



Prof. Chris van der Werken
Past President AOF

Welcome to the first AO Trauma NOW Newsletter, where we intend to keep you informed about how the new AO Trauma specialty is developing.

The AO Foundation (AOF) has just completed its 50 years' celebrations, where we honored (a) the endeavors of our founding fathers; that band of 13 focused and dedicated surgeons who truly revolutionized the field trauma surgery and (b) the expansion and development of the AO into the world's premier general trauma and orthopedic community, which is now recognized as the gold standard in Trauma care.

Therefore, what better time than during the highlight of the 50th anniversary year in Davos, June 2008, for the Board of Directors of the AO Foundation (AOVA) to confirm the final, but crucial piece in the jigsaw for the future of a modern AOF...

... the creation of the AO Trauma specialty.

For 40 of its 50 years, it can be correctly argued that Trauma and the AO were synonymous—AO was Trauma and Trauma was AO. The spirit of AO was in Trauma, the philosophy of AO was in Trauma, and the pride of AO was in Trauma.

Over time, AO has evolved from a community of generalists into one of specialists. This emerging community of specialists has continued to share AO's vision of improving patient care, but each group has also developed their

own unique interests and different needs. The specialist groups were no longer served by an AO organization with one common approach for all. AO clearly needed to differentiate between the specialties and provide structures and finances to meet their unique needs while maintaining the spirit of its first 50 years. Hence the natural emergence of the specialties. The first group to identify themselves was our Vet colleagues, then came Spine, and later the CMF surgeons. As these "specialty" groups developed, AO and Trauma continued as they had done for the last 50 years seemingly as one; after all we had our traditions, we had our ways—we had our club.

Nobody, however, predicted the new specialties' success to growing and attracting surgeons to the AO community.

Clearly, by focusing exclusively on the needs of the specialty, by opening the doors to new persons with new ideas and new ways, the three young specialty groups have demonstrated dynamic growth, great resourcefulness, and fostered a new spirit.

We have demonstrated that as Trauma we are open to others; and as a Trauma surgeon within AO I say with pride that this new AO,

AO Foundation

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| AO CMF | AO Spine | AO Trauma | AO VET |
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this expanded AO family is still united in its sole purpose to improve patient care. For me personally, AO will always be Trauma, it is what I know; it is my heritage, and it is in my soul. However, the new generations of Trauma surgeons already see a new AO Foundation, a multi-specialty foundation, where the name AO is shared and strengthened. As our family gets bigger and matures, those groups that we have nurtured also want a say in the family affairs. It makes total sense, therefore, that Trauma now also creates a new structure and an own identity within this new modern AO Foundation.

I can therefore say with pride that the birth of AO Trauma was in fact a major highlight of the anniversary year and one of the greatest moments of my two-year presidency.

AO Foundation from strength to strength

The founders created the AO Foundation (AOF) consisting of like-minded orthopedic and fracture surgeons from around the world. For the past 50 years, the AOF has grown and evolved, and over time the specialties of Veterinary, Craniomaxillofacial, and Spine surgeons have created "specialties" within the AOF.

The specialties have grown to a size that they are now recognized entities within the AOF with their own governance over their academic and scientific areas of interest. Recognizing the need for worldwide development, the Foundation itself has evolved from a strictly Swiss-German group to a worldwide organization to promulgate the AO vision.

This regionalization has been extremely important because it has provided a common infrastructure within each of the regions and the AO Foundation to support the specialties. In the 50th anniversary year, the AO Foundation found it suitable to finally complete the specialization with the creation of AO Trauma, a specialty involving those people interested in musculoskeletal trauma and disease, fractures, and its subsequent complications and problems. This has now completed the specialization of the Foundation.

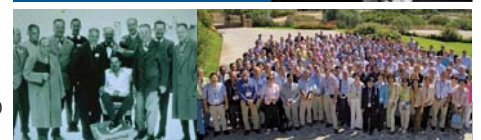
What is now important for the Foundation is the fact that each specialty can govern its science, its academics, and will now have a voice

at the table to assure that it is well heard in a cooperative, collegial fashion. AO Trauma is now fully franchised into this process. Although being the original founder of the Foundation, AO Trauma is now the newest of the specialties. As this specialty develops many uncertainties as well as personal and regional issues will need to be addressed. This process should not be considered as an attempt to centralize power or divest any region or section of their independence.

It is important that all involved in this process work together in the spirit of the founders to define AO Trauma's own personality as a consensus builder and collegial partner in the AOF.

The cooperative interaction between AO Trauma and the Foundation and its regions will continue to assure that AO remains the world leader in what it does best—education and research. I believe that the next 5, 10, 20 years will see tremendous growth as each of the specialties controls their own academic and scientific destiny in cooperation with each other and with the support of the Foundation and its regional infrastructures.

Prof. James Kellam
Chairperson AO R&D





Prof. Paul Manson
President AOF

AOF relevant for today—AO Specialties

The time has arrived—**AO Trauma** is now!

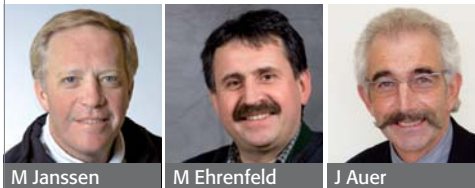
I have the distinct honor to be the first non-Trauma surgeon to be elected AO President. There can be no bigger accolade for me personally nor recognition to the change in the AOF.

Much has been said about the development of the AO Specialties. There are rumors that they will create “forces” that will lead to the breakup of the AOF; there are rumors that creation of AO Specialties leads to centralization of power.

Personally I don't believe it. The development of AO Specialties and AOTrauma does not undermine the past or the future of the AOF nor does it mean centralization in power since the specialties operate through their regional and national bodies. The AOF is stronger today than it ever was, it is broader today than it ever was, and it is more inclusive today than ever. I envisage an exciting change in the role of the AOF in the future; for

example, presenting the whole AOF outward to a new non-surgeon public.

My discussions with Michael Janssen (Chairperson AOSpine), Michael Ehrenfeld (Chairperson AOCMF), Jörg Auer (AOVET) indicate that the specialties are not moving away, actually quite to the contrary.



With the creation of AO Specialties, the AOF has in effect engaged them, it allowed them to create their “own” space and making the whole AO organization and family stronger. The AO Specialties have proven that we, the AOF, can accommodate different groups and different ideas. They have proven that by galvanizing

and focusing members of their Boards, Commissions, and Committees to agreed strategies and tasks they can move faster, use less resources, and create new and more relevant benefits for their members.

As a member of the AOVA, I can see that Trauma has grown so big, so diverse (with its own sub-specialties), and so complex that gaining focus is difficult and sometimes the different groups don't know what each is doing. The new AOTrauma specialty will change all that (not by following AOSpine's strategy, after all we have 50 years of Trauma to build on, we are the “standard”, and our partner Synthes is the market leader) by working together as a single team, with a new spirit.

I am convinced having seen the spirit, direction, and dynamism in the other specialties, the Trauma community in the new AOF will greatly benefit from the new AOTrauma specialty.

What is the AOTrauma specialty?

Since taking up my post, I have had the opportunity to truly look inside Trauma in AO. I am in no doubt that to develop our talents, to focus our resources, and to maintain our huge network we need **AOTrauma** as its own uniquely defined specialty. We also need our own dedicated administrative teams to support our surgeon network.

Naturally, the AOTrauma specialty will mean different things and create different emotions for different people. It represents uncertainty to some, yet opportunities to others. Some feel it is not needed; however, for many it is overdue. Which is right?

Only time will tell. However, in the meantime we invite you to give it a chance, to trust your Trauma colleagues who will be engaged in your Boards, Commissions, and Committees and to...

- ...envision an organization that is run solely for the benefit of Trauma surgeons by Trauma surgeons.
- ...see an organization that will aim to focus and integrate all activities to better satisfy the needs of its diverse community.
- ...reflect on an organization where the focus is on “we”, where opportunities are open, and where ideas and goals are aligned to deliver new values back to members and stakeholders.
- ...consider an organization which creates leadership opportunities for senior Trauma surgeons while nurturing opportunities for younger future leaders.
- ...visualize an organization that creates a dynamic environment by fostering self-directed regional and national teams to run their own educational, research, and community development activities.

The time is **now** for AOTrauma to meet the emerging requirements of the new professional Trauma community. From today, not only the left hand and right hand of Trauma will know what each are doing, but all our fingers too!

AOTrauma teams will work and collaborate together to boost innovation, opportunities, and results for all.

I am optimistic that once we have found our “own” space, developed our own values, spirit, and focus, AOTrauma will fast-track and deliver new benefits above and beyond expectations!

*So, I sincerely hope that you will want to join AOTrauma and get involved in **your** new organization.*



Prof. Michael Wagner
Chairperson AOTrauma