



**Australian Association for Exercise
and
Sports Science**

ANNUAL REPORT

1999

President's Report

Tony Parker PhD

AAESS has had a very active and successful year with a number of new developments and improvement of our profile and standing with Government and other professional groups. We have expended considerable effort in representing AAESS's position on national and state issues related to physical activity and health and aspects of service delivery. Active lobbying of government has occurred through written submissions, deputations and representation on national and state committees. The GST has been a major issue and was the catalyst for active lobbying by AAESS of key representatives on all sides of politics in an attempt to exempt exercise science services from the tax. Although unsuccessful at this time, there was significant empathy with our position and increasing recognition of the role played by AAESS members in areas of preventative medicine and exercise rehabilitation. Representation at this level of government will be most valuable in future consideration of GST items.

Membership has increased to more than 500 members, which acknowledges the work of AAESS and the benefits to be derived from this membership. The increase in membership also reflects significant improvement in membership services and the success of our promotional activities. Our newsletter and website have improved communication to members and the excellent work of the secretariat has provided efficient and timely responses in the day-to-day running of the organisation. We are indebted to Mrs Judy Mack for her work as coordinator of the Secretariat. The regional chapters have been most active during the year and have made an excellent contribution to the national agenda. At the same time, they have attended to local issues and have worked effectively to promote AAESS through a variety of strategies including an interesting and topical range of practitioner oriented seminars.

Further refinement of our accreditation procedures in specialist categories has occurred and it is pleasing to see a steady increase in the number of applications for specialist membership which suggests an increasing recognition of the value of specialist accreditation in the workplace.

Developments in the professional areas of sports science have also occurred but not to the same extent as in the exercise rehabilitation domain. This situation, in no way, reflects the work done by the Sports Science members of AAESS rather the greater emphasis that we have placed on exercise science in response to the increasing range of career opportunities in this area. As career opportunities in sports science extend beyond the academies of sport and into the professional sport arena, there are new opportunities to increase representation of sports scientists in AAESS and increasing need for professional support and representation. Graham Maw (Vice President, Sports Science) has worked hard to promote AAESS among sports scientists and has redefined the procedures for specialist accreditation in sports science to provide a greater emphasis on the more relevant areas of professional practice.

AAESS continues to maintain a strong working relationship with the tertiary sector particularly in areas of accreditation. The standards and requirements for accreditation of members implemented by AAESS have evolved following extensive discussion between representatives of training institutions and AAESS practitioner members. The standards set by AAESS have had an important influence on the structure and content of courses at this level, and a significant milestone in the organisation occurred this year with the development of guidelines and procedures for the accreditation of courses in exercise and sports science. Although I accepted the responsibility for the preparation of this document, many members of AAESS have contributed to its development over an extended period and with the implementation of this process later this year, we will be in line with other professional groups such as medicine, physiotherapy and dietetics who have had such procedures in place for some time. With over 20 University courses offered in our field, it is important to have guidelines that provide a basis for quality control and ensure close matching of the requirements of 'industry' with course content in professionally oriented programs. Industry experience during degree programs is one important component of professionally oriented degrees and at present standards in this area highly variable and in some programs appropriate work experiences are non-existent. The accreditation guidelines allow for flexibility in course design and AAESS recognises the need for diversity in University courses. However, there are core areas and specific knowledge skills and competencies that need to be included and developed to ensure high standards of professional practice and the relevancy of courses to industry and community needs. The accreditation guidelines will continue to be developed and refined as we identify and embrace new career opportunities for graduates in exercise and sports science.

As we continually expand the activities of AAESS, an ever-increasing amount of work is placed on volunteer members and our part-time secretariat. This limits the range of activities that we are able to achieve and there is still a need for full-time support to take care of the day-to-day running of the organisation. This would also

increase our advocacy role and take advantage of the opportunities that exist to advance the organisation. Our treasurer has done an excellent job in the organisation of the financial structures of AAESS and increased membership and careful planning of expenditures has improved our financial situation. There is still a need however to increase our income if we are to meet the expectations of members and move the organisation to a higher level of activity.

Since our initial meeting in 1988 to discuss the need for a professional body to represent exercise and sports scientists and the formal constitution of AAESS in 1992, the organisation has passed through many stages, climbed many mountains and overcome many problems. Some of our achievements include the implementation of accreditation procedures in a range of professional areas, development of salary scales, professional indemnity insurance, and code of ethics, to name a few. Importantly, we have developed an organisation, which has a highly credible and clearly identifiable membership, and one, which is increasingly effective in fostering the professional aims of graduates in our field. Our activities have stimulated the development of new career opportunities while at the same time protecting the interests of our graduates in those areas unique to the exercise and sports science practitioner.

As I retire from the Presidency of AAESS, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to many people who have shared the vision for the development of the organisation and who have provided support and friendship over the first seven years of its life. In particular, I would like to thank members who have played an active role on national and regional boards and the many other people who in various ways have helped to shape the vision and structure of the organisation. Although the development of a professional organisation in our field was somewhat belated by comparison with other professional groups, we have made considerable progress in a relatively short time. In contrast to some other professional groups, until relatively recently, efforts in our field have been directed towards the establishment of a strong discipline base through research and scholarly activity. The stronger discipline base however, has been, and will continue to be advantageous in the development of professional activity and become increasingly important as greater emphasis is placed on evidence based practice. AAESS will continue to grow and I am confident that the structures that we have established provide a sound basis for this growth.

I am most grateful for the honour of being President of AAESS and thank all members most sincerely for their support, enthusiasm and commitment to the organisation during my period of office. I wish the incoming President every success and encourage every member to actively contribute to the continued growth and development of AAESS.

Vice President's Report – Exercise Rehabilitation

Peter Abernethy PhD

It is with mixed feelings that I write this report, On the one hand it provides an opportunity to reflect on all the things that AAESS has achieved in the previous 12 months; yet on the other, one is never satisfied with the pace of progress. on election to the office of Vice-President Exercise Rehabilitation I set myself the goal of developing a template submission for private health insurance companies. Through the efforts of many AAESS members around the country, and particularly those of Sharon Sibthorpe, this goal has been achieved. It is my sincere hope that this template can now be used to make successful submissions to numerous insurers. We should be prepared to export that some private health insurers, at least initially, will not want to cover our services. However, I am sure With continued advocacy that we will succeed.

The other big issue to confront the portfolio of exercise rehabilitation has been the GST. At this point I would like to acknowledge and thank Phil Hamdorf for all his work in the area. Again this issue will take time to resolve successfully (hopefully prior to July 1 next year). However, we must not set this issue up as our *make or break issue*. We should be secure in the knowledge that we are legitimate allied health professionals, and our importance will be validated with time and greater advocacy, Clearly, our advocacy is starting to have, an effect. During our recent visit to parliament not one member questioned the efficacy of what we did, nor the legitimacy of AAESS.

I do believe that each and every member of AAESS has a responsibility for being an advocate for our field and professions. It is time for all of us to be more vocal within our community and with our community leaders. Could I urge you to meet with local politicians, community leaders and citizens to explain about what we do. We need to become more valued by the general community. Again on our trip to Canberra it was pleasing to hear a Member of Parliament speaking highly of his local exercise physiologist.

Clearly, there have been many other issues during the year, for example Workers' Compensation. It has been pleasing to see how local chapters have taken on these issues. We will need to rely increasingly on the input of chapters and advisory committees the more we engage with more issues and other players.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Exercise Rehabilitation Advisory Committee for their support and advice, my colleagues on the National Board, and all those AAESS members who have contacted me over the past year. It is my firm belief that while we never travel as quickly as we would like, we are heading in the right direction.

Vice President's Report – Exercise Science

Graeme Maw, PhD

One year ago, the aim of the Association in Sports Science was to promote both the Association itself and a broader concept of the sports science profession. Thus, the year has seen presentations by and for AAESS at the 1998 and 1999 Annual Conferences for Science and Medicine in Sport, a presentation at the 1998 Applied Physiology Conference, exploration through the internet of sports science internationally, communications with the Australian Sports Commissions Laboratory Standards Accreditation Scheme (LSAS), and articles in the AAESS newsletter specifically by a diversity of sports scientists.

While these initiatives have been successful in raising the profile and discussion of AAESS among the profession, they have not yet significantly impacted on membership – and therefore the strength – of the sports science branch. While this is frustrating, as the merits of the Association are increasingly recognised, it may be explained by sports current preoccupation with Olympic preparation: Like the athletes themselves, there is currently a quite blinkered approach to work by those employed in high performance sport. It is unfortunate, but this means the Association is not in the strong position it would like in order to lobby with the professional upheaval likely after the 2000 Games.

Moving on from there, however, new criteria have been approved for the accreditation of sports scientists, really focusing on the actual working requirements of the profession. This will be launched at the earliest opportunity through the AAESS newsletter and as a mail out to those already working prominently in the area.

As mentioned, it will also be promoted to the LSAS, highlighting the need for appropriately trained scientists in laboratories, as well as the mechanical skills currently accredited. This move will be strongly supported by the impending AAESS-accreditation of university courses, as it will be seen that a credible external association is able to distinguish – for the benefit of the employer – the strengths and weaknesses of respective courses.

There will also be continuing efforts to improve services to existing members, such that the Association is seen to be providing “value for money” for members in sports science. While these moves may not yet match the advances in exercise science (e.g. provider numbers, GST lobbying, etcetera), they will undoubtedly be important and form the ground work to generate the membership strength that allows for bigger issues. Lab accreditation is one such issue, along with job ad inclusion, team selection, and continued expansion of the career path.

To facilitate these moves, the overdue sports science subcommittee will be formed early in the new year, including a sports science representative from each regional chapter. The move of the South East Queensland Chapter to position a sports science representative on their executive is perhaps the example of how communication and proaction can best be developed from and to the national executive for the continued development of the sports science field.

Vice President's Report – Exercise Science

Tim Olds PhD

1. General comments

The year 2000 will be a critical year for AAESS and exercise science as a profession in Australia. For many outside the field, there is no independent discipline of exercise science. “Exercise science” is seen merely the intersection of a number of parent disciplines with a common but ephemeral interest in similar content areas. Its practitioners are not real practitioners in the way medical doctors or physiotherapists are: they have no universal representative body, no accreditation scheme, no lobbying focus. They are not recognised in government legislation, by granting bodies, in ARC and NHMRC classification codes. Public and private insurance schemes do not automatically recognise their services as they do those of nurses or physiotherapists. They are seen as marginal, stopgap second stringers with no

distinct zone of responsibility clearly demarcated from medical doctors above, physiotherapists to the side, and fitness leaders below.

The opposing view is that exercise science is an emerging profession. It has a distinct and unique content area, clear zones of practice and responsibility, and is beginning to achieve legislative and administrative recognition. Vertical and horizontal articulations with other professions are being crystallised, largely through the work of Owen Curtis with AFAC. In 5, 10 or 20 years' time, we will see exercise scientists hang up their shingles and set up private practices and consultancies as routinely as dietitians or physicians do now.

The fact that we can even be said to be at this turning point is largely due to one person — Tony Parker. He has more than anyone created the profession of exercise scientist in Australia. Few people realise the enormous amount of politicking, red tape, bargaining and meticulous documentation this requires.

With Tony's retirement, it is time to revisit the role of AAESS. Should AAESS be a trade union? Is it mainly a lobby group? Or should we follow the ACSM model, where the College is essentially a professional association and a marketing organisation?

2. Accreditation guidelines

The development of university course accreditation guidelines, based on competencies, has been a key element in deciding the shape of this future. The accreditation guidelines offer an operational definition of the discipline area, and of professional roles and responsibilities. They are a mechanism of quality control and a common ground for lobbying private and public financial providers. However, there will be problems with implementing the guidelines due to increasing deregulation, fragmentation and fluidity of course structures. Internally, courses are becoming extremely flexible, offering multiple pathways, many of which may not lead to AAESS accreditation. Externally, the ability to "plug in" bits and pieces of courses from overseas universities delivered in distance mode will make the application of the guidelines difficult.

3. Continuing education initiatives

Most professional associations offer some kind of continuing education for their members, and AAESS is moving in this direction. In 1999 AAESS launched a certification course in pre-exercise screening. A pre-exercise screening course using the ACSM model was conducted in August at the University of Western Sydney, convened by Paul Lilyman and the executive of NSW AAESS. About twenty-five participants registered, and three have already been certificated. The courses are being conducted with the assistance of Human Kinetics, whose course ware is being used. Associations of this sort will be constructive for AAESS in offering services to members, keeping the AAESS name in people's minds, and in achieving one of AAESS' aims of improving the quality of exercise and sports science services. These courses are a way of keeping in touch with graduates, and of recruiting undergraduates.

In Brisbane in September, the SE Queensland chapter of AAESS co-sponsored a Level 1 ISAK Anthropometry course. A larger international course will be held in Brisbane in 2000, again co-sponsored by AAESS.

It is important to develop and run other modules, and invite members to put forward ideas.

4. Sports science conference workshops

It is also important that AAESS maintain a presence at national conferences. The 1999 IOC conference and 2000 pre-Olympic conference constitute departures from the traditional conference format. AAESS is sponsoring a workshop at this Conference, on sports scientists' preparations for the Olympic Games, and will have a presence at the 2000 Conference.

It is not clear whether the old conference format will be resumed in 2001 and thereafter, particularly with the defection of some discipline groups. This means that AAESS will have to rethink its conference role. Should AAESS continue to support a depleted SMA conference, or launch its own? Is a "virtual conference" a possibility? What are the revenue implications?

5. Future prospects

The following are critical directions for AAESS in the new millennium:

- articulation of professional roles and responsibilities
- development of strong professional development instruments
- increasing pro active media involvement
- brokering agreements with private providers and public authorities

Treasurer's Report

Barry Ridge PhD

The financial statements for the Company for the period 1st July, 1998 to 30th June, 1999 are attached. A profit of \$8795 was made during the year and is somewhat higher than last year. Income was higher than last year due in part to income from advertising but primarily to an increase in the number of members and higher membership subscriptions. Conference income was the lowest on record. Expenditure this year was also higher than last year and the main items of expenditure were: the secretariat; printing and stationery; board members travel; audit; teleconferences; and chapter start-up costs.

The AAESS will carry forward \$19,934 into the 2000 Financial year.

The operation of five AAESS Chapter accounts commenced this year with monies being deposited through the national account and down loaded to the respective Chapter Account. All chapters which operated their accounts during the 1999 Financial year have provided financial details to the National Treasurer as required by the Articles of Association.

Motion 1: That the Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss Statement, Notes to the Financial Statements, Directors' Statement and Independent Auditor's Report for the period ended 30th June, 1999 be received.

Motion 2: That no Director's fees be payable in respect of the 2000 financial year or future year.

Secretary's Report

Phil Hamdorf PhD

1999 has been an extremely busy year for the National Secretariat with a number of issues requiring significant attention. Of course the GST issue has taken precedence and remains a critical issue for the Association. As discussed in the last update to members, the AAESS is continuing to work hard at lobbying the Federal Government to include the work of exercise physiologists as GST-free services. The Board considers this a crucial issue and will require the continuing support of all members.

The Association has continued experience strong growth and the current membership (as at 26.11.99) of 582 is well above the prediction I made some 12-months ago. I believe our growth will continue throughout 2000 and would anticipate that at this time next year the Association's membership will most likely be approaching 700.

The breakdown of AAESS members is as follows:

Ordinary members:	349
Student members:	230
Adjunct members:	3

The accreditation scheme is also continuing to grow with well over 100 members having achieved this status. I also expect this number to increase rapidly should the Association be successful with its GST deliberations.

1999 Accredited members -	Exercise Physiology:	83
	Cardio-respiratory rehabilitation:	2
	Musculo-skeletal rehabilitation:	18
	Sports Psychology:	1
	Sports Physiology:	7
	Sports Biomechanics:	6

The Association has negotiated numerous member benefits this year and has arrangements Human Kinetics, QANTAS, Ansett Airlines and Hertz. A new range of AAESS apparel has also just been released and is proving rather popular with members.

The AAESS website has also undergone considerable change and features a totally new look with an exclusive "members only" area providing discrete benefits for members.

This has been a hectic but highly rewarding year for the Association. I look forward to continued growth throughout 2000 as the Association consolidates its position.

In closing, I would like to thank Judy Mack for her tremendous efforts and commitment to our Association's needs.

Chapter President's Reports

South Australia – *Phil Hamdorf PhD*

The past 12-months has seen little activity (on the home front) by the SA Chapter as most of our energy has been directed towards the GST fight. The Chapter will conduct its AGM in December and we look forward to increasing the activity of the Chapter during 2000.

It is of some interest however, to note the joint Exercise Physiology and WorkCover "clinical trial" was abandoned due to a lack of interest by General Practitioners to participate in the study. This decision should in no way be taken as a loss of confidence in exercise physiologists as many of the GP's interviewed for participation in the study considered it (ie. the study) to be redundant as they deemed the role of exercise physiologist was "paramount" in the provision of post acute exercise services necessary for the return of injured persons to the workplace.

Western Australia – *Tim Ackland PhD*

The ten months since our last AGM in October 1998 seems to have flown by. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Executive of the W.A. Chapter of AAESS for their hard work throughout the year. This was reflected in the stimulating and diverse member education program, with the following activities attracting strong support:

- Ms Helen Gilbey & Prof John Bloomfield - Hollywood Functional Rehabilitation Clinic - New Developments in Musculoskeletal Rehabilitation Equipment
- Mr Bob Galloway - Small Business Development Corporation - The Importance of a Business Plan
- Mr Matthew Reading - Interlink Insurance Professional Indemnity and Public Liability Insurance
- Dr Marcus Adonis & Dr Brian Galton-Fenzi - What is the Physician's Role within the Workers' Compensation System?

AAESS is also indebted to Sports Medicine Australia for the inclusion of our members in their education program, including the annual conference in Busselton.

The executive also responded to the W.A. Health Department's requests for submissions in respect of the review of the Allied Health Acts. We received a "Gold Star" for our submission for content, clarity and brevity! Thanks to all who contributed. At this time, all submissions are still being reviewed and the outcome is not expected to be finalised until the new millennium.

Our next "battle" appears to lie with the Federal Treasurer (of Australia not AAESS) in relation to the GST-free status of our accredited professional members. It seems you can be an iridologist, palmist or naturopath and be exempt, but the services of Exercise Physiologists / Rehabilitation Specialists were unheard of. The National branch is "girding its loins" for the fight!

Finally, the response of the Federal Treasury to a submission by AAESS secretary, Dr Phil Hamdorf in relation to the GST issue sums up the need for a strong, unified voice representing our members. It also demonstrates that we have a long way to go in spreading the word about who we are and what we do.

Under the Government's original tax reform policy documents, GST-free status was to apply to medical services that attract a Medicare benefit and also to 'commonly used' health service. As you mentioned in your letter, exercise science and, in particular, exercise physiology is an emerging profession. Therefore, it could be argued that the requirement that the health service be a "commonly used" health service is not met.

South East Queensland – *Sean Tweedy*

The 1998/9 year has been a very industrious one for the SEQ committee, including well attended education seminars on core stability by Helen Flemming and sport science in the new millennium by Dr Graeme Maw and the staging of the now regular (and very popular) Beach Volleyball Social Day.

The most important growth area in Chapter activity was that of industry articulation. Links with Recreation Training Queensland, Fitness Queensland, WorkCover, Departments of Tourism Sport and Racing and Queensland Health (Qld. Govt.) and MBF were all strengthened through specific project work which was undertaken by various members of the Chapter. These projects, many of which are on-going, include application for provider number status (MBF), advice on pay scales for physical conditioning services (WorkCover) input into the development of a new curriculum relating to physical activity for older persons (coordinated by Fitness Queensland) and input into the state Injury prevention strategy (Queensland Health). The growing number articulations of this nature are an important barometer of the degree to which the Chapter is gaining acceptance and influence within our sector.

In response to the expected growth in this type of Chapter business, and in order to mirror the AAESS national structure and other regional chapters, the latter part of the year was devoted to restructuring the SEQ Chapter executive. At the SEQ AAESS AGM, people were elected to the following positions:

President:	Reuben Brennan
Vice-President:	Rachelle Foreman
Treasurer:	Gehann Molachino
Secretary:	Laura Brooks
Director (Exercise Science):	Neuela Byrne
Director (Sports Science):	David Rowbottom
Director (Exercise Rehabilitation):	Sean Tweedy
Director (Special Projects):	Chris Nunn
Director/s (Ex Officio):	Deanna Furyk; Graeme Maw

People elected to the new "Director" positions will be responsible for the establishment of a working committee, will conduct at least one education seminar for the year and will deal with the key items of business for each area. Student liaison Officers and a social convenor positions will be retained and will report directly to the Vice President. Full position descriptions are available from the Chapter Secretary.

In summary the year has been a very successful one, maintaining a commitment to member services while taking some important steps towards establishing the role of AAESS and our profession within the Queensland Health and Fitness industries.

Victoria – Zorica Babic

As the Victorian chapter nears its first anniversary of operation I am pleased to report that our chapter has greatly increased its presence and significance (at least internally) in such a relatively short amount of time in this state. The executive committee's greatest challenges have been not only to prioritise and action items contained in our strategic plan, but to manage our operations, and indeed, growth. Through the consistent and concerted efforts of our executive team, we have achieved the following in 1999:

- Created networking opportunities for current and potential members alike. We have held four General Meetings, to discuss the issues affecting exercise physiologists in practice. In addition, a "Jobfest Seminar" has been planned for late October as a collaborative effort between AAESS, the Victorian universities, and AAESS exercise physiologists working in the field to provide an information forum for how and where to get jobs in Victoria.
- Executive committee members made presentations to relevant Victorian universities in an effort to increase the awareness and profile of AAESS amongst students. Some universities have been more proactive in their appointment of student/staff liaison officers than others to date, but we are confident in continuing collaborations to strengthen our partnership in the future for the mutual benefit of *our profession* and professionalism.
- Established a database of current Victorian members. By identifying and recruiting potential eligible members who are currently working in the field, we have welcomed key people into "our team" this year. It has been reassuring to see continually more members becoming involved in the chapter's activities – we see their invaluable

contributions and support as the reasons our chapter has made significant initial gains towards realising our collective vision. Recently, members were encouraged to join our database of AAESS practising members, to be used as a referral resource for GP's, through strategic alliance with the Active Script Program.

- Formed a working party to focus exclusively on making submissions on behalf of AAESS to gain rehabilitation provider numbers for our accredited members. As the majority of our "active" members have an interest in rehabilitation, our actions as a chapter have been guided by priorities in this field.
- To add a Victorian voice to the national body actions regarding the GST issue. We disseminated information regarding the impact of the GST on our profession during our September General Meeting, and assisted our members to take some political action by providing guidance about who to write to and major points to include in letters to local and Canberra MP's.

We look forward to maintaining the momentum in the new millennium.

New South Wales – Paul Lillyman

The NSW Chapter has continued to develop over the past 12 months since our last AGM. I would like to thank the Executive for their hard work throughout the year, and also to those members who contributed to their State Chapter.

The NSW Chapter has attempted to increase both its membership and member services throughout 1999. A number of initiatives were undertaken this year, including the establishment of Tertiary Contact's within the University's of NSW to assist with increasing the Associations student profile and membership base. A number of well-attended seminars were held in the later part of 1999, focusing upon Small Business and Pre-Exercise Screening.

The impact of the GST and the access of Provider number status have been a major issue with all AAESS members. All members were urged to support the National Board in their ongoing push for Exercise Physiologist recognition. Documentation outlining the skills and competencies of Exercise Physiologists working within the field of musculo-skeletal rehabilitation is being developed. This documentation is targeted towards Workcover , but will also be of use to other interest groups eg General Practitioners.

The new Executive will meet in early December to establish the operational plan for the coming year. Stronger inter-Chapter links and improved public awareness of AAESS are issues high on the agenda for 2000.

