

**SUMMARY**  
**SURGICAL LEGAL ANAESTHETIC MANAGEMENT**  
**(SLAM THE WALL)**

**Convenor: Advanced Professional Education (APE)**



Thank you to all the participants in this extraordinary one-off conference.

Flexibility was one of the themes for the SLAM. The Flexibility theme anticipates the APE conference to be held in January 2020.

Flexibility was evident in:

- solving the disappearing spoons at buffet breakfasts,
- negotiating with pool attendants who refused to acknowledge the existence of hot-tubs, jacuzzis, whirlpools or any other pseudonym for a hot bath.
- adjusting to step heights that ranged from the invisible sneaker-attackers to the massive step-whales that intimidated people to a crawl

Flexibility even went as far as a contortionist who did not understand the correct use of champagne cups.



**Day one** of the program for the SLAM conference included an icebreaker and introduction to China. This included a visit to the Great Wall at Huangyaguan where the history of China was evident in the the structure of the Wall. We saw abutments dating back over 1400 years. These were used for defence obviously but also as part of a system of communication using fire and smoke signals. Modern equivalents in the form of the internet were discussed including the impact of the Chinese internet firewalls on development, the emphasis on control and coordination through surveillance and the impact on trade, political expression, privacy and behaviour.

Lectures from local guides, Leo and Frankie, emphasised the willingness of the Chinese people to trade off many things for economic benefits. Acknowledged trade-offs are in the form of time with family and unstructured leisure, an acceptance of Party sovereignty, restrictions on access to information and a degraded and crowded environment. The preeminence of superstitions in decision making was also a major attribute of local behaviour. The association of the number four with bad luck featured in the discussion - 'four' is a homophone for death. The Bridge and Road Initiative (BRI) was discussed



including impact on Australia.

**Day two** of the conference included a visit to Tian'anmen Square and the Forbidden City and provided the backdrop to discussion of geo-politics and trade from the Chinese perspective.

The visit to Tian'anmen came very close to the 30th anniversary of the massacre there and the images of "Tankman" facing off with the PRA tanks (5/6/1989). No mention of this tragedy was made during the visit by our guides or delegates. Neither did it seem to feature in the consciousness of the 20,000 people in the queue for Mao's tomb. One gets the feeling that it will not be a focus for the Chinese authorities. We were informed that the multitudes paying homage to Chairman Mao are from often remote villages in rural China where reactionary tendencies never flourished.

**Day Three** involved the major team-building event of the SLAM conference i.e. the Great Wall Marathon (GWM). Conference participants were outstanding in



their events. All showed the physical and mental fortitude to complete the arduous climbs and descents and gained a new appreciation of the warm welcome of the Chinese hosts and the logistics skills of the Danish organisers.

**Day Four** saw the delegates gaining an understanding of the fauna of China with a visit to the Beijing Zoo and the unmissable panda house. The environmental challenges facing China are clearly enormous. Discussion focussed on whether the meritocratic political system operating in China may be better placed to take on these challenges than the electoral democracy that we are more familiar with in Australia. Policies such as limiting car use according to plate numbers, with

exceptions for zero emission vehicles, offer a way forward for encouraging changes in Australian vehicle buying and usage. In tension with these policies are some of the city based policies to expand population and availability of car parking.

### Summary

The SLAM conference was challenging and informative. All participants now have a much richer knowledge of Chinese, culture, history, economics and geography.

Thanks to all the delegates for their excellent contributions, physical efforts, time and goodwill.

