Proceedings of the
Australasian Language Technology Summer School (ALTSS) and Australasian Language Technology Workshop (ALTW) 2003

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Preface

The Australasian Language Technology Association is proud to present its inaugural Summer School and Workshop. The Summer School consists of eight intensive courses and eight standalone lectures presented by experts in the field, and targeted at postgraduate students and researchers from academia and industry. The Workshop, chaired by Alistair Knott and Dominique Estival, provides a forum for the presentation and discussion of new research in language technology. On Wednesday evening, the Language Technology Forum will promote language technology to the wider community, as a field which is addressing fundamental questions in cognitive science and generating important new social applications.

At a time when the field of language technology is experiencing unprecedented growth in Asia, Europe and North America, it is encouraging to see a healthy community taking shape in Australasia. The isolation of our region, its linguistic diversity, and its rapid uptake of new technologies, present important challenges and opportunities. With timely cooperation in research and training, such as the events on offer this week, the language technology community will continue to expand. Major goals will be to develop more natural human-machine interfaces, and more efficient ways to access the information contained in large collections of text and speech. Progress in these areas will lay the groundwork for new applications which address the challenges and opportunities of our region and, more generally, support the multilingual information society of the future.

On behalf of the ALTA Executive Committee, I would like to thank all the speakers, sponsors, editors, and participants for making this week a success.

Associate Professor Steven Bird
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President, Australasian Language Technology Association

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Acknowledgements

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- the Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering at the University of Melbourne for administrative support;
- Professor Rao Kotagiri for his personal endorsement and support of opportunities for postgraduate research training through events such as this;
- the University of Melbourne for hosting the event;
- Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO) for their generous sponsorship of the Australasian Language Technology Workshop.
- Appen Pty Ltd for their generous sponsorship of the Australasian Language Technology Summer School.

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