

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

2014 has been a year of great excitement and another milestone for the APOA. At the Jubilee year (2012) of the Association, several important structural changes within the association were considered. These included

- Constitutional review,
- Delinking of the APOA Presidency from future Congresses,
- Setting up the Finance, Federation and Congress Committees, and
- Relocation of the Secretariat from Singapore to Kuala Lumpur.

The constitutional review by Ted Mah took many months of consultation and the 2014 version was unanimously accepted the APOA council meeting in Kuala Lumpur in April 2014. This was the second major constitutional change in 52 years since the formation of the APOA (nee WPOA). The last constitutional change was in 1999 where Western Pacific Orthopaedic Association was changed/widen to become Asia Pacific Orthopaedic Association, under the leadership of Robert Bauze. The 2014 Constitution delinked the APOA Presidency from future congresses; removed the position of second Vice President, and updated many aspects of the association functions to the meet the requirement of the electronic age. The new Secretariat at Kuala Lumpur under the leadership of Ms Kong is functioning well. The Finance Committee under the Chairmanship of David McNicol has been actively reviewing many aspects of the APOA Finance, especially membership renewal. The formal delinking of an APOA Congress and its President is likely to occur at the first Council meeting in Pattaya in 2014.

The Journal of Orthopaedics under the new editorial-ship of Prof Kenneth Chung has undergone rejuvenation and several important changes have been introduced to enhance the efficiency of editorial reviews, online first review before publication, expanded editorial board and editorial commentary/reviews. The impact factor of the journal has been enhanced by regular editorial reviews. The creation of Sectional Editors and the process of initial screening of all submitted articles will improve the quality of the journal and expedite the review and publication turnaround time.

The new APOA website has been established by Dr Sureshan Sivanathan from Malaysia and is performing well. The APOA Newsletter has been managed well by Jamal Ashraf from India. These web-based activities will enhance more efficient communication between the APOA organisation, its members and industry. A recent introduction of Calender of Events on the APOA website will consolidate various activities of member Orthopaedic Associations, Sectional meetings and specialty meetings, all on one website for ease of planning and allowing members to choose meetings that are most relevant to themselves. The web linkages with national orthopaedic association such as the Australian Orthopaedic Association (AOA) will enable members of APOA to search for all AOA accredited Fellowships and Continued Medical Education meetings on offer, thereby enhancing closer tie between the national orthopaedic associations with APOA. Another similar mutually beneficial symbiosis is exemplified by the reciprocal membership for international meetings between SICOT and APOA. The benefits of such an important relationship between the two major organizations are yet to be explored by individual memberships.

The organisation of 2014 APOA 18th Congress in Pattaya, Thailand on October 23-26th is in full swing. The Congress has been tarnished by the political unrest in Thailand for many

months. The recent introduction of military rule in the country will hopefully bring peace and ensure social stability, to help ease the fear of many foreigners travelling to Thailand. The recent statement by the Congress organiser regarding a more peaceful situation in Thailand is timely; and the availability of direct transport from Bangkok International airport to Pattaya will provide an important peace of mind for all international delegates. APOA President Prof Chareon Chotigavanich has invited many National Orthopaedic Association Presidents to the Congress and it will be an important opportunity to further foster the future concept of the APOA federation-style. At the Pattaya Congress, Nepal is likely to be inducted as a new APOA chapter, if the necessary requirements are completed on time.

Australia was given the privilege to host the 2016 APOA Congress in Melbourne following the Pattaya Congress. It will be the third time in the 54-year history of the APOA movement that Australia will host the Congress. The previous congresses were in Perth and Adelaide. Since awarded the 2016 APOA Congress the Executives of the Australian Chapter have worked closely with Australian Orthopaedic Association to host the Congress at the Melbourne Convention Centre. Scientific, finance and social committees were set up under the guidance of John Bartlett, Ted Mah and Graham Mercer to ensure the congress is an educational, entertaining and exciting event to local and visitors alike. The 19th Congress will also co-host with New Zealand, to make it a truly an Asia Pacific affair.

Edward (Ted) Mah
President, APOA