**IPAN 2021 October 2nd AGM report**

We meet today on the lands of First Nations peoples around Australia. I would like to acknowledge that these lands have never been ceded and pay my respects to Aboriginal people present at this meeting.

This is IPAN’s 8th AGM. The first AGM was held at a conference in Canberra in 2014. At that time, we were responding to and focused on the decision to host 250 marines in Darwin on a rotational arrangement.

As a result of Covid this year we meet again on zoom. Australia announced the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan immediately the after the US did after 20 years of committing our young men and women to wage a war unrelated to the defence of Australia. The costs and consequences of that war include the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Afghani people, 41 deaths of Australian forces and just made public SMH reports between 2001 and 2019 over 1000 serving or retired ADF personnel who lost their lives to suicide.

The announcement of the AUKUS pact which includes the US and UK providing technology to build nuclear powered submarines came as a shock to Australians and to leaders and people in countries around the world.

The extent of change AUKUS brings is becoming clear with more troops, more hardware, more missiles and the likelihood of US and UK nuclear powered vessels being leased or just stationed here in Australian ports eg Stirling in WA. unlikely there will be any Australian ship building jobs

No indication from the government on financial costings.

An emergency meeting on Saturday 18th September called after the announcement by IPAN and AABCC filled the 100 places on zoom with others trying to get on. The outcome of the meeting was a petition **No Nuclear-Submarines; End U​.​S. dominance; Healthcare not warfare** whichhas received 15000 signaturesand a planned coalition building zoom meeting on the 7th November organised by a range of peace and environment groups.

The major work of IPAN over the past 18 months has been the People’s Inquiry into the Costs and Consequences of Australia’s engagement in US led wars and the alliance with the US.

This historic and ground breaking Inquiry has been very successful with more than 260 submissions received some of which could be published as individual books! But importantly the majority have been the views and words of the people of Australia. Bevan Ramsden and Andrew Fullerton have collated some of the submissions into radio programs which are valuable snap shots of these views and recommendations.

**The 8 Panel Leaders receiving submissions**

Dr Alison Broinowski FP, Dr Vince Scappatura Military and Defence, Prof Ian Lowe Environment, Jeannie Rea Working people, Dr Chad Satterlee Economics, Terry Mason First Nations, Greg Barnes QC Political and Democratic Rights and Dr Peter Catt Social and Community

These community leaders have contributed greatly to the integrity of this Inquiry and have volunteered their time to read and write reports and present on webinars. They have been supported to read and summarise content in the submissions by a team of volunteers who we recognise for their time and expertise.

Inquiry Chair Kellie Tranter has demonstrated her leadership for peace and independence during this Inquiry period. Kellie and the panel leaders have written an interim Inquiry report which will be discussed during today’s general meeting . We anticipate the final report on findings and recommendations will be tabled in both houses of Parliament in early 2022.

There are also many who have worked tirelessly in the outreach texting, tweeting, emailing and phoning. We estimate there have been over 2000 people reached by phone, email, webinars, twitter, FB, forums, surveys and online petitions which makes this Inquiry so unique and valuable.

The Inquiry is open for further AUKUS related submissions until the 5th October- 3 more days for you to share your views

The service of Sam Brennan as Communications manager during the Inquiry has been invaluable. We look forward to continuing to work with Sam into the year ahead.

I would also like to recognise the work of all our committee members over the past year and in particular the roles of secretary and treasurer performed so capably by Jonathan Pilbrow and Ross Gwyther. Id also like to thank Christopher Crouch who is retiring from his position as WA state rep and thank him for his commitment and work.

**What lies ahead?**

The Inquiry report will be a valuable tool to use as we take the findings and recommendations into the community groups, to political representatives and the media, especially during a time of increasing talk of war in our region and the need to build a broad and inclusive peace movement to reject this trend.

Administratively we as a network of organisations and individual members need to maintain memberships and engage our members in the ongoing work of IPAN, as well as supporting them to the best of our ability in their areas of primary focus be it on environmental, community building, for equality and justice on human rights and workers’ rights.

This is a significant challenge and we need new and fresh input from our members. We hope to assist in this process by holding regular members zoom meetings into the year ahead. We are also looking for volunteer members to take on supporting roles on the coordinating committee. Please indicate your interest during this meeting.

We now have active local groups operating in all states. The number of organisations who are financial sits at more than 50 and over the last 3 years 140 individuals have joined. We need to develop ways in which individual members of IPAN can be more engaged and active around our aims.

Work being done in each of the states is expanding IPAN opportunities to work collectively with a range of other organisations. A good example of this is the Raising peace initiative in NSW which held a peace festival over 7 days around the International Day of peace this year with over 30 organisations involved and 37 events.

Each of the 8 states in which IPAN has members have provided a summary of the many areas of work they have engaged in over the past year which is too long to read now. This is available for your perusal on the IPAN web site along with this Chairperson’s report.

**IPAN (SA) Report for IPAN AGM 2021.**

As with everyone else, Covid has been severely restricting our activities.  The joint rally on 24th of this month was our only rally this year. It was reasonably good - about 200 people. Mostly older, but a few more younger people than normal, probably due to the environmental element. The PA (from the Greens) was bad however and so listening was difficult - IPAN has a better PA to use next time. We are meeting on Oct 9th to set up a more organised coalition. Those groups involved so far are IPAN (SA), No Dump on South Australia, Friends of the Earth, Spirit of Eureka (SA), Pax Christi, the Greens (SA), Socialist Alliance and Solidarity. WILPF (SA) may also become involved, and MAPW (SA).

We had a rally organised for July 4th this year, with good speakers, but unfortunately it had to be cancelled because of lock-down. We have also participated in the Inquiry, to the extent possible with our small numbers.

**IPAN NSW**

As in other States, activity this year has been severely curtailed by Covid19. However, NSW people have supported IPAN’s People’s Inquiry enthusiastically and submitted a good number of submissions. The sub-committee is warmly thanked for the extraordinary effort that has gone into the inquiry.

* On March 20, 2021 (a particularly wet day in Sydney!), IPAN was represented at a small gathering to remember the invasion of Iraq. The action will be repeated in 2022, preparatory to the twentieth anniversary in 2023. (The date of the invasion is unforgettable - 20:03:2003.)
* IPAN was represented at the “Home Run for Julian’ tour of NSW in support of Julian Assange, taking the opportunity to identify the significance of IPAN’s work.
* Letters written by IPAN supporters have appeared in major newspapers.
* In Brisbane, NSW IPAN supporters also joined the Disrupt Land Forces action and the launch of Scott Ludlam’s book, “Full Circle”.
* Attended and contributed to the Australian War Memorial Public Consultations.
* Attended ANZAC Day Frontier Wars Rally at the Australian War Memorial.
* Supported ‘Whistle-blower’ and David McBride rallies in Canberra.
* The Raising Peace Festival during September involved several affiliated groups and required some serious commitment from them. The festival has been judged a success, in that it brought together a disparate collection of peace groups, some affiliated with IPAN and others who are not. Together, they showed that they could work in concert to produce a memorable event.

**IPAN ACT**

It has been a quiet year for IPAN ACT with COVID and being under lockdown or other restrictions for much of the year.  A number of members have contributed to the People's Inquiry and have been active in other organisations, such as climate organisations, MAPW, the Alliance Against Political Prosecutions and Manning Clark House.  We have communicated with members by email and zoom, but hope for a more active year to come.

**IPAN NT**

Areas of work in NT represented reported on by the **Alice Springs Peace** Action Think Tank include the People’s Inquiry, Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty, Hiroshima Remembrance and Alice supported an Anzac Peace Vigil.

From Justin in Darwin A large bill board **NOUSAWARBASE** has been reported on in the paper, and on radio.

**IPAN QLD**

The 8 affiliate groups in Qld have joined together on these occasions:

* Inquiry- both in speaking at community events and assisting in the processing of submissions
* Whistle-blower actions supporting Witness K and Bernard Colleary
* Hiroshima events
* Brisbane International Day of Peace events
* Anzac eve vigil
* Forums on issues relating to IPAN issues/
* Disrupt Landforces lead and main event in early June

**IPAN Victoria Report**

Over past 18 months Melbourne and parts of regional Victoria have been in a succession of prolonged lockdowns with a few very brief periods of eased restrictions in between the lockdowns. Overall, Melbourne has been in a severe lockdown for 9 months restricting most organisations, including IPAN-Victoria, ability to organise face to face activities. However, the alternatives of on-line meetings, discussions and events, creates new opportunities in organising and involvement by more people, expanding our reach more widely.

* **Monthly IPAN-Vic meetings**
* We were able to overcome some covid restrictions by continuing to hold regular monthly meetings, on line, with average attendance of about 15 people representing affiliate organisations, individual associate members and supporters.
* IPAN-Victorian representatives on the co-ordinating committee report back on national co-ordinating cttee meetings, working groups (eg Inquiry Working group), decisions and events organised by the national co-ordinating committee. National reports are followed by discussion, with views and proposals at IPAN-Vic meetings conveyed to the national co-ordinating cttee.
* Affiliates report on their organisations’ activities which IPAN promotes and assists affiliates with. As well as attending and contributing to IPAN discussions and events, affiliates are active and busy in their own organisations.
* Whenever possible, time is set aside specifically for a general discussion on current events eg developments in South China Sea, preparations for war in the region and globally, China-US-Australia. Discussions on specific topics are sometimes led by one person making brief introductory remarks to open up the discussion. These informal discussions allow for greater involvement by members and supporters to contribute their views.
* Two public zoom meetings with keynote speakers on the Alliance and the Inquiry *(A People’s Inquiry: Exploring the case for an Independent and Peaceful Australia. What are the costs and consequences of Australia’s involvement in US-led wars and the US-Alliance? What are the alternatives?)* were held during the year. Attendance at each was about 80-90 participants.
* We were able to hold one public activity in between 2 lockdowns when restrictions were lifted for 3 weeks. July 4th rally was held at Victoria Market and attended by 50 people complying with covid restrictions of maximum numbers in an outdoor gathering of 50, and other covid requirements. The rally was initiated and organised by IPAN-Vic and endorsed by 12 organisations. There were brief speeches by representatives from 12 endorsing organisations. The rally was well received with lots of support from passing pedestrians and car traffic. Information and leaflets on IPAN, the threat of War with China, the Inquiry and Questionnaire on the Alliance were distributed to the public for 2-3 hours. Passers by stopped to listen to speakers, and engaged in conversations with us.
* IPAN-Vic members worked hard promoting the Inquiry and inviting submissions. Hundreds of emails were sent and phone calls made to many faith and community organisations and unions. Sometimes this hard ground work is undervalued and unacknowledged, but it is vital for introducing ideas on independent and peaceful Australia and IPAN, to people and places not familiar with these issues and positions. The People’s Inquiry has proven to be an important vehicle in promoting ideas for an independent and peaceful Australia and IPAN as a broad national Network.
* IPAN-Vic’s contact list has grown to over 150 contacts. Some are financial members; others are not yet financial but support and are interested in our work. They all receive notifications of events and activities by national IPAN and IPAN-Vic.
* Community radio stations 3CR in Melbourne, and community radio station in Warrnambool, regularly broadcast interviews with IPAN members, discussing the Inquiry, the Alliance, July 4th rally and related issues and events.
* **Victorian Regional Contacts**
* There are a number of IPAN members and supporters across regional Victoria.
* **IPAN South-West Regional Victoria** group is working with local environment groups, trade unions and farmers’ organisations. Julie Hart is the South-West Regional Victoria representative on IPAN’s national co-ordinating cttee. Julie’s letters often appear in local newspaper in Hamilton, Portland and Warrnambool.
* **Tasks for the future.**
* Ensure more time at monthly meetings is set aside to members’ and supporters’ discussions on topical issues.
* Increase input and information flow from State group to the national co-ordinating cttee.
* Promote and build AUKUS Coalition.
* Re-new and expand connections with organisations and individuals to build IPAN and the coalition on AUKUS. Welfare groups, unions, environment groups.
* Work on establishing more regional IPAN groups.
* Increase financial membership.
* **Finally, we acknowledge and thank the collective work of all members of IPAN’s national co-ordinating committee.**

**IPAN WA**

WA didn’t have the extended periods of lockdown of the rest of the country and most months held a monthly vigil in Perth City Centre where the ‘No Australian involvement in US wars’ banner was prominently displayed and leaflets handed out. Leaflets have addressed different aspects of war damage under the IPAN Inquiry headings and were given out alongside the IPAN inquiry brochure. Over a thousand brochures were distributed. Negative responses were usually rare.

IPANWA organised a roundtable discussion with representatives of local environmental groups to try and get a short group submission from them for the inquiry to no avail. The only WA union reps who responded to similar invitations to discuss the inquiry were from the CPSU. So, whilst there was a lot of work establishing contacts locally the outcomes were not very productive. There may be long term benefits of establishing these contacts after the Inquiry publication.

No new members have formally joined but supporters from other activist organisations have joined the vigils sporadically.

The 4th July national rally went ahead despite appalling weather with three speakers addressing a group of around twenty, who were already supporters of IPAN.

IPAN reps have given the IPAN perspective in two public peace events in Perth.

IPANWA is currently organising a public meeting for the 12th October to develop local responses to the idea of Garden Island becoming a nuclear submarine base.

**TASMANIA**

The peace movement in Tasmania has always had a low profile compared to the attention that Environmental and Justice issues get. The Quaker Peace & Justice Committee meets monthly and writes letters: a number of its members have had letters published in the local paper on peace and anti-nuclear issues. MAPW organised the annual Hiroshima Day vigil on a wet Saturday in August attended by a round two dozen local  activists from WIPLF, Quakers and MAPW though it must be admitted that membership of these  groups often overlaps.