

The future of Transit Australia

The current late publication of TA has been mainly caused because I am in my thirteenth year at the position and am worn out and ready to give up. I have lost much of the interest that I previously had in the work and have arrived at a decision that I may be able to produce the remaining issues of the current volume, but am very unlikely to be able to produce them on time.

TA is rapidly approaching a situation where production is not really viable, the reader base appears to be ageing and younger readers are not around in anything other than small numbers. TA is basically covering its publication costs, but there is nothing left to cover promotional costs and publicity or seek other distribution channels. The digital version would need major promotion to even make slight progress and most of the current digital readers seem to be transfers from the print version.

A major problem is the lack of contributors, for in any given volume the total number of contributors is likely to be about 50. In any given month there is a contribution from only about 15 people, with nearly half of these the permanent members of the Editorial team. This results in considerably out of balance written content and photographs, with both now becoming a real problem. The only 'contribution' of the great majority of subscribers is to complain noisily when issues are a day or two late, this is very discouraging.

This basically means that the editorial job is basically a full time unpaid position that offers very little in the way of satisfaction, particularly in the way that there is very little feedback about the work done. There has not been any remuneration for some time, but there is some reimbursement of expenses.

Following a discussion with the Publisher, Hugh Ballment, a decision has been reached to issue a call for a new editor, but, if one is not found, to cease publication at the end of the volume.

What is needed to fill the Editorial position?

It is really very simple ; lots of dedication, knowledge, spare time and a very firm grasp of the English language and its use. This will need to be backed by a demonstrated ability to write articles in that language and the ability to put them together from diverse sources. You also need the ability to politely put up with ditherers, time wasters, salesmen and ratbags, not necessarily in that order.

All applications should be made to the Editor in a clear, concise way.

Tony Bailey
Editor