

This is the first newsletter of the organization formally known as the American College of Aerospace Medicine. If you want to know why we're no longer known as ACAM - Read ON!

The goal of this first newsletter is to bring you up to date on "what's happening" within your organization. This first issue will also serve as the minutes for the organizational meeting held during the Aerospace Medical Association's (AsMA) Annual Scientific Meeting in Seattle on 21 May 98.

Why the Name Change?

To understand why the membership voted to change our name from ACAM to something else you need to know what happened at the Aerospace Medical Association's (AsMA) Council Meeting.

AsMA COUNCIL MEETING

On Sunday, 17 May 98, Col Mike Mork was given the opportunity to present at AsMA's Council Meeting a proposal to extend constituent status to the American College of Aerospace Medicine (ACAM). The discussion that followed was lively to say the least. AsMA's Council was divided about the prospect of recognizing a new group to represent aerospace medicine specialists. Those in favor of such an organization cited the obvious enthusiasm for the group as evidenced by the ease of recruiting members and the outpouring of support. They also mentioned the need for a group within AsMA to work issues which bore directly on the specialty of ASM and to improve AsMA's membership among ASM specialists.

Those opposed to the establishment of an American College of Aerospace Medicine had two main concerns. One, was that establishment of a college might serve as a wedge to splinter the parent organization and further dilute the membership's efforts within AsMA. The second concern was who would represent ASM within organized medicine. AsMA is now the recognized representative organization for ASM physicians. AsMA is a nominating society to the American Board of Preventive Medicine and has

an established seat in the AMA House of Delegates. The establishment of a College of Aerospace Medicine might confuse organized medicine as to who rightfully should represent ASM physicians. Their argument was that if an organization was going to call itself a college then it should act like a college and that would put it in direct conflict with AsMA.

After almost an hour's worth of discussion, the Council determined that it could not vote on the issue of constituent status for ACAM because ACAM had not submitted a slate of officers to AsMA for its consideration (at the time of the Council meeting ACAM had not yet elected officers). In Col Mork's opinion it was fortunate that the vote did not occur because it was very likely that ACAM would not have received the two-thirds vote required to be accepted as a constituent organization.

Council provided some very straight forward guidance to ACAM if it expected to be accepted as a constituent organization. It must first meet all the stipulations as outlined in AsMA's Constitution and By-Laws. Second, retaining the name ACAM would not be acceptable to Council and would result in denial of constituent status.

ACAM must extend its warmest appreciation to the following individuals for their support during the Council discussion: Drs. Robin Dodge, Bob McMeekin, Roger Landry, Jeff Davis, Bob Orford, and Hank Taylor.

FIRST ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

On Thursday, 21 May 98, beginning at 7:30am, the first organizational meeting of what was formally known as ACAM was held. Eighty-five founding members and interested physicians were in attendance. It was truly heartwarming to see such a high level of interest so early in the morning.

Col Mike Mork welcomed the group and recognized all those who were founding members. ACAM had 162 dues paying members on record by 8 May 98. Dr Al Parmet made a motion to elect Col Mike Mork Interim

President by acclamation. The motion was seconded and then approved by unanimous voice vote.

ACAM History

Col Mork provided a brief history concerning the motivation behind the establishment of an ASM specialty group. There were four main drivers: 1) establishment of standards for the specialty of ASM, 2) promotion of the interests of physicians who specialize in ASM, 3) promoting and preserving the highest professional standards of care among ASM practitioners, and 4) striving to interest young physicians and potential employers in the specialty of ASM.

The question, of course, was why couldn't AsMA fulfill these roles. The answer appears to be that AsMA, as a professional organization, represents a multitude of interests, international as well as national, in the fields of aviation, space, and environmental medicine. Although AsMA is the recognized representative organization for ASM physicians, there is no clearly defined group or spokesperson within AsMA for the specialty of ASM. If one believes that the voice of the specialty of ASM should be limited to physicians, board certified in ASM, then AsMA must identify a group which meets that requirement. AsMA needs an ASM specialty group to provide direction and leadership in the science, policy, and practice of the specialty of ASM. The establishment of a constituent organization composed solely of physicians interested in the specialty of ASM within AsMA would immediately create the appropriate voice for the specialty.

The issue is not whether such a group should or should not exist, but whether it should exist within the framework of AsMA or apart. It was clearly the desire of the organizers of the ASM specialty group that it be an integral part of AsMA. Dr. Bauer discovered in 1929 when he established the Aero Medical Association (AsMA's predecessor), that there were not enough physicians interested in aviation medicine to sustain an organization. Dr. Bauer, therefore, opened the membership up to non-physicians to ensure its viability. The same is true today. The specialty of ASM remains too small to sustain itself as a stand-alone organization. If the voice of the specialty is to be effective it must be voiced through the larger, but more diffuse organization of AsMA.

Motion to Delete the ACAM Name

Col Mork then gave a report on AsMA's Council Meeting and presented Council's position that retaining the term college in the organization's name would mean continued exclusion from AsMA. Col Mork then entered a motion to keep the name ACAM and accept exclusion from AsMA or delete the name ACAM (for some other name to be determined at a later date) and continue to work towards obtaining constituent status within AsMA. The motion was seconded and then open for discussion.

That discussion that followed was again lively and animated. Although several speakers were not happy with AsMA's Council perceived heavy-handedness in this issue they acknowledged the desirability of remaining within AsMA. Dr. Warren Silberman discussed the need to develop practice guidelines within AsMA and that an ASM specialty group would be the ideal group to do so. Dr. Al Parmet discussed expanding full membership to non-ASM boarded physicians as a way to make it more viable as a stand-alone organization, but agreed on the desirability of remaining in AsMA if possible. Many others expressed a desire to keep the organization focused on board certified ASM specialists. Dr. Jim Vanderploeg discussed the difficulty of using the term college if AsMA were to continue to be the representative for ASM. Dr. Mike Berry clarified the mistaken belief that the ABPM might sponsor an ASM specialty group (not in the ABPM's purview). Dr. Jeff Davis spoke in favor of the group working from within AsMA through the strategic planning process. Cols Peach Taylor and Chris Heinrichs, CDR Glenn Merchant, and Lt Col Karen Fox all spoke in favor of changing the organization's name to ensure acceptance into AsMA as a constituent organization.

The Vote

Finally, a vote was taken. By a unanimous decision the membership elected to drop the name ACAM and continue to seek recognition as a constituent organization within AsMA.

Selection of Officers

A motion was made and seconded to select a slate of officers. Col Mike Mork was nominated for President and seconded. There were no other

nominations and he was elected unanimously. Dr. Al Parmet was nominated and seconded for Vice-president/President elect. There were no other nominations and he was elected unanimously. For Secretary there were three nominations: MAJ Tom Burke, Lt Col Al Berg, and Col Bill Ferrara. MAJ Burke was elected by a majority of votes. Lt Col Chris Benjamin, who had been acting Treasurer was unanimously elected back into office.

Treasurer's Report

Col Benjamin presented the treasurer's report which showed a credit of \$1590.44, a debit of \$7.75 (for checks) and a balance of \$1582.66.

Committee Members

Members were asked to sign up for one of 6 committees:

Membership

Margaret Barnes-Rivera, Chair
Alan Berg
Jay Clemens
Timothy Jex
Warren Silberman

Constitution and By-Laws

Glenn Merchant, Chair
Don Arthur
Dave O'Brien
Jay Clemens
James Laub
Tom Luna
H.J. Ortega
Robert Weien

Aeromedical Practice – Standards and Competencies

Dan Van Syoc, Chair
Warren Silberman, Co-Chair
Fananly Anzalone
Dean Bailey
James Bost
David Geyer
William Klein
Whit McConnell
Dave O'Brien
Carol Ramsey
Samuel Stauss
Richard Trifilo
James Vanderploeg

Publications

Lloyd Dodd, Chair
Rick Allnutt
Dean Bailey
Schuyler Geller
Mark Janczewski
Ken Knight
H.J. Ortega

Nominating

Karen Fox, Chair
Verba Moore
Jerry Owen
Bill Tarver

What's Next?

As the meeting wound down, Dr. Whit McConnell asked what's next? Col Mork advised the members to expect to see a ballot for a new name for the organization in the mail this summer, a copy of the Constitution and By-Laws for ratification, and the first semi-annual Newsletter. The plan is to bring the issue of constituency status up again to AsMA's Council for a vote at their Fall meeting. That means a new name and a ratified constitution will have to be completed by late summer for submission to AsMA.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40am. Next meeting will be in conjunction with the Annual Scientific Meeting of AsMA in Detroit, MI. Time and place to be determined.

Disclaimer: the opinions, interpretations, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the Officers of the organization formally known as ACAM and are not necessarily endorsed by the DoD, U.S. Army, Navy, or Air Force.