FSRACA National Conference 2026 – Gold Coast QLD
30 September – 02 October 2026
My experience – Jammima West

I was very fortunate to attend the FSRACA National Conference on the Gold Coast, and I would like to sincerely thank the SRACA WA Committee for supporting me to attend. Without their support, I would not have had this opportunity, and it really meant a lot to me.

As this was my first sterilising conference, I wasn't quite sure what to expect, but I came away feeling it was an incredibly worthwhile and inspiring experience. This year's theme, *Waves of Innovation, Anchored in AS 5369*, reflected our industry's journey of embracing innovation and new technologies while remaining grounded in standards, scientific evidence and patient safety.

It was wonderful to connect with fellow SRACA WA members, colleagues from across Australia, international speakers and delegates from Papua New Guinea, New Zealand, the USA, Italy and other parts of Europe, along with industry representatives at the trade exhibition. Sharing experiences and hearing different perspectives was invaluable. It was reassuring to realise that many of the challenges we face in our own departments are shared across the industry, and that we are all working towards the same goal of providing safe, effective and high-quality patient care.

The keynote speakers, Brooke Hanson and Julie Cross, were fantastic. Their energetic and heartfelt presentations focused on resilience, positivity, challenging ourselves and remembering the importance of self-care. There was plenty of fun too! Did we recover from perfecting our squats and remember our sparkle? Their messages were a great reminder to bring positivity and enthusiasm into both our work and everyday lives.

There was an incredible amount of information shared throughout the conference, with scientific presentations and research from Australia and around the world. A major focus was the implementation of AS 5369:2023 and understanding the evidence behind updated requirements. Sessions on cleaning, decontamination, biofilm management and infection prevention reinforced the importance of effective cleaning at the point of use and during pre-cleaning, reminding us that getting the fundamentals right consistently and effectively, is essential to safe reprocessing.

Endoscopy was another significant topic, with interesting discussions around single-use and reusable devices, evolving reprocessing requirements, high-level disinfection and sterilisation, and biofilm and infection risks. These sessions highlighted the importance of understanding the science behind changing practices so we can confidently apply evidence-based approaches and maintain patient safety.

I was also interested in discussions about the increasing pressures on CSSD, including more complex procedures, larger instrument sets, loan sets and tighter turnaround times. Staffing, fatigue and burnout were important topics, highlighting the need for adequate resources, good communication, training and improved workflows without compromising safety or quality.

Other presentations explored automation, robotics, data and artificial intelligence, as well as water quality, cleaning validation, instrument traceability, Lean methodology, sterile storage

environments, humidity, single-use devices, implantable items, reusable textiles and sustainability. There were also discussions about upcoming changes to Certificate III and IV education frameworks and the future direction of SRACA in Australia. There was certainly plenty to absorb, and I know I will continue reflecting on what I learnt and how it can be applied in my own role.

What I appreciated most was the opportunity to learn from others, share experiences and gain a broader perspective on our profession. The conference reinforced the importance of ongoing learning, sharing knowledge and supporting one another as our industry evolves, as well as the science, teamwork and responsibility behind the work we do every day.

Outside the presentations, the whole experience was wonderful. The beautiful Gold Coast weather was a lovely bonus! The venue was excellent, the food was superb and the accommodation was comfortable. The gala dinner was heaps of fun and a great opportunity to relax, have a laugh and connect with other delegates. It was also lovely to see the Teresa Normington Award**,** which sponsors a delegate to attend a World Federation for Hospital Sterilisation Sciences World Congress, and to see our own SRACA WA Secretary, Rosalie Berry**,** recognised for her long-standing service and contribution to the sterilising profession. It was a wonderful reminder of the dedication of those who continue to support and strengthen our industry.

Looking back, I feel proud to be part of the sterile services profession. I returned from my first national conference with new knowledge, ideas to reflect on and renewed enthusiasm for continuing to learn and contribute to the Sterile Services Department at Bunbury Regional Hospital.

I am sincerely grateful to the SRACA WA Committee for making this opportunity possible. It was a memorable experience, both professionally and personally, and one I will take a great deal away from. Thank you again for your support and for helping make it all possible!

Thank you,
Jammima West