

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE OVERSEAS SPECIALIST SURGICAL  
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.  
14th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**20 OCTOBER 2016**

Ladies and gentlemen, it is with a degree of pleasure and optimism that I present this report to the 14th Annual General Meeting of the Overseas Specialist Surgical Association of Australia.

**Locales and Team Visits**

As previously advised, *Indonesia* remains off-limits to foreign surgeons and surgical teams operating in that country. While there were encouraging signs of a policy shift earlier this year, as communicated to us by the Sisters at Halilulik and Cancar who are anxious to have us return, the prohibition remains. The situation will continue to be closely monitored.

Since receiving official advice in August 2015 from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs about this ban, your committee has examined other opportunities, including

- A needs based assessment of developing countries in our region with officers of DFAT
- Discussions with the Royal Australian College of Surgeons (RACS) which coordinates surgical aid on behalf of the Australian Government
- Other surgical interventions in addition to plastics in East Timor
- Country specific research on Bhutan (OSSAA co-sponsored an Interplast team visit), Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar
- Networking with other medical aid delivery organisations (including Africa)

Because the Australian Government is now adopting a more holistic health delivery approach for Pacific countries, there are opportunities to fill emerging surgical gaps. An ENT team visit to Tonga is being planned in conjunction with RACS. It is expected there will be more countries looking for assistance.

*Timor Leste* remains a key focus area. During 2015/16 there were, in keeping with our commitment, two team visits to TL, namely:

- On 1 August 2015 Dr Mark Moore led a plastic and reconstructive team comprising surgeon Dr Vani Prasad Atluri, anaesthetist Dr Andrew Wallace, theatre nurses Srs Joy Booth and Margaret Malone, and speech pathologist Celine Lai to the national hospital in Dili. They were joined by local plastic surgical trainee Dr Joao Ximenes and speech pathologist Ms Alotu da Costa Sarmiento. The team accomplished 54 consultations and 28 surgical procedures, comprising 16 cleft lip/palate, 3 burns contractures and 9 hands/lesions.
- On 28 November 2015 Dr Mark Moore led a plastic and reconstructive team comprising anaesthetist Dr Brian Spain, theatre sister Margaret Maloney and plastic surgical registrar Dr Patrick Coghlan to Baucau Hospital. The team also included locals Dr Joao Ximenes (plastic surgical trainee/counterpart surgeon) and Dr Angelo H da Silva Belo (doctor/anaesthetic trainee). During the week there were 48 patient consultations and 34 surgical procedures comprising 30 cleft lip/palate and 4 burns/lesions.

We are grateful for the support provided by RACS and the staff at both hospitals.

*Since OSSAA's establishment in March 2002, 99 trips, 11,201 consultations and 4,931 surgical procedures have been carried out.*

### **Events and Fundraising:**

The annual luncheon was held on 19 June 2016 and we were privileged to have Dr Brian Spain AM (newly anointed in the New Year's Honours) as our guest speaker. The film event *Lady in the Van* in March at Wallis Cinema Mitcham was a hit; the Romeo Family Foodland again generously provided food and refreshments. Fundraising during the year netted \$5398 which, together with donations, covered most of the costs for the 2 team visits and administration.

#### Large Donors (\$1000 or more) included:

Lions Club of Richmond	\$2,000
JWarren & BHP	\$2,000
Clare Barnes	\$1,500
Rotary Club of Unley	\$1,000

I have been advised that Valerie Thompson left \$15000 in her will to OSSAA.

#### Others who have provided assistance to OSSAA include:

Air North  
Calvary Hospital  
Duografik (Simon Perrin)  
Office of Vickie Chapman MP  
Royal Australian College of Surgeons (RACS)  
The Box Factory (and Adelaide City Council)  
QANTAS  
Wallis Theatre (Bob Parr OAM)

### **Membership:**

At 30 June 2016 there were 19 financial corporate members, 73 ordinary members, and 48 team members (of which 5 were also ordinary members).

### **Committee of Management (COM)**

OSSAA has again been well served by the Committee which at 30 June 2016 included Vice President Dr Mark Moore AM, Secretary Donna Fitzgerald, PP Patrick Markwick-Smith, Treasurer Alex Jonson, Margaret Maloney OAM, Helen van der Jeugd, Connie Granozio, and Dr Andrew Wallace. Donna started as administration manager in July 2015; Barbara Flaum retired after 3 years of valuable service; Doug Omond OAM resigned due to ill health; and Connie rejoined the Committee. The COM met 8 times in 2015/16.

We thank former Vice President Doug Omond for his untiring efforts since 2002. His networking, particularly with Lions service clubs, and his organisation of fund-raising events enabled OSSAA to be an effective deliverer of vital surgical aid to the neediest in our region. Doug was awarded Honorary Life Membership at the June 2016 luncheon.

Two editions of the OSSAA Newsletter were published during the year. Thanks are again due to the office of Vickie Chapman MP for printing them. Simon Perrin from Duografik also deserves our thanks for his website management.

We sponsored 4 theatre sister team members in October 2015 to attend a RACS symposium in Melbourne dealing with delivery of safe and affordable surgical and anaesthetic care in our region.

### **Key Challenge**

I continue to be delighted by the important surgical and training roles played by our plastic and reconstructive teams in East Timor. But clearly that is not enough. The next 12 months will be critical for opening up new opportunities for all our outstanding surgical teams.

**I thank everyone who has helped during the year.**

Stephen Baker  
President

20 October 2016