

The Annual Scientific Meeting and ICAM

Anthony Wagstaff, M.B.B.Ch., BAO, Ph.D., Dip.Av.Med., MBA

Be a presenter!

When the first readers look through the sentences I am about to write, we will have the 2026 Annual Scientific Meeting behind us. It can be something of a relief and (hopefully) a sense of accomplishment when we head home after a busy, bustling week of Aerospace Medicine. A relief because of all the work that has been done, from budgeting, planning, and facilitating scientific sessions and meetings to organising social gatherings, receptions, and exhibits, to name a few of the many activities that make up the Annual Scientific Meeting. The sense of accomplishment may vary from person to person, of course, but pulling the whole thing off together is a major undertaking that should stimulate some reflection.

The Annual Scientific meeting is, besides the Journal, probably the most important product of our organisation. It is a formidable undertaking and the largest meeting in our field in the world. In recent years, we have been joined by the Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society (UHMS). Together, the joint AsMA/UHMS congress provides an even wider basis in closely related sciences, as the study, practice, and applications are closely related. The arduousness of the environments they aim to tame is equally impressive. We discuss new scientific findings, discuss with colleagues how to solve clinical problems, learn about new technological solutions, and understand new training concepts. Our fields are unique, offering challenges for protection, prevention, and support to people who push humanity into the most extreme environments.

Meetings within the meeting

In parallel with the scientific program, there are a large number of meetings in our constituent organisations, committees, affiliate organisations, and working groups. During the 2025 Annual Scientific Meeting, there were over 70 such meetings, keeping “the wheels turning” for collaborative activities, special initiatives, and interest groups.

The “icing on the cake.”

The scientific programme is, of course, the icing on the cake, and the 500+ abstracts that go into this year's Annual Scientific Meeting are visible proof of the engagement and enthusiasm within our ranks. Participants from over 50 nations usually attend the AsMA/UHMS Annual Scientific Meeting. For it to be a success, we need presenters—people who have an idea and send in an abstract. Some presenters have done it many times and are experts in their field. Others are just starting on a project or have an interesting case. The first time is usually the most difficult. It may be a

bit scary to expose oneself to peer review and possibly critique. Don't let that stop you—have a go. There are several types of abstracts which may be acceptable for the Annual Meeting: original research, case studies, experience from practice, and educational papers. Read the abstract guidance material and do your best. Ask for guidance from those who have experience. The worst that can happen is that the abstract gets turned down—and you learn for next time. Scientific contribution is not a competition to be the best, but rather a way to participate in developing our field—a field that is diverse both in competency and challenges. Knowledge is built brick by brick, and no brick is perfect.

I have been lucky enough to have participated in several decades of AsMA meetings; my first was in 1994 in San Antonio. I presented a paper and I remember how nervous I was. I also remember all the people I met because I made that presentation. Not that it was particularly good, but the people who were interested in my subject at the time were there. I got connections, I met like-minded practitioners and scientists, and made new friends. Going to an Annual Scientific Meeting is always valuable, but even more so when you also have a story to tell.

ICAM 2026

A new opportunity for scientific exchange is already on the horizon this fall: The International Congress of Aerospace Medicine (ICAM) is another Scientific meeting where AsMA is involved in the organisation, together with the European Society of Aerospace Medicine (ESAM), International Academy of Aviation and Space Medicine (IAASM), and a national aerospace medical association. It is a biennial meeting which was last held in Lisbon, Portugal, with over 800 participants. This year, the venue is in Istanbul, Turkey, October 1–3. Check out www.ICAM2026.org. Abstract deadline is June 30.

A note from Dr. Silberman

In the AsMA President's Page in April 2026, I noted Vast's Haven commercial space station was to be launched into space in May 2026. I need to correct that statement. I was recently informed by Dr. Dana Levin that the launch is planned for the first quarter of 2027.

Reprint and copyright © by the Aerospace Medical Association, North Palm Beach, FL.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3357/AMHP.PP9706.2026>



CONTACT DETAILS:

Email: President@asma.org • **Website:** www.asma.org • **Facebook:** Aerospace Medical Association • **X:** @aero_med_1929 • **YouTube:** @aero_med_1929