



# The Asian Oceanian Society of Radiology: Reaching Out, Growing Asia Oceania

Evelyn Lai Ming Ho

Imaging Department, ParkCity Medical Centre, Ramsay Sime Darby Healthcare, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

## Take-home points

- The Asian Oceanian Society of Radiology (AOSR) is a large, diverse professional body with complex geopolitics, varied resources, culture, languages, and needs, spanning two continents.
- The AOSR offers programs designed for sharing the latest scientific innovation, networking, and development of young leaders.
- Since 2021, many new initiatives have been established to raise the visibility of the AOSR, increase meaningful member participation, reconnect with lapsed members, and enhance member benefits.
- Volunteerism from diverse membership is needed to ensure the continued growth of the AOSR.

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The Asian Oceanian Society of Radiology (AOSR) is primarily comprised of society members. Although individual membership was previously available for countries/territories without a society and few radiologists, it is now open to radiologists, radiation oncologists, and scientists worldwide [1].

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**Corresponding author:** Evelyn Lai Ming Ho, MBBS, MMed, Imaging Department, ParkCity Medical Centre, Ramsay Sime Darby Healthcare, No. 2, Jalan Intisari Perdana, Desa ParkCity, Kuala Lumpur 52200, Malaysia.

• E-mail: evelynlmho@gmail.com

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The AOSR spans two continents and caters to approximately 60% [2] of the world's population. Asia Oceania spans countries with varying resources, needs, and challenges. Complex geopolitics and disparate cultures, languages, socioeconomic status, and access to education make AOSR colorful and diverse.

The idea of establishing a regional society arose in the late 1960s [3]. The consensus was to start a society after results of a questionnaire sent to 13 nations/territories were collated. At the International Congress of Radiology in 1969 in Hotel Otani, Tokyo, Japan, 12 nations/territories met to discuss the formation of what is now referred to as the AOSR. Twelve nations/territories, as they were known then, were at the first meeting: Australia, Ceylon, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Republic of China, and Thailand.

The Asian Oceanian Congress of Radiology (AOCC) [3] is the official congress for the AOSR. It provides a forum for the AOSR members to assemble, network, share and exchange the latest scientific developments, and provide learning opportunities.

The president's term followed the AOCC, which was quadrennial from 1971, triennial from 1995, and biennial from 2006 to 2020. The AOSR General Assembly takes place at the AOCC where formal matters are conducted, and presidential handovers occur. At the turn of the millennium, the AOSR trialed the same venue for the AOCC, but after two congresses in Singapore, it was decided that the venue should rotate for various reasons. The founding president was Professor William Hare from Australia. There have been eighteen presidents (sixteen men and two women), fifteen of whom were from Asian countries/regions and three were from Australia. From 2021, when the AOCC became an annual event, the president's term would remain biennial until further review.

The first statutes were drafted in 1971 and circa 2001, the AOSR was registered in Singapore. In 2005, the permanent secretariat was in Australia, with oversight from the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists. In 2010, the secretariat moved to Seoul with oversight by another AOSR member, the Korean Society of Radiology, and has remained there since. The AOSR Constitution, as the statutes became known, has been evolving over many years to meet the needs of our membership.

Although the AOSR does not currently have its own journal publication, Dr. Sudarshan K. Aggarwal secured funding and was the Editor-In-Chief for the Asian Oceanian Journal of Radiology from 1995 to 2006. Unfortunately, the funding could not be sustained.

The Asian Oceanian School of Radiology (AOSOR) [3,4] was established in 2012 with the aim of providing structured, high-quality education and training in radiology, and enabling scientific communication between AOSR member societies. Among its programs are conjoint sessions with member societies, the international visiting professor program, and the AOSOR Youth Club (YC). The YC began in 2015 and is an educational, social, and academic program to train future leaders of the AOSR. While the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic suspended many of its activities, they eventually resumed via online, hybrid, or onsite modes.

Since 2021, the AOSR has taken many first steps on various fronts to raise its visibility, encourage meaningful participation, connect with dormant/lapsed members, and enhance its benefits. These included the onset of annual AOCRs, joining the International Society for Strategic Studies in Radiology in July 2021, advancing value-based radiology (VBR) throughout the region, conducting AOSR-wide webinars [5], and producing a livelier and more interesting AOSR newsletter [6]. There were profile features on AOSR councilors and members, including sharing landmark events, milestones, and the impactful activities of our members. In 2022, we published our first position statement on the multidisciplinary approach to patient care [7].

My motto during my presidency (18th AOCR, April 2021 to 21st AOCR, February 2023) was Reaching Out, Growing Asia Oceania. For me, reaching out meant personally connecting with the leadership of lapsed or dormant members, explaining how the constitution had changed, and welcoming their return to active participation. Certain activities did not require the clearing of subscription arrears. Getting individuals involved again was key for them

to see for themselves and to provide opportunities to steer their future, making a difference in their own society and in the AOSR (the “chicken and egg” situation).

AsiaSafe [8] is an initiative by the AOSR to establish a radiation safety culture and ensure the appropriate use of radiation in medicine. While originally proposed in 2017, it had a long incubation period and was officially launched in July 2021. Very early on, the AOSR decided that safety should be expanded beyond radiation-related matters to magnetic resonance (MR) and even contrast safety. AsiaSafe represents the AOSR at the International Atomic Energy Agency, International Commission on Radiological Protection and the International Society of Radiology Quality and Safety Alliance.

The AOSR expanded personnel involved in its activities by inviting individuals from all member societies to volunteer to serve in committees, regardless of whether they were dormant/lapsed members. The AOSR created an entirely new committee, Emerging Trends [9], which would be concerned with trending issues, such as those related to artificial intelligence (AI) [10] and VBR. MR Safety Ambassadors were appointed from several societies in Asia Oceania to increase buy-ins and messages on MR safety. Prior to this, only a limited number of council members were available to run AOSR and its activities. However, specific conditions related to subscriptions still exist for eligibility to run for council positions.

The Presidents' Roundtable enabled authorized delegates from each member society to come together and talk outside of the formal matters of the General Assembly. Three roundtables have been conducted since December 2021. Members learned more about each other's needs and arrived at a consensus on which aspect of VBR was practical to advance in the region after a VBR survey [11] was conducted from May to June 2022. The roundtable is now looking at the minimum standards for the training curriculum and appropriate use guidelines.

In July 2022, the AOSR social media presence was established to provide individuals of member societies, direct access to the AOSR and allow them to choose which platform they preferred to connect with the AOSR. Since then, Facebook has become the most popular platform and led to the AOSR's second individual member application.

We cannot predict the future. The AOSR has just entered the next half-century with much room for growth, and building upon the AOSR's leadership efforts is logical. Many of our first steps on various fronts since 2021 require time

to develop and mature to realize their full potential. For those which may fail, lessons will be learnt. We will need to find more funds and expand our support secretariat of one staff member.

*Let us emerge stronger from the pandemic, where collaboration and cooperation are stronger than ever, and everyone rapidly learns how to harness digital tools.*

*Let us improve our communication skills and talk to our patients because we care and not only because we need to be visible.*

*Let us work with our non-radiology colleagues to ensure we are more effective together.*

*Let us not fear AI, but harness it for good to enable efficiency, freeing up time to be a doctor to our patients once again.*

The AOSR has many challenges, as mentioned earlier: one size does not fit all. I look forward to the day where we can truly rise above politics, despite saying that we are apolitical. The AOSR is rich in diversity. Like a rope where a collection of strands or fibers are joined together or braided to give it high tensile strength, so is my vision that despite the knots along the way, we will eventually emerge into a beautiful braid of ribbons. For this, we will continue to need motivated, dedicated society volunteers willing to give their time and expertise to collaborate, share, help each other, and help the AOSR serve its members. To a large extent, the future is up to us.

#### AOSR Social Media Links

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/287474856904816>

Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/aosr\\_radiology/](https://www.instagram.com/aosr_radiology/)

Telegram: <https://t.me/aosrofficial>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/AosrOfficial>

Youtube: [youtube.com/@aosr](https://youtube.com/@aosr)

#### Conflicts of Interest

The author has no potential conflicts of interest to disclose.

#### ORCID iD

Evelyn Lai Ming Ho

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4900-610X>

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