

Date: 26th February 2023

Bula, Talofa, Kia Ora, Mauri, G'day, Hello Olgeta

Greetings to you all from Honiara

I'd like to welcome you all to this PIOA AGM virtual meeting hosted from Brisbane, Australia. A special welcome to our new trainees and founding members present. This past year marks the 10th year of our association. We would not be where we are without the enormous support from individual surgeons and other health personals and partner Organisations since we started. Our training program has graduated 7 specialist and we have more than 10 trainees in various stages of the training program including women.

The past year saw the relaxing of travel restriction within our region around the middle of the year and we are able to hold a first ever module in Suva Fiji in September after a 2 years hiatus. We would like to acknowledge and thank Mr Dave Bartle, Dr Ian Cheung and Dr Mitchell Atkinson who delivered the spine module and Mr Vaughan Poutawera, Dr Kushik Hazratwalla and Mr Andy Vane who delivered the Hip Module. We were also able to hold our Third ever exit exams and thank Mr Richard Lander and Dr John North for coordinating the exams and Shaun and I were able to sit in as co examiners. We congratulate Pita Sovanivalu and Areta Samuelu for passing the exams. At this point we would like to thank Dr Pauliasi Head of orthopaedic at CWM Hospital for hosting us and together with the Fiji ministry of Health for enabling us to hold the module in Suva. We look forward to visit them later this year for the foot and ankle and knee modules.

Our experience during the pandemic means we were able to continue on weekly Sunday presentations over zoom to offer our trainees continuous learning even with the resumption of travels. Our international and local faculty were able to deliver topics on trauma and orthopaedic conditions that contributes to the upcoming modules and offer more time during module contact for clinical skills and practicals as most lectures are covered over zoom.

This year we have planned the following modules. Paediatric, tumour and infection/ professional topics scheduled for 13th March to 1st April in Apia Samoa. And later 11th to 30th September Knee and Foot/ankle module in Suva Fiji.

X-rays and imaging remain a challenge in our hospitals. During the pandemic Des had time to partner with Drs for Africa in developing a low cost II equivalent with portable components (named C bones). All mechanical moving parts and robust. Easily removal parts for replacement or light to transport for repairs. First prototype in Kundiawa and the other in Somaliland.

Challenges in improving supervision and monitoring response from our trainees remain largely unresolved. We are continuously working with our training committee team to better understand these challenges and explore solutions.

We acknowledge our trainees attachments in Tauranga and Wellington, NZ. We thank Mr Vaughan Poutawera and Mr Tim Greg and their teams. I believe Dr Reshwin Rajan and Dr Naseri Aitaoto have settled in and gained valuable exposure and developed valuable networks. We hope this will continue for our trainees to provide the needed exposure and supervision they need. We thank Orthopacifix for getting Thomas over to Tauranga and helping me join him at the combined AOA/NZOA ASM for presentations at the outreach section.

I would like to acknowledge the many partners who supported our association, surgeons from NZ, Australia and Switzerland providing time for delivery of lectures, Hospitals in NZ/Orthopacific for hosting our trainees attachment, the Samoa National University for accrediting our program and AO alliance, South Pacific projects, Peace nexus foundation, SPC, PIC Governments and others for support and funding.

I would like to acknowledge Des, Shaun and the training committee for organising and facilitating our training programs and ensuring the association maintains its registration requirements, but moreover continuing to advocate and seek new partners in our association programs. Our recent talks with FNU during the Suva module highlights this ongoing engagements.

Finally, I had been very privileged to hold the position of President for the past 5 years and acknowledge all the help and kindness and would like to say thank you, Korapa, Fa'afetai lava, Vinaka vaka levu, atawai wolo, tena koutou and tagio tumas.

I believe todays meet will be fruitful and look forward to our discussions

Thank you.