

Preface

The following papers and abstracts were presented at a workshop on "*The Possible Causes and Consequences of Outbreaks of the Crown-of-thorns Starfish*", held on 10 June 1992 in Townsville, Australia. The workshop was hosted by the Crown-of-thorns Starfish Research Committee (COTSREC) and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) with a view to:

- Presenting recent research findings about the crown-of-thorns starfish relevant to determining the possible causes and consequences of outbreaks;
- Reviewing the current status of the COTSREC research program; and
- Discussing and recommending possible future research directions.

Selected papers from the workshop held the previous year appeared in volume 43/3 of the Australian Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research which has been reprinted under the title "*Crown-of-thorns Starfish on the Great Barrier Reef: Reproduction, Recruitment and Hydrodynamics*", C Johnson (ed).

Papers in this proceedings represent projects funded by the Authority through the COTSREC research program over the last three years. During that time Professor John M Swan has acted as Chairman of the Crown-of-Thorns Starfish Research Committee. Professor Swan also chaired the Authority's previous crown-of-thorns starfish advisory committee (COTSARC) from 1985 to 1989. He has been a major influence on the direction and conduct of crown-of-thorns starfish research for about 7 years. It is with deep regret (from all parties involved) that Professor Swan has decided to stand aside from his position because of personal and family commitments. The papers of this proceedings (together with others before and yet to come) stand as testimony to his drive, dedication and global perspective. The following introductory paper demonstrates some of these qualities. Thanks John.

Brian Lassig
Co-ordinator Crown-of-Thorns Starfish Research Program
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority