

## **CITATION FOR PROFESSOR ROBERT STIMSON, ANZRS AI DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD**

### **Kingsley Haynes and Paul Dalziel**

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Professor Robert J. Stimson, or Bob to his many friends and colleagues, has played an outstanding role in fostering regional science in Australia for more than four decades. Bob's intellectual contributions to the discipline have been previously honoured when he was made a Life Member of our Association in 1997 and when he became the first Australian to be elected as a Fellow of the Regional Science Association International (RSAI) in 2010. The purpose of this Award is to recognise Bob's distinguished service to the Australia and New Zealand section of RSAI (ANZRS AI) throughout the Association's first forty years.

Bob was present at the May 1971 meeting of the Australia and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science, which consisted mainly of economists and geographers. The meeting was convened by Professor Alex Kerr in Brisbane to discuss the formation of an Australian and New Zealand Section of RSAI. It was this meeting that led to the formation of ANZRS AI, with Professor Kerr elected as its first president.

ANZRS AI organised its first annual conference in 1976. At the fifth conference in 1980, Bob Stimson was elected as the Association's fourth president, a position he held until 1983. Under Bob's presidency, ANZRS AI hosted its first Pacific Regional Science Conference (PRSCO) at Surfers Paradise in August 1981. More than 60 papers were presented at that conference, which included a large delegation from Japan. Since then, ANZRS AI has hosted PRSCO on three further occasions.

Bob was elected onto the RSAI Council in 2005 and was appointed as its president in 2005 and 2006, following the example of Professor Rod Jensen who had been RSAI president in 1990. A feature of Bob's presidency was the progress made by RSAI to build on the initiative of the previous president, Antoine Bailly, who integrated its various sections, so that all ANZRS AI members are now automatically given access to RSAI membership. The agenda during Bob's presidency saw

the development of an extension in member services, including the planning for the new journal, *Regional Science Policy and Practice*, initiation of discussions for the development of a section of RSAI in China and the establishment of new sections in South America. More than anyone else, Bob has been a key figure in ensuring ANZRSAI remains connected to the wider international community of regional science scholars.

After four years as a high school teacher Bob began his academic career in 1966 as a senior Tutor in Economic Geography at the University of Melbourne. Bob's leadership in regional science in Australia has been reflected in a series of prestigious appointments, including: Director of the Centre for Applied Social and Survey Research at Flinders University (where he was a Senior Lecturer in Geography); Director of the Australian Institute of Urban Studies in Canberra; Dean of the School of Management at the University of Canberra; Director of the QUT Node and then the UQ Node of the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (where he held a Chair in Urban Studies), Director of the Centre for Research into Sustainable Urban and Regional Futures at the University of Queensland (where he was Professor of Geographical Sciences and Planning); Convenor of the Australian Research Council Research Network in Spatially Integrated Social Science; and his current position as Director of the Australian Urban Research Infrastructure Network (AURIN) at the University of Melbourne, a \$20 million federal government funded project.

These positions of responsibility did not detract from Bob's research output; over a long and illustrious career, Bob has published 48 books and monographs and more than 400 scientific papers and book chapters. Throughout that career, Bob has been actively engaged in supporting and promoting the regional science community in Australasia. He has acted as a generous mentor to colleagues and students and continues to participate in ANZRSAI Council meetings as a trusted and highly respected advisor.

Apart from being a regional scientist, Bob is a cricket tragic, loves fishing and watching Aussie rules, and is an avid consumer of good Australian Shiraz.

The ANZRSAI Council thanks Professor Robert J. Stimson for his outstanding contributions to our Association over such a long period and confers on him the Australian and New Zealand Regional Science Association's Distinguished Service Award.