



# ANZATSA

## Annual General Meeting 2020

### President's Report

<i>Tuhia ki te rangi</i>	Write it in the sky
<i>Tuhia ki te whenua</i>	Write it in the land
<i>Tuhia ki te ngākau o nga tangata</i>	Write it in the heart of the people
<i>Ko te mea nui ko te aroha</i>	The greatest thing is love
<i>Tihei Mauri Ora!</i>	Behold there is life!
<i>Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa</i>	Greetings, greetings, greetings to you all

*“Ānō ko te marama kua ngaro, kua ara anō”*  
Just like the moon that disappears and rises again  
(‘Rise again’ no matter what the adversity)

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Tēnā koutou e nga Rangatira – greetings esteemed members,

The last year has been a period of collective anxiety and trauma for many – but also of solidarity. Australian firefighters were supported by many from New Zealand during the ‘Black Summer’ of the Australian bushfires; Numerous protests were held across both countries in support of racial justice and #BlackLivesMatter; not to speak of the ongoing threat of the coronavirus pandemic. Not since WWII have so many lives been so collectively impacted. For our members and friends of the Association, the shutdown of services, practitioners unable to work effectively – if at all, and increased barriers for clients to access services has meant a complete rethink about service delivery across the sector. As of this writing, the impact of COVID-19 is ongoing and tenuous, rendering circumstances less predictable and events less controllable. Indeed, 2019-2020 has been a challenging year for ANZATSA members and the Association itself.

However, the enforced dropping of tools over this time has given the executive committee an opportunity to REFLECT on where we’ve been and where we need to go, REVIEW current roles and procedures, and move into our current stage of REBUILD as we address systemic gaps, anticipate personnel changes, and position ourselves to increase our relevance and support to members, the field, and our many communities.

Once again, I acknowledge you, our valuable members, who do all of the work on the ground, develop our field knowledge, and contribute to healthier societies for current and future generations.

### **Finances**

Our Treasurer, Dr Katie Seidler (also a founding member of the Association), has done an admirable job in addressing systemic gaps and aligning our financial processes across both countries. As you will see in the upcoming Treasurer's report, we have maintained a healthy balance of funds across Australia and New Zealand over the last twelve months. Expenses have been low – due to postponed activities – and income from symposium sponsors has been significant, allowing us substantive resource to stage that event next year. This is very positive given the circumstances, not to mention at a time when there have been challenges recruiting an executive committee member with the requisite skills and expertise needed to provide sound financial advice and inform a viable financial strategy.

### **Membership**

Membership has remained stable over the past year, with a focus on follow-up of lapsed members and the initiation of more content for members on a regular basis. As at July 2019, we had 188 financial members. At July 2020, we have 166 active members.

Due to Covid-19's financial impact, a decision was taken by the executive committee to extend memberships by six months fee-free, in order to assist members who might be feeling the strain of the virus financially. All memberships were automatically extended to 31st December 2020. For those members who had paid their 2020/21 memberships, this fee now covers the next 18 months of membership through to 31st December 2021. Lapsed members were also invited to 'come back to the fold', and offered 6-months no-fee membership through until 31st December 2020.

In response to frustrations with membership processes, we have re-organised and streamlined our administration of new membership applications and membership renewals on the website. Additionally, over the next 12 months, members should be pleased to see more web-content offered, including up-to-date research summaries, training opportunities, information regarding our May 2021 Western Australian-based symposium, and other interesting content. Watch out for these commencing in late September 2020. I acknowledge the work of Dr Russ Pratt in managing our membership process.

### **Professional development**

*Symposium.* It has been ANZATSA's tradition to hold a conference every two years and a symposium every alternate year. Last year, we held one of our most successful events with the '*Valuing All Voices: 9<sup>th</sup> Biennial ANZATSA Conference*' in Brisbane – Kudos to our conference committee of Dr Gwenda Willis and Dr Danielle Harris for drawing that event together. We had planned our symposium for late August-early September this year. However, like the rest of the world, we have had to reschedule that event for a later date. The symposium, titled: '*Children, Young People and Harmful Sexual Behaviour: Healing is Prevention*', will now be held at the Perth Convention Centre, Western Australia, on 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> May 2021. This will be Australia and New Zealand's first symposium on this important child safety issue. On behalf of the executive, I would like to thank Dale Tolliday for his

tireless efforts in securing funds as well as co-ordinating the programme and speakers. We are thankful for the generous sponsorship from a range of Government agencies. Like other ANZATSA events, the symposium will draw on international and national thought leaders and promises to be a highly valuable event for professionals working in the field of sexual abuse.

*Survey.* In recognition of difficult times faced by many health professionals during the lockdowns such as being isolated and challenges connecting in real time with wider professional circles, we disseminated a survey to our members to better understand how ANZATSA might support our members. The survey gave us an opportunity to identify skill and educational needs and inform ways to better support members across the sector and in both countries. Our aim is to utilise your responses to shape upcoming low cost and free training and professional development opportunities. Given we're not the same countries – or world – anymore, the need to think adaptively and plan a sustainable future for the Association in a post-Covid environment is critical. My hope is that we continue to dialogue with our members to refine our efforts to provide essential support. I would like to acknowledge Brandon Wilson's efforts in putting the survey together.

### **Succession and sustainability**

At our Brisbane conference last year, I declared my intention to step down from the role of President at the next conference (or rather, the symposium) in 2021. The next AGM will immediately follow the symposium and will mark my last official duty for ANZATSA. Pending a successful election (i.e., suitable nominees and a clear outcome), we can then transition and support the new person into the role until they formally take over.

The executive committee conducted a long-overdue strategic development workshop to establish clarity and internal consensus regarding the identity, objectives and mission for 2020 and beyond in order to (1) purposefully plan organisational activities and events, (2) enable opportunities for organizational branding, positioning and sector recognition as a centre for excellence, (3) tailor quality education and professional development opportunities for sector stakeholders, and (4) maintain existing membership and create opportunities for membership growth and financial viability.

If there is an upside to lockdown, it's in the serendipitous opportunities to take stock and reflect on where we are and how we've been doing as an executive committee. With routine and special activities on hold or postponed, the time available allowed the executive to reflect and move itself into a more professionalised mode of operating. As volunteers, a lot of time, energy and sacrifice is made to keep the Association afloat. I acknowledge Jeanie Dean in creating this important opportunity to structure our thinking and activities in moving forward.

### **Indigenising the Association**

Reflecting on the President's report (2019), I stated to our membership that *"To be credible, members and stakeholders need to see themselves reflected in the organisation"*. The sexual harm issues for Indigenous peoples – recently highlighted by the Royal Commissions of Inquiry in both countries – are long-standing and constitute gross human rights and social justice violations. I have been the only Indigenous member (from any country) on the

ANZATSA exec – possibly ever. In my experience with ANZATSA, cultural and indigenous initiatives have typically been well-received and supported by the Association and our other professional colleagues. However, the need for us to support the often invisible and woefully under-resourced efforts in Indigenous spaces is a direction that, more than ever, I would like to see the Association move further into. Some suggestions here include (1) ensuring we have at least one Indigenous member on the exec at any given time (a recruitment issue), (2) forming advisory groups with representation from Maori, Pasifika, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities (a governance issue), and (3) maintaining prominent space for these voices at our conferences – as has been a highlight since the Auckland conference (a political issue).

### **Internationalising the Association**

In recent months, closer engagement between ANZATSA and our friends from other Associations, such as ATSA and IATSO has been developing as part of a worldwide conversation. This is a really important function as well as a vital opportunity for ANZATSA to learn from our friends around the globe, but also for us to exercise influence in the international space. It is not a good thing that sexual harm occurs at all – but the unique geographic, political, and cultural context in which our two countries exist has resulted in a thriving and respectful community of practice that offers important learning insights and aspirations for other nations to observe. To be sure, we work in socially toxic and politically unstable circumstances, but our networks are testament to the desire to communicate, educate, and innovate amongst each other.

At this time, I would like to initiate a process of expansion and inclusiveness and invite our Pasifika brothers and sisters to join together with us as part of a growing conversation as well as sharing knowledges – and triumphs – with our neighbours. Given the relationships between Pasifika peoples with Australia and New Zealand, I would like to see greater involvement between the Association and community development with the peoples of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia.

### **Celebrating the past of the Association**

2021 will be the silver anniversary of ANZATSA. Yes indeed, we're coming up 25 years! As a people, Māori hold a long view of the past as well as the future. There have been quite a number of people who have been part of the ANZATSA story. As an acknowledgement of service, it's important that we show due recognition to those who have served before us on the executive, helped to build the Association, and contributed to ANZATSA's longevity and relevance over the years. As volunteers, we all give of ourselves – sometimes to the point of burnout – to promote ANZATSA and ultimately support safer communities from sexual harm. It is timely that we celebrate the contributions of past executive committee members.

### **ANZATSA Executive Committee**

I want to acknowledge the contributions of members who have since stepped out of the executive committee since the last AGM. Over this last year, we say farewell to Dr Gwenda Willis (NZ), Dr Danielle Harris (QLD) and most recently, Mr Brandon Wilson (NZ). I thank you all for your energy and contribution to ANZATSA's activities over the years and hope we can still draw on your knowledge and expertise in other ways.

I would also like to thank the continuing members for their support and selfless hard work on behalf of the Association:

- Jeanie Deane, *Secretary*, former Director: FamSAFE, Melbourne.
- Dr Russell Pratt, Founder and Principal: Prime Forensic Psychology, Melbourne.
- Dr Katie Seidler, *Treasurer*, Director: LSC Psychology: Clinical Forensic Psychology Services, Sydney.
- Dale Tolliday OAM, Clinical Advisor: New Street Services, Sydney.

Last but not least, I would like to thank Miles Summer and Melissa Elliot for their IT and administrative support over the years. It is with some sadness that Melissa has recently wrapped-up her work with some urgency due to personal reasons. Our thoughts and prayers are with her during this time.

### **Final thoughts...**

Key tasks for the Association are to (1) continue to grow our membership base, (2) continue to encourage korero (dialogue) with each other, and (3) position ourselves as a centre of excellence and authority in the field.

Our Association is a fantastic Association, and I invite you to consider how you can contribute, not only through attending the conference and trainings, but also via sub-committees and by bringing new members on board, particularly those in the earlier stages of their career, so that ANZATSA can work together for a healthier future and can continue to contribute to safer communities and advancing practice knowledge in this most important of spaces. In that spirit, I will finish with this well-known whakatauki:

*“Ehara taku toa I te toatakitahi. Engari, he toa takitini”*  
My strength is not the strength of one. It is the strength of many.

Ngā mihi ki a koutou – thank you,



Armon Tamatea

President

15 September 2020