

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE OVERSEAS SPECIALIST SURGICAL
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.
18th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

15 OCTOBER 2020

I present this report to the 18th Annual General Meeting of the Overseas Specialist Surgical Association of Australia, cognizant of the challenges facing the world.

Planning for 2019/20 included team trips to the following locales:

- Timor Leste – Dili and Baucau
- Eastern Indonesia (NTT) – Halilulik and Cancar

Trips for 2020 were cancelled due to Covid 19 restrictions.

Visits in second half of 2019

Halilulik, West Timor

In July 2019 Dr Mark Moore led a plastic and reconstructive surgical team to RSK Marianum Hospital. The team comprised anaesthetist Dr Todd Maddock, theatre sister Josephine Luke and recovery nurse Lisa Alvino and coordinator/interpreter Ms Anastasia Stain. There were 51 consultations and 38 operations comprising 20 cleft lips/palates, 5 burns contractures and 13 others, mostly lesions.

Dili, East Timor

In November 2019 Dr Mark Moore led a plastic and reconstructive team to the national hospital. The team comprised anaesthetists Drs David McLeod and Brigid Brown, and nursing sisters Liz Mazzei and Jacqueline Price. Dr Joao Ximenes was again invaluable. This trip was originally scheduled for Baucau but there were more patients awaiting attention in Dili. During the week there were 52 consultations and 32 operations comprising 26 clefts/palates, 2 bone grafts and 4 others. To date 1082 clefts have received surgery in Timor Leste in 48 visits.

Capacity building of medical and hospital staff has been a hallmark of our trips. To further enhance the longer term benefits it was planned to adopt a more holistic approach by integrating allied services (including dental, physio, speech therapy, nutrition) into the team visits. We were also preparing to respond to a request from Cancar for an ENT team visit. We continue to be grateful for the support provided by RACS and hospital administrators and staff.

Trips will resume as soon as it is safe to do so!

Since OSSAA's establishment in March 2002 there have been 112 trips, 12,032 consultations and 5,379 surgical procedures carried out.

Events and Publicity:

Our annual luncheon held at Glenelg Golf Club on 25 August 2019 had a record attendance with Dr Mark Moore AM and Margaret Maloney OAM as guest speakers. They reflected on 20 years of delivering life changing/saving surgery into East Timor and eastern Indonesia. Speech therapist Celina Lai from Darwin was presented with the Doug and Terry Omond Memorial Scholarship certificate for 2019.

On the publicity front, the ABC Catalyst program on 14 October 2019 about the Australian Craniofacial Unit at the Women's and Children's Hospital featured several of our surgical team members in action. This followed the extensive OSSAA coverage in the INSIGHT section of the Sunday Mail on 23 June 2019.

In February 2020 a report entitled *The economic value of primary cleft surgery in Timor Leste 2000-2017* was published in the World Journal of Surgery. Our 44 plastic surgery team visits, delivering cleft and palate repair and continuous training, were estimated to have benefitted the local economy by US \$2m+. This study did not attempt to measure the other wide-ranging humanitarian benefits.

A planned mid-year luncheon and film event for 2020 were postponed.

Donors continue to provide generous support, as evidenced by the list of larger contributors shown below. We are most grateful.

Large Donors (\$1000 or more) included:

AJ & LG Kennedy (FSJS Jubilee Charitable Foundation)	\$39,500
Estate of A Roman	\$15,000
Dr A Lake	\$2,000
A Kelly	\$1,500
AK Vickery	\$1,200
Dr M Moore	\$1,000
C Barnes	\$1,000
Carthew Foundation	\$1,000
Dr Z. Gill	\$1,000
P Davidson	\$1,000

Others who have provided assistance to OSSAA include:

Air North
Royal Adelaide Hospital
Version (Simon Perrin)
Office of Vickie Chapman MP
Royal Australian College of Surgeons (RACS)
The Box Factory (and Adelaide City Council)
QANTAS

Due to strong donor support and the unfortunate cancellation of trips planned for the first six months of 2020 our balance sheet improved by \$38,020 which places us in a strong position to continue providing this much needed surgery.

Membership:

At 30 June 2020 there were 21 financial corporate members, 71 ordinary members, and 53 team members.

The Committee of Management has been concerned for some time about the demographics of OSSAA's membership. Because it is likely that OSSAA will continue its work for some time into the future the organisation needs to continue to attract new members, especially younger ones. One agreed activity is to stage events designed to attract young medical and health staff to OSSAA through promotional activities; another is to explore using media that may be more age attractive. However, with Covid 19 restrictions these activities have been temporarily shelved.

Committee of Management (COM)

OSSAA has been well served by the Committee which at 30 June 2020 included Vice Presidents Dr Mark Moore AM and Stephen Baker, Secretary Donna Fitzgerald, Treasurer Alex Jonson, and committee members Dr Andrew Wallace, Joy Booth, Sandy Grixti and Anthony Rologas. Due to work commitments Anthony will not be continuing this year. We thank him for his support and contributions.

The Committee of Management met on 4 occasions including one through exchange of emails. Two editions of the OSSAA Newsletter were published. Thanks are again due to the office of Vickie Chapman MP for printing them. Simon Perrin from Version also deserves our thanks for his continuing website assistance.

I thank everyone who has contributed to OSSAA.

Patrick Markwick-Smith
President

15 October 2020

Post Script

It was with sadness we learned of the death of Dr John Hargrave MBE OA in August 2020. Dr Hargrave (often referred to as a 'living saint' during his lifetime) dedicated himself to combating the scourge of leprosy in Top End Aboriginal communities and introduced Australia's first reconstructive surgery program for leprosy patients. He also identified the need for reconstructive surgical services in neighbouring Eastern Indonesia. In the early 1990s, Dr Hargrave led small volunteer teams of specialist doctors and nurses into Timor, providing reconstructive surgical programs in rural areas. In 1995, Dr Hargrave incorporated a surgical group as ASEA Rehab [Australia South-East Asia Rehabilitation Foundation], a Northern Territory based organisation comprising mainly local specialists and supporters. Over time the team composition expanded to include more interstate specialists and nurses, particularly from South Australia (including Dr Mark Moore and nursing sister Margaret Maloney) This marked the genesis of OSSAA which was established in 2002 to continue the Hargrave humanitarian effort.