Foreword

In today's world there is no shortage of data or a willingness to collect even more data. Our challenge is to make sense of such data and to squeeze useful information from it, particularly as an aid to decision making. Statistical models are an essential tool in helping us to make sense of data. They allow us to summarise its basic features and to make predictions of how as yet unobserved data might behave. For these reasons it is good to have a new journal whose title reflects the prominence of the model in statistical research.

In this second issue of *Model Assisted Statistics and Applications*, a range of important topics are covered. There are papers on handling outliers in nonseasonal time series, missing data when auxiliary information is incomplete, non-responsive bias in survey data and reducing problems of false responses when asking potentially sensitive survey questions. Other topics include modelling repeated experiments when a residual effect can carry over from one experiment to the next, estimating the variance of the estimate of the variance of an estimator and the difficult problem of testing whether two samples have been drawn from the same population based on two variables.

Two important applied problems are also tackled in this issue. They are a new method for comparing income distributions and the use of statistical modelling to evaluate different procedures for early detection of breast cancer based on South Australian data. This latter application is a good example of the power of statistical methods to inform policy making, particularly in the important field of public health.

This is truly an international issue with authors from five continents: Europe, Asia, America, Africa and Australia. The editorial team is to be congratulated for bringing together from all parts of the world such an interesting set of papers.

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