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7th Annual AMMA Scientific Conference Report

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The 7th Scientific Conference of the Australian Military Medicine Association was held from 16 to 18 October 1998 at the Swiss Grand Hotel, by the beach at Bondi, Sydney.

The official opening, by Rear Admiral Peter Briggs AO CSC, Head Strategic Command Division, took place on the Friday evening, and was followed by a paper by Dr Richard Morris on the issues facing him as the medical commander at the site of the 1997 Thredbo landslide disaster. Dr Morris's dissertation was an illuminating insight into the similarities between the medical management of a disaster site and many aspects of operational military medicine.

The first day opened with an Address by the Association's new Patron, and Surgeon General of the Australian Defence Force, Major General John Pearn. The Keynote address was given by Captain Art Smith, USNR, and focussed on the challenges unique to military medicine, and in particular naval medicine. Alluding to the logistic challenges facing medics at sea, he demonstrated clearly the problems and limitations imposed inadequately caring for the large numbers of casualties that are inevitable in war and occur on a regular basis in peace.

The papers read over the two days of the Conference maintained a very high standard and covered a wide variety of subjects, including operational support, clinical specialties, occupational and environmental health, history, psychology and preventive medicine.

The 'Weary' Dunlop Award was won, for the second time, by Squadron Leader Dave Newman RAAF, who spoke on the physiological challenges of supermanoeuvrable flight. This type of flying is the face of the future of military aviation, and solutions to the problems faced by pilots will be demanded.

The Conference proceedings were interspersed with refreshment breaks for social interaction, where delegates had the opportunity to visit the Trade Display led by the Association's principal sponsor, Smith Kline and Beecham.

The Conference Dinner was a great affair, with much conviviality. As a change in format, a military medicine quiz was conducted. With self-assessment, scores ranged from a respectable (and honest) 25 to 253 (there were only 18 questions). Fortunately, any disputation on scores was academic as there was no prize. The questions and answers are included in this Issue.

At the end of the Conference, delegates returned to the mundane affairs of their profession refreshed and invigorated. Next year's Conference will be held in Adelaide from 8 to 10 October.

Conference Exhibitors:

- Smith Kline Beecham – Major Sponsor
- Astra
- Roche

- Ego
- CSL Pharmaceuticals
- Defence Health
- Essex Phama
- ParkeDavis
- GMS Marketing
- Uvex Safety