

APRIL 2024



COASTN
Providing Excellence in Transport Nursing
NZNO



Photo Credit Life Flight Wellington. Open Day 10th March 2024

**College of Air and Surface Transport Nurses
Section of the New Zealand Nurses Organisation**



From the Editor – Tania Parr



Kia ora koutou katoa,

Welcome to the fresh new look COASTN emag featuring our brand-new logo as voted in by you, our members. It features an albatross which ties in with the theme of our award for excellence in transport nursing.

This edition has a great nationwide update – although we are missing some teams from around the country. If your flight or transport team isn't featured, then please get in touch! I'd love to have a write up for every region, and every transport team. It's such a great way to celebrate news and keep us all connected.

Wellington, Hawkes Bay and Waikato all had some fantastic open days recently, and new aircraft were welcomed to both the NZAA and the Nelson flight teams.

There's education opportunities on offer, and you can read about the recent COASTN aeromedical retrieval course held in February by Taz, who is going to leave some big shoes to fill as the coordinator for this course – Thank you Taz for your years of service and hard work making this course such a success.

Along with Taz departing the COASTN committee, we say farewell to Helen who has done many years' work with the finances, and making sure we are on track in this department – Thank you Helen for your years of service to COASTN.

The 2024 symposium planning is underway this time a joint venture between COASTN and ANA which should make for a great conference in September – see the save the date for details.

As always, I need your stories, case studies, photos – please forward these to me at any time – The emag is published 3 times per year, the next due out in August 2024, so be sure to get some crisp winter pictures when you are out flying. tania.parr@nmdhb.govt.nz

Ngā Mihi

Tania

Did you know that COASTN is on social media?

Find us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/250823442046051/?ref=share>
and on Instagram <https://instagram.com/nznocoastn?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>

Chair Report – Lynette Will



As the nights are drawing in and autumn is beginning to declare itself it is a good time to reflect on the first part of the year.

The aeromedical course was held in February and was a great success with all participants enjoying a full and informative week. We say goodbye to Taz as course coordinator as she will hand over the reins to our new coordinator in April. Taz has run a professional, highly respected course over her time as coordinator and has done so in some challenging times including pulling a course together whilst in the UK dealing with the COVID lockdowns and uncertainty which lead to many postponements, but a successful course was delivered with both online and practical components achieved. We thank Taz for all her hard work, patience, humour, and expertise over the years.

We discussed at our AGM that we were looking at changing our logo and you will see by the magazine headings that we have now done so. We sent our options out to our membership early this year and we are pleased that we now have an updated logo representing both the land and air transports our members undertake.

You were all sent out a forms survey to complete asking for your thoughts on the direction for COASTN over the next few years to help us with future planning, unfortunately we did not get many surveys returned, so I ask you if you have not done so please fill out the six question survey, the link is [COASTN survey](#)

Keep an eye out for applications for the outstanding nurse of the year which will be given out at the ASA conference in September. On that note if you have not already done so get your registrations in for #Aeromed24 to be held in Christchurch on the 24-26th September. Link is: <https://www.aeromedconference.com/>

We are also farewelling both Taz and Helen from our committee after our next face to face meeting at the end of April. Helen has been treasurer since 2017 and has worked hard to help the committee move to being financially secure enabling us to complete the work our members have deemed important to them, and grant scholarships as requested. Taz not only has been the course coordinator, but she was seconded onto the committee in 2022 and has been a valuable asset to the committee since. We will miss both of them at our meetings, especially the laughs they have given us, and our evenings will never be quite the same!

We welcome to our committee Sam Collis from the Dunedin ICU who will be taking over the treasurer role and Jodie Purches from PICU who have both been seconded onto the committee and will stand for election at our September AGM.

Yours in Transport

Lynette Will COASTN Chair

Hawkes Bay Flight Team

We have passed the 12-month anniversary of Cyclone Gabrielle and things have returned to normal for the majority of staff. Personally, I'm happy to have the insurance finally come through and builders start on the repairs to my house today.

Work continues as normal, with a gradual increase in flights and patients transferred. I'm sure all the flight services are seeing an increase in numbers as well as an increase in the acuity of the patients that we transfer.

Recently we have had some bariatric transfers that became somewhat challenging – one patient over 300kg post MVA – which we were unable to move and another 226kg that we ended up moving by Heli – this patient was also post MVA with a spinal injury – so a very challenging transfer. This definitely tested the limits of not only the equipment, the aircraft but also the staff. Finding it very interesting to describe to staff how to measure the width of a patient with the wording sometimes being 'lost in translation.'

Despite the King Air being able to cope with the load, the sheer dimensions of the patient, altered centre of gravity, limited egress made this transfer by fixed wing impracticable. The bariatric ambulance was not available – though a 6-hour road trip with someone of this size and condition was also out of the question. This is a problem all flight services need to address.

Saturday the 24th Feb saw us at an Open Day with HBHRT (Hawkes Bay Helicopter Rescue Trust) – the first one in 4 years because of COVID cancellation and the Cyclone. The day was

very well attended, with FENZ, Police and their dogs (more popular than the Police) and several displays put on throughout the day to keep everyone entertained as well as food carts and face painting.



Ange with an ex-patient

Several staff gave up their valuable time and we had some of the equipment that we use daily on display. The baby pod was set up and it was lovely to see some of the children that we had transferred years ago come up with their parents to tell us their story.

This year is definitely flying and although I really don't believe that it's true that the years go quicker as you get older, it is certainly feeling that way.

Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does.

Quote By William James

Jackie Hardy CNM

Greetings from the NZAAS teams!

We are excited to announce the newest addition to our aeromedical fleet, ZK-RSQ a Beechcraft Super King Air 200 equipped with cargo door. The aircraft arrived from Australia in mid-January and has since been fully upgraded and refitted with a G1000 cockpit configuration. On Monday 4th March the aircraft was blessed in Napier with the name it was gifted: **“Te Manu Hāneanea”**.



ZK-RSQ showcasing its fresh new livery in Napier.

The meaning behind the name “Te Manu Hāneanea”:

When the wellbeing of people are in turmoil, distress or discomfort, Māui transforms into a kererū flying to their aid.

Kererū – a special wood pigeon who bears the healing gifts of Taranga, the mother of Māui. A warm woven maro, soothing kōkōwai and other rongoā allow loved ones to become hāneanea

or comfortable – with themselves, others supporting them and their surroundings.



Robyn Kahukiwa
Taranga (detail), oil painting 1982
 Collections.tepapa.govt.nz



Kererū in flight
 guardian.com



Kererū
 Green, red and Blue Plumage
 nzbirdsonline.org.nz

Some of you may have noticed that we have recently onboarded several new members in clinical, aviation, mission coordination and load master roles throughout our NZ bases. It is always fantastic having team members who care about the work that we do.

The transition from Summer to Autumn is well underway as the departure of warmer days gives way to the changing leaves and a crispness in the air...and with that the start of the 2024 'flu vaccine campaigns around the country!

Take care and fly safely always.

Angela and the NZAAS teams.



Waikato Flight Team

Over the last few months our ICU transport team has been unfortunately flying in the slow lane with our team seeing a reduction in flights and transport referrals. However when we do get the flights and transports our team is ready and excited to go, particularly as this is a job we love doing.

We were lucky enough to send Jordan to the COASTN course that has recently been held in Auckland. He came back buzzing from what he learnt and participated in. The Huet training in particular was a highlight – he is much braver than me!

In February Aihua and my-self attended the Waikato Westpac Helicopter Open Day which was hosted by Philips Search and Rescue Trust. Logistics proved a bit challenging to get the old (and soon to retire) Stryker out to the airport, however our friends at Life Flight came to the rescue and assisted us with getting equipment out to airport. We anticipated lower than usual public attendance due to the change of location (normally held onsite at the helipad but this year out at the airport), however the day was busy! Helicopters, police boats, police cars, fire engines, face painting, you could even pay for a scenic helicopter ride but the best attraction of the day was our ICU transport team!

Over the course of the day we meet people from the community who wanted to learn about what our team did and where we flew, to learn CPR, to learn how to use a defib but most of all they just wanted to chat about what it is like in the helicopter as an ICU nurse (we promise we talked about the role the Doctor played too). They were surprised about how much equipment we actually had to take on board - and we had only half of it on display. The most enthusiastic participants to learn CPR and demonstrate compressions were the kids and it was fantastic to see children of all ages give it their best go. We did a lot of talking and a lot of teaching. Aihua and I had a fantastic day representing our Intensive Care unit and our transport team out in the community, but most of all talking about a job we are passionate about.



Melissa Evelyn
Associate Charge Nurse Manager ICU
Waikato/ Transport Nurse

Whanganui Flight Team



Greeting from Whanganui, with winter fast approaching, we are lapping up the last of the sunshine here in Whanganui, however this winter we will get to enjoy using our new hanger facilities for the first rainy / cold season.

While we have had undercover hangers, this year we are in new spacious facilities, which are very nice to work in, we have had lots of nice comments from our patients and relatives who utilise the facilities also.

We like everyone have been busily flying up and down the country making the most of some spectacular views.

We have welcomed 2 new team members who are orientated and enjoying being out and about.

It's always nice to catch up with our neighbouring team members when we are out and about 😊

Happy flying everyone

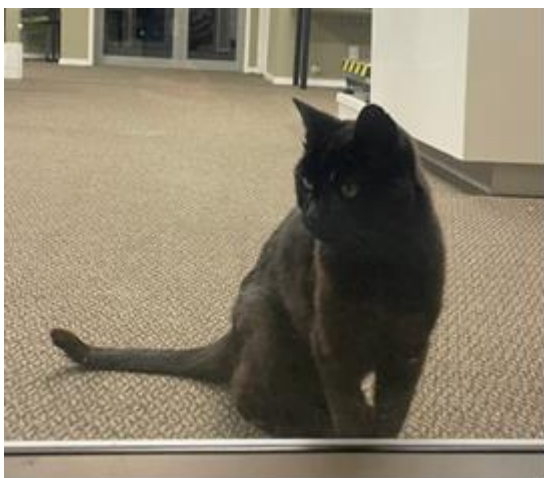
Life Flight Wellington - Te Whanga-nui-a-Tara

Kia Ora from Wellington

Things have quietened down as usual over the summer months. A nice break before the winter mayhem! We say this but have many days of all or nothing, asking our friends in other services to help out as able while also helping to reduce empty legs or avoid multiple teams heading in the same direction.

We have had ongoing challenges with runway closures in Taranaki, Auckland, Masterton and the odd surprise closure in Wellington.

The Masterton closures are 24/7 for 2 months and we have been fortunate enough to be able to use the grass runway when the weather plays ball. We have otherwise had to rely on the heli a bit more for our higher acuity patients with the occasional but less ideal road transport when transfer cannot be deferred.



On a more positive note for Masterton - after being missing and presumed dead for over 4.5 months, Pilot the cat has reappeared at Hood aerodrome! Apparently some people living illegally in a tiny house had 'adopted her', they were evicted, and left her behind, she was fortunately picked up by the SPCA. She was contained/locked in the office until she could put some weight back on. Many flight nurses, crew and pilots pleased to see her back. 😊

We had our annual recertification day a few weeks ago. It was great having the whole team together for the day. Also a fantastic spread for our shared lunch, everyone is great in the kitchen! (in case anyone would like to move to Wellington and join the team in the future)



We have recently welcomed Reece Latonio and Ruth Meo to the team, please introduce yourselves if you notice new faces when they are out on the job. In the next couple of months we will also have 2 of our flight nurses Kate Halkett and Julie Claxton joining the coordination team.

Many will remember Helen Gardiner who was an incredibly experienced flight nurse completing over 1000 flights in her time. Helen stopped flying several years ago but has now left Wellington behind to enjoy Marlborough – look out for her if you are passing through Wairau HDU.

March 10th was the annual Life Flight open day. Each year this event gets bigger and has a great turn out. Aside from the ICU and NICU displays there were airport fire, police dogs, an old airforce strike master along with the newer A109 helicopter and a number of other displays and food trucks! The Life Flight helicopter managed to sneak in a few winch demonstrations off the airport rescue boat when airport traffic allowed. Our ICU display was popular with the kids, one concerned that "Crash" the mannequin may once have been alive... a few tried to pull out some eyes and some child gave him a head injury but otherwise Crash was unharmed. – ***See photos from the day on the front page.***

The Wellington flight course is coming up at the end of April, we are looking forward to seeing flight nurses from around the regions joining us.



A happy Easter to all and safe flying!

The Wellington Flight Team

New Zealand Flying Doctors Service – Nelson/Whakatū

Kia Ora from Nelson,

On the 15th February we had the formal welcome, blessing and naming of our new aircraft. NZFDS ran a competition for the public to name the new plane. The winning name was Kahurangi, and was named by Naomi, one of the Nelson Marlborough Dieticians. Kahurangi means blue which represents the blue sky that we fly in, and precious representing the aircraft and all who fly in it, and Kahurangi National Park is the second largest national park in NZ which is located in the Top of the South, so an all-round perfect name.



Kahurangi was welcomed under water cannons by the airport fire rescue crew, then blessed by Archdeacon Emeritus Harvey Ruru QSM.

Exciting news in Marlborough, we have re-started a Road nurse transport team. We have used the opportunity to recruit nurses from the inpatient wards in Wairau hospital, train them in CORE advanced resuscitation, along with some other learning packages to help with tarmac transfers or patient transfers between Wairau and Nelson hospitals, while at the same time supporting Wairau hospital with having nurses with advanced skills to help in emergency situations in the hospital. At present they are covering Monday-Friday shifts, and the ability to tarmac patients has really helped our flight nurses squeeze extra flight transfers into our days.



Kahurangi has had a busy start to her air ambulance life, and flew more than expected in its first couple of months. Flight transfers for the Top of the South continue to be a challenge with increasing demand. Many thanks to everyone who helps us out every day!!

New Zealand Flying Doctors Service – Christchurch/Ōtautahi

Kia Ora to you all from Ōtautahi,

Hopefully everyone has enjoyed some rest and relaxation in the first quarter of 2024. Summer was a busy few months for the Canterbury Air Retrieval Service (CARS). Along with routine retrievals, the holiday period also saw increased demand for the service as Cantabrians travelled further afield for to enjoy their summer breaks, or at least attempted to! Subsequently, our repatriation requirement surged.

Our crew have been rewarded over summer by former service users returning to the hanger both to give thanks, and to put the pieces of their health care journey together. Seeing and hearing how our work has positively impacted members of the community is a warm reminder to both nurses and pilots of why we do what we do.

In early February some members of CARS were fortunate enough to attend the COASTN course in Auckland. This proved to be highly valuable for meeting nurses from various air retrieval services, and of course for the learning!

Unfortunately, summer also saw the port hills surrounding our city ablaze. Although this did not impact our aeromedical workload, it was fascinating to see Christchurch airport spring into action. As the north-south runway remained fully operational, the north-west runway promptly became a service hub to a high turnover of Single Engine Air Tankers (SEAT) aeroplanes, and Air Attack helicopters. Upon landing, they would swiftly replenish water supplies before returning to assist in extinguishing the fires. Fortunately, the fires were contained and extinguished in a timely manner with no loss of life or property.



Speaking of heat, as daylight savings approaches, a distinct chill is now being felt at dawn and dusk. A timely reminder to ensure a woollen beanie is tucked into your flight bag.

Safe flying to you all and enjoy the autumn colours.

The CARS team.



Greetings from the Southern Critical Care Flight team in the Lower South!

Alas - we're becoming aware that the days are getting a little shorter as our long late twilights draw in..... and the changes in weather begin to impact some of the choices / opportunities we have when transporting our patients. At this time of year the diurnal temperature differences tend to cause issues with fog – meaning we have had a few unplanned overnights in a variety of accommodation settings (from a Jucy pod to the more resplendent Sudima hotel room!).

Our heli-based doctor/nurse team is as busy as ever – as heli is our preferred acute response method of transfer between facilities from Christchurch south. Its quite evident that the effects of the global pandemic on tourism around the lower South have well worn off – with a busy summer period of trauma (from extra traffic & questionable driving on our suboptimal roads). The advantage of heli transport is of course the door-to-door convenience & rapid deployment of resources (as we have ~ 6 helicopters we can access if needed..... providing there are enough pilots & crew to fly them for us). But there has been a degree of “mission creep” where some of the IHT work usually undertaken by our team have been outsourced to a Paramedic-led transfer team. These situations are usually mentioned for review at our bi-weekly AME review meetings – with the flight nurses keeping an eye on the patient cohorts & care required during these transfers (as for ICU nurses titrating vasoactive infusions, managing NIV/resp support and such like are our bread & butter), and advocating for the flight team to be considered as the most suitable transfer clinicians where appropriate.

Our fixed-wing mainly nurse-led portion of the SCC flight service has become increasingly busy since its advent ~ 2 years ago. A large proportion of this is the repatriation of patients (such as stroke clot retrieval or Neurosurgical pts that have been transferred to centres such as Christchurch for definitive therapy) back to medical facilities in the South for ongoing care or follow-up. The opportunity to maximise the fixed-wing resource – with its 2 stretcher / 4 seat capacity – by some careful planning by our flight team coordinators means sometimes there is the opportunity for 2 flight nurses to work together to transfer multiple patients on one flight. We are also finding with some weather-related issues that the plane can be used in adverse weather conditions where heli transfer is not possible – so we're all becoming more comfortable with transferring the higher-acuity patients on our fixed-wing rig. So at a recent multi-platform flight nurse training day there was some extra time spent practicing on how to fix our Lifeport to ambulance Stryker stretchers (both manual & Powerpro) as there has been a change in practice requiring the stretcher mattress to be removed so the Skydeck can be clamped to the stretcher utilising block clamps rather than the ratchet-style straps previously used.

We've welcomed Amie Eden back to the team from her Riyadh-based flight sabbatical – this time as a 0.5FTE flight team coordinator (in addition to her 0.5 ICU clinical nurse/flight nurse



role), where she will manage the team alongside Esther Radford (who has been incumbent in the coordinator role since its establishment). Amie takes over from Helen Poole who we were very sad to lose to Auckland City Hospitals PAR team at Christmas. Our loss was very much their gain, and we miss her terribly. We're also going to miss our base manager / chief SDH pilot Cole Bennetts who is moving to Auckland's Skyline base, which will enable him to "spread his wings" and fly on some different air frames to national & international destinations. Cole has been a huge asset to our team, and his incoming replacement has large shoes to fill!

Another innovation we have managed is the introduction of Flight Nurse Practitioner – flight nurse missions (both rotary & fixed-wing, acute & lower acuity transfers). These flights have enabled nursing staff to work together to transfer patients, with the NP role functioning like the medical clinician but coming at it from a nursing perspective. A recent repatriation of a young ICU/HDU level neurosurgical patient on a long-distance transfer by a NP/flight nurse team was praised by the patients accompanying family for the excellent care that not only the patient was given but also the extra step the team took to care for the parents who travelled with her. So for those experienced flight nurses there is a potential pathway for career progression in terms of clinical practice - rather than climbing up the management ladder 😊

Toni Johnston

Nurse Practitioner – Southern Critical Care Flight Service





Many of you will know me by now, but in-case you don't, my name is Taz. I wear many hats, often at the same time! I am a Mum, a Flight nurse, a PaR Nurse, and a PICU nurse. I have been the course co-ordinator solely since 2019 – which in COVID time is not an easy one, but I have been involved with this course for so many more years before that too, including the SIM days (which is where my passion really lies).

Despite my love for this course and the many hours of love sweat and tears poured into it over the years. It is my time to hand the baton over to someone else..... for some new fresh ideas to come through, so this course, 2024, was my last as coordinator.

With some very mixed emotions I prepared for the course. It began many many months before the course started as it always has done, learning from previous years as to what can be changed, who is the best person to speak on this topic or that, what do the candidates want from this course. After reading and re-reading all the feedback from the years gone by I started the email role of rustling up some speakers. Now, I am a flight nurse but there is no way I could teach half of what we cover on the course. I am no expert and I learn something new every course I run.

With a few last minute panic emails and phone calls as I realised I had forgotten to ask for the mannequins for the SIM days and a few emails back and forward about aircraft availability, we were set for the course. It was a frantic time with Christmas and then before I knew it the course was 2 weeks away! With still a list as long as my arm to sort – as always it came together in the end. I am lucky and have the support of some amazing people to make this all happen.

I cannot get through a piece on the flight course without mentioning NZAAS. Without their ongoing love and support, the SIM days would not look as they do. The pilots who went out to Ardmore the week before to work out why in 2023 we had no ground power and had to rapidly think on our feet and rush off to hire a generator – they didn't want a repeat of that. The hours of time the pilots and the team put into preparing for the day was enormous. I for one appreciate every second they spend.

I cannot get over what an amazing year this was. The COASTN 2024 flight course was definitely the one to be going out on. What an amazing and wonderful collection of flight nurses who I had the privileged to meet. They turned up to AUT on the 12th February, as always all a little nervous and apprehensive about what the week held ahead of them – mostly a little fear of the HUETS.

After a couple of days sat in the classroom – me, with very limited voice but had the luxury of a 'side kick' this year which I passed all the speaking onto. It also gave me the opportunity to duck out during some of the talks to re-familiarise myself with a SIM monitor, or sort the food for the BBQ later in the week, or take all the phone call and liase with the AUT techs about all the equipment they kindly put together and loaned us.

What a lovely valentines present that I gave to them all.... a little dunking in the heli frame. I had wonderful feedback from Denray about the group and it made me proud to be facilitating them all. They all of course did amazingly well and all passed the HUETS with flying colours.

After they all survived and no one drowned which appeared to be the biggest fear, they turned up to Ardmore for a second day of non-classroom activities. The SIM day. All of them survived and most left laughing from the aircraft. With an impromptu break in the day to watch the 4 Harvards take off and head to the Art Deco weekend, we were back on track and hard at work. As always there were some technical hitches with a few frantic phone calls to 'phone a friend' we got everything up and running again. The team that work with me on that day are amazing and nothing phases any of us. We all look like graceful swans gliding around a pond when in reality we are paddling hard underneath, and it is so worth it when it all comes together and the students get from the day what is intended.



The final day loomed and wow this week has passed me by in a blur of anxiety, tears, laughter and some amazing friendships. The students love the morning with a tiny exam to kick start the day – who said coffee was a good starter. It was time to head out of the classroom again for survival skills at SOS. What an amazing session with a wonderful, funny and well connected group. All the faculty went and even had fun at building (with a little stealing) the best shelter in the competition. Sadly the day came to an end all too soon and there was not long enough for the final BBQ and laughs with students and faculty all together as a group. There is never enough time but with Auckland traffic building by the minute, it was time to say goodbye and wave off the final course for me.

With a tear in my eye, it was time to hug all my amazing faculty. I could not make the course what it is without them and I want to give the BIGGEST thanks to Ange, Helen, Toni, Lina, Mailei and of course Jess who even popped in for a visit with her brand new baby sporting the latest COASTN tee.

Not to mention our amazing pilots Beau and Martin, who embraced the day with gusto. Without you guys the SIM days would just not happen and I have appreciated you all for your knowledge expertise and ability to role with it all and keep me calm and fed! A massive thank you to you all.



Finally, I would like to thank the amazing students we had this year, who's enthusiasm, professionalism and comradery shone through. I have really appreciated the feedback received from this year, and I wish you all many happy flights. Hope to see you around the country sometime.





POST GRADUATE STUDY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO – by FN Peter Fortes

Hello, my name is Peter Fortes, and I am a Senior Lecturer in the Aeromedical Retrieval & Transport stream of the Occupational & Aviation Medicine Unit (OAMU) at the Wellington campus of the University of Otago. Quite a mouthful, but basically, I am an ordinary person who works as a flight nurse for an Auckland based fixed wing air ambulance service, and on the side, I try my best to help a group of post-graduate students with their on-line distance aeromedical studies.

The purpose of this little write-up is to advertise the course that I am involved with in a more personable manner than placing an ad with a stock picture of a helicopter or fixed wing aircraft with some people dressed in flight overalls pushing a patient on a stretcher along an anonymous helipad or airport tarmac somewhere in the world.

The course is the Post Graduate Certificate in Health Sciences endorsed in Aeromedical Retrieval & Transport (PGCertHealSc endorsed in AeroRT). The course consists of two papers, AVME719 Operational Aspects of AeroRT, and AVME720 Clinical Aspects of Aeromedical Retrieval, and is usually run as an on-line (or distance) part-time course over a 12-month period. For reasons known only to the university hierarchy, this year AVME719 will commence in the second semester of 2024 (around mid-July by my reckoning) with course enrolments being in the months prior to this. AVME720 will commence in Semester One of 2025. The course covers a variety of topics within the aeromedical sphere, and as I'm known to ramble on with way too many words, I won't provide a full run-down here other than to say the first paper (AVME719) is an in-depth introduction into some of the important aeromedical considerations, and the second paper (AVME720) is more clinically focused and covers a wide variety of topics. That's a bit short and sharp and rather vague, however if anybody is interested in knowing a bit more about some of the topics covered then I am more than happy to correspond and will provide my university email address at the end.

To provide a bit of an overview as to how the course is run, there are two tutors, with flight paramedic Russell Clarke being the lead tutor providing perspective on the primary mission rotary wing side of things, and myself being his 2IC providing perspective on the flight nurse and inter-hospital fixed wing side. As said earlier the course is fully online, there are no residential or in-class requirements. The assessment side of each paper consists of two essays on set topics (with a word count of about 2000-3000 words, written in an academic essay format, and referenced), a webinar presentation (on a topic we provide you with) and webinar participation (you are an audience member listening intently to a student presenter, ready to ask riveting questions at the end), a forum lead presentation (an on-line discussion where we assign you a topic, you go off and do some research and write it up in a few paragraphs), a forum participation (this is where students earn marks with some well thought out comments on the topic the forum lead has written about). There are also four multi-choice quizzes that relate to the readings of the four modules within each paper. And there is no end-of-semester exam! Hooray for that. Russell and I monitor each student's involvement closely, providing gentle encouragement as needed along the way, particularly if we haven't heard from a student for a while, but we like to nag everybody from time to time.

Both Russel and I have been students on the program, having been silly enough to continue onwards to masters level, so we know what it's like to be busy working post-graduate students. Over the years we have had students from civilian and military backgrounds, some young, some not-so-young, students who are living in New Zealand and those studying from overseas in places such as the UK, Canada, Australia and the Pacific. Students deploy on operations, they get sick, have stuff going on at home, get busy with their jobs and so forth. We understand and appreciate how difficult things can get and thus provide students with a degree of leeway as required. We just need to be made aware of things and go from there, plan etc.

For those who have not written anything resembling an academic essay (or forum post) then please relax, we will provide help along the way with kick-starting the process and with checking out essay drafts prior to due date. Same goes with anyone who finds computer technology daunting (anyone who knows me well also knows I'm fairly useless when it comes to doing stuff on computers) we can also provide help or drag in a knowledgeable helper as needed to sort things out.

Post-graduate study does not come cheap (please don't blame your tutors for the cost, the university sets the prices), and there is funding out there if you get in early enough and apply, although people mostly bite the bullet and pay up front. Students set forth on their PG studies for a variety of reasons, and those doing our course come from a variety of paramedicine and nursing backgrounds and experience levels. Some are already working in the aeromedical specialty, some are looking at getting into it down the track, and others are doing a paper or two as an interesting elective. Whatever the reasons for embarking on studies, and whoever is studying, we do our best to make them feel welcome and involved with the course. It's not easy completing post-graduate studies however I consider it to be a worthwhile thing to do, whatever course you choose to do, and as the saying goes, 'you get back what you put in.' Here is my Otago email: peter.fortes@otago.ac.nz And here is the course administrators email: OAMU@otago.ac.nz (you'll most likely get a reply from a lady named Susan).

Go well! Finally here is a photo of the author taken at the 2024 NZ National Masters Surf Lifesaving Championships event held at Mt Maunganui in March (the skull cap is from Red Beach SLSC & I compete in the 60-64 year group):



Te reo Māori

COASTN would like to encourage you to incorporate te reo into your everyday. Try using some of these simple words/phrases at work and home.

Toroa - Albatross

Rawe - Excellence

Aperira – April

Mei – May

Hune – June

Hurae – July

Ngahuru – Autumn

Ua - Rain

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