



GSA STRATEGIC PLAN
2024-2026



General Surgeons Australia

Overview

General Surgeons Australia (GSA) was founded in 1999 and its Constitution was ratified in June 2000.

In 2024, GSA has a membership of over 1,700, comprising consultant Specialist General Surgeons, Junior Doctors, General Surgery Trainees, and Specialist International Medical Graduates (SIMGs), practicing mainly in Australia.

GSA has a close working relationship with the New Zealand Association of General Surgeons (NZAGS), and is an official Designated Society of the Association of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland (ASGBI). GSA maintains close links with the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS), and is committed to promoting both high quality training and the continuing medical education of our Members.

Specialist General Surgeons

A General Surgeon is a Specialist who:

- is trained to provide expert treatment across a broad range of emergency and planned surgical procedures
- pursues a balance between sub-specialty interests and generalist surgical practice
- participates in multi-disciplinary teams
- contributes to training and research
- is available to address surgical needs within Australia and globally

Our Vision

To maintain Specialist General Surgery as a respected, prestigious and rewarding surgical career and to meet the surgical needs of patients in Australia.

Our Purpose

The key function of GSA is to ensure the provision of high quality, comprehensive Specialist General Surgical services, including emergency and planned services, to the Australian community. We achieve this through the promotion of specialist training, continuing medical education, research, advocacy, and audit for our Members.

Strategic Plan 2024-2026

Our Purpose

GSA represents Specialist General Surgery in Australia, through:

- developing and managing education and training programs that produce Specialist General Surgeons of the highest professional standard
- ensuring that Specialist General Surgeons maintain the highest standards of professional competence
- providing GSA Members with valuable benefits and services that support their professional lives
- promoting GSA as the authority for Specialist General Surgery in Australia, and being recognised as such by government, health groups, and the wider community
- aligning the specialty of General Surgery on key strategic issues by continuous engagement and co-operation with the RACS, NZAGS, and the various sub-specialty societies and groups within Specialist General Surgery, both regionally and globally

Our Values

EXCELLENCE *We pursue the highest standards of surgical care based on expertise, compassion, respect, ethical practice, conscientiousness, and scholarship*

ACCOUNTABILITY *We take ownership of our actions and work openly and constructively with Members, Trainees, and all stakeholders*

COLLABORATION *We promote interaction with medical Colleges, government, industry, and consumers, and with specialty surgical groups both regionally and globally*

COMMITMENT *We commit to equity and diversity within our specialty and our organisation, and to equitable treatment of all stakeholders, without discrimination*

SUSTAINABILITY *We endeavour to maintain generalism and deliver sustainable surgical services that meet the needs of the Australian community, and commit to sustainable approaches in managing our resources*

Our Goals

This Strategic Plan details the goals of GSA, the strategies it will use to achieve these goals, and its priorities grouped into six Key Result Areas:

1. Member Services
2. Education and Training
3. Continuing Medical Education
4. Surgical Research
5. Professional and Community Liaison
6. Administration and Resource Management

Goal 1 Member Services

To provide GSA Members with valuable benefits and services that support their professional lives.

Strategies

We will achieve this goal by:

- Continuing to advocate for appropriate remuneration for Specialist General Surgeons, including for the provision of emergency surgery
- Offering a pathway of 'lifelong learning' at all levels, from medical student through to specialist practice in Specialist General Surgery
- Maintaining GSA as a professional network to assist Members with employment and career development, including the promotion of post-Fellowship opportunities, and support for members in both Public and Private practice
- Ensuring Members receive appropriate recognition for contributions to surgery, teaching, and mentoring

Key Performance Indicators

INDICATORS	TARGET
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Membership increase >5% p.a.• 80% of new General Surgery Fellows joining GSA each year, including SIMGs• New membership amongst junior doctors of >5%p.a.• New Associate membership of overseas Consultants of >5% p.a.• Diverse membership that reflects the profession of Specialist General Surgery
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• eBlast to Members issued quarterly
Member recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annual Honorary membership nomination for significant contribution to GSA
Career Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annual webinars for new fellows and junior doctors

Short Term Priorities

- Continue to develop options for improved communication with Members
- Continue to acknowledge and recognise significant contributions of GSA members
- Continue to advocate for appropriate remuneration for Specialist General Surgeons
- Expand membership eligibility to include appropriately trained overseas surgeons as associate members

Longer Term Priorities

- Develop and publish position/best-practice papers on professional practice issues
- Develop career resources for new fellows, including webinars for navigating the MBS
- Develop career resources for medical students and junior doctors interested in a career in Specialist General Surgery, through engagement with surgical/medical groups such as PVASS
- Maintain post-Fellowship database of specialty and sub-specialty opportunities, and continue to foster placement in co-operation with sub-specialty groups
- Promote opportunities for career transition and support, including the RACS Preparation for Practice program

Goal 2 Education & Training

To provide and foster education and training to the level of Fellowship in General Surgery and beyond.

Strategies

We will achieve this goal by:

- Implementing and delivering the strategic objectives of the Australian Board in General Surgery
- Contributing to the ongoing development of the General Surgery training program to attract the best candidates
- Continuing to expand, review, and update online learning resources, assessment modules, and educational activities that are aligned to the Curriculum
- Developing guides and modules for General Surgery Supervisors and trainers, and ensuring they are equipped with the necessary tools to manage Trainees, including Trainees in difficulty
- Communicating regularly with General Surgery Supervisors and trainers regarding the SET and GSET Programs in General Surgery
- Managing the program requirements for General Surgery SIMGs, and providing ongoing support
- Attracting and recruiting Specialist General Surgeons, particularly Younger Fellows, to be involved in education and training activities

Key Performance Indicators

INDICATORS	TARGET
Selected Trainees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Retention > 95
Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% of General Surgery Supervisors as Members of GSA
Fellowship Examination pass rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 80% by second attempt
SIMGs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SIMG Fellowship Examination pass rate equivalent to Trainees
Younger Fellows	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tutor faculty increase >5% p.a.

Short Term Priorities

- Continue to promote support services for General Surgery Supervisors and trainers, including professional development and mentoring opportunities
- Continue to advocate for General Surgery Supervisors to be given adequate time, remuneration, and resources for supervision
- Continue to develop support services for General Surgery SIMGs, including Fellowship Examination preparation, career development, and professional networks
- Continue to provide additional support for candidates with multiple failed attempts at the Fellowship Examination

Goal 2 Education & Training

(continued)

Longer Term Priorities

- Continue implementation of SEAM II in alignment with the Curriculum
- Continue to engage sub-specialty societies and groups in the content development of SEAM II (Refer: Professional and Community Liaison)
- Provide support for the RACS Court of General Surgery and Fellowship Exam, including blueprinting the exam against the General Surgery Curriculum
- Continue to develop educational, skills, and career resources for junior doctors, to foster interest in General Surgery as a prestigious and rewarding surgical career
- Incorporate and evolve resources covering non-technical competencies

Goal 3 Continuing Medical Education

To provide a Continuing Medical Education (CME) program consistent with the highest standards of Specialist General Surgical practice.

Strategies

We will achieve this goal by:

- Promoting the GSA Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) as the key Specialist General Surgery meeting on the calendar
- Coordinating the Specialist General Surgical component of education activities at the RACS ASC
- Developing Consensus Statements on core issues impacting Specialist General Surgical practice
- Making available to Members high quality, attractive, and relevant professional development activities
- Facilitating compliance with the RACS Continuing Professional Development program
- Delivering online educational resources including GSA ASM presentations and Masterclasses
- Delivering high quality Post-Fellowship Education & Training Programs

Key Performance Indicators

INDICATORS	TARGET
CPD compliance	• 100% compliance with existing RACS CPD
GSA ASM	• At least 50% of ASM delegates as surgeons
Education Resources	• At least two Masterclasses delivered for members annually, at the ASM or via GSA Online

Short Term Priorities

- Continue to maintain an independent, single stream GSA ASM program with a broad Specialist General Surgery focus, as well as developing a parallel stream with sub-specialty focus where appropriate
- Develop Position Description and Guide for ASM Convenors
- Develop additional education resources for Members, such as “How I Do It” video series and Masterclasses, including collaboration with Sub-Specialty Societies

Longer Term Priorities

- Develop position papers relevant to Specialist General Surgeons in collaboration with Sub-Specialty Societies
- Engage Younger Fellows and Senior Surgeons in the review of position papers

Goal 4 Surgical Research

To promote high quality research in the specialty of General Surgery.

Strategies

We will achieve this goal by:

- Providing a range of scholarships and grants to promote research by SET and GSET Trainees, Younger Fellows and Fellows, including an annual, named research scholarship
- Maintaining quality in the development, presentation, and publication of research projects
- Fostering and maintaining collaborative research within the specialty of General Surgery

Key Performance Indicators

INDICATORS	TARGET
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% of SET and GSET Trainees complete research by required milestones
Scholarships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All scholarships awarded annually• 100% of research supported by GSA scholarships published• Travel scholarships awarded for prize-winning research at GSA ASM

Short Term Priorities

- Continue to recruit members to review ANZJ General and Rural Surgery articles
- Continue to provide research grants and scholarships for Trainees and junior doctor Members of GSA, including grants for consumables and statistics support
- Continue to provide opportunities for Trainee and junior doctor research presentations, and provide formal feedback to improve educational outcomes

Longer Term Priorities

- Create listing of research projects and audits for all members, including BCCA, BQA, ANZELA and International Open Abdomen Audit

Goal 5 Professional & Community Liaison

To maintain GSA as the peak body for Specialist General Surgery in Australia.

Strategies

We will achieve this goal by:

- Fostering and maintaining professional relationships with relevant sub-specialty societies and groups of Specialist General Surgery, both regionally and globally
- Collaborating with medical and surgical Societies, Colleges, and Associations
- Collaborating with Government, regulatory bodies, industry partners, and consumers
- Collaborating on submissions to government and other regulatory bodies after due consideration
- Improving awareness and information for the general community about the specialty of General Surgery
- Maintaining GSA as the preferred body for interaction with Government, Health Departments, and local Health Services on all matters pertaining to Specialist General Surgery
- Providing a range of travel grants and educational opportunities to support Specialist General Surgeons and Trainees from low- and middle-income countries

Key Performance Indicators

INDICATORS	TARGET
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver co-badged or co-located scientific meetings and workshops with sub-specialty groups and societies
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Co-authoring submissions to government and other bodies
Travel Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All travel grants awarded annually
Outreach Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bi-annual education opportunities delivered in low- or middle-income countries

Short Term Priorities

- Develop position description for Communications/PR role to enhance communication effectiveness and fortify reputation of General Surgery with key stakeholders
- Continue to engage sub-specialty societies and groups in the content development of SEAM II (Refer: Education & Training)
- Continue to update position papers and guidelines on Specialist General Surgical practice
- Update Public Information section of GSA website with appropriate links and resources for consumers
- Continue to facilitate access to and promote involvement in surgical audits, for our members

Goal 5 Professional & Community Liaison

(continued)

Longer Term Priorities

- Foster relationships with media contacts and collaborate with RACS in preparing media releases/commentary on issues related to Specialist General Surgery
- Develop broad guidelines for Scope of Practice and Credentialling
- Develop strategies to address equity and sustainability issues in the Specialist General Surgical workforce, including access and service provision (see also: Administration & Resource Management)

Goal 6 Administration & Resource Management

To maintain an efficient and sustainable organisation to manage the resources of GSA.

Strategies

We will achieve this goal by:

- Ensuring the organisational culture is supportive, respectful, enriching, and diverse
- Attracting and retaining the best people across our governance and staff structures
- Ensuring staff are adequately trained and provided with professional development opportunities
- Managing the continued growth of the society
- Continuing to foster sustainable non-Member revenue streams to build capacity for future investment
- Operating a sustainable financial plan
- Complying with regulatory requirements
- Investing in contemporary media and technologies
- Assessing surgical workforce requirements to ensure appropriate numbers of graduating Specialist General Surgeons

Key Performance Indicators

INDICATORS	TARGET
Membership management	• 75% of Members paying online or via direct deposit
Diversity	• Balanced and diverse representation on GSA Boards and Committees
Engagement	• Monthly social media posts
Event Management	• Provide Event Management services for at least two external events annually
Governance	• All Directors compliant with requirements, including Director IDs
Compliance	• Lodgement of Statutory Accounts four months after EOFY • All charity details are updated on the ACNC register
Budget performance	• +/- 5% of budget annually

Goal 6 Administration & Resource Management

(continued)

Short Term Priorities

- Finalise organisational review to create a fit-for-purpose structure that aligns with strategic objectives and key results areas of the business
- Implement succession planning strategies for key staff roles
- Provide corporate governance training for all Directors
- Annual Strategic Plan 'Report Card'
- Maintain information regarding Specialist General Surgery workforce data and develop strategies in consultation with appropriate Health Department objectives
- Develop strategies to address equity and sustainability issues in the Specialist General Surgical workforce, including access and service provision (see also: Professional & Community Liaison)

Longer Term Priorities

- Continue to review technologies for delivery of GSA services, including access data for GSA services by programming Google Analytics and tailoring user experience
- Continue to expand Event Management services for core Specialist General Surgery meetings
- Continue to develop strategies for environmentally sustainable approaches to events and educational activities delivered by GSA



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