



**Minutes of the 43rd Annual General Meeting of the Australian Society for Microbiology held on Monday 13th July, QT Hotel, Canberra, ACT
12.30 pm**

1. Welcome

The President, Professor Jon Iredell welcomed all members present to the meeting and rang the Nancy Atkinson Bell to signify the opening of the AGM

2. Apologies

Paul Young, Rod Bowman.

3. Minutes of the 42nd Annual General Meeting

Unanimous acceptance of minutes by show of hands as a true and correct record, as proposed by Julian Rood, seconded Fran Laurie.

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

Items addressed as part of reports

5.1 Presidents Report

Presented by Jon Iredell.

- JI described the structure of the Council that in now meets face to face twice a year and includes all State Branch Chairs. The operational structure and decision making on a monthly basis is made by a small Executive which includes much of the strategic planning. Paul Young's idea was to expand the Executive to include Division Chairs as discipline leaders to spread the workload.

- Peter Traynor raised questions from the current proposed constitutional changes about how the Division Chairs would be elected, and how they interact with members? Under the current structure, the State Branch Chairs are much closer to the members. Any proposed changes should have a three step discussion paper –
 1. Description of the changes
 2. Explanation of how they impact on members
 3. Description of the benefits

- JI invited further comments from the floor:

- Ruth Bishop – NSW works well, has a large number of events and is very active at the State level. Don't want to change the way state branches operate and the close relationship with the SIGS.

- JI – This year a quarterly teleconference with State Branch Chairs and the President and Vice-President Scientific Affairs has been instigated. These, along with the two Council meetings will perhaps be enough.

- JI – raised the issue of some SIGs who are not reporting to Council nor attending the conference. Is there are structural disconnect between some SIGS and the

Council? Proposed that SIGS should be discontinued if no reports are supplied to two consecutive reports missed. Unanimously accepted as appropriate.

- JI asked if there were similar disconnects with State Branches and the LOCs?
- Charlene Kahler – There is a workload issue in smaller states where the LOC and State Branches overlap. For NSW this year, most of the LOC were State Branch Members. They serve two different functions as the LOC is operating on behalf of the Council to run the annual conference and States don't have autonomy to conduct the conference.
- JI – There needs to be more communication between the LOCs and the Executive and sharing of the power
- Mike Manefield – The Division structure was the only thing that wasn't clear this year and had used a different conference structure with three concurrent sessions only.
- JI – Paul's idea of the Division Chairs was based on Julian's initial concept.
- Julian Rood – The idea had been to give a national voice to the disciplines as the 'scientific' had gone missing so had introduced Divisional chairs and the NSAC. Not set in stone and what may have served the society well 15 years ago could be ready for change.
- JI – Raised the structure of the Meetings as in need of review. BacPath, ASMicrobials, AVS have all been splitting off from the main ASM conference which has lost its value as the overarching body. ASM should support and embrace more specialised meeting themes and perhaps hold smaller, more focussed meetings. A proposal for a more formal association with BacPath is being finalised. Another topic may be Diagnostic Microbiology to be run as a separate meeting, focussing on diagnostics. Perhaps in 2017.

ACTION – Members invited to send proposals and ideas to Jon.

- Comments from the floor - IUMS is an example of combining bacteriology and virology with a two day overlap. Perhaps good idea to run AVS pre or post ASM similar to Mycology this year.

6. Presentation of the Financial reports by the Vice-President, Corporate Affairs

Presented by Cheryl Power.

The audit process was successfully completed and the resulting financial statement has been posted on the ASM website. The new auditor has now pooled income and expenses of the Society with that of the Conference so figures are expressed differently to previous years.

The recent trend of slowing members appears to have halted, and income from membership is higher than last year and the year before. Congratulations to the Branches for the great effort with many free events for members making the membership more highly valued and believed to be the main reason the member numbers have stopped sliding. Membership forms should be available at all functions.

Income: Membership fees resulted in income of \$275,605 for the year and conference profit at \$130,370 with another \$50,000 from investments.

Profit from the conference allows for the expanded activities of the Society.

Expenses: Professional fees from ASN Events of \$95,680, office fees and accounting of \$714,853 for a total of \$1,69,733. The Executive has reviewed capitation and distributed \$42,601 last year which will increase from 15% to 20% this financial year, and hoping to increase this to 25% in the 2016-17 year. Other expenses paid were two years of Microbiology Australia fees of \$91,341 and awards to the total of \$13,884.

Operational costs were down on previous years.

Research Trust: Combined investments of the Research Trust and the Society amount to \$1,053,000, and include both shares and term deposits. Currently, the investments yield enough income to pay awards to the total of \$40,000, and we were able to introduce a new award for next year. \$300,000 is invested in a share portfolio which is currently being reviewed by an independent broker with a view to rationalize some holdings and adding others. Dividends are now approximately \$10,000/

State branches are covered by the National Office Audit now, and SIGS need to be reported through the relevant State Branch or direct to National Office if operating as a National SIG.

VP Corporate Affairs report proposed to be accepted by Peter Traynor, seconded by Tony de la Porter, all in favour.

7. Reports from the Vice-President Scientific Affairs on NSAC & Research Trust.

Presented by Dena Lyras

Dena thanked Dee Carter and the Division Chairs of the 2015 LOC and Mike Manefield for organizing an excellent meeting in Canberra. Congratulations on the large amount of work that goes into organizing the scientific content of an ASM.

Perth 2016 will be led by Charlene Kahler, and Hobart 2017 by Anthony Baker.

Future meetings may have a different format. The relationship between BacPath and the ASM is to be formalized soon which will be of benefit to ASM members.

Two meetings were sponsored this year, CMV and Eucast, both to the value of \$2,500. Several awards were conferred this year to the Millis-Colwell to Jennifer Moffat, the Burnet-Hayes to Mathew Johnson, and the NZMS Postgraduate Research Travel Award was awarded but the recipient could not take up the offer. There were no applicants for the Clinical Microbiology Travel Award again this year - all members should encourage people to apply next year.

A new award has been initiated in response to a gap in the current awards in the area of early career researchers. This award will be the equivalent of the Fenner Award using the same guidelines but will be awarded to worthy applicants who are up to 5 years out from completing their PhD or equivalent degree.

Peter Traynor has once again overseen a very successful visiting speakers program with Stefan Schwarz undertaking the program post the Canberra ASM, and another speaker, Jay Hinton, from the BacPath Meeting.

VP Scientific Affairs report proposed to be accepted by Jon Iredell, seconded by Mitchell, all in favour.

8. Reports from the Vice-President Scientific Affairs

Presented by Jack Wang

The communication brief this year was to expand the online presence of the ASM. There has been a redesign of the website that is still ongoing, an increase in email frequency, and a greater capacity for State branches to interact well with members.

Communication with people outside the membership has not been the focus of attention in the past, press releases are no longer viable, and University's wont partner for media outcomes. The solution was to broaden the social media presence. A media relations officer was investigate but found to be too expensive. Social media has been expanded to Twitter, Facebook, website blog, LinkedIn and a YouTube channel.

Have now implemented a strict social media policy at the meeting and if anyone is seen to be in breach they can be reported back to Jack.

There have been several students and ECRs engaged as ambassadors whereby they become the social media host for a two week period. Ten have been appointed so far and hoping to recruit more from this conference.

As video get the most engagement on social media but is also time consuming to generate, a professional videographer has been engaged for this conference.

VP Communications report proposed to be accepted by Jon Iredell, seconded by Dena Lyras , all in favour.

9. Office Bearers 2015-2016

Jl informed that no President Elect nominations have been received and the position will be re-advertised. He urges all senior members of the Society to promote the role. Until a President-Elect is appointed, the current Executive remains in place.

- o President Prof Jon Iredell
- o Immediate Past-President Elect Prof Paul Young
- o VP, Scientific Affairs A/Prof Dena Lyras
- o VP, Corporate Affairs Ms Cheryl Power
- o VP, Communications Dr Jack Wang

10. Determination of Annual Subscription Fees

The fees for the upcoming year remain as follows:
2014 - 2015 Financial Year 1st April 2014 – 31st March 2015

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| o Student | \$50 |
| o Associate, SASM, MASM, FASM | \$185 |
| o Retired | \$92.50 |
| o Sustaining | \$950 |

This represented no change to fees from the previous two years and a vote of members was not required.

At last Council meeting it was proposed that the Financial year be moved to coincide with the membership year but that does not allow for audited reports to be ready for the

AGM held coincidentally with the annual scientific meeting. A proposal will be made to move the membership year to end March 31 and to be implemented in 2016/17 financial year.

A discussion resolved to increase the membership fee by 5% to account for increasing costs as it has been 5 years since the last increase. This would mean increasing the \$185 yearly membership to \$195. A proposal will be made at the next AGM.

The fees for the upcoming year remain as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| ○ Student | \$50 |
| ○ Associate, SASM, MASM, FASM | \$185 |
| ○ Retired | \$92.50 |
| ○ Sustaining | \$950 |

11. Appointment of the Auditor

Cheryl Power advised retaining the services of Eric Townsend and Co., for the ASM Investment and Research Trust Funds

Acceptance of audit proposal, proposed Cheryl Power, seconded Jon Iredell, all in favour

12. Closure of the meeting

Meeting closed at 1.37

13. Other Business

A discussion was held around the current format of the Annual Scientific Meeting not meeting the expectations of the clinical diagnostic supporting companies. Numbers of members in the clinical Division 1 have been decreasing. Members expressed concern that a separate clinical diagnostic may reduce support for the Annual Scientific Meeting. Trade at the conference is important to the members who attend from more remote locations. No formal motion or question was put but it was generally agreed that the scientific program should be the focus for the LOC.