

Chairpersons Report 2008 Annual General Meeting NZATS

5 meetings of the NZATS Executive were held throughout the year following the 2007 Annual General Meeting.

Members of the Executive also attended Regional meetings throughout New Zealand to disseminate information, meet members and to listen to concerns and issues. I have found my attendance at Regional Meetings rewarding and a pleasure to attend.

There is a large list of people and organisations I would like to thank for their time and expertise over the past year. These include elected members of the executive and the representatives from the NZNC of ANZCA, the NZSA and the PNC of the NZNO.

Others include National Assessors, examiners for the Registration Exams, and markers for AUT papers, Registration Committee, Work Place Assessors, Trade support and the many people involved with block courses.

The Financial position of NZATS has been managed successfully with income received from registration, website advertising and overseas applications for registration. We are aware of the need to have sufficient funds for when compulsory registration is implemented and the expected decline in NZATS membership.

Despite initial problems with processing registrations at the beginning of this financial year, membership continues to remain healthy. The Clinical Training Agency has approached NZATS to provide information we do not currently gather. This will mean individual applications will be altered next financial year to capture these details. We will also require signed confirmation from each applicant that they are truly eligible for registration, particularly in the area of clinical hours.

Regular issues of the NZATS newsletter have been printed to provide an educational and information conduit for the membership. Increased trade advertising has offset many of the costs involved with the newsletter. Unfortunately the newsletter can only continue to succeed with articles from the profession and I encourage you all to contribute. Despite the bi-monthly newsletters we encourage members to still access the NZATS website for news and changes within the profession.

Review of the HPCAAct 2003 is expected to be finalized by the end of this year. I attended two review meetings over the year. Profession specific issues were not included in the review; however the Minister of Health has agreed that Anaesthetic technicians should be regulated under the Act. Because of the Cabinet directive that no more responsible authorities be created until the review has addressed their "proliferation", the Ministry cannot progress the regulation of Anaesthetic technicians until the review is complete. Once it is complete the Ministry can then decide how best to regulate techs and what responsible authority we should be regulated under.

Compliance of the annual Training Hospital Survey was excellent. Only a few issues surrounding adherence to training regulations were raised from the feedback gathered.

Five hospitals commenced Anaesthetic Technician Training at the beginning of 2008:

North Shore Public Hospital, Auckland Surgical Centre, Gillies Hospital, Auckland, North Harbour Southern Cross and Brightside Hospital, Auckland. All of these hospitals have experienced an excellent inaugural year of training.

One additional hospital has successfully sought training hospital status throughout the year. We congratulate Boulcott Hospital, Lower Hutt for their application.

The shortage of qualified technicians in NZ has escalated this year. Some hospitals have increased their trainee numbers to meet the future demand for staff but NZATS would also like to encourage past training hospitals to seek reinstatement.

The executive are investigating the potential for increasing the scope of practice for suitably qualified staff to encourage retention and job satisfaction. This could also alleviate the chronic shortage in areas in the OR traditionally held by nursing staff.

The initial feedback from this years review of the Diploma of Applied Science (Anaesthetic Technology) has indicated investigating extending the role of Anaesthetic Technicians in the OR in the future.

Collation of professional development data sought from all hospitals is underway. We expect to finalise a document to assist the membership with collection and maintenance of professional development by the end of 2009.

I wish to thank you all for attending the annual general meeting.

The 2009 NZATS conference will be held 4th-7th November in Rotorua.