The New Logo and the Future Direction of the Journal

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At a special Council Meeting of the Western Pacific Orthopaedic Association held at the Gold Coast, Australia, on 9 April 2000, a resolution to change the name of the Association was passed.

The new name, Asia Pacific Orthopaedic Association, was first proposed during the 12th Triennial Congress in Fukuoka, Japan in 1998. Proponents wanted the change to more closely describe the geographical constituents, i.e. the member countries and regions. These have recently expanded to a total of 16, including China, India and Pakistan. Accordingly, the Journal of Orthopaedic Surgery has adopted the new logo of the Association. Editorial independence, peer review policies, and all Editorial Board members remain unchanged.

I must thank the Editorial Board members for their contributions in reviewing articles and submitting editorials. It is mainly through their diligence that the Journal has received very positive feedback in the past 5 years. Review processes have been demanding due to the necessity to have 2 independent reviews for every article and the relatively long processing time, especially when authors have to comply with revisions, sometimes extensive.

Much thought has been given to the future direction of the Journal. While we have been awaiting the decision of the USA National Library of Medicine Literature Selection Technical Review Committee on indexing, contributions from authors have improved steadily. There has been an encouraging trend for authors to submit more original, valid and valuable research articles despite our relatively limited circulation of 1200. Inclusion by Index Medicus/Medline is a necessary step to further improvement in quality and quantity of articles, but what else can be done to increase the readership and usefulness of the Journal?

Information technology has given an unprecedented boost to medical education in the last decade. The Journal must harness that technology to enhance its efficiency, attractiveness, publication and distribution. Paper, and the environment, can be saved and mailing expenses greatly reduced. Already a great deal of editing and processing is being conducted via e-mail, with high quality images being the noted exception.

Starting in June 2001, therefore, it is our intention that the Journal will be in both printed and electronic form. The Journal will only be sent in paper form to paid-up members and subscribers, whereas all other readers will be able to access full-length articles through the Internet. They will also be able to download and print articles, with the usual provisions on copyright. The readership will potentially include anyone with Internet access, although there remains the option of selective access. Hopefully, with greatly expanded readership, and more efficient processing, we can attract even more original articles, so that we will be producing quarterly issues before long.

The purpose of a scientific journal is, after all, to disseminate new information based wherever possible on carefully conducted, validly construed, and rigorously reviewed research. There should be no need to limit the readership on grounds of economy or privilege. Healthcare professionals and scientists should welcome the change as part of an unstoppable universal revolution in information sharing.