The 2009 – 2012 triennium has been a productive period for ICOH. At the 2009 Congress in Cape Town, ICOH confirmed the need for strengthening international collaboration in improving the conditions of work, health and safety and well-being at work, and to provide basic occupational health services, especially in developing regions. ICOH has been active in all the elements of research, information, and training and reinforcing best practices in the field of occupational health and safety. The AGM in 2009 approved four priority areas namely:

1) advancing pro-active risk assessment and control of work procedures to emerging issues;
2) expanding occupational health (OH) services to all workers through the implementation of basic occupational health services (BOHS) programmes;
3) developing action-oriented ICOH toolkits (for basic occupational health services implementation); and
4) strengthening the ICOH network for action through scientific committees, National Secretaries, Board committees, task groups and joint working groups.

Aspects which have been addressed for each priority area are outlined below.

1. Advancing risk assessment and control measures
   • Scientific Committee (SC) and related conferences have discussed recent developments in work-related health and safety risks. Assessment of new risks like psychosocial risks, linked to practical control measures has been highlighted, published in some scientific journals, and some SCs are developing guidelines or guidance materials in this regard.
   • The Working groups on Occupational Infectious Agents, Participatory Approaches to OH, the Elimination of Asbestos Related Disease, and the Young Child and Child Labour are currently in the process of preparing guidance material for action-oriented risk management by OH services.
   • A renewed emphasis has been placed on the prevention of serious health risks at work, including the global ban of asbestos and the elimination of asbestos related disease. The SC on Respiratory Disorders has called for prevention of new asbestos cases as well as a compilation of national profiles on secondary/tertiary prevention. The working group on Occupational Infectious Agents developed an ICOH model policy for HIV for small and medium enterprises. A new SC was formed from the work group on Nanotechnology. ICOH contributed to the adoption of the new ILO list of Occupational Disease in 2010.
   • Notable progress in research has been made in developing workplace measures for enhancing the mental health of workers and the prevention of work stress in different settings.
   • The SC on Education and Training was revitalised as the need for up to date education and training materials, including website facilities was recognised.

2. Extending OH Services
   • Extensive reviews have taken place amongst SCs on how to develop and disseminate effective health services to various industries. The working group on Professional Curricula has made online training material available at www.workershealtheducation.org.
   • ICOH in collaboration with WHO and ILO have conducted joint efforts on the prevention of occupational- and work-related disease and injuries for BOHS services.
   • In collaboration with WHO, ICOH has developed guidelines, training of trainers and supporting pilot projects for BOHS. Country-wide programmes for BOHS have been supported through policy advice, guidance materials, and implementation in China, Thailand, Vietnam and the Balkan areas.

3. Development of ICOH – toolkits
   • ICOH and the International Ergonomics Association jointly publish Ergonomic Guidelines for developing countries in 2010.
   • Through ILO projects and the WHO Collaborating Centre network, ICOH has contributed to the development and guidance and training tools for BOHS in small and medium enterprises.

4. Review of Code of Ethics
   • Following discussions at the midterm meeting in (Milan, 9 Feb 2011), a special effort was made to review the ICOH Code of Ethics. The review of the existing Code of Ethics for Occupational Healthcare Professionals was initiated by the Ethics and Transparency Committee and referred to the ICOH board for consideration.
   • The United Nations Medical Directors work group agreed to align itself with the ICOH Code of Ethics in 2010.
   • The suggested changes in the text of the Code were relatively extensive, increasing the total length considerably. Currently the editing of the Code text is continuing to be amended and will be presented as a final draft to the Board in the next triennium.

5. Strengthening of ICOH network activities
   • The activities undertaken by ICOH and SC committees reconfirmed the vital importance of the networking functions, which include the constant exchange of research results, and good OH practice, education and training, and information conducted at various levels of ICOH.
• The Activities of National Secretaries were discussed, especially their role in administrative support, which amongst others includes the membership campaigns, the provision of news to their regions, and the facilitation of nominations and election processes.

• The ICOH Secretariat has provided a template for SCs to advertise activities and a number of SCs have developed their own website. The SC Virtual Office includes all the documents relevant to SC activities and scheduled outcomes.

• The Task Group on Information acted as the Editorial Board of the Newsletter, which is available in hard copy, online and now on Twitter.

• All forms and guidelines for SCs have been revised over the past three years and are available on the website for easy access. The rationale was to provide clear guidance to SCs, and to newly appointed Chairs and Secretaries.

• The next ICOH Congress in Seoul is to take place between 31 May – 5 June 2015. Dublin in Ireland won the bid for the 2018 ICOH congress.

Report on ICOH Scientific Committees
• The SCs have worked diligently, collaboratively generating high quality scientific work and products, which is reflected in the final report. Nearly all SCs have arranged at least one conference resulting in over a 100 conferences over the past three years. The number of publications including scientific proceedings for SCs were approximately 115. SCs were engaged in choosing the recommended keynotes and semi-plenary sessions for ICOH 2012. Ten keynote addresses, 30 semi-plenaries, and 120 special sessions were organised, in addition to 500 poster presentations being displayed at the ICOH 2012 conference. The mid-term and final reports of SCs are available from http://www.icohweb.org/scvo/index.asp.

• The sessions organised by the SCs during the past three years demonstrated both depth in content as well as emerging ideas for the future.

Report on SCOHN (SC on Occupational Health Nursing) activities during ICOH 2012
The ICOH congress started on a high note with the welcoming and opening of the ICOH Board and SC meeting on Saturday 17, by Prof. Kogi. The main objectives as outlined earlier were discussed in more detail. This was followed by a breakaway session where the interaction and integration amongst SCs, the current status, progress reports as well as future developments were discussed. The following actions were recommended:
1) Mentoring between SCs through which the more active SCs provide advice and support to those who are less active;
2) The organisation of contacts to become more formalised – currently collaboration occurs on a friendly, informal basis;
3) Better use of the website;
4) Joint sessions of old and new SC officers to be held on 22 March to meet and share information; and
5) Discussion on joint workshops/conferences between different SCs.

We attended the Business Meeting of the SC on Education and Training in OH on Monday afternoon after it was dormant for the past 3 years. Prof. Frank van Dijk was elected as chairperson, with Linda Grainger (now in the UK) as secretary with the hope to see a revitalisation of the committee and its contribution to the larger population of OH professionals.

The South African contingent consisted of SASOHN and SASOM members as well as members from the Chamber of Mines, NIOH, tertiary institutions and the public sector (about 30 people). Most of these delegates contributed either through poster or paper presentations to the ICOH congress and made South Africans proud participants.

SCOHN held two oral sessions on the topic ‘Emerging strategies for OH practice’ which included presentations from Japan, Thailand, South Africa, and South America (Brazil). This was followed by the SCOHN EXCO meeting for discussions on the Business Meeting. SCOHN EXCO also met with a delegation of AAOHN (Catherine Pepler (President), Jeannie Hanna (Secretary), and Kay Campbell (Past President), regarding an invitation to SCOHN to attend the 3–5 May 2014 AAOHN Global Congress in Texas, America. The delegation was requested to put their proposal to the SCOHN Business Meeting, for a decision, which was to be held the next day.

Continued on page 33
Kimberley, Klerksdorp, Mpumalanga, Polokwane, Port Elizabeth, Richards Bay and Witbank, each with their own chairperson and annual programme to host a seminar or plant visit, worthy of Continuing Education Units, two or three times a year. The meetings are open to anyone with an interest in occupational health. Contact the SASOM National Office for more information.

**SASOM ANNUAL CONGRESS – 27-28 JULY 2012**

The Congress programme was published in the previous journal, with the exception of the ‘ICOH Tract’ on Friday 27 July 2012. We can now confirm that the tract is as reflected in the table on page 32.

See the full programme and registration form on the SASOM website at www.sasom.org or contact Jenny Acutt in the SASOM National Office – e-mail: info@sasom.org Tel: +27 (0)12 803 7418.

**ICOH/SCOHN News**

On Wednesday, the SCOHN Special Session took place with two keynote speakers addressing innovative roles, practice and policies in OH, namely Mrs Kay Campbell who addressed the audience on the new role of the OH practitioner in counselling on employee well-being/wellness. Prof. K Kono of Japan addressed the issues around nursing competencies as part of her research project.

The SCOHN Business Meeting was on Wednesday afternoon. Various agenda items of importance were addressed:

- The consolidation of the SCOHN banking accounts into one international account, currently in Denmark. SCOHN agreed to the use of the rest of the funding to be utilised: 1) in setting up the SCOHN website, 2) linked with ILO/WHO with specific reference to competencies in occupational health nursing, training and education.
- The invitation to attend AAOHN in 2014 and SCOHN to conduct a special session was presented to the SCOHN business meeting. The invitation was supported by both the SCOHN EXCO and the Business Meeting.
- The first recipient of the Yukiko Okui Award for the best paper/poster presentation was awarded to Prof. Keiko Kono of Japan.
- The SCOHN reports and history project were completed by Finland and will be archived on DVD.
- The final findings of Dr B Rogers research project to be published, and possibly printed as SCOHN report No 11.
- The status quo in terms of election of office bearers remained for the next three years, all elected for a second term – Louwna Pretorius (Chair), Susan Randolph (Secretary), Maria Ratio (Vice-Chair), Kazuka Nishida (Treasurer), with Dr Bonnie Rogers as ex-officio officer (ICOH Board – SC and Vice President).

On Thursday we attended the function for old and new SC members and enjoyed the gala dinner which signalled the end of the congress with the election of the ICOH board on Friday. Congratulations to Prof. Mary Ross (re-elected) and Claudina Noguira who was elected to the ICOH Board.

*Article compiled by Louwna Pretorius (ICOH/SCOHN Portfolio)*

**0861 SASOHN**

Yes, that is the new telephone number for the SASOHN National Office. Linda Stokes who has diligently manned the office since its inception in 2003 will no longer be the voice that answers your calls. SASOHN wishes to thank Linda for all her hard work in establishing the office. Her contribution has made a significant difference to SASOHN’s visibility. We will all miss her and wish her well in her future endeavours. The office was relocated in April 2012 and it was decided to source a telephone number that would be both easy to remember and would follow us wherever we go. Jenny Pitout, the new office coordinator, will man the office from 09H00 to 14H00 Monday to Friday. Other contact details for the office are:

**Postal address:** Lion House, 20 Roberts Ave, Kensington, 2094

**Physical Address:** Lion House, 20 Roberts Ave, Kensington, 2094

**Fax:** 086 263 8757

**e-mail:** sasohnoffice@mweb.co.za

**Website:** www.sasohn.co.za

*The view from the Conference Centre in Cancún*