



Forum for European-Australian Science and Technology cooperation

Newsletter # 13

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www.feast.org

In this Issue:

Latest News

- ARC new CEO
- ANU and CSIRO join with French on agricultural and environmental research
- Industry specific action agendas
- Robotic Firefighters
- Backing Australia's Ability 2
- EC compiles catalogue of European technology transfer institutions
- Feature: Australian Academy of Science Travel Award recipient
- OzNano2Life –Integrated with EU Network of Excellence

Future Events

- Seminar Series: CORDIS website –rescheduled
- FEAST France events
- ARIA/Scientific Office of the Embassy of Italy events
- Australasian Research Management Society 2004 conference
- Programs and Courses, Centre for R&D Leadership, University of Melbourne
- EU supported training in Malta – EU Nationals only
- Perth International Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Conference
- Australian Academy of Technological Sciences & Engineering 2004 Symposium

Grant Highlights

- Australian Research Council 2004 Federation Fellowships awarded
- Australian Academy of Science – International Collaborative research – Call
- Latest European 6th Framework Programme calls
- Australian Universities Europe Network – Travel Grants - Call
- Biotechnology Innovation Fund - Call
- Health & Medical Research Infrastructure projects funding
- Pharmaceuticals Partnership Program (P3) First Round Grants
- Highlighting AusIndustry Products – Funding opportunities
- Erasmus Mundus scholarships – Call
- Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering - Call

Other News

- FEAST website – feedback sought
- CRC Conference June 2004 – short report
- Irish Presidency of the Council of Europe
- European Commission releases review of FEAST by Dr Karsten Brenner

Tel: +61 (0) 2 6273 4823

Fax: +61 (0) 2 6273 4848

E-mail: info@feast.org

Website: www.feast.org

FEAST Office

Engineering House, 11 National Circuit

Barton ACT 2600

Australia

The Executive Manager, Michael Parker, can be contacted at mparker@feast.org.

The Project Officer, Alison White, can be contacted at alison@feast.org

Latest News

Australian Research Council new CEO

Dr Brendan Nelson has announced the appointment of Professor Peter Høj to the position of ARC CEO to commence a 5 year term from 1 October 2004.

<http://www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Nelson/2004/06/n757210604.asp>

ANU and CSIRO sign MOU with French on Agricultural research

Australia's scientific relationship with France has received a boost, with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between some of the top French and Australian research bodies. The agreement will lead to closer collaboration in the fields of agricultural and land-based environmental research, into areas like forestry, sustainable land use, salinity and water management.

The Australian National University and the CSIRO signed on behalf of Australia with five leading French research centres, including the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS).

Enquiries, to the Science Attache at the Embassy of France Alain Moulet on (02) 6216 0133. [news@eu the newsletter of the Delegation of the European Commission to Australia and New Zealand.7/6/04]

Industry specific action agendas

There has been an increase of 12% in the uptake of the Australian Government's commercialisation programs which has been credited to the Government's industry specific action agendas. This increase was discovered through a recently completed evaluation of the Action Agenda process.

The Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources examined the process of developing and implementing Action Agendas and the outcomes achieved, and surveyed industry leaders to ascertain the value they placed on the process.

From R&D Review, www.halledit.com.au

Robotic Firefighters

Officially opening the Centre of Excellence for Autonomous Systems, Australian Government Science Minister Peter McGauran praised the enormous potential offered by this research into robotic firefighters. The Australian Government has provided \$10 million over five years for the Centre, a collaboration between the University of Sydney, University of New South Wales, and the University of Technology, Sydney. The Centre also has strong partnerships with Australian and international organisations.

<http://www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/McGauran/2004/04/mcg001280404.asp>

Backing Australia's Ability – Building our Future through Science & Innovation

Future funding of \$5.3 billion is available to strengthen Backing Australia's Ability successes. The ARC has had its competitive funding doubled; the CSIRO has won a funding boost of \$305 million over seven years to support its Flagship program. The research community has responded quietly, and the higher education sector is disappointed that funding has not been more substantially boosted.

http://backingaus.innovation.gov.au/min_announce.htm

<http://www.halledit.com.au>

EC compiles catalogue of European technology transfer institutions

Lists over 1,500 institutions and organisations in Member countries.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/enterprise_policy/competitiveness/index.htm#ittse

Feature: Australian Academy of Science Travel Award

Dr Massimo Gasparon (Earth Sciences, The University of Queensland) received an Australian Academy of Science travel award in 2003. This enabled him to strengthen existing research links with several academic institutions in Italy and Germany. Dr Gasparon's main research interests are in environmental geochemistry, human impacts resulting from mining activities and in establishing levels of metal contaminants in remote areas such as east Antarctica.

The first outcome of the award, funded through the support of the Italian Embassy in Canberra, was a comprehensive study of trace metal pollution in marine and lacustrine sediments of the area surrounding Casey Station in the Australian Antarctic Territory which was undertaken jointly with the Australian Antarctic Division, the Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar Research (Germany) and the Interdisciplinary Ecological Centre for the Technical University of Freiberg (Germany).



(L to R) Dr Gasparon, Ms Mares (centre) and Ms Malandrino (right) in the Earth Sciences laboratory, The University of Queensland.

OzNano2Life: Australian Nanobiotechnology Cluster Integrated with a European Union Network of Excellence

OzNano2Life is a nanobiotechnology network that includes the most of the states of Australia: NSW, QLD, VIC, SA, WA and the ACT.

It has received funding of \$1million from the Australian government under the Innovation Access Program to conduct research programmes targeting biomimetic membranes. The research programs involve both national and international collaboration.

This project is exciting because it is the first formal linkage of an Australian cluster of nanobiotechnologists with the only Network of Excellence (Nano2Life) in nanobiotechnology funded under the European Commission Framework 6 Program.

A linkage was formed with CEA in Grenoble, France from which OzNano2Life has grown.

OzNano2Life will undertake 6 cutting-edge internationally collaborative research programs. Outputs will include peer-reviewed publications and intellectual property of biosensors, biochips, and elastomeric materials for example.

Several major research institutes are involved in OzNano2Life. The foundation group of Australian partners is extensive and is led by Associate Professor Donald Martin, Institute for Nanoscale Technology, University of Technology Sydney.

Future Events

Seminar series on the CORDIS website – rescheduled

The FEAST- CORDIS seminar series will be held 16-24 August. In addition to the Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra tour in the April cancelled series, visits also to Perth, Adelaide and Hobart are planned. A minimum of 40 attendees at each event are required for the seminars to proceed. Please ensure we can visit your city by registering to attend these popular seminars.

The seminar flyer will be available early July with complete details of dates/times/locations. Registration will be via the FEAST online registration system through the FEAST website www.feast.org. Enquiries to Alison@feast.org

FEAST-France events:

- Sydney, 29 June: Public seminar: Joint/Double-Badged Doctoral Degree - the French-Australian PhD in 'Cotutelle'
- Hobart, Wednesday 7 July: The French-Australian workshop on Marine Sciences, part of the Australian Marine Sciences Association (AMSA) conference
- Melbourne, Tuesday 3 August: Public seminar: Joint/Double-Badged Doctoral Degree - the French-Australian PhD in 'Cotutelle'
- Nouméa (New Caledonia), 24-27 August: Symposium on French Research in the Pacific.

For more information:

- Visit <http://www.ambafrance-au.org/science/>
- Become a member of FEAST-France by selecting this option in your FEAST online registration (you will then receive the FEAST-France newsletter and alerts)

ARIA (Association for Research between Italy and Australasia) in conjunction with the Scientific Office of the Embassy of Italy – future events

Italy-Australia Science Forum in the ACT: “A seminar series to present and discuss scientific collaboration between Italy and Australia”

ARIA-Canberra in conjunction with the Scientific Office of the Embassy of Italy and DEST, is establishing a seminar series to inform the scientific community about the Italian system and avenues for collaboration between Italy and Australia. The seminars have the endorsement of the Delegation of the European Commission, the National Europe Centre, the ANU, CSIRO, the University of Canberra and FEAST.

Each seminar will take place in the Department involved in the presentation.

- 9 September ANU Mathematical Sciences Institute
- 20 or 27 October ANU Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics at Mt. Stromlo
- 1 December ANU Research School of Earth Sciences
- 23 February 2005 CSIRO Land and Water
- 16 March 2005 ANU Department of Applied Mathematics, Research School of Physical Sciences and Engineering
- 18 May 2005 University of Canberra Ecochemistry Laboratory

Contact and RSVPs to Luciano Lombardo Luciano.LOMBARDO@dest.gov.au

8-10 November 2004, Brisbane. Conference **Transgenerational inheritance of epigenetic modifications to the genome: potential implications for health and disease**

ARIA-Queensland is organising this conference.

Enquiries Prof Michael D’Occhio, m.docchio@uq.edu.au

8-10 November 2004, Brisbane **Workshop on marine parks in Italy and Australia: a comparison of research and management methods**

ARIA-Queensland is organizing this conference.

Enquiries Prof Ron Johnstone, rnje@uq.edu.au

6-11 February 2005, Canberra

ISPET IV: “Advanced techniques applied to petrological problems”

ARIA-Canberra will participate in the organisation of this graduate school.

Venue: Research School of Earth Sciences, The Australian National University

Enquiries Dr Daniela Rubatto, Daniela.Rubatto@anu.edu.au

15 -17 September 2004 **Australasian Research Management Society (ARMS)**

Annual Conference – Fremantle, Western Australia

Contact: Rod Thiele, Chair, ARMS 2004 Conference Committee

<http://www.promaco.com.au/conference/2004/arms>

+61 (08) 9266 3854 (ph) r.thiele@curtin.edu.au

Award Programs & Short Courses – University of Melbourne

Several courses are proposed on various topics: Creativity and Performance for R&D Teams, CRC Leadership and Career Development, Strategic Planning in R&D Programs, Collaborating for Success in R&D.

Enquiries to Professor Leon Mann, School of Behavioural Science, telephone: 03 8344 4434 No website available

EU supported training in Malta – EU Nationals only

Visit and learn in Malta totally free. This venture is supported by the European Commission's Grundtvig 3 programme and is for EU Nationals only.

<http://www.trainingmalta.com>

12 – 15 September 2004, Perth International Hydrogen & Fuel Cell Conference

<http://www.dpi.wa.gov.au/fuelcells/conf/index.html>

15 – 16 November 2004, Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering National Symposium, Adelaide

"Living Longer, Living Better - Improving longevity and quality of life through science, technology and engineering".

Contact Paula Williamson, ATSE Office (03) 9347 0622, <http://www.atse.org.au>

Grant Highlights

Australian Research Council 2004 Federation Fellowships

The Fellowships are designed to attract the world's best research talent to Australia, and offer opportunities for our world-leading researchers to continue their work here. Twenty-five Fellowships were awarded, 10 to expatriate Australians who will return home, 5 to foreign nationals who will move to Australia and 10 to resident Australians.

Almost \$38 million will be provided through the ARC for these new Fellowships over the next five years, each Fellow receiving an indexed salary of around \$235,000 for each of five years.

The Fellows will work in diverse areas such as environmental change, multi-scale microstructure engineering, the role of metals in degenerative brain diseases (e.g. Alzheimer's and Parkinson's), the development of logic and language in children, nanostructures for electronics and photonics applications, and computational problems.

http://www.arc.gov.au/funded_grants/selection_discovery_fellow.htm

Australian Academy of Science – International Collaborative research - Call

Funding applications are invited for short-term visits to Europe, North America, and North East Asia to undertake collaborative research. Complete information available from

<http://www.science.org.au/internat/index.htm>

Deadline July 2004.

Latest European 6th Framework Programme calls

FP6 – 2004 – Global -3 (Sustainable development, global change and ecosystems)

Closing date: 26/10/2004 and 15/3/2005

http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=133

FP6 – 2004 – NMP – NSF – 1 (Nanotechnologies & nanosciences, knowledge-based multifunctional materials, and new production processes and devices)

Closing date: 14/10/2004

http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=135

FP6 – 2004 – IST – NMP – 2 (Information Society Technologies and Nanotechnologies & nanosciences, knowledge-based multifunctional materials, and new production processes and devices)

Closing date: 14/10/2004

http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=136

FP6 – 2004 – IST – FETP1 (Future & Emerging Technologies – Proactive initiatives)

Closing date: 22/9/2004

http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=137

FP6 – 2004 – IST – 3 (Information Society Technologies)

Closing date: 22/9/2004

http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=138

FP6 – 2004 – TC – SSA – General (Specific measures in support of international co-operation)

Closing date: 14/10/2004

http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=145

FP6 – 2004 – ACC – SSA – 2 (Specific measures in support of international co-operation)

Closing date: 14/10/2004

http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=146

FP6 – 2004 – LIFESCIHEALTH – 4 (Life sciences, genomics and biotechnology for health)

Closing date: 9/9/2004

http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=147

FP6 – 2004 – LIFESCIHEALTH – 5 (Life sciences, genomics and biotechnology for health)

Closing date: 16/11/2004

http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=148

GALILEO (Aeronautics and space)

Closing dates: 8/10/2004 (Area 1 activity); 24/9/2004 (Area 2 activity); 17/9/2004 (Area 3 activity)

http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/call_details.cfm?CALL_ID=140

If you are considering applying for EC funding, and wish to discuss Australian Government support, please contact Tony Rothnie, Assistant Director, International Science and Technology Relations, Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training at tony.rothnie@dest.gov.au

Australian Universities Europe Network – travel grants – Call

The Australian Universities Europe Network (AUEN) invites applications for travel grants to European focused scholars wanting to conduct research in Europe in 2004 and 2005.

Postgraduate Travel Grants: The AUEN will award up to six travel grants (valued between \$2,000 and \$2,500) to postgraduate scholars researching European issues from universities eligible to join the AUEN.

For further information please contact Cressida Thompson at The National Europe Centre
E: europe@anu.edu.au T: +61 2 6125 6586
Closing date: **Friday 2 July 2004.**

The AUEN is under the auspices of the National Europe Centre and funded by grant monies paid to the Centre by the European Commission.

Early career/post doctoral scholars travel grants:

The AUEN will also allocate two further travel grants (valued at \$5,000) to early career / postdoctoral scholars working on themes identified as part of the National Europe Centre's work program.

*Scholars with a comparative focus (Australia and Europe) are given preference
http://www.anu.edu.au/NEC/auen_grants.php

Biotechnology Innovation Fund

The Biotechnology Innovation Fund (BIF) aims to increase the rate of commercialisation of Australian biotechnology ventures by raising the cost of demonstrating “proof of concept” for new biotech initiatives. Grants of up to \$250,000 are available to eligible firms on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

Closing date: 15 July 2004.
www.ausindustry.gov.au or ring hotline 132846 for more information.

Health & Medical Research Infrastructure projects funding success

A sum of \$31.2 million has been allocated to 14 medical research institutes for research infrastructure projects. Congratulations to the recipients as follows:

- Centenary Institute of Cancer Medicine and Cell Biology - \$1.4 million
- Children's Cancer Institute Australia - \$100,000
- Murdoch Children's Research Institute - \$2.5 million
- National Ageing Research Institute - \$125,000
- Prince Henry's Institute of Medical Research - \$1 million
- Queensland Institute of Medical Research - \$5 million
- Wesley Research Institute - \$100,000
- Brain Research Institute - \$2 million
- Hunter Medical Research Institute - \$5 million
- The Millennium Institute, Sydney - \$5 million
- The Garvan Institute, Sydney - \$5 million
- The Woolcock Institute of Medical Research - \$2 million
- The Howard Florey Institute - \$1 million
- The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research - \$1 million

The money will be used for purchasing equipment and the construction of new buildings. This additional funding augments the Government's response to the Investment review of Health and Medical research and recognises the significant role of independent medical research institutes in undertaking and commercialising health and medical research.

P3 First Round Grants

Industry Minister, Ian Macfarlane, has announced the first round of grants under the Pharmaceuticals Partnership Program (P3) – a total of \$87.1 million awarded to eleven companies. P3 is a competitive program with a total funding of \$150 million; companies receive 30 cents for each dollar they spend on eligible research and development in Australia up to a total of \$10 million. Congratulations to the following successful companies:

- AGT Biosciences – grant offer \$8.4 million
- Amrad Corporation – grant offer \$5.2 million
- CSL Ltd – grant offer \$10 million
- Eli Lilly Australia Pty Ltd – grant offer \$10 million
- Janssen-Cilag Pty Ltd – grant offer \$5.4 million
- Mayne Pharma Pty Ltd – grant offer \$10 million
- Merck Sharp & Dohme (Australia) Pty Ltd – grant offer \$10 million
- Novogen Ltd – grant offer \$10 million
- Pharmaxis Ltd – grant offer \$6.1 million
- Servier Laboratories (Australia) Pty Ltd – grant offer \$7.8 million

The P3 program will encourage partnerships and linkages between multi-national firms and local players.

Highlighting AusIndustry Products – Funding opportunities

Commercialising Emerging Technologies (COMET)

Individuals, early-growth stage companies and spin-off companies from research organisations are invited to apply for the COMET funding. It is a competitive, merit based grants program which aims to support business and individuals to increase the commercialization of innovative products, processes and services. This program has been extended to 30 June 2011 with \$100 million provided for grants.

<http://www.ausindustry.gov.au/content/level3index.cfm?ObjectID=BEDA1BF8-88E5-48D1-B07559AC87C114C8&L2Parent=AEB901E5-7CB8-4143-A3BF33B2423F9DA6>

Innovation Investment Fund (IIF)

This Fund is a venture capital program that invests in nine private sector venture capital funds to assist small companies in the early stages of development to commercialise the outcomes of Australia's strong research and development capability.

<http://www.ausindustry.gov.au/content/level3index.cfm?ObjectID=C872E5E3-B1E5-471E-8443AD706534D546&L2Parent=AEB901E5-7CB8-4143-A3BF33B2423F9DA6>

Pooled Development Funds (PDF) Program

This fund is designed to increase the supply of equity capital for growing Australian small and medium-sized enterprises. The Pooled Development Funds are private sector investment companies established under the PDF Act which raise capital from investors and use it to invest in Australian companies.

<http://www.ausindustry.gov.au/content/level3index.cfm?ObjectID=5160357F-90A9-4B90-90E58626CE85A8D8&L2Parent=AEB901E5-7CB8-4143-A3BF33B2423F9DA6>

Pre-seed Fund

This is a competitive fund for universities and public sector research agencies which addresses the gap between promising scientific discoveries and commercialisation.

<http://www.ausindustry.gov.au/content/level3index.cfm?ObjectID=449BFCE8-8D0C-40D1-9E68AAA0F34F8965&L2Parent=AEB901E5-7CB8-4143-A3BF33B2423F9DA6>

R&D Tax Concession

The R&D Tax Concession administered by AusIndustry, the Department's program delivery arm, and the Australian Taxation Office, enables companies incorporated in Australia and registered with the Industry Research and Development Board, to claim a tax deduction for their eligible R&D expenditure. The R&D Tax Concession includes a 125 per cent deduction for expenditure on R&D; a 175 per cent Premium deduction (the R&D Incremental Tax Concession) for additional R&D expenditure above their average over the previous three years and the R&D Tax Offset (Rebate) which allows eligible small companies (ie with group turnover under \$5 million and annual grouped R&D expenditure up to \$1million) to 'cash out' their R&D tax losses.

<http://www.ausindustry.gov.au/content/level3index.cfm?ObjectID=40CEE157-EC9F-4AE3-863FFB2EEFE79ED9&L2Parent=AEB901E5-7CB8-4143-A3BF33B2423F9DA6>

Commercial Ready

The Australian Government is providing more than \$1 billion over five years from 2006-07 to the new Commercial Ready program, which builds on the successful R&D Start program (a competitive grant and loans program which supports Australian companies to undertake R&D with high commercial potential., concluding late 2004), the Biotechnology Innovation Fund and elements of the Innovation Access Program. The new Commercial Ready program encourages the growth of innovative Australian companies in emerging and high-technology industries. Small and medium-sized firms will be supported to undertake research and development, proof-of-concept, technology diffusion and early-stage commercialisation.

<http://www.ausindustry.gov.au/content/level3index.cfm?ObjectID=318B569B-C9AA-4FE2-A1C2DDF2272DB604&L2Parent=AEB901E5-7CB8-4143-A3BF33B2423F9DA6>

Renewable Energy Equity Fund (REEF)

This program is a specialist renewable energy equity fund based on the Innovation Investment Fund (IIF) model. It provides venture capital to assist small companies to commercialise R&D in renewable energy technologies.

<http://www.ausindustry.gov.au/content/level3index.cfm?ObjectID=BFD445F4-56A3-4D40-B010321DE18F422F&L2Parent=AEB901E5-7CB8-4143-A3BF33B2423F9DA6>

Erasmus Mundus scholarships – call

The Erasmus Mundus programme is a co-operation and mobility programme in higher education which promotes the European Union as a centre of excellence in learning. Scholarship funding is available for third country nationals participating in Masters Courses, as well as European Union nationals studying in third countries.

A call for applications is currently out for the academic years 2005/2006. Closing date: 31 October 2004.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/mundus/index_en.html

Support for Frontiers of Science and Technology Missions and Workshops

The Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (AATSE) receives funding from the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) for the Frontiers of S&T Missions and Workshops element of the Innovation Access Programme - International S&T Networks, as detailed in the Australian Government's Innovation Statement, Backing Australia's Ability. ATSE is offering Australian researchers an opportunity to submit expressions of interest for international activities during the financial year 2005-2006.

An EOI form available from:

<http://www.atse.org.au/index.php?sectionid=548> email elizabethm@atse.org.au

Closing date - FRIDAY 2 JULY 2004 at 5.00 PM EST.

ATSE will not fund the following activities conference sponsorship, attendance or participation in conferences, collaborative research projects, and Postdoctoral or Fellowship exchanges.

Other News

FEAST Website (www.feast.org) – Feedback sought

The FEAST website is updated regularly and includes more in depth information than the newsletter is able. We would like feedback from you, our website visitors, subscribers and database members to assist us in improving the service we provide for you.

The FEAST website has undergone several reincarnations over the years, and as with all good technology, has moved with the times and evolved. We are considering a complete website redesign to ensure longevity and easier use from both a user's and web designer's perspective. This will involve moving the FEAST website from a database driven system to a platform static system. It will still have a database of members.

We would like to hear about your experiences in the use of the FEAST website, what you think about its current format that would be crucial to keep in a new system, and what things

you would like to see which are not currently provided. We need to ensure our stakeholders and users are catered for. Indeed, you are the reason we have a website.

Please respond by e-mail by July 15th 2004 to Alison White Alison@feast.org with any comments you have.

CRC Conference – short report

CRC Association's Annual National Conference was held from 8th to 10th June 2004 at the Adelaide Convention Centre. It well encapsulated its theme "CRCs from strength to strength – sharing experiences" as it was an invaluable networking opportunity. 370 people attended, of whom 315 were full registrants – the others being partial registrations/complimentary registrations (sponsors).

The SA Minister for Industry, Trade & Regional Development, the Hon Paul Holloway, MLC opened the Conference. The Minister for Science, the Hon Peter McGauran, MP presented the Awards for Excellence at the Gala Lunch which was attended by 446 people and the Conference Dinner later that same day by some 320.

Once again one of the highlights was the presentations from the eight CRC PhD students who were selected to attend out of 35 applicants. The Chief Scientist, Dr Robin Batterham presented his views on the CRC Program. There were a number of concurrent sessions in two streams – Best Practice and Realising the Benefits which provided the opportunity for people from a range of CRCs to share experiences. Workshops for the key CRC roles (Chairs, CEOs, Business Managers, Communication and Education & Training Managers) also proved really worthwhile. <http://www.crca.asn.au>

The Irish Presidency of the Council of Europe

The Irish Presidency of the Council of Europe concludes on 30 June 2004. The Netherlands is next to take on the prestigious role as President for the six months from 1 July 2004.

FEAST has been most fortunate to have the support of the Irish Embassy for this time in hosting and chairing the Executive meetings and would like to thank the staff of the Irish Embassy, and particularly the First Secretary Mr Ciaran Byrne, for their kind assistance.

We look forward to working with the Royal Netherlands Embassy during their period of Presidency.

European Commission releases review of FEAST by Dr Karsten Brenner

The European Commission has now released the report of the review of FEAST by Dr Karsten Brenner. The report recommends the continuation and expansion of FEAST and may be viewed at http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/iscp/pdf/feast-assessment-report_en.pdf

**FEAST would like to thank all contributors to this newsletter and encourages anyone who would like to contribute to the next newsletter to contact us at email:
info@feast.org**

The FEAST newsletter presents a brief review of major relevant news. Longer and more indepth reports are available from the FEAST website. Some items not included in the newsletter are available from the website.