

How to Use the ANZSOM New Zealand Lists

Now that you are a participant in one or more of the Society's lists, you'll want to know how they work... The following instructions are the same regardless of which Society list you have just joined (we are setting up several).

Just remember the abbreviated NAME of the list in question (e.g. "ANZSOM-Forum") and substitute this for any *** which appears as the first part of any e-mail address below. For example, ***@topica.com might become ANZSOM-Forum@topica.com or cttee-ANZSOM@topica.com

1. POSTING MESSAGES:

Messages posted to the *** list get distributed to the entire list [The only exception is the ANZSOM-News list: replies ONLY go to whichever committee member posted the message].

Please use PLAIN TEXT or RICH TEXT (not HTML), avoid ATTACHMENTS to such messages, and adhere to accepted Internet protocol. To post a message to a list, you can send email to: ***@topica.com

or you can REPLY to a message received via the List by hitting the REPLY button. Try not to accumulate too much of a "tail" of attachments on your replies - it helps to delete older stuff which is no longer relevant.

If instead you wish to reply to an individual, you will need to make a conscious decision to do that. Merely hitting REPLY (or REPLY ALL) will send your answer automatically to ALL participants.

Although subscription is automated, only participants previously cleared by the listmaster can subscribe (ANZSOM members). But be aware that any member can of course forward copies to other people, so it is not entirely secure.

If you wish to include an interested non-member in a particular topic on the *** list, just add that person to the "cc" line. But bear in mind that if they then reply, ONLY YOU as the initiator would receive that reply.

You would need to remember to forward their reply to the *** list (if you felt it was warranted) for our members to see that! For example, replying to a forwarded ANZSOM-Forum e-mail does NOT give outsiders access to that Forum. Encourage them to join the Society, of course, if they want more direct access.

2. UNSUBSCRIBING FROM THE LIST PRIOR TO ABSENCE:

When you are going to be away, you don't necessarily have to "unsubscribe". But this is the simplest solution if you are in the habit of setting an "OUT OF OFFICE AUTOREPLY". The other members really won't want the annoyance of receiving your autoreply every time they post a message to the List!

Members can unsubscribe from the list via email simply by sending a BLANK email to: ***-unsubscribe@topica.com

Alternatively, you can use the "**Easy unsubscribe**" link which appears at the foot of every message on these lists. Just follow the link...

A more elegant method is available if you register on Topica's website

(see "OPTIONAL EXTRAS" at bottom of these notes)

3. SUBSCRIBING AGAIN AFTER AN ABSENCE:

Members can re-subscribe to the list via email simply by sending a BLANK email to: ***-subscribe@topica.com

During the period you were unsubscribed you will have missed some messages. These can be checked using the archives (which are also useful for other reasons).

At present the archives (which can be accessed via the Topica website -see below) are only accessible to ANZSOM members. An alternative may be to throw it open for public viewing, to encourage new members! This would allow non-members to read without posting messages (lurking).

4. IF YOU HAVE PROBLEMS WITH THE FUNCTIONING OF THE LIST:

Please send a private message to <mailto:anzsom@anzsom.org.nz> - DON'T bother the whole list membership with the problem.

5. CHECKING WHO ELSE IS ON THE LIST:

Registered members of some special lists (but not the Forum) can at any time confirm the current list membership by interrogating the database via an e-mail to ***-who@topica.com

-But PLEASE respect the privacy of your fellow members by NOT circulating such a list to non-members.

Optional Extras - Using the Topica Website

To do the things described below requires only that you **register** as a Topica user (which is free).

Go to, <http://www.topica.com> to find how to register. Click the "Sign up" link at top of screen. Once registered, use the "Login" link beside that for future visits, and bookmark the Login screen which appears (for convenience next time).

6. TO READ YOUR LIST ON THE WEB

Login, and pick which of the displayed lists you want to see. The relevant option is "Read current messages". An alternative shortcut is to use this URL:

http://www.topica.com/lists/**/read . Using the Topica site to read your Society lists, and other lists, is a convenient way to keep all your list mail in one place, freeing up your email in box, saving email download times, and more. You can also post to your list from the Topica website, and use this as a simple way to subscribe and unsubscribe.

7. A NEATER WAY TO HANDLE YOUR ABSENCE

Don't Put the Forum on the Loopty-Loop!

The holidays are typically spent with family and friends -- and without access to email. That's a good thing, but in the process we strongly recommend you put your subscriptions on vacation hold. This is especially recommended for those who set up auto-responders, such as **automated out-of-office replies**, for your email accounts. Such auto-responders tend to generate email loops on lists, whereby repetitive messages about your whereabouts are continually sent to the list owners or your fellow subscribers. To avoid this scenario, you can set your delivery option to **Web Only**. Here's how:

* Log in to Topica and go to your My Topica page <http://www.topica.com/my>.

* Click on the name of the list you wish to put on hold.

* Click on the arrow for the drop box next to each list. Highlight the "Web Only" choice and click "Save Changes" at the bottom of the page.

You can also change this setting through your list's Options page http://www.topica.com/**/prefs, where *** is the nickname of your list [e.g. ANZSOM-forum]. Simply click on Email Address and Delivery from the choices in the left margin of the page. Next to the word Read, click the down arrow for the drop box and highlight "Using Topica Web Site Only - No Email". Click the "Save Changes" button and your changes will be saved. We'll all enjoy the holidays much better if you do!

8. NETIQUETTE – Rules of Behaviour on Lists:

An E-mail list can only run smoothly if its members display goodwill and courteous behaviour. The ANZSOM lists demonstrate this, with minimal inconsiderate behaviour. We'd like to preserve that. What follows is based on other published explanations of internet etiquette (netiquette), with particular thanks to Dougal Watson. You can use any search engine and the keyword 'netiquette' or 'internetiquette' or 'netiquet'. We have distilled the fairest of them here.

The general rules of netiquette apply to mail sent to this list, and here are some rules we would like to emphasise.

- Be **courteous** at all times, even if you strongly disagree with someone. Do not **quote anyone** from the List in any other publication without obtaining specific permission from them.
- Do not send your reply as an **attachment**, or post e-mail with an **attachment**. REASON: unnecessary attachments clog-up mailing lists, irritate users, and are a frequent mode of computer virus dissemination. Instead, if you have a file which may interest list members, one of these options may be useful:
 - if it is small enough, just copy its text and paste this into the text of your message; or
 - mention it and invite those who are interested to ask you for a copy. You might post it into DropBox; or, if you have your own website, post it on the web and advise the list of the URL; or
 - if it is of particular value, the Listmaster may offer to post it on the Society website.
- Do not post **commercial material** to the list, such as advertising your services or organisation on the list. REASON: It can cause offence. If you have material that is vaguely commercial (such as a 'classified' advertisement for a vacant medical position) and you think it may be of interest to the list send it to the Listmaster who will decide whether to post it to the list or not.
- Do not post **HTML e-mail** to the list and try to avoid formatted e-mail (such as Eudora Pro and similar mailers produce). REASON: The hypertext in these mail formats shows as text in a basic mailer and makes your message virtually unreadable. It is safest to post your e-mail to a mailing list in the simplest format you can and that's plain old ASCII text.
- Do not simply hit REPLY and add a couple of lines of comment to the **bottom** of the message. Take a little time to remove those parts of the original message that are not relevant to your reply. REASON: The people who are interested in the topic will already have read the original and so don't want to have to wade through it again just to get to your few lines of comments.
- Do not post **joke pages** to the list. By all means show your sense of humour (some light relief helps at times), but no joke pages please as most of us have already read them ... a thousand times.
- **Be careful when you're replying** to a posting from the list. REASON: It can be embarrassing to post, to the whole list, a personal message intended for only one person to read. The default situation is a **reply to the whole list** so if you only want to reply to the original poster you will have to copy and paste their address.
- **Dis-identify any medical case history** you discuss. Make sure that it is absolutely impossible for other list members to identify the person you are discussing. To do otherwise would be not only a breach of netiquette but potentially a breach of professional confidentiality.

- Do try to **include references** in support of your opinions, especially if you're involved in a debate on a topic.
- **Give your name** and some relevant background if possible, whenever you join in. REASON: If you want your question or comment to be respected, people will tend to be more open. While you are welcome to stay anonymous if you wish you are encouraged to close your message with **your name** and perhaps your **place of employment** or how you are **involved in occupational medicine**. It is not bragging: it helps the conversation to flow better.
- **Don't shrink from asking questions.** Something you're worried about is never going to be a 'stupid question' to people with a similar interest in occupational medicine.

9. What to do when someone behaves inappropriately on the List:

Different people have different visions of what is appropriate behaviour on lists such as the ANZSOM-Forum. While there are aspects of netiquette upon which most folk agree there are also more contentious, borderline, topics. To maintain the tone and level of the list in a fair and even manner it is usually best that netiquette and content issues be dealt with by one central person - the listmaster. However, the Listmaster response may happen behind the scenes.

- You should not take it upon yourself to 'correct' any other person who has transgressed your ideas of netiquette.
- If you think someone is acting in a manner that is upsetting to others, and the Listmaster seems not to have responded appropriately to this, send a message to the Listmaster or to a committee member.

10. What does happen when members act inappropriately on the List?

The response of the Listmaster may not be seen by members as part of list traffic, although sometimes there may be an announcement on the List *after* a serious problem has been handled. Prior to that there may have been messages to individuals, such as:

- A polite e-mail pointing out the problem and how this can be avoided.
- A firm e-mail along the same lines.
- Suspension from the list with the ability to rejoin by resubscribing.
- Expulsion from the list with removal of the ability to rejoin.

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