

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is only four months since I presented a report at the Biennial meeting of the Society. This report, as well as some policy proposals, ASSH Australia and ASSH International, was published in *Bulletin* no. 38. So I will not repeat what I have already said.

Policies and procedures: A primary focus this year is on further documenting policies and procedures. I plan to hand on two copies of a policies and procedures manual — under fourteen heads and six sub-heads (see below) — which summarise past precedents, policies and agreements — the way in which ASSH has operated. This will be a useful guide for future Executives. I hope that they in turn will keep this manual up to date, amending and adding to the documents included.

The constitution: Constitutional reform is a second important agenda. We all agree on the need to update the constitution though there are differing views on the process and extent of desirable change. I wish to thank those that have initiated this process, particularly Ian Warren, and others who have reacted to his proposals, including J. Neville Turner and Dwight Zakus. In the Executive Meeting that follows this AGM will be useful to have a more general discussion about the areas of constitutional change and the process of change. It will then be up to the next Executive to decide which specific changes and amendments should be put to the membership.

The Executive and the conference host: This is a third important area that needs to be addressed. I wish to thank Dwight Zakus for his continuing work in drawing up a template for this important relationship. I personally think it is extremely important to tighten the bid process, to deal with the financial issues relating to the holding of the biennial conference and to improve the transfer of knowledge from one conference to another. I would commend, in this regard, John O'Hara's document prepared after the Sydney 2003 Conference.

There may be debate about how far we move to standardise conference procedures given that in the past the Executive has put few restrictions on the host body. However, we do need to have a very close look at the biennial conference — which is the flagship of ASSH. Like the Olympic movement we seem now to be confronted from the problem of gigantism with the Sydney conference running over five days — twice the length of the NASSH conference — and the Melbourne event may be even longer. The Sydney organisers have already flagged some problems with a longer conference: a number of delegates chose to sign up for one or two days only rather than attending the whole conference. The prospect of a longer conference may prove daunting to smaller cities who may wish to make a bid for a future ASSH conference.

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ASSH chapters: It is good to see so much activity from an expanding number of ASSH chapters. The Sydney branch is staging a one-day conference tomorrow, the Canberra branch is talking about a two-day Olympic conference in 2004 and the Melbourne branch continues to have a high profile. In the policy document 'ASSH Australia' I suggested that the Executive might consider giving some seeding money for branch activities. Since these groups carry the ASSH name, I believe that it is important to develop a set of guidelines for the operation of such groups — which would deal with both benefits and obligations and the relationship of an ASSH branch to the ASSH Executive.

The timing of the ASSH AGM 2004: I believe that the next ASSH AGM, which will be held in Melbourne, should occur in September 2004 or as soon as possible after this month. This will enable Imke to have sufficient time to sign off on the books and have them audited. Imke and I will attend this meeting to ensure as smooth a handover as possible.

CHECK LIST OF TOPICS FOR THE
ASSH POLICY & PROCEDURES MANUAL
(Persons who are putting some policies on paper)

Archives (John Deane)

Bequests, donations

 Tom Brock Bequest (Braham Dabscheck)

 Max and Reet Howell Address

Biennial conference (Dwight Zakus)

Chapters, ASSH (sub-committee)

Constitution (sub-committee)

Fellows (Richard Cashman)

Financial Structure (Imke Fischer)

Income – agreements

 AAFLA

 CAL (Imke Fischer)

Insurance (Imke Fischer)

Incorporation and the ASSH Public Officer (John Deane)

Legal issues (J. Neville Turner)

Publications Committee Policies (Rob Hess)

Relationships

 AHA (Rob Hess)

 New Zealand (Doug Booth)

Website policies (Tara Magdalinski)