



Report from SAIOH President and Council Members

MESSAGE FROM THE SAIOH PRESIDENT

It is hard to believe that we are already well into the second half of 2018. SAIOH Council Members continue to work hard to achieve the goals set at the strategic planning session in February this year.

COMPLAINTS AND ETHICS PROCEDURES

Cas Badenhorst, the current Chair of the rebranded SAIOH Complaints and Ethics Committee (CEC), and his subcommittee have worked hard, benchmarking and rewriting the SAIOH complaints and ethics procedures and associated documentation. As our membership grows, the possibility of complaints and the need for investigations will increase. Hence, it is important that SAIOH has a workable, effective, fair and transparent system to enable this to occur timeously and within legal frameworks. The new procedures are currently undergoing legal evaluation; we expect a better understanding of the application in this regard shortly.

As part of this project, and taking into consideration other aspects affecting our ability to investigate certain types of complaints (especially the SANS 17020 Accreditation System and the Department of Labour's (DoL) recognition of Approved Inspection Authorities (AIA)), the CEC met with representatives of the Association for Occupational Hygiene AIAs (OHAIA) and the DoL to understand loopholes and obstacles better, allowing a single body to perform all types of investigations. The outcome is the potential for joint investigations and sharing of ownership in some instances. We hope that we are not required to trial the new system too soon.

SASOM ANNUAL CONGRESS 2018

In June, I was invited to represent SAIOH at the annual Congress of The South African Society of Occupational Medicine (SASOM). It was wonderful to present the history and lessons learned for our profession. In preparing my presentation, 'Failures and opportunities: Health professional impact in improving the standard of asbestos fibre analysis and service levels in South Africa', I was able to truly understand how far we have come in the past few years, with many thanks to our Past Presidents and Council Members, who each added value and support. Our South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) standing and the international accreditation of our assessment system are examples of improvement in, and recognition of, our profession. The substantial increase in the numbers of registered members supports the success of the work done by these individuals.

BRANCHES AND DISCUSSION GROUPS

One of our strategic goals for 2018 is the continued support and expansion of local branches and discussion groups. It is important that SAIOH is able to deliver to all members, and the best way to do this is by holding local meetings where information and expertise

can be shared more easily. This has certainly been an exciting time and we are proud to report that there have been 11 branch and discussion group meetings held throughout South Africa since May 2018. A further 12 are planned for the next few months.

Not only have the meetings been held but, in most cases, we have ensured that Council or Professional Certification Committee (PCC) Members have attended and presented talks about SAIOH and the PCC, as well as been able to answer questions posed by members. If you are keen to find out more about the branches in your region, please contact Tracy Mphaphuli, the administrator at the SAIOH Office, for more information.

I was fortunate to be involved in a half-day workshop held by the SAIOH KwaZulu-Natal branch in June 2018. Sean Chester, the PCC Chair, and I spoke about preparing for SAIOH Assessments. The session was very interactive and well-supported and the feedback was extremely positive. We will continue to grow our branches and support the meetings where required.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) AUDIT

We are proud to announce that our 2018 CPD audit is nearing completion and at last we have a good procedure for this important annual process, as required by both SAQA and international auditors. To those members who provided the required information, we would like to express our gratitude for your responses and understanding as we worked through the process. We hope to have the final results of the audit shortly and to be able to report on the outcome at the Annual General Meeting in October.

SAIOH ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018 – CHAMPAGNE SPORTS RESORT, CENTRAL DRAKENSBERG

Planning and finalisation of the programme, and the logistics for our Annual Conference (23 to 26 October 2018), are progressing well. The programme was finalised in mid-August and presenters were advised of their successful submissions. The programme is very exciting with many excellent presentations scheduled. This will be an educational and informative conference and attendees will gain much knowledge and learn new concepts. We take this opportunity to remind all our members to register for the conference and to book their accommodation early, as it is anticipated that the block booking afforded to SAIOH at the Champagne Sports Resort will fill up very fast. Please access the SAIOH website for information: <https://www.saioh.co.za/page/SAIOHConference18>.

We are thrilled to confirm that the entertainment at our Gala Dinner will be provided by the world-renowned Drakensberg Boys Choir, fresh from their victory at the World Choir Games. This is an 'once in a lifetime' opportunity, not to be missed.

On a final note, and thinking about our branch meetings,



workshops and the Conference, I was reminded of a famous statement made by the late John F Kennedy, the 35th President of the United States: 'Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country'. It would be wonderful if we could all follow this adage and think how we can individually make SAIOH better. If each of us, whilst listening to expert presenters, writes down a question and model answer, based on the topic of interest, and submits it to the SAIOH PCC for consideration for the assessment database, we will substantially improve and

increase the number of questions available for selection in our written papers. This will ensure continued inclusion of new and up-to-date subjects and material. The added bonus is that you will earn precious CPD points as well.

Keep healthy and well and I look forward to seeing many of you at the Conference at the end of October.

Julie Hills
SAIOH President 2018

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH IN COLOMBIA IS ALIVE AND WELL: LESSONS FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA

Every year, at the end of October, the 'Occupational and Environmental Health Corporation', an entity comprising four Colombian academic and scientific societies, hosts the '*Semana de la Salud Ocupacional*' or 'Occupational Health Week', in Medellín, Colombia. The four contributing societies are:

- Colombian Society of Occupational Medicine, Antioquia Chapter
- Colombian Society of Ergonomics, Antioquia Chapter
- Colombian Association of Occupational Hygiene (ACHO)
- Colombian Association of Integral Safety (ASASI)

This year will see the 24th 'Occupational Health Week' being hosted at the Hotel Intercontinental from 30 October to 2 November 2018. The theme is 'Safety and Health at Work with Meaning: A Global Approach'.

It is remarkable to see different societies in Colombia representing medicine, occupational hygiene, safety, and ergonomics collaborating every year to run this highly successful and well-attended event, with over 2 000 participants from across the region and the globe. Exhibitors from around the world use this enabling and collaborative event to advertise their products and services in a well-organised events centre and exhibition hall. Many seasoned occupational health professionals, representing various disciplines, are invited to deliver papers at the event. Countries represented include Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Poland, Venezuela and the United States.

In 2017, the International Occupational Hygiene Association (IOHA) held its Annual General and Board Meetings at the same venue, immediately before the start of the 'Occupational Health Week'.

This collaborative event runs from a Tuesday to a Friday, starting with a plenary session. Oral presentations and poster sessions are scheduled throughout the week, which culminates in a Gala Dinner on the Friday evening to thank all presenters and participants for their contributions and presence. The heads of all four of the host associations deliver thank you addresses at the Dinner.

Medellín, as a city, holds many delights for visitors, including fine dining and friendly people. The Museum of Antioquia (see: <http://www.museodeantioquia.co/>) provides insight into the famous artist and Medellín native, Fernando Botero. Once

exposed to Botero's artwork, one is sure to recognise it again, anywhere in the world, due to its distinctive and unique form and character (see: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fernando_Botero). Should one wish to venture outside Medellín city, the Arvi Park is highly recommended and can be reached either by road or cable car (see: <https://parquearvi.org/en/>).

Developing countries with their own occupational health and safety associations can learn a great deal from the Colombians, in terms of how to achieve successful and sustainable collaboration amongst sister organisations and the hosting of joint conferences, for mutual benefit.

For more information on the 24th 'Occupational Health Week', please access: <https://www.semanadelasaludocupacional.com.co/>

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Exhibition Centre: Guitar player entertaining delegates at the Medellín 'Occupational Health Week'

Photograph: Peter-John (Jakes) Jacobs