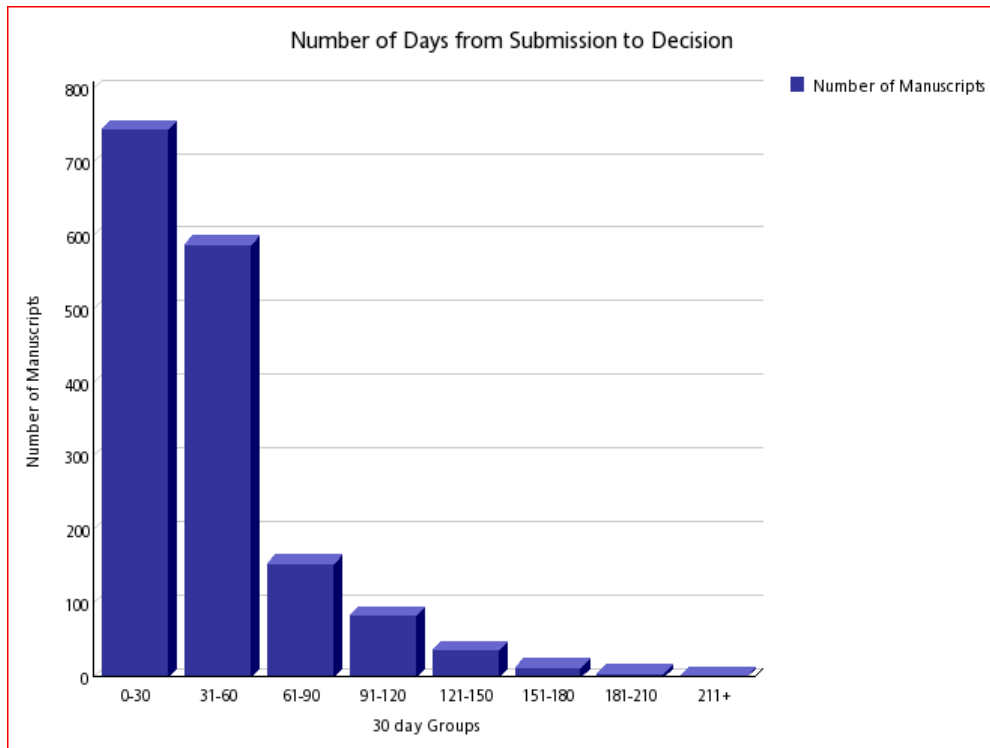
Information based on all manuscripts whose submission date is Between Aug 1, 2016 and Jul 31, 2017

Average Days by Decision



Accept/Reject	Number of manuscripts	Proportion of all manuscripts	Average days
Reject – Inappropriate*	992	61.0%	28.96
Reject*	152	9.3%	70.12
Minor Revision	148	9.1%	67.24
Major Revision	115	7.1%	93.60
	220	13.5%	30.30

\*"reject inappropriate " means rejected up front and "reject " means rejected after being handled by members of the Editorial Board Associate Editors



### Editorial Board Meeting – Sydney, March 2017

As noted in a recent editorial in the *Journal*, 30–31 March, eleven members of the Editorial Board, the president (Dame Valerie Beral) and president-elect (Henrique Barros) of the International Epidemiological Association (IEA), and Allen Stevens from our publisher, Oxford University Press, met the editorial team in Sydney to review progress and plan the *Journal's* immediate future.

The two days of useful discussion led to the following main outcomes.

1. The *Journal* should continue to concentrate on maintaining its current high standards of published material, taking account of the most pressing public health problems to which epidemiology proposes solutions, to strengthen our ties with the IEA and its membership.
2. The meeting acknowledged the crucial importance of the *Journal* increasingly providing **evidence and guidance of use to practitioners**, especially epidemiologists involved in public health practice, and to help solve the 'big problems' in epidemiology and public health. Several participants considered that more thought should be given to meeting the needs of readers and suggested a survey of subscribers. The Editorial Board, itself, should be as representative as possible of geography and fields of interest.
3. Given that more than 60% of the *Journal's* content is drawn from Europe and North America, much discussion concerned the publishing of **research from more international contributors**, particularly in the non-Anglophone world. We are aware that this has been a long-standing concern.

4. We noted the **volatility of scientific publication**, where a contest is being played out between online and print publication, and between subscription or paywall models and open-access (author pays) models. The number of print copies of each *IJE* issue is reducing year on year and is now fewer than 200. They are costly to produce and distribute. On the other hand, the *IJE* is now accessible online in over 7000 institutions worldwide and to the 2000 IEA members. Each month, about 175,000 articles are downloaded.

Our online status allows us to publish more **open-access** material, thus providing accessibility to all users. In 2016, we published 92 open-access articles. We need to keep a close watch on the direction in which the publishing world is heading: there are advantages and disadvantages in being print-only, online-only, or a mix. The point was stressed that, if we are true to our discipline, such decisions should, as far as possible, be based on evidence.

5. The *Journal* operates from a comparatively slender financial base. The IEA is not a wealthy organisation. Its *Journal* needs to be run parsimoniously, with major unpaid contributions from its editors (including me!) and with the support of the institutions hosting the editorial team.

We are looking carefully at **citation and usage patterns** of our different types of articles to assess their value to readers and authors. We want to ensure that we prioritise those areas most important to our readership and the epidemiological community and not spend time on poorly received material.

6. To deal with a **backlog** of accepted papers that had been published online as Advance articles but not yet in a print issue, including full-length cohort profiles that had been submitted before the *Journal's* change to publishing a one-page Pocket Profile in print, we decided to publish these full cohort profiles solely as electronic pages.

We consulted with authors about this proposal and implemented it in the April 2017 issue, with the publication of 22 cohort profiles as e-pages. We have thus reduced the 'waiting list' for cohort profiles from 60 to 37. We have also been able to reduce the number of original articles waiting to be published formally in the *IJE* from 78 to 50. With the assistance of OUP, we are almost back on track with the timely publication of issues and expect to fully achieve this by the end of the year.

### **The editorial team**

We have four experienced part-time members of the editorial team - deputy editors Drs Tania Janusic and Marion Carey and Ms Elsin Meyer and Ms Katherine McLeod and intern Dr Bilal Ahmed, supported occasionally as needed by executive assistants Ms Sandie Tolliday and Ms Veronica Lai (through the NSW Ministry of Health and the University of Sydney). The editorial group worked with me at *The Medical Journal of Australia* and for many years prior to my two years as Editor-in-Chief. They work many more hours than I am able to pay them – they are really outstandingly patient and professional in their commitment. We also gratefully acknowledge the many hours of *pro bono* editorial contribution from Dr Peter Arnold in Sydney.

## Financial Report for the financial Year 2016-2017

Our finances are managed through the Western Sydney Local Health District (finance officer Ms Dahlia Younan) and the District also provides accommodation for meetings and teleconferencing. We adjust the workload to fit the budget: some things that the previous editorial team on a larger budget were able to do we cannot do in the available time.

### An Overview:

An agreement has been established between International Epidemiological Association and Western Sydney Local Health District in May 2016. The agreement provides funding for three years to support the IJE editorial office costs for the journal. The office started its work in Aug-2016. This report represents the financial results as at Jun-17.

Fund Entity: **WSLHN - WSLHD Western Sydney LHD Fund Entity**  
 Cost Centre: **WSTM International Journal of Epidemiology-Prof S. Leeder**  
 Project: **Projects - Projects**  
 Allocation: **Total Allocations**  
 Budget Version: **Submitted**

### Net Cost of Services Detail Period Ended: June FY2016/2017



	FY2016/2017 June				FY2016/2017 June				FY2016/2017 YearTotal			
	Actual	Budget	Var	Var %	YTD_Actual	YTD_Budget	Var	Var %	Forecast	Budget	Var	Var %
<b>EXPENSES</b>												
A114295 S&W Man Jnl Other	-	-	-	-	13,388	-	(13,388) U	-	13,388	-	(13,388) U	-
<b>S&amp;Ws Others</b>	-	-	-	-	13,388	-	(13,388) U	-	13,388	-	(13,388) U	-
<b>Salaries and Wages</b>	-	-	-	-	13,388	-	(13,388) U	-	13,388	-	(13,388) U	-
<b>Employee Related</b>	-	-	-	-	13,388	-	(13,388) U	-	13,388	-	(13,388) U	-
A176885 Spec Servs Other	-	-	-	-	14,870	-	(14,870) U	-	14,870	-	(14,870) U	-
<b>G&amp;S Special Services</b>	-	-	-	-	14,870	-	(14,870) U	-	14,870	-	(14,870) U	-
<b>Clinical Operating</b>	-	-	-	-	14,870	-	(14,870) U	-	14,870	-	(14,870) U	-
A197450 G&S Other	26,803	-	(26,803) U	-	160,264	-	(160,264) U	-	160,264	-	(160,264) U	-
<b>G&amp;S Admin</b>	26,803	-	(26,803) U	-	160,264	-	(160,264) U	-	160,264	-	(160,264) U	-
A196250 Travel Dom Airflights	-	-	-	-	380	-	(380) U	-	380	-	(380) U	-
<b>G&amp;S Travel</b>	-	-	-	-	380	-	(380) U	-	380	-	(380) U	-
<b>Admin</b>	26,803	-	(26,803) U	-	160,643	-	(160,643) U	-	160,643	-	(160,643) U	-
<b>Goods &amp; Services</b>	26,803	-	(26,803) U	-	175,513	-	(175,513) U	-	175,513	-	(175,513) U	-
<b>Expenses</b>	26,803	-	(26,803) U	-	188,901	-	(188,901) U	-	188,901	-	(188,901) U	-
<b>REVENUES</b>												
A430201 Interest Received Private	(276)	-	276 F	-	(1,852)	-	1,852 F	-	(1,852)	-	1,852 F	-
<b>Interest Revenue</b>	(276)	-	276 F	-	(1,852)	-	1,852 F	-	(1,852)	-	1,852 F	-
A471100 Non User Charges General	-	-	-	-	(327,058)	-	327,058 F	-	(327,058)	-	327,058 F	-
<b>Other Sources of Revenue</b>	-	-	-	-	(327,058)	-	327,058 F	-	(327,058)	-	327,058 F	-
<b>Own Source Revenue</b>	(276)	-	276 F	-	(328,910)	-	328,910 F	-	(328,910)	-	328,910 F	-
<b>Retained Revenue</b>	(276)	-	276 F	-	(328,910)	-	328,910 F	-	(328,910)	-	328,910 F	-
<b>Other Items</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	26,527	-	(26,527) U	-	(140,009)	-	140,009 F	-	(140,009)	-	140,009 F	-
<b>GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTIONS</b>												
<b>Result for the Year</b>	26,527	-	(26,527) U	-	(140,009)	-	140,009 F	-	(140,009)	-	140,009 F	-

### **Financial Report key points:**

- The agreement of funding is for three years for US\$170,000/annum starting from Jan-17.
- An interim payment of US\$50,000 was made in Aug-16 to cover the period from Aug-16 to Dec-16.
- Total number of consultants engaged in the Editorial office in addition to the Chief Editor is five.
- Invoicing to transfer the funds is on annual basis as per agreement.
- Total funds received from Aug-16 to Jun-17 is \$327,058.
- Total interest received on the funds is \$1,852.
- Total costs for running the IJE office for the period Aug-16 to Jun-17 is \$188,901.
- A review of costs and the number of hours invested by consultants was conducted and resulted in a reduced number of hours to keep costs within IJE allocated funding.
- The above results indicates the very high activity of the Editorial Office and it's expected to break even financially as at Dec-17.

### **Other activities**

We are committed to ensuring that instructions to authors and reviewers are optimal. For example, clearer checklists for cohort studies have been developed and we are looking at the other classes of submission in the same way. We are examining with the help of the editorial board ways of bringing sections of the *Journal* up to date – **Education Corner** being one.

We have had several inquiries about **supplements**. In partnership with OUP we are developing a user-pays arrangement whereby the cost of resources to develop the supplements are covered, including the time of the editorial staff.

### **The Future**

We welcome discussion with IEA and OUP, our Editorial Board, those who provide material for the *IJE* and those who read and use it as to future directions and large and small changes. We (Sydney) are still in the early stage of our editorship and have focussed on ensuring continuity and sustainability of the *Journal*. So I hope that as the new IEA Council considers its plans it will give thought to how it wishes to see the *IJE* evolve and discuss its future with us.

## Appendix

### Manuscripts Accepted by Country for International *Journal of Epidemiology*

Information based on all manuscripts with a decision date of between Aug 1, 2016 and Jul 31, 2017.

Country	Accept	Reject	Total	Accept Ratio
Angola	1	0	1	100.00%
Argentina	0	1	1	0.00%
Australia	27	53	80	33.75%
Austria	0	1	1	0.00%
Bangladesh	1	5	6	16.67%
Belgium	1	7	8	12.50%
Brazil	2	26	28	7.14%
Cameroon	1	1	2	50.00%
Canada	13	60	73	17.81%
Chile	1	0	1	100.00%
China	1	90	91	1.10%
Czech Republic	0	1	1	0.00%
Denmark	12	33	45	26.67%
Egypt	0	6	6	0.00%
Estonia	1	2	3	33.33%
Ethiopia	0	3	3	0.00%
Finland	6	17	23	26.09%
France	7	37	44	15.91%
Gambia	0	1	1	0.00%
Germany	6	27	33	18.18%
Ghana	2	3	5	40.00%
Greece	2	4	6	33.33%
Guinea-Bissau	0	1	1	0.00%
Hong Kong	3	19	22	13.64%
Hungary	1	2	3	33.33%
Iceland	0	2	2	0.00%
India	0	33	33	0.00%
Iran, Islamic Republic of	0	23	23	0.00%
Ireland	0	8	8	0.00%
Israel	0	9	9	0.00%
Italy	2	25	27	7.41%
Japan	3	30	33	9.09%
Kazakhstan	0	1	1	0.00%
Kenya	0	5	5	0.00%
Korea (the Republic of)	3	26	29	10.34%
Lebanon	0	3	3	0.00%

Country	Accept	Reject	Total	Accept Ratio
Malaysia	0	2	2	0.00%
Malta	1	0	1	100.00%
Mexico	1	4	5	20.00%
Netherlands	11	32	43	25.58%
New Zealand	2	7	9	22.22%
Nigeria	0	3	3	0.00%
Norway	5	15	20	25.00%
Oman	0	1	1	0.00%
Pakistan	0	3	3	0.00%
Peru	1	0	1	100.00%
Poland	0	4	4	0.00%
Portugal	0	4	4	0.00%
Puerto Rico	0	1	1	0.00%
Qatar	0	3	3	0.00%
Réunion	0	2	2	0.00%
Saudi Arabia	0	1	1	0.00%
Serbia	0	3	3	0.00%
Singapore	0	11	11	0.00%
South Africa	3	8	11	27.27%
Spain	5	24	29	17.24%
Sri Lanka	0	1	1	0.00%
Sudan	0	1	1	0.00%
Sweden	10	36	46	21.74%
Switzerland	3	9	12	25.00%
Taiwan	2	31	33	6.06%
Tanzania, United Republic of	0	1	1	0.00%
Thailand	0	2	2	0.00%
Trinidad and Tobago	0	1	1	0.00%
Turkey	0	2	2	0.00%
Uganda	0	1	1	0.00%
United Arab Emirates	0	1	1	0.00%
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	48	156	204	23.53%
United States	53	302	355	14.93%
<b>Total</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>1,237</b>	<b>1,478</b>	<b>16.31%</b>