

## UROLOGICAL CONFERENCE BECOMES VENUE FOR MEMORABLE MEDAL CEREMONY

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At first sight a urological conference might not appear to be a logical venue for a historic and emotional medal ceremony - yet that is exactly what happened at the 65th Annual Society Meeting of the Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand, held at the Darwin Convention Centre last week (April 21 - 24).

Almost 600 urological surgeons and nurses were attending the same meeting in Christchurch's city centre last year when the earthquake that claimed 185 lives struck. Many of those attending risked their own lives to help rescue people trapped in broken buildings.

While this year's gathering obviously carried the scars and memories of the previous year's, Darwin Convention Centre General Manager Malu Barrios commented that it was among the most successful and inspirational in her experience.

The emotional highlight came at the closing conference dinner with the presentation by the Society of the Christchurch Medal Award for Bravery in recognition of the immediate response to the crisis during the previous annual meeting of the Society.

The presentations were made to four urological surgeons, all members of the Society - one each from Christchurch and England and two from Brisbane - who, disregarding the risks to their own lives, entered the disaster scene and treated several trapped and badly injured people, with one of the group amputating the leg of a man trapped under fallen concrete with a pen knife.

"It was a totally moving gesture that will live in my memory forever - and a privilege for the Centre to host such a memorable experience," said Ms Barrios.

**For further media information or comment, please contact:**

Mr Peter Sawyer

Sawyer Public Relations Media Consultant to the Darwin Convention Centre

**T:** + 61 417 626 605

**E:** peter@sawyerpr.com.au

[www.darwinconvention.com.au](http://www.darwinconvention.com.au)

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