

Report from the SAIOH President



Dear SAIOH Members

The months of September and October were a busy part of SAIOH's annual schedule.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR WORKSHOP ON OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE PROVIDERS

SAIOH participated in and contributed to the workshop on "Occupational Health Service Providers" which was organised and hosted by the Department of Labour (DoL) and held on 7 September at the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) Training Centre, at the headquarters of the National Health Laboratory Service (NHLS), in Sandringham, Johannesburg. The workshop was the result of a joint venture between the DoL, and the occupational health sister organisations SASOM, SASOHN and SAIOH. Mr Jaco Pieterse presented on behalf of SAIOH, on the "Role of the Occupational Hygiene Profession and SAIOH in the Prevention of Occupational Disease (*Thy Art and Thy Science*)".

SAIOH ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2016

The highlight of the year was the SAIOH Conference which was held at Blyde Canyon – a Forever Resort – from 26 to 28 October 2016, in the beautiful setting of Graskop, Mpumalanga, and against the awe-inspiring backdrop of the Three Rondavels, along the pristine Panorama Route. The Conference was hosted by the SAIOH Mpumalanga Branch, with the theme of "Caring for our Wellbeing". The Conference was attended by approximately 160 delegates; 37 oral and poster presentations, which included four keynote addresses, were delivered as part of the scientific programme. On Wednesday 26 October, two pre-conference Professional Development Courses (PDCs) were offered: Mr Duane Bester from Gijima presented on Fundamentals in Whole-Body Vibration Assessment and Evaluation; and Dr Tanusha Singh and colleagues from the National Institute for Occupational Health (NIOH) presented on Biological Risk Management. Both PDCs generated much interest and were each attended by approximately 70 delegates.

On Thursday 27 October, the first day of the scientific programme of the conference, Ms Christa de Roubaix, Chair of the SAIOH Mpumalanga Branch and Mr Jaco Pieterse, SAIOH President, officially opened the conference, welcomed the delegates, and chaired the day's sessions.

Mr Richard Spoor of Richard Spoor Inc. Attorneys presented the first keynote address titled "Five years on from the Constitutional Court decision in the matter of Thembikile Mankayi versus AngloGold Ashanti: a reflection on its impact and ramifications". His address offered much legislative food



Natural Wonders – The Blyde Canyon Forever Resort, set against the awe-inspiring backdrop of the Three Rondavels, was the perfect location for the SAIOH Annual Conference 2016

for thought, and covered the Constitutional Court's judgment on whether the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (COIDA) extinguishes the common law right of mine workers to recover damages from their employers, when they have a claim under the Occupational Diseases in Mines and Works Act (ODMWA); along with a brief survey of the silicosis class action litigation, its implications and direction; the response from industry and the State; and his proposal for a better way forward in terms of the protection of mine workers' health and safety and compensation. The first keynote was followed by oral presentation sessions with the sub-themes "Mining" and "Management Systems and Quality".

A SAIOH Professional Certification Mini-Workshop, presented by two members of the SAIOH Professional



Together we Stand – The NIOH was a strong presence at the Conference, as it continued to celebrate 60 years of valuable contributions to Occupational Health, while presenting a PDC on Bio Risk Management. L to R: Mr Thabang Duba, Dr Tanusha Singh, Ms Lufuno Muleba, and Ms Onnicah Mabe



Top Students make North-West University proud – In a first for a SAIOH Conference, a competition was held for student oral and poster presentations. L to R: Ms Claudina Nogueira (SAIOH Council Member), Mr Renier Nortjé (winner of the Best Student Oral Presentation), Mr Jaco Pieterse (SAIOH President), Ms Marelé Keyter (winner of the Best Student Poster Presentation)

Certification Committee (PCC) – Ms Julie Hills and Mr Deon Jansen van Vuuren – was held during the lunch hour.

The second keynote address, titled “Hazardous biological agents: current and future trends” was presented by Dr Tanusha Singh, who emphasised that good occupational health practice needs to be an integral part of infection control, aligned to relevant legislative requirements. Her address was followed by the afternoon oral presentation session with the sub-theme “Organisations in Occupational Health”, wherein representatives of SAIOH and its sister organisations, SASOM and SASOHN, presented on their perspectives for closer collaboration within and between the three anchors of occupational health service provision – occupational medicine, occupational health nursing and occupational hygiene. The newly established “Occupational Hygiene Approved Inspection Authorities Association” was formally introduced to SAIOH conference delegates in the same session.

The second day of the conference, Friday 28 October, kicked off with the third keynote address titled “Solar UV radiation-induced skin cancer as an occupational disease: can international experience inform South Africa?” which was delivered by Dr Caradee Wright of the South African Medical Research Council. Her presentation stressed the fact that outdoor workers are at increased risk of developing skin cancer, and for the latter to be registered as a reportable occupational disease, significant efforts will be required in terms of epidemiology, exposure assessment, and legal management and policy-making. The third keynote address was followed by an oral presentation session sub-themed “Dermal Exposure”, as well as an oral presentation session dedicated to the DoL, as a collaborator and contributor to the SAIOH Conference. The DoL presentations (five oral, one poster) covered the following topics: criteria for the registration of occupational health service providers by the DoL; a



Safety in Numbers – The DoL was a collaborator and contributor to the Conference, putting into action the commitments agreed to in the SAIOH-DoL Memorandum of Understanding. L to R: Ms Nozi Maphoto, Mr Warren Mallon, Ms Bulelwa Huna, Ms Milly Ruiters, Ms Jabu Mhlophe, and Ms Elize Lourens

case study on the benefits of engineering controls; in-house ergonomics programmes and case studies; occupational hygiene stressors in diving activities; and proper control of exposures to chemical agents.

The fourth keynote address, titled “The implementation and management of an effective fatigue management strategy in the workplace” was delivered by Dr André van Jaarsveld of BSS Africa, who highlighted key misconceptions related to fatigue management, and how addressing organisational and employee culture and behavioural practices is crucial to the implementation of a successful strategy to manage fatigue. His address was followed by the last oral presentation session with the sub-theme “Chemical and Physical Stressors”.

SAIOH ACCOLADES GALORE

This year’s conference saw the introduction of a couple of “firsts” for SAIOH conferences: the inclusion of an “Ignite” Session which was termed “Gotsomollo” (*making fire*); as well as a student competition (for both poster and oral presentations).

The “Ignite” session concept originated in the high-technology profession but has spread worldwide, and has been very successfully showcased at events such as the American Industrial Hygiene conferences (AIHce) – the motto being “Enlighten us, but make it quick!” In keeping with the punchy and high-impact format of “Ignite” sessions, the four presenters in this session were each allocated only five minutes to “fan the flames” and bring their points across to the audience, on their choice of “burning issues” in occupational hygiene.

Students from various tertiary institutions were given the opportunity to deliver poster and oral presentations within their respective areas of research in the field of occupational hygiene. Eight student presentations were delivered: three oral papers and five posters; these were adjudicated by a



Thy Art and Thy Science – Ms Christa de Roubaix, Chair of the SAIOH Mpumalanga Branch, thanks Mr Duane Bester (Gijima), following his delivery of a PDC on Fundamentals in Whole-Body Vibration Assessment and Evaluation



Legal Eagle and Eager Beavers – Mr Richard Spoor answers questions from the engaged audience, following his keynote address on compensation for mine workers and the silicosis class action litigation, while the SAIOH President, Mr Jaco Pieterse, looks on

panel of eight judges. The award for best student poster presentation went to Ms Marelé Keyter, from North-West University (Potchefstroom Campus) for her research topic “Particle size and metal composition of gouging and lancing fumes”. Mr Renier Nortjé, from the same university, won the award for best student oral presentation for his research topic “Characterization of nickel in platinum refining process dust”.

At the SAIOH AGM, which was held on Thursday evening, 27 October, SAIOH members were acknowledged and congratulated for their valuable contributions to the occupational hygiene profession.

The following SAIOH awards were bestowed:

- Top Author – Occupational Hygiene Article for the Year 2015 – Dr Anja Franken (North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus) for her publication: **Franken A, Eloff FC, Du Plessis J, Badenhorst CJ, Du Plessis JL. In vitro permeation of platinum through African and Caucasian skin. Toxicology Letters. 2015; 232:566-572.**
 - Occupational Hygienist for the Year 2015 – Mr Kevin Renton (newly retired from the NIOH)
 - Vocational Education and Training Student for the Year 2015 – Mr Mark Harrison (Occupational Hygiene Monitoring Services)
 - Tertiary Student for the Year 2015 – Ms Monica Young (North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus)
 - Top Achiever Award for the category “Occupational Hygiene Assistant” – Mr Thato Nau (community service work at the Free State Department of Health during 2015)
 - Top Achiever Award for the category “Occupational Hygiene Technologist” – Ms Miriska Gerber (Douglas Manufacturing Ltd, Auckland, New Zealand)
 - Top Achiever Award for the category “Occupational Hygienist” – Ms Zoe Selenati-Dreyer (Anglo American)
- The Conference was officially closed by the SAIOH

President on Friday afternoon 28 October, following the announcement of the SAIOH award winners.

From the SAIOH President, sincere thanks and appreciation are extended to the Conference Organising Committee members responsible for the administrative, logistic and scientific aspects, and for making the SAIOH Annual Conference 2016 a success: Ms Christa de Roubaix and Ms Maryke Steenekamp (Chair and Secretary of the SAIOH Mpumalanga Branch, respectively); Prof Johan du Plessis (SAIOH Council Member: Technical Portfolio); Ms Claudina Nogueira (SAIOH Council Member: Liaison, and Communication and Marketing Portfolios); and Ms Kate Smart (SAIOH Chief Administrative Officer). The abstracts of the conference presentations will be published in the OSHA Journal early in the coming year.

WINDING DOWN FOR THE YEAR

As we reach the end of another stimulating and productive year for SAIOH, there are still a few final matters that need to be addressed. SAIOH will hold its last Council meeting for the year on Thursday 24 November, at which time Mr Jaco Pieterse will hand over the SAIOH presidency to Mr Kenneth Hlungwane (the current SAIOH Vice President), who will officially take up office on 1 January 2017. A SAIOH Strategic Planning Session will be held early in 2017.

We wish all our members a healthy and safe end of year Festive Season with many blessings, and all of the best for the New Year 2017.

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