

EDITION 7, JUNE 2026

PSA PASIFIKA PULSE

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear PSA Members,
Noaia e Mauri!

As we move beyond the halfway point of the year, I hope this message finds you well and thriving in your respective roles and communities across the Pacific.

I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to our colleagues and friends in the Solomon Islands on the celebration of their 48th Independence Anniversary, and to our Samoan family as they marked the 68th anniversary of Samoa's independence. These important national milestones are a testament to the resilience, progress, and achievements of our Pacific Island nations.

Reflecting on these celebrations has also prompted me to consider the remarkable journey of the Pacific Society of Anaesthetists (PSA). What began as a vision shared by a group of dedicated professionals in the late 1980s became a reality in the early 1990s. Driven by a commitment to advancing anaesthesia practice throughout the Pacific, these pioneering individuals transformed an ambitious idea into a thriving regional organisation.

Through determination, perseverance, and the enduring spirit of Pacific collaboration, the PSA has continued to grow and strengthen over the years. This year marks a particularly significant milestone as we celebrate 35 years of Annual Scientific Meetings, a testament to the dedication of our members and the enduring value of professional partnership and knowledge sharing across our region.

Our journey has not been without challenges. However, through the collective efforts of our members and the unwavering support of our longstanding partners, the Australian Society of Anaesthetists and the New Zealand Society of Anaesthetists, we have continued to advance our shared mission and reach new milestones together.

As we celebrate our achievements and look ahead to the opportunities before us, I encourage everyone to remain inspired by the vision of those who came before us and committed to strengthening anaesthesia practice across the Pacific for future generations.

I hope you enjoy this edition of Pasifika Pulse and the stories, updates, and reflections it contains.

Warm regards,
Eunice

President, Pacific Society of Anaesthetists (PSA)



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COLLEGE OF INTENSIVE CARE MEDICINE ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING.

This year's College of Intensive Care Medicine (CICM) annual scientific meeting was held in Sydney from May 27th to 30th. The theme of "straight to the heart – precision, passion and progress" provided the platform for a dynamic mix of cutting-edge advancements, practical insights and thought-provoking discussions.

Annual Scientific Meeting Reflection

The College of Intensive Care Medicine Annual Scientific Meeting was an outstanding experience—truly "straight to the heart." It offered a powerful reminder that, although critical care is often viewed through cold metrics, sterile rooms, and highly advanced technology, its core remains deeply human.

The Human Side of Critical Care

It was profound to hear senior clinicians speak candidly about the emotional and ethical challenges of working across two very different realities: the stark resource limitations of developing health care systems and the abundance of cutting-edge Western centers. Their reflections felt deeply relatable and reinforced the importance of compassion, context, and resilience in intensive care practice.

Advances in Cardiac Intensive Care

The advances in the management of cardiac patients were equally inspiring. There is a clear shift toward precision imaging, advanced monitoring, and more tailored approaches to care within the ICU. The industry exhibition reflected nearly every pillar of modern intensive care and has helped shape a practical wish list for our units in Fiji.

Emerging Frontiers: Mitochondria and Heart Transplantation

Among the many brilliant presentations, the scientific paradigm shift around "Mitochondria and Heart Transplantation" stood out as one of the most fascinating frontiers in advanced cardiac care. The concept of injecting mitochondria into stunned myocardium to rapidly boost ATP production—and the demonstrated evidence of improved contractility was remarkable. The possibility that these applications could expand exponentially is both thrilling and inspiring.

A Pacific Perspective

The perspective we bring from the Pacific, combined with an understanding of these highly advanced cellular therapies, represents exactly the kind of bridge the global critical care community needs. This meeting reinforced the value of connecting innovation with equity, and global expertise with local realities.

*Dr Kaajal Swarup
Geelong, Australia*





15-19 APRIL 2026
19th World Congress
of Anaesthesiologists
MARRAKECH ★ MOROCCO

19TH WORLD CONGRESS OF ANAESTHESIOLOGISTS

Marrakesh, Morocco | 15–19 April

Congress Overview

The 19th World Congress of Anaesthesiologists took place in Marrakesh, Morocco, from 15 to 19 April under the theme “Anaesthesiology Along the Patient Pathway.” The congress brought together approximately 3,700 participants from more than 130 countries, providing an outstanding forum for learning, collaboration, and the exchange of ideas in anaesthesia, critical care, pain medicine, and perioperative services.

PSA Representation, perspectives & scholarship programme

PSA was proudly represented by three scholarship recipients: Dr Shereen, who travelled from Fiji; Dr Loreen, who travelled from Melbourne; and Dr Katarina, travelling from Auckland. We arrived in Marrakesh on Tuesday, 14 April, ahead of the official opening of the congress. We were honoured to be among the 39 scholarship participants, joining Anaesthesiologists from other low- and middle-income countries. This created a valuable opportunity to connect with colleagues facing similar healthcare delivery challenges and to discuss practical, innovative approaches for strengthening anaesthesia services in resource-limited settings.

Pacific Perspectives

We were also pleased to meet Dr Lamour from the Pacific Community, who presented two important abstracts on:

- Pacific Clinical Services Resilience
- Surgical, Obstetrics and Anaesthesia (SOA) Workforce in the Pacific

These presentations highlighted the progress, ongoing challenges, and future priorities for strengthening perioperative and clinical services across Pacific Island nations.



Programme Highlights

The congress programme ran over four and a half days and featured keynote lectures, panel discussions, workshops, and scientific presentations. Sessions covered a broad range of topics focused on improving patient care and safety in anaesthesia and critical care.

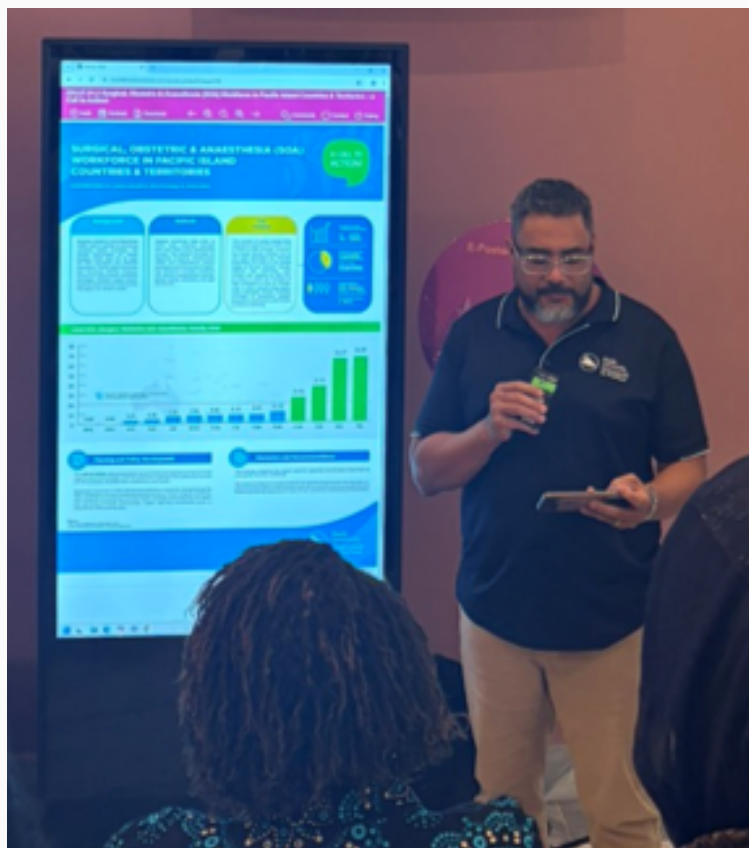
Key themes included:

- Patient safety and quality improvement
- Advances in airway management
- Regional anaesthesia techniques
- Obstetric anaesthesia updates
- Critical care management
- Pain medicine innovations
- Workforce development and training
- Sustainability in anaesthesia practice

The theme, “Anaesthesiology Along the Patient Pathway,” reinforced the expanding role of anaesthesiologists beyond the operating theatre, from preoperative assessment through intraoperative care to postoperative recovery and critical care support.

One of the most impactful sessions was the Harold Griffith Lecture delivered by Dr Adrian Gelb, titled “Can Anaesthesiologists Lead on Patient Safety Again?” He emphasized the need for a shift in mindset: recognizing the limits of our own knowledge, involving the right experts, and driving system change through multidisciplinary teamwork. One of the most powerful reminders from his lecture was that meaningful change in systems and human behavior is gradual and requires sustained effort over time.

Alongside the academic programme, the industry exhibition featured the latest medical technologies and equipment. Companies including Mindray, Dräger, Masimo, GE Healthcare, and Lifebox showcased ventilators, oxygen delivery systems, patient monitoring devices, ultrasound machines, and other innovations designed to improve patient safety and strengthen anaesthesia care worldwide.



Cultural Experience and Broader Engagement

Beyond the congress itself, we had the opportunity to explore the beauty, culture, and history of Marrakesh. Highlights included:

- Camel riding
- Shopping in the famous Medina markets
- Visiting the beautiful gardens
- Exploring the vibrant “Red City” and its architecture

These experiences added depth to the trip, allowing us to appreciate Morocco’s hospitality, traditions, and heritage while strengthening connections with colleagues from around the world.

Dr Loreen also participated in the TopMedTalk podcast at the WFSA - provided a valuable opportunity to showcase Fiji internationally and discuss the realities of delivering anaesthesia in a resource-limited setting. Many anaesthetists from around the world were unfamiliar with Fiji and the specific challenges faced by small Pacific Island nations. It was meaningful to share not only the limitations we work within, but also the resilience, adaptability, and commitment of our anaesthesia workforce. The experience reinforced the importance of global collaboration and of ensuring that the perspectives of smaller nations are represented in international discussions.

Conclusion and Acknowledgements

Overall, attending the 19th World Congress of Anaesthesiologists was an enriching and inspiring experience. It provided valuable educational updates, strengthened international connections, and offered practical insights that can help improve anaesthesia and critical care services in Fiji and the wider Pacific region.

We strongly encourage colleagues back in the Pacific to pursue opportunities like this to advocate for our profession, continue learning, experience new cultures, and build networks with anaesthetists from across the globe.

Finally, we would like to express our sincere thanks to PSA, ASA, and WFSA for making this trip possible through their support and scholarship assistance. We are truly grateful and look forward to sharing what we learned to support the continued advancement of safe anaesthesia care in our region.

Katarina Dimurikalou
Waikato Hospital, Hamilton,

Dr Loreen Sharma
NZ Bayside Health, Wonthaggi, Victoria, Aust.





DAN & UHMS SPRING 2026 DIVING & HYPERBARIC MEDICINE CME

The Divers Alert Network (DAN), in collaboration with the Undersea and Hyperbaric Medicine Society (UHMS), returned its one-week Continuing Medical Education (CME) conference to Volivoli following the inaugural event held in October 2024. The Hyperbaric Unit in Fiji was honored to participate in this year's Diving and Hyperbaric Medicine CME, held in Volivoli, Rakiraki, Fiji, from 3 to 8 May 2026. Led by Dr Akuila Waqanicakau, the local team included Dr Sitiveni, RN Shane, RN Asinate, Dr Shivankar, and Dr Sefton from Lautoka Hospital, as well as Dr Maurice from Labasa Hospital.

The program combined half-day diving sessions with half-day classroom instruction, offering a well-balanced learning experience. Faculty members included experienced divers and specialist physicians, with speakers from the United States and Poland. The conference covered a range of topics, including inner ear decompression, patent foramen ovale, hyperbaric oxygen therapy for necrotizing wounds, intensive care in the hyperbaric unit, and extreme recreational diving. These discussions highlighted the continued advancement of diving medicine, including emerging developments such as the use of hydrogen as a breathing gas to reduce the effects of nitrogen narcosis and support deeper dives.





While conference participants undertook their daily dives, the local team was generously given the opportunity by Volivoli Resort management to receive introductory dive training at no cost. This was a valuable experience, as it allowed the team not only to manage diving-related complications in a clinical setting, but also to better understand the activity through direct participation. We accept that diving is not for everybody - Congratulations are extended to Dr Shivankar, RN Shane, and RN Asinate for successfully completing the course and becoming certified recreational divers. Dr Akuila, Dr Sitiveni, and I were also invited on a fishing trip behind Nanu-i-Ra and Malake Island, which added to the overall experience and hospitality of the week. We also accept that fishing is not for everybody.

Overall, the conference was an enriching and highly rewarding experience for the local team. Sincere appreciation is extended to the DAN faculty for including the local participants, to Ra Divers for their time and expertise in teaching diving skills, and to Volivoli Resort management for their warm Fijian hospitality.

Sota Tale
Maurice Atalifo



VITAL ANAESTHESIA SIMULATION TRAINING (VAST): A FIVE-YEAR PRESCENCE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

Since its introduction to the Pacific Society of Anaesthetists (PSA) community in 2019, the Vital Anaesthesia Simulation Training (VAST) course has become an important pillar of perioperative education for non-technical skills training. Introduced through Fiji National University (FNU) by VAST founder Dr Adam Mossenson, the programme has transformed the way anaesthesia providers and perioperative teams learn, placing equal emphasis on technical expertise and the non-technical skills essential for safe patient care.

Following the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, VAST was successfully re-established in 2022 with a Facilitator Course and VAST Lite programme held in conjunction with the Pacific Society of Anaesthetists Annual Scientific Meeting in Warwick, Fiji. The course marked the beginning of a renewed commitment to simulation-based education for the PSA community.

Since then, VAST course has been delivered annually in Fiji, primarily through Fiji National University's postgraduate anaesthesia training programme, which encompasses a large proportion of PSA members. The programme has become an integral part of specialist training, providing anaesthesia trainees with practical experience in crisis resource management and strengthening their ability to deliver safe, high-quality perioperative care.

The continued success of VAST course has been made possible through the collaboration of the international VAST organisation, Fiji National University, the Australian Society of Anaesthetists (ASA) and the Pacific Society of Anaesthetists. Through these partnerships, instructors have now been trained from nine of PSA's eleven member countries, creating a growing regional network of educators who are committed to advancing simulation-based education throughout the Pacific.

A significant milestone in the programme's evolution was the expansion of participant groups to include the wider perioperative workforce. In addition to anaesthesia trainees, recent courses have welcomed general surgery trainees, anaesthetic technicians and perioperative nurses, fostering interprofessional learning that mirrors the collaborative environment of the operating theatre. The course has also secured instructors from the nursing cadre who also work as coordinators. Ms Sheetal Nand a nurse educator by background and an experienced instructor in other courses such as MIMMS and APLS has now taken the helm at the VAST steering committee. This is a great step forward in ensuring the courses sustainability in the Pacific.



Looking ahead, VAST shares a vision similar to other successful anaesthesia lead educational initiatives supported by the World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists, including Essential Pain Management (EPM) and Primary Trauma Care (PTC). The long-term objective is to expand the programme beyond Fiji and deliver VAST courses across Pacific Island nations, enabling local perioperative teams to train together within their own healthcare settings while developing sustainable in-country faculty.

As VAST continues to grow, it invites all our members to join in the VAST movement in moving simulation training in high fidelity situations and nontechnical skills teaching onward in our region.

AOSRA-PM 2026

JOIN AOSRA-PM

Asian & Oceanic Society of Regional Anaesthesia and Pain Medicine

Advance your practice. Grow your network. Be part of a regional community.

AOSRA-PM membership connects professionals dedicated to regional anaesthesia and pain medicine across Asia, Oceania, and beyond.

Membership Benefits

- Official membership certificate recognising your affiliation with AOSRA-PM.
- Discounted registration fees for selected sister society conferences and events.
- Monthly educational webinars featuring experts in regional anaesthesia and pain medicine.
- Scholarship eligibility for education, research, and training opportunities.
- Professional networking with colleagues across Asia and Oceania.

Membership Fee: SGD 20 per year or SGD 50 for 3 years

The PSA Executive committee is inviting EOI from members to secure membership to the AOSRA-PM society. To support RA & PM in the region, PSA will sponsor 2 colleagues for membership of 3 years. Please provide the following documents (orange) and membership sponsorship will be considered for those meeting the following (green) criteria.

Criteria:

- Active paying member of the PSA
- Special interest in RA/PM practice
- Advocate of RA/PM in your hospital.

Supporting Documents:

- Support letter from your HOD
- A short paragraph (<300 words) how you will use the opportunity to champion/provide stewardship of RA/PM service and resources in your hospital

Become a member today and support excellence in regional anaesthesia and pain medicine.

UPCOMING EVENTS



PSA CONFERENCE

Conference Dates: August 31st to September 4th 2026

Tanoa Hotel, Rakiraki, Fiji

CSC2026

COMBINED SCIENTIFIC CONGRESS
ASA & NZSA • HUNTER VALLEY AU
8-11 OCTOBER 2026



Safe Airway Society 2026 Annual Meeting

REGISTRATIONS NOW OPEN



Friday 28th August 2026



09:10 - 15:00

(optional workshops in AM & PM)



Elysium, Noosa Heads, QLD (previously Sofitel)



Visit the Annual Meeting
website for further details

Papua New Guinea Society of Anaesthetist & Intensivist

August 27th-29th, 2026. City of Lae

“The role of anaesthesia & critical care in emergency care”

