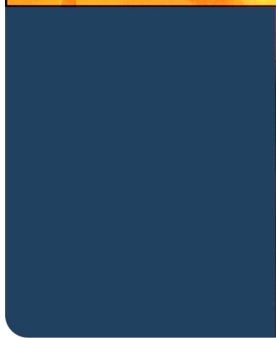




# ANNUAL REPORT 2013/2014



# YOUTH AFFAIRS NETWORK OF QUEENSLAND INC.

## ANNUAL REPORT 2013-2014



y o u t h   a f f a i r s   n e t w o r k   q l d

### Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc. Annual Report 2013- 2014

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YANQ acknowledges funding support from:

Dusseldorp Forum for “Building Young People’s Voices” project and Brisbane Metro North Medicare local for Youth Primary Health Development project.



YANQ would also like to thank all its members, networks and communities that invited, hosted or worked with YANQ in various ways during the past twelve months.





### **Acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders**

We believe that the primary culture of Australia is Aboriginal. We recognise that Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and South Sea Islander peoples are 3 separate cultures. We recognise Aboriginal people as the permanent custodians of mainland Australia, including those areas of land whose owners have been wiped out as a result of racist policies and acts. We use the term custodianship in the context of protection and care for the land.

YANQ is committed to respecting Murri communities and individuals. We seek to understand their responses to policies and issues affecting them. We are committed to learning about their understandings of the impact of decisions on them. YANQ apologises for the past and present social mistreatment of Murri and Islander people created by colonisation, and is committed to supporting the healing process.

### **A Summary of YANQ's Values**

At YANQ, we believe that everyone is unique. At the same time, human beings share a lot in common, and are essentially social. We envisage a society where everyone lives in harmony. For this to happen, society must both value every individual and seek the best outcome for the community as a whole. There is the same diversity amongst young people as the rest of the community; like everyone else, young people need to feel respected and valued. When young women and young men are treated as important, the rest of society will gain from their insights and experiences.

We aim to contribute to developing a society that genuinely includes all its members. That's why we are committed to promoting multiculturalism (in its widest sense), and supporting and respecting the wide range of cultures that are part of Australian society. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people always have been, and always will be, the first people of this land. Because of their special relationship with the land, indigenous culture will always have a particular significance in Australian society. Focussing on reconciliation with indigenous people is an important starting point toward creating a more inclusive society. It also provides a model for other areas of action, including strategies toward improving the situation of young people.

We believe that the most effective way to achieve constructive social change is for people to work together. Economic, social and political change is happening all the time, and it is critical that we constantly assess and reassess our strategies if we are to influence change. Both the process and outcomes of change must be fair if sustained, constructive social change is to occur.

We believe that everybody is entitled to have their basic emotional and material rights met. The central role of governments is to ensure that this occurs. Unfortunately, at the moment, governments in Australia focus on supporting global economic interests. Whilst we believe that everyone is fundamentally equal, some sections of our society do not have access to their fair share of society's resources. This includes young people, whose basic human rights are currently not being met. YANQ is committed to encouraging positive discrimination on behalf of those groups which miss out in society so that this type of social injustice will be overcome. It is only when everyone's fundamental rights are fulfilled, and each has the means to fully participate, that it will become relevant to talk about "mutual obligation" between society and its members.

We believe that a range of strategies is required to achieve constructive social change. Governments in Australia appear committed to stopping the voice of those who challenge their misplaced priorities. YANQ is responsible for being a strong public voice which lobbies and advocates on behalf of those young people who particularly miss out in society and of young people as a whole. To undertake this role effectively, it is crucial that we draw on the expertise of those working most closely with issues affecting particular groups of young people - young women and young men themselves, youth workers and youth organisations. That's why networking is another important social change strategy; it enables the youth sector to participate in collective action.

Ultimately, YANQ's credibility is maintained by practising what we preach. Our whole structure is designed to ensure that our values and vision permeate the organisation. We are committed to maintaining an open, flexible, accountable, consistent, inclusive, valuing approach in all our dealings - within YANQ, and in our relations with our members and the wider community. We are committed to applying our values in everything we say, and everything we do.

### **About the Youth Affairs Network of Queensland**

The Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc (YANQ) is the peak community youth affairs organisation in Queensland, representing individuals and organisations from Queensland's youth sector.

We promote the interests and well being of young people across the state by:

- disseminating information to members, the youth sector, and the broader community
- undertaking campaigns and lobbying
- making representations to government and other influential bodies

- resourcing regional and issues-based networks
- consulting and liaising with members and the field
- linking with key state and national bodies
- initiating projects
- hosting forums and conferences
- input into policy development
- enhancing the professional development of the youth sector

We advocate on behalf of young people in Queensland, especially disadvantaged young people, to government and the community.

We promote and support cultural diversity. We encourage the development of policies and programs that respond to the rights and needs of young people.

### **The YANQ Team from July 2013 to June 2014**

#### **Committee Members**

Mr Jude Saldanha (President)  
 Mr (Kuot) Elijah Buol (Vice-President)  
 Mr Phil Dodds (Treasurer)  
 Ms Matilda Alexander (Secretary)  
 Ms Whit Church  
 Ms Miranda McReynolds  
 Mr Alvin Hava  
 Mr Gavin Tyson  
 Ms Deb Kilroy ex officio  
 Mr Siyavash Doostkhah ex officio

#### **Staff**

Siyavash Doostkhah  
**Director**

Trish Ferrier  
**Policy Officer**

Steve Skitmore and Amber Hansen  
**Administration & Communication Officer**

#### **Consultants**

Prof. Martin Mills, University of Queensland

Suzi Quixley

Dr Glenda McGregory, Griffith University

Liz Archer

Dr Phil Crane, Queensland University of Technology

HowNow Solutions



## President's report

2013/2014 has been a significant year for YANQ and the Queensland Youth Sector. Although the LNP State Government severed YANQ's entire funding for the first time in 22 years, the organisation continues to act as the peak body representing the youth sector and rights of young people, and has doubled its membership since the funding cuts.

However, these funding cuts have had an adverse impact on YANQ's ability to engage with the various issues which are impacting on both young people and the youth sector. YANQ has had to restructure and downsize to ensure we remain financially viable. Ongoing reviews, changes and funding cuts have also exhausted the youth sector and many YANQ members have expressed major concern about the ongoing uncertainty and the associated anxiety imposed on the sector.

YANQ has also been planning to stage a youth sector conference in August 2014. The conference is the most significant event for the youth sector. For the first time the conference will have a international keynote speaker Tony Taylor, from the UK, who will bring Queensland up to date with information about the state of the youth sector in UK. He will also discuss the campaign he has been leading titled "In Defence of Youth Work". Conference themes include youth justice, health, housing, education and workforce development.

As well as these great projects YANQ has been involved in many other projects across the state this year and a plethora of other work in advocacy, lobbying, research and policy development all of which are outlined in more detail throughout this report. Please contact our staff if you would like any further information and/or clarification about any of the issues documented in this report, or if you would like to engage with any of our ongoing work, which we outline on a fortnightly basis in our email bulletin.

A special thanks to all YANQ members for your ongoing support of our work. Without its members YANQ will cease to exist. With your support we will endeavour to represent the youth sector, as we have done since 1989 (our founding year). We believe that we continue to be a strong voice for the rights of young people and the development of our sector and welcome working with you!

It was with sadness this year that we farewelled Trish Ferrier and Steve Skitmore who have been integral parts of YANQ for many years. I know that all who knew Trish and Steve would agree that they had both contributed a great deal to the work and vision of YANQ and we wish them all the best in their future pursuits.

I would also like to acknowledge my fellow Management Committee members for their hard work and dedication and especially to the Executive who have supported me in my role.

Finally, I hope that in the coming year we can continue to build on our strengths in partnership with the sector across Queensland and greatly look forward to working with you all.

Jude Saldanha  
President  
Youth Affairs Network Qld

## *The year at a glance:*

### *Youth Sector review, QLD Youth Strategy and Social Services Investment Framework*

The second round of consultations with the youth sector on the Recommissioning of Youth Services will start on 3<sup>rd</sup> June and finish in early July 2013. YANQ met with Helen Ferguson, the head of the Social Inclusion unit of the Department of Communities and received an early briefing about the consultation process.

Both Labor Government, which collapsed 10 programs into one called YARI, and the LNP with their Recommissioning of the Youth Services, ignored evaluation and learning from the 10 programs which have now disappeared. Regardless of who is in power in George Street, the youth sector is concerned about losing flexibility, moving away from prevention and a push for services to work within a case management model.

The Youth Sector in Queensland has been undergoing continual review for the past 10 years. Essentially, both Labor and LNP have been pushing for the current variety of services funded by Queensland Government to be replaced by a narrower range of services, delivered more intensively, to a smaller number of young people. It proposes discontinuation of the safety net provided by funded early intervention and prevention services. Implementation of these initiatives over time has diminished the quality of service delivery, has led to duplication of services, and contributed to an increase in the number of vulnerable young people in Queensland.

As you may know Queensland Council of Social Services (QCOSS) and the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) teamed up to take over the role of YANQ after the LNP Government cut YANQ's entire funding. This was done in partnership with the LNP and rolled out as part of the government's consultations across the state. QCOSS attended all consultations across the state and informed the sector that the government had funded them to put together a report and help organisations with the recommissioning process. YANQ invited both QCOSS and LGAQ to a public debate about the future of the Youth Sector and the role of various peaks but unfortunately both of them refused YANQ's invitation.

In 2013 the State Government also released a Draft Social Services Investment Framework <https://www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au/gi/consultation/1513/view.html>

The release of this document cemented uncertainty in the sector. The government's contestability agenda results in ongoing uncertainty as future contracts will always be open to competitors and potentially terminated early. YANQ made a submission to the government outlining the potential negative impact of contestability on the sector and urged the Queensland government to abandon this move.

### *Reengagement with Education research project - Marginalised Students: Enhancing life choices through engaging educational policies and practices*

Despite the defunding of YANQ, this project is going ahead strongly with research continuing in the Sunshine Coast and North West (Mt Isa) regions. YANQ held meetings with representatives from Catholic Education, Edmond Rice, Partnership Brokers and Youth Connection in regards to their assistance with promotion of our research project.

Building on the academic research, YANQ with funding support from the Duseldorp Forum commenced a video documentary project titled *Building Young people's Voices*. This project is about capturing young people's views about mainstream and alternative education, validating the academic research and taking young people's voices directly to politicians and other decision makers.



The project will be implemented in a number of alternative education sites in south east Queensland. Workshops with young people about our research will bring young people up to date with the findings and will allow for validation of these findings by young people. Community arts frameworks will be utilised and young people will work with professional film making crews who will assist them to document their stories.

Young people will be telling their stories about disengaging from mainstream schooling, the reasons they reengaged, and the reasons they are remaining engaged in an alternative setting. The final products will be used in several ways, as well as informing politicians and public servants, these stories will be used as an online training resource for youth workers and educators interested in working in alternative education sites. We are also planning a Facebook page which will encourage disengaged young people to find out more about flexible education options and provide them with contact details of various flexible education sites across the state.

### *Youth Primary Health Development Project*

Metro North Medicare Local contracted YANQ to assist them to undertake consultation and research with young people and the youth sector to identify the issues for young (marginalised) people to access primary health services.

During the project YANQ:

- undertook a literature review and collected data from the region to inform a regional perspective on the key issues for young people's primary health care needs and identified key stakeholders in primary health care services for young people in the region.
- consulted with young people and the youth sector about their views on what it would take to have marginalised young people accessing health services in the Metro North Region. This involved surveys and focus groups.
- developed the capacity of young people and the youth sector to engage with the activities of Metro North Medicare Local.



- developed partnerships between key stakeholders to ensure that marginalised young people access primary health care.
- developed and tested some pilot strategies to assist the project achieve its goal of improving marginalised young people's access primary health care services.
- delivered a final report of all findings to Metro North Medicare Local.

### Other Activities:

#### Special consultative status with UN

We had exciting news during the year from the United Nations. Here is part of the letter we received from UN letting us know that YANQ has been granted Special Consultative Status.

## United Nations

1 August 2013

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS BRANCH  
OFFICE FOR ECOSOC SUPPORT AND COORDINATION  
25th Floor Secretariat Building, United Nations, New York, N.Y. 10017  
Telephone: (212) 963-8652 Fax: (212) 963-9248  
Website :[www.un.org/ecosoc/ngo](http://www.un.org/ecosoc/ngo) Contact: [www.un.org/ecosoco/ngo/contact](http://www.un.org/ecosoco/ngo/contact)

Dear NGO Representative,

*I am pleased to inform you that the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) at its Substantive Session of July 2013 adopted the recommendation of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to grant Special consultative status to your organization, Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc. On behalf of all staff of the Non-Governmental Organizations Branch, please accept our heartfelt congratulations.*

*Consultative status for an organization enables it to actively engage with ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies, as well as with the United Nations Secretariat, programmes, funds and agencies in a number of ways.*

YANQ is intending to lodge a comprehensive complaint to the United Nations against the treatment of children and young people in Queensland and how various policies are in conflict with the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child.



### *YANQ Restructure and Planning*

In November 2013 YANQ staff and committee undertook a review of all organisational operations and finances. This resulted in restructuring the organisation to reflect the budget deficit faced by YANQ due to State government funding cuts. Unfortunately downsizing YANQ has meant the loss of our Policy Officer, CPLAN Regional YANQ Representatives and Administration and Communication positions, as well as a reduction in the Director's hours. We also have been downsizing the office and now share our office space with a group of alternative health practitioners. In addition, we have been selling and giving away excess office equipment and digitising our historical publications, and making them available online.

At the same time, in order to make YANQ more accessible to individual youth workers it was decided that YANQ adopt and promote a new fee structure for the membership of YANQ and that:

- individual youth workers, young people and YANQ supporters and voluntary organisations (without paid staff) be invited to join YANQ free-of-charge;
- voluntary organisations (without paid staff) be invited to join YANQ free-of-charge;
- non-voluntary organisations (with paid staff) continue to pay the current annual fee for YANQ membership, according to their income;
- all individual membership be ongoing; and,
- all organisational membership continue to be renewed annually.

### *CPLAN - YANQ Regional Representatives*

YANQ's regional representatives continued to play a key role in informing YANQ about specific regional issues as well as assisting us in formulating both regional as well as state-wide responses. The network of Regional YANQ Representatives held regular teleconferences as well as a two day face -to-face meeting.

Regional Representatives of YANQ have been assisting with promoting YANQ membership, the 2014 conference call for papers as well as the conference sponsorship package.

YANQ also released case studies from the CPLAN initiatives in 2012-2013 in a report written by Dr Phil Crane from Queensland University of Technology titled *Building the Youth Sector from Bottom Up*.

### *Youth Justice Review*

In a loaded survey, packaged as community consultation, the Attorney General outlined a raft of changes to the Youth Justice Act which will cost the community greatly, both economically as well as socially. YANQ developed and disseminated a guide for filling in the Attorney General's survey. We reached many people through social media. It was one of our highest accessed social media campaigns and results of the survey indicated that our campaign was clearly successful, with the majority of respondents rejecting government's proposals. Despite this, the Attorney General arrogantly introduced these proposals to the parliament and the LNP used their vast majority to push through these changes, winding back decades of slow reform in the youth justice arena. No doubt we will see many young people being criminalised and a significant increase in youth detention rates.

### *National Definition of Youth Work*

Australian Youth Affairs Coalition is developing a definition of Youth Work which it hopes all states would adopt in order to make it into a national definition. YANQ has done a lot of work in Queensland on this topic for the past few years and submitted a detailed proposal for AYAC to consider. There are a couple of issues that AYAC needs to clarify before we are prepared to support the definition as a national definition. AYAC has committed to undertake further work and bring in amendments to the definition in 2014. YANQ has also been progressing the Queensland definition of Youth Work with workshops planned at the upcoming State Youth Affairs Conference.



### *State Youth Affairs Conference*

There has been significant amount of work undertaken by YANQ, without the aid of a conference coordinator, in planning and staging the 2014 State Youth Affairs Conference. We have confirmed that our main guest speaker will be Tony Taylor from UK who has been running a campaign titled "In Defence of Youth Work" <http://indefenceofyouthwork.com/>

The conference will also host over 30 workshops during the two days, covering a range of youth issues as well as workshops dedicated to exploring youth sector issues.

### *Other Activities:*

YANQ met with Amy Lamoin, National Advocacy Manager of UNISEF in regards to various Queensland issues. YANQ also met with Australia's United Nation Youth Representative, Adam Pulford and discussed specific youth rights issues relevant to Queensland.

YANQ gave a number of lectures on peak bodies and their advocacy role to South Bank and Bracken Ridge TAFE Community Development students. YANQ also gave presentations on youth

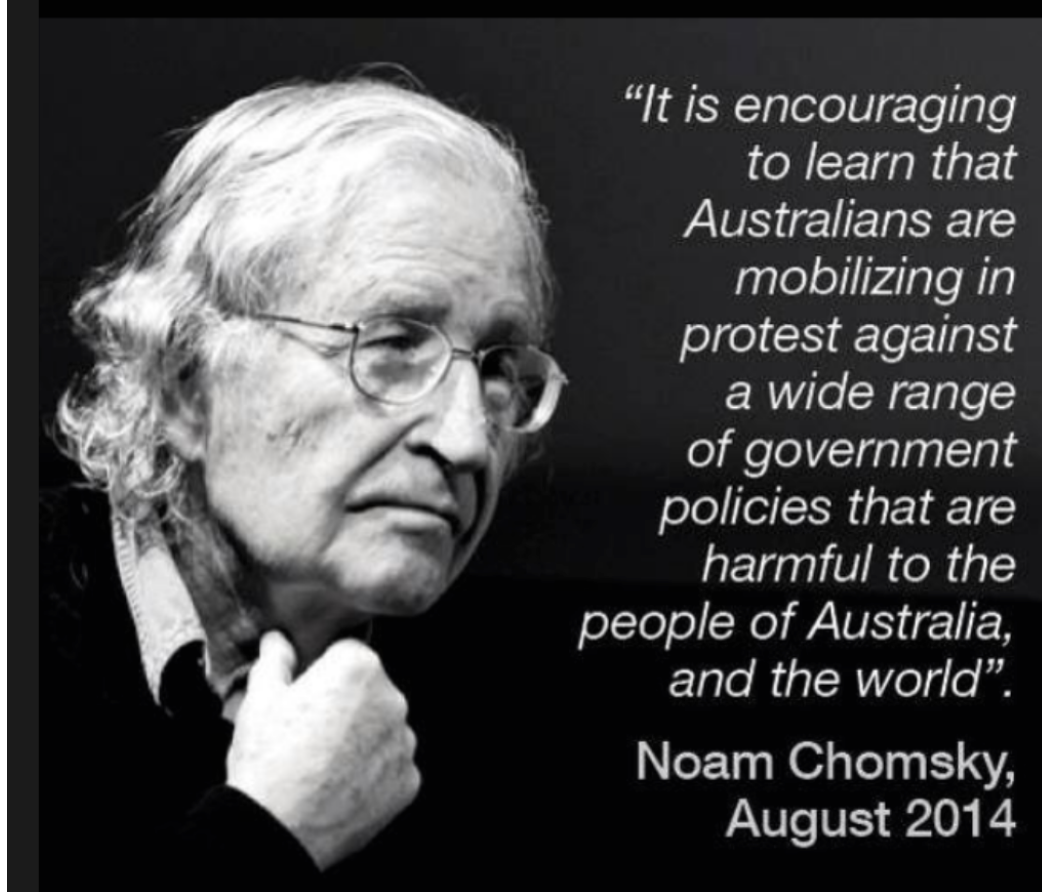


work to a number of in-house staff training meetings at various youth services. YANQ also participated and spoke at a number of regional Youth Interagency meetings.

YANQ participated in a half-day consultation by the Mental Health Commission with senior peak bodies. The consultation fed into the development of the Queensland Health's Strategic Plan for Mental Health and Drug And Alcohol with implications for the funding of the NGO sector. Again the contestability agenda will probably result in many small organisations disappearing or being consumed by larger organisations.

YANQ played a key advocacy role for various federally funded youth programs that were axed after the Murdoch/Abbott government took over at the national level this year. As well as the defunding of youth programs such as Partnership Brokers and Youth Connections, the Abbott government's defunding of Australian Youth Affairs Coalition (AYAC) demonstrates a vicious attack by conservatives on the youth sector. This follows the trend of what took place in Queensland after the LNP government came into power. YANQ received national electronic and print media coverage in regards to the Federal government cuts to youth projects, services and payments.





### **Treasurer's Report**

I have pleasure in presenting the independent auditor's report for the year ending 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

The successful work of YANQ's finance committee is evident by the report from our auditor and the financial position of the organisation.

Although YANQ's recurrent funding was cut by the LNP over two years ago, strict fiscal restraint has ensured YANQ remains in a financially viable position.

YANQ has continued to be a strong voice for the rights of young people in Queensland and the development of Queensland youth sector. In order for the sector to respond appropriately to challenges faced by young people and communities we require a healthy youth sector . That's why YANQ's work in the sector development area is paramount to creation of a vibrant youth sector in Queensland.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our members and subscribers for their financial contribution to YANQ. I also would like to thank our funding bodies and donors for their contribution.

If you require any further information in regards to the audit report please contact our office.

Matilda Alexander  
Treasurer





**Hayes Knight**

Accountants, Advisors & Auditors

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## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF YOUTH AFFAIRS NETWORK OF QUEENSLAND INC**

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc (the association), which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2014, the income statement and statement of cashflows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the statement by members of the management committee.

### ***Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report***

The committee of Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc is responsible for the preparation of the financial report, and has determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act (Qld) 1981* and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The committee's responsibility also includes such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### ***Auditor's Responsibility***

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We have conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the association's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view, in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the committee, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.



### ***Opinion***

In our opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc as at 30 June 2014 and its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, and the *Associations Incorporation Act (Qld) 1981*

### ***Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution***

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc to meet the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act (Qld) 1981*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

*Hayes Knight Audit (Qld) Pty. Ltd.*

**Hayes Knight Audit (Qld) Pty Ltd**

*AM Robertson.*

**AM Robertson**

Director

Level 23, 10 Eagle Street,  
Brisbane, QLD, 4000

Date: 24 November 2014