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Editorial

The Astronomical Society of Australia (ASA) and **CSIRO PUBLISHING** are very pleased to announce that PASA is growing and changing format to fully electronic publication from 2002.

Extra Edition in 2001

We are delighted to offer a fourth edition of PASA in 2001, in addition to the three scheduled editions. This edition, PASA 18/4, is a festschrift of papers on plasma astrophysics, published in celebration of the sixtieth birthday of Professor Donald B. Melrose of the University of Sydney. More details of the festschrift can be found in the Foreword of this edition.

Move to Fully Electronic Publication

PASA 18/4 is also the last edition of PASA to be published fully in paper-format. From 2002 PASA will be moving to principally electronic publication. *All the steps involved in producing a quality journal will be preserved, except for the final stage of printing and posting a paper copy.* In addition, publication will occur paper-by-paper, giving readers the fastest access to important new results, and authors timely publication of their work.

Background: PASA is a Professional Society-owned journal published by a not-for-profit publisher, **CSIRO PUBLISHING**. The Australian astronomical community recognises the importance of maintaining diversity in astronomical publishing as an aid to the internationally equitable dissemination of refereed, research results. As a fully refereed, ISI listed journal PASA provides for authors an effective, efficient and inexpensive alternative to the large journals. This is especially important in a country like Australia, whose scientists often do not get page charges covered by the Government funding agencies. As a result, over the last few years, PASA's submissions have been increasing in number and improving, its Impact Factor has been rising, and there is good author support for the journal.

However, with the journal's production costs rising, the Astronomical Society of Australia needs a less expensive publishing option that still supports peer-review and the highest quality editing and production. We are determined to continue to make rapid, high-quality refereeing features of PASA. We believe that it is these features, rather than a hard-copy, which are essential for the future of astronomical research. Self-publication, by putting papers on astro-ph, for example,

is not considered to be an adequate substitute for a fully refereed journal.

Most readers access astronomy papers electronically these days and PASA papers have been directly linked to from the NASA Astrophysics Data System for a number of years. As a result the ASA has decided to produce PASA in electronic-only format from 2002, incorporating all the steps involved in producing a quality journal except for the final stage of printing and posting a paper copy. In addition, with the move to electronic publishing, PASA can publish paper-by-paper, giving readers the fastest access to important new results. Without this move to electronic-only publishing, PASA would have had to cease production, or sharply raise subscription costs.

Access and Archiving: **CSIRO PUBLISHING** and the Astronomical Society of Australia will make every effort to ensure the indefinite availability of the archive of PASA papers, whatever happens. Institutional subscribers will have access to the full text of electronic PASA papers on the **CSIRO PUBLISHING** site. **CSIRO PUBLISHING** will continue to provide access to the papers in Volumes for which subscribers have subscribed. New subscribers to PASA will have access to the full electronic PASA archive held by **CSIRO PUBLISHING**.

Additionally, when a paper is published, the abstract details are sent to the NASA ADS and they establish links to the PASA papers on the electronic PASA website. Readers from subscribing institutions will be able to access the full text of the papers from the ADS site. Full-text will be made freely available to the ADS one year after publication.

As an independent business unit operating within CSIRO (the Australian Government-funded scientific research organisation), **CSIRO PUBLISHING** uploads all of its journals, including PASA, to the CSIRO library service where the material is stored in perpetuity on their ScienceServer system. This creates an independent library-based archive.

CD archive copies will be produced (in pdf format) of each issue and can be made available to subscribers at cost upon request. Institutions wishing to discontinue subscriptions to PASA will be given the option of receiving the archive on CD or uploaded directly to their system.

The PASA Update Bulletins

PASA is also producing a quarterly broadsheet, the PASA Update Bulletin, to promote the contents of PASA and important news on Australian astronomy to our subscribers and to others. Using the PASA Update Bulletins, readers can be made aware of the content that PASA is publishing, and they can access the papers either directly or, as they more usually would, using the Astrophysics Data System.

Future Expansion

With the move to fully electronic publication, PASA will be able to expand its content by 50% next year, with a less than 5% rise in the institutional subscription price.

Concluding Remarks

Next year, PASA will be making a significant departure from the traditional publishing model. Of course, many astronomical journals have made similar moves, although, for some, the fact that the electronic version is now the official archive is less obvious as they

maintain a partially complete paper journal. PASA is taking the transition to electronic publishing one step further. With the support of the astronomical community, this will ensure the continuation of a Society journal produced by a not-for-profit publisher, and will promote a cost-effective, timely and innovative way to disseminate quality, scientific information.

PASA continues to welcome submissions from Australian and overseas authors at any time. Instructions to Authors can be found at the PASA website at <http://www.publish.csiro.au/journals/pasa>. We encourage the astronomical community to take full advantage of the new PASA's speed and distribution as well as its exceptional value.

Sincerely

Dr Russell Cannon
Chair, PASA Editorial Advisory Committee