



look at a career in statistics, especially as he would be able to combine statistics with his first passion: sports. While I'm far from being an expert, I have worked for the Statistical Society long enough to have a rough idea of what a sports statistician does. At the end she was all excited about talking to her son about a possible career in statistics.

If we had not had that conversation, he may never have even learned that the option is out there. He did not hear about it in school!

And that, ladies and gentlemen, is why we have a *Mathematics and Statistics Awareness Month*.

[Marie-Louise Rankin](#)

SSA Executive Officer

Read newsletter in your [browser](#)

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*On behalf of the History Committee, Dennis Trewin was checking whether obituaries/citations were available for Past-Presidents. A big gap was Dr Clemens Pratt who was President from 1969-71. Dennis' research showed that he was still alive and that he had taught him operations research at the University of Melbourne in 1966. The citation is below. Dr Pratt was able to check the validity of the citation."*

**CLEMENS W. PRATT – SHORT CITATION**

Dr Clemens (Clem) W. Pratt was President of the Statistical Society of Australia from 1969 to 1971. His background was primarily in queueing and congestion theory but also operations research. He achieved his PhD under Professor David Cox in London (1961-63). In the 1960s, he taught statistical methods for research workers, and Operations Research part-time at Melbourne University as part of the third year Statistics course.

Pratt helped set up the Victorian Branch and was an early President of the Branch, maybe the first. He was President when the annual Belz Lecture was first established in 1969. There were only 3 Branches of the SSA at that time (initially NSW, followed by Canberra and then Victoria).

He was educated in Brisbane and was dux of Brisbane High School in 1954. At the age of 18, enrolled in engineering studies at the University of Queensland, then pursued postgraduate studies there and at the University of London.

Pratt had a 38-year career with Telstra (previously the PMG and Telecom Australia), initially specializing in telephone traffic engineering, and later working in information systems planning and development, network operations, quality management and network planning. During this period he represented Australia on several international bodies (including the International Telecommunication Union in Geneva and the Economic Commission for Asia & the Far East in Bangkok) and was on the governing body of the International Teletraffic Congresses.

He also chaired the Board at the Teletraffic Research Centre at the University of Adelaide in the late 1990s. The Teletraffic Research Centre, incorporating the Centre for Defence Communications and Information Networks, conducted research and development for both the commercial and defence sectors.

After taking early retirement, he set up his own consultancy business and undertook contracts with Victoria University (quality management), the Committee for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (reviews of quality assurance programs in universities), the Australian Information Technology Education Company (training in forecasting and traffic engineering), and Air Services Australia (security of its private telecommunications network).

He lives in Melbourne, where he enjoys music, theatre, amateur astronomy, and his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Dennis Trewin  
April 2023

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**THE  
RANDOM  
SAMPLE**

# Optimisation: The Intelligence Behind AI

**Peter  
Stuckey**

**Sevandi  
Kandanaarachchi**

**TheRandomSample.com.au**

## Episode 77: Optimisation: The Intelligence behind AI

In our everyday lives, we all face decisions where we ask ourselves questions about the best way to do something. For example:

“How much of this item should I buy?”

“What is the best time to do this task?”

“What is the best way to get from point A to point B?”

These types of decision-making questions, or problems, are known as optimisation problems. For businesses or industries, these types of problems are much more complicated.

In this episode, we explore certain types of optimisation problems known as discrete optimisation problems and how industries and companies use discrete optimisation to make decisions for complex problems.

Our guest is Monash University Professor Peter Stuckey, a pioneer in constraint programming (CP) which is a powerful approach to solving discrete optimisation problems. Professor Stuckey explains why he believes optimisation is the intelligence behind artificial intelligence.

Our host is Dr Sevandi Kandanaarachchi, a Senior Research Scientist and Team Leader with CSIRO.

[Find out more](#)

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## **SA Branch of the Statistical Society of Australia – March 2023 Annual General Meeting**

The 2023 Annual General Meeting of the SA branch of the Statistical Society of Australia was held on March 22, 2023. Barbara Toson, President of the Branch presented the minutes of the 2022 meeting which were approved. She also presented her annual report, where she listed the speakers who presented in 2022 and also noted difficulties with finding speakers in some months and last minute cancellations. Barbara also discussed memberships and how there was an increase in early 2022, coinciding with the Machine Learning workshop which was booked out. The increase was probably due to a reduction in registration fees for members, Barbara noted this may be a good way to increase memberships. The SA Branch is currently offering free student memberships, however uptake has been slow. It may be useful to point out that students with at least 2 years continuous membership can apply to travel grants.

Initiatives for 2023 include: to acknowledge service of all council and committee members; organise workshops, increase attendance at presentations; and to promote mentorship program. The ASC/OZCOTs in 1-15 December 2023 in Wollongong, there was discussion about organising face to face events at the conference and whether there would be online registration.

Nominations for council were:

Barbara Toson: President

Lan Kelly: Vice-President

Paul Sutcliffe: Treasurer

Gabriella Lincoln: Secretary

Council members: Aarti Gulyani & Julian Whiting

Auditor: Tony Hobbs

All nominations were accepted. There is still a need for 2 more Council members, including an early career statistician representative.

Following the AGM, there was a talk presented by Dr Amal Osman (from meetup) on her work on pharmacotherapy for obstructive sleep apnea. Dr Amal Osman is a post-doctoral research fellow at the Adelaide Institute for Sleep Health, Flinders University. Her research involves the development of simple clinical tools to measure how collapsible the upper airway is during wakefulness and sleep in people with obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA). Dr Osman is interested in understanding the mechanisms that contribute to

airway closure in sleep apnoea and developing new tools to predict responses to much needed targeted and novel OSA treatments. These tools have now been used in several clinical trials and have recently been recognised by Women In Innovation, Innovation Category, 2021 and InDaily's 40Under40, 2022 awards.

Lan Kelly

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**Looking for your dream job** can take less time when you set up a personalised job alert in our very own [Career Centre](#).

How it works:

- Receive notifications when new jobs matching your specified criteria are posted
- Set how often you would like to receive these alerts
- Focus your time elsewhere and let your next job come to you
- Quickly and easily remove the alert after you accept your dream job

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**Mentioned in previous newsletters (click on the relevant heading to find out details)**

[SSA PhD Top-Up Scholarships: the SSA wants to support you](#) (deadline 26 April 2023)

[Society Awards](#) - Do you know anyone deserving of one of SSA's Society Awards?

[Expression of Interest in Survey and Data Science Courses in 2023–24](#)

[2023 Venables Award for Developers of Open Source Software for Data Analytics](#) - (deadline 22 April 2023)

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## SSA Events

**Mathematical Engineering of Deep Learning - Part One Foundations**

20 Apr 2023, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM (AEST) held at Room 163, 14 Sir Christopher Ondaatje Ave Macquarie University, NSW 2109, Australia

This workshop is presented by the NSW Branch and School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences, Macquarie University. It is targeted at people interested in engineering, signal processing, statistics, physics, econometrics, operations research, quantitative management, pure mathematics, bioinformatics, applied machine learning, or even applied deep learning.

For more details and to register click [here](#).

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### **Getting to Know: Stats New Zealand**

20 Apr 2023, 2:00 PM (AEST), held online

The Early Career and Student Statistician Network and New Zealand Statistical Association present

### **Getting to Know: Stats New Zealand.**

This webinar will be online 4 pm NZ time and 2 pm AEST.

In this webinar, Wendy Dobson will give a brief overview the work of Stats NZ, some of the key statistical roles here and how professional development is supported. Drawing on her experience of 8 years of recruitment rounds she'll also talk about how recruitment works at Stats NZ and will share what a hiring manager looks for.

Tiana Whitehead will talk about her experience as an early career statistician at Stats NZ and what it has been like transitioning from university into full time employment.

Click [here](#) to register for the zoom link.

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### **WA Branch Events - In person only**

The WA Branch has organised three events for members and guests during April with Professor Guy Nason, the Frank Hansford-Miller Fellow for 2023

The named Frank Hansford-Miller Lecture is on the evening of 18 April at UWA. [Find out more](#).

On 24 April is a special event for early career and student statisticians in



Fremantle where they get to engage personally with Professor Guy Nason.

[Find out more.](#)

Lastly, on 27 April, there is a hands-on workshop on Non-stationary Time-series.

[Find out more.](#)

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### **Statistical Consulting Network April Meet-Up**

28 April 2023, 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM AEST, held online

Come along with your thinking cap, maybe a problem, and some lunch!

The Statistical Consulting Network invites you to their monthly meet-up, a virtual lunchtime meeting where statisticians help each other out with problems that they aren't sure how to deal with. This virtual meeting is held on Zoom at lunchtime on the last Friday of each month, 12:30-1:30 PM (AEDT). We start each meet-up with announcements, or occasionally a special topic discussion, then discuss problems that attendees have brought along with them.

We also have a Slack workspace where members of the consulting network can communicate between meetings, or post problems or relevant materials they would like to discuss during a meeting.

[Zoom link](#)

[Slack Workspace link](#)

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### **[Item Nonresponse And Imputation Course](#)**

20 Jun 2023, 5:00 PM (AEST) – 11 Jul 2023, 6:00 PM (AEST), held online - weekly 1 hour live discussions with Professor Dr Jörg Drechsler

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The ASC2023 workshops are open for registration:

10 December 2023

[ASC 2023 Workshops- Essential Skills for Statistical Communication](#)



[ASC 2023 Workshops-Statistical Consultancy – The Essentials for Getting Started and Ongoing Success](#)

[ASC 2023 Workshops-Deep Statistics for More Rigorous and Efficient Data Science](#)

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The logo for OZCOTS consists of the word "OZCOTS" in a bold, black, serif font, enclosed within a black rectangular border. Two horizontal lines extend from the left and right sides of the border.

### **ASC and OZCOTS 2023**

10-15 December 2023, University of Wollongong, NSW

[Abstract submission](#) and [registration](#) now open!

The Scientific Program Committee is pleased to invite authors to submit abstracts for oral and poster presentations, to be delivered at ASC and OZCOTS 2023.

Please click [here](#) to submit your abstract. You will be asked to create an account with Oxford Abstract. Just follow the prompts.

Presenters should aim for 10-15 minute presentations. Depending on the number of submissions a final decision on the length of presentations will be made closer to the event.

The abstract submission deadline is 24 April 2023.

Find out more

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### **Current Vacancies in SSA's Career Centre**

#### [Multiple Data Analyst Roles - APS6 and APS5 - Perth](#)

Western Australia

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

Department of Employment and Workplace RelationsLocation ...

#### [Multiple Data Analyst Roles - APS6 and APS5 - Sydney](#)

New South Wales

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

Department of Employment and Workplace RelationsLocation ...

#### [Multiple Data Analyst Roles - APS6 and APS5 - Canberra](#)

Australian Capital Territory

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

Department of Employment and Workplace RelationsLocation ...

#### [Multiple Assistant Directors - Data Management and Reporting - EL 1](#)

New South Wales

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

The Evidence and Assurance Division provides ...

#### [Multiple Assistant Directors - Data Management and Reporting - EL 1](#)

Australian Capital Territory

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

The Evidence and Assurance Division provides ...

#### [Revenue Officer- DIRECT HIRE \(12 Month Register\)](#)

Multiple Locations (see description)

Internal Revenue Service

Duties WHAT IS THE DIVISION? SMALL BUSINESS ...

#### [Internal Revenue Agent \(Examiner\) - Direct Hire \(12 Month Register\)](#)

Multiple Locations (see description)

Internal Revenue Service

Duties WHAT ARE THE APPEALS (AP), LARGE BUSINESS ...

[Lecturer in Applied Statistics](#)

Western Australia

Curtin University

A new role for a statistician to teach data science ...

[View All Jobs](#)

If you have news from the Australian statistical community to share in Stats Matters and Events, please get in touch [with us](#)! We love getting feedback too.

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