Dr Mark Rehehan

RANZCO Censor-in-Chief (2008–2016)

On the retirement of Dr Kaufman as Censor-in-Chief at the end of 2008, there was a seamless transition to Dr Mark Renehan as his replacement. In the role of Censor-in-Chief, Dr Renehan carried on with the developments in education and training initiated by his predecessors and accomplished many advances.

Dr Renehan was born in 1958 at Ivanhoe, Victoria. At school, he was conscripted into cadets and promoted to the rank of Corporal. He attended Monash University and graduated MBBS in 1988. To Mark and his cohort, Monash University was affectionately known as 'The Farm' as it was an old epilepsy asylum surrounded by mud. Mark trained to become an ophthalmologist through the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital training scheme from 1989 to 1992 and graduated as FRACO in 1993.

During his ophthalmology training, he was involved in a large ocular trauma research project. However, because the 'leader' of the project published without acknowledging the co-researchers, Mark's research fire was put out. Nevertheless, he taught fourth, fifth and sixth year undergraduate medical students at Monash then undertook post-graduate registrar teaching, both clinical and operative. Mark served on the Medical Advisory Committees of Shepparton Private Hospital and the Medical Advisory Committee of The Bays Hospital Inc., Mornington Peninsula, and has been on the Board of that institution since 2013.

He was a Member of the Victoria Branch Committee of RANZCO and was on the Board of the Centre for Eye Research Australia when he was Chair of the Branch in 2000. He became a Councillor of the College in 2000 and has served on the Health Policies and Priorities Committee. He was elected to the RANZCO Board in 2004 and continues as an ex-officio member as Censor-in-Chief. Mark served on the QEC as a physiology examiner for the Part I exams, and in 2003 he was elected as Chair of the Part I Board of Examiners. He assisted in steering the changes from the Part I Examination through to the Ophthalmic Sciences exams, and was re-appointed as the Chair in 2006. He also served as an Inspector of Posts for Accreditation, and is a member of the Overseas Trained Specialist/Specialist International Medical Graduates (OTS/now S-IMG) Committee.

As planned, the behavioural capabilities assessment for the selection of trainees had been reviewed and was withdrawn while support for selection committees in 2009 for 2010 was upgraded by developing and coordinating sources of information on applicants structured with registration form, reference template for referees to complete online, and behaviourally focused interview questions. The selection criteria continued to be the seven key roles of the specialist ophthalmologist and the matching program remained unchanged while the integration of basic sciences study and needs of the service role of trainees in the hospitals was under constant review.

At that time new training positions, particularly in paediatrics, were sought. Support for supervisors was strengthened with the publication of a Trainers' Handbook, a source of practical guidance including trainee remediation. Work-based assessment of trainees continued to be based on three key assessment meetings: at the beginning on intentions for the term; informal feedback mid-way through the term; and towards the end of the term with reports from clinical tutors. The assessment was then discussed with the trainee before they moved on to their next post.

Examination changes were sustained through evaluation feedback and training for all examiners. Online examinations were successfully launched for three ophthalmic sciences subjects that trainees may perform at times of their convenience and the General Pathology examination was discontinued and instead incorporated into the Ophthalmic Pathology examination for trainees in their third year. Pathology examiners decided to use advanced computer-based imaging in place of the microscope viva in the new, integrated ophthalmic pathology examination for third year trainees in 2010.

The first full curriculum review for all ophthalmic sciences and pathology subjects was completed over a two-year period with involvement of supervisors, trainees, examiners and College managers across all networks. Another was commenced in 2012 ensuring that all curriculum standards were revised or expanded to incorporate new technology and recent developments into training.

In a two-day pilot workshop funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aging, there were fourteen second-year trainees who were trained in communication competencies as set out in the Social and Professional Responsibilities standard. That was achieved by using simulation techniques and trained actors through structured role-play scenarios to teach communication skills for interalia breaking bad news. The trainees experienced complex communication situations and gained feedback on their communication styles, which increased their understanding of the impact on their performance.

In 2011, Mark was elected to the Steering Committee for the International Development Committee, contributing to the capacity building of the Pacific Eye Institute in Fiji. He signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Prof Saphonn Vonthanak in Phnom Penh representing a continuing collaboration between RANZCO and the University of Health Sciences (UHS) to ensure high quality ophthalmic education and professional standards for eye care in Cambodia. He also contributes to ophthalmic education and professional standards for eye care in Timor Leste.

Mark also promulgated the introduction of Temporary Trainee Associate Membership for prospective trainees who had not been selected onto the training program after being through the selection process but who filled vacancies in accredited training posts created by maternity or paternity leave.