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Communication for health and regional stability

THE 10TH ASIA-PACIFIC MILITARY MEDICINE CONFERENCE was held in Singapore from 7–12 May 2000. Co-hosted by the Singapore Armed Forces and the United States Army Pacific Command, this important regional forum brought together the leaders of military health from 28 nations. The Conference facilitates international health communication and promotes regional stability through cooperation in Australia’s specific regional area of interest.

The Conference attracted 480 registrants, of whom 18 were senior Australian health officers from all three Services. The military health of almost one-half of the world’s servicemen and women were represented by the Surgeons-General of China, Mongolia, Russia, Japan, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Thailand and Sri Lanka, as well as several of the world’s smaller nations, including the Maldives and Kiribati.

The Conference was entitled *Hostile Environments — Challenge to Military Medicine*. The 140 papers presented provided a unique forum for discussion of shared challenges and of regional and nation-specific problems in military health. Among the themes discussed were bioterrorism, telemedicine and health issues raised by joint health deployments, particularly during United Nations peacekeeping work.

Australians delivered 14 papers, including reports on preventive medicine and health, the results of recent malaria research, logistic and planning issues in military medicine, military training methods with particular emphasis on the prevention of injuries and the maintenance of positive health, reducing sporting injuries in the military forces, a plenary paper on “The laws of war”, and medical ethics in the context of military medicine.

The Asia–Pacific military medicine conferences have been made possible by the generosity of the Health Branch of the United States Army Pacific Command, currently commanded by Major General Nancy Adams. The full-time conference coordination and planning team (Colonel Douglas

Biggerstaff, Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Berg, Colonel Dale Vincent and Mr Dan Horne) are to be congratulated for achieving another step towards the vision of international communication in military health. The success of the Conference is also a product of the generosity and hospitality of the Medical Branch of the Singapore Armed Forces, and the tireless efforts of Brigadier General Lionel Lee, Colonel Wong Yue Sie and Colonel Low Wye Mun, all of the headquarters of the SAF Medical Corps.

Major General John H Pearn
Surgeon General ADF



Hosts of the Asia-Pacific Military Medicine Conferences. Left to right: Colonel Wong Yue Sie, FRCS, SMO(Health Care), of the Singapore Armed Forces, and Co-ordinator of the 10th Conference; Lieutenant General Preeyaphas Nilubol, Surgeon General of the Royal Thai Army Medical Department, host of the 9th Conference in 1999; Major General John Pearn, Surgeon General ADF (Australia was host of the 6th Conference in 1996); and Brigadier General Lionel KH Lee, Chief of the Medical Corps, SAF, and the Conference host this year.