



# Report from SAIOH President and Council Members

## MESSAGE FROM THE SAIOH PRESIDENT

2018 was a pivotal year for the Southern African Institute for Occupational Hygiene (SAIOH), with Council delivering strongly on SAIOH's strategic objectives. Integral to these was the launch of the SAIOH Mining Forum at the Annual Conference in October. The main objective of the Mining Forum is for SAIOH representatives to work closely with our mining-related partner organisations to support and develop occupational hygiene practitioners in the mining industry.

The SAIOH branches and discussion groups have grown, with 12 active groups meeting on a regular basis. One of SAIOH's main success stories is the Botswana branch which has grown substantially since its launch a year ago. It aims to become a stand-alone association in the next few years.

Having served on the SAIOH Council for several years, I realise that many of our members are not aware of how we operate. Council Members meet quarterly to develop strategies, review operational requirements, oversee finances and spending, and ensure that SAIOH members are supported. To enable the Council to cope with the substantial workload, each Member is responsible for a specific portfolio. These include policy and planning, ethics, technical, liaison (national and international) with global entities, and sister associations and stakeholders in occupational health, such as the South African Department of Labour (DoL); branches (for the support and development of branches across southern Africa); communication and marketing; and the general management of the office and staff.

A lot of effort goes into managing the SAIOH certification system. In order for our members to be registered in the three professional categories, viz. registered occupational hygiene assistant (ROHA), registered occupational hygiene technologist (ROHT), and registered occupational hygienist (ROH), SAIOH has a Professional Certification Committee (PCC) that certifies the competence of members through written and oral assessments. The PCC meets three times a year to set examination papers, coordinate and run oral assessments, and mark the written papers. All Council and PCC Members are volunteers.

We look forward to 2019 and thank all the Council Members who contribute so much time and effort to the implementation of SAIOH strategies and objectives. A big 'thank you' to Julie Hills for presiding over Council so effectively in 2018. You have left big shoes to fill. We do, however, recognise that you will continue to play an important role in Council as Immediate Past President, and we appreciate your continued support and guidance.

*Celia Keet*  
SAIOH President 2019

## REVIEW OF THE DRAFT REGULATIONS FOR HAZARDOUS CHEMICAL AGENTS

SAIOH representatives, Julie Hills, Garth Hunter and Alan Hanley, met with Neels Nortje (CEO of the South African Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, SaioSh) and Neil Enslin (Master Builders Association) to prepare a consolidated response to the DoL's call for comment on Phase 1 of the proposed Regulations for Hazardous Chemical Agents (RHCA).

SAIOH would like to thank members who submitted comments and suggestions to be included in the consolidated response.

## SAIOH ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018

The SAIOH Annual Conference, held from 23 to 26 October at the Champagne Sports Resort in the central Drakensberg, was hosted by the SAIOH KwaZulu-Natal branch. The conference theme was 'Raising the bar in occupational hygiene – informed control reduces worker exposures', and the presenters did not disappoint. The quality and content of the presentations throughout the programme were of a very high standard. The programme was multi-layered with a selection of professional development courses (PDCs), the launch of the SAIOH Mining Forum, a breakfast meeting for SAIOH Branch Chairs, the SAIOH Annual General Meeting (AGM), and a scientific conference taking place during the four days. SAIOH members and guests showed their support and endorsement of the proceedings, with conference attendance being much higher than in recent years.

## PRE-CONFERENCE PDCS

SAIOH was fortunate to have secured the availability of three international experts who each presented a two-day pre-conference PDC.

The first PDC, 'Testing the performance of local exhaust ventilation (LEV) systems to achieve adequate control of employee exposures', was facilitated by Mr Adrian Sims, Managing Director of Vent-Tech Ltd, Bristol (UK). The PDC was outstanding in terms of its practical application, and it was delivered by an expert with a visible passion for ventilation. What set it apart from the other PDCs is that Mr Sims focused on his own professional experience during the presentation. Having designed numerous LEV systems over the years, he understands the opportunities and challenges of designing these systems. Although the PDC focused on the assessment of LEV systems, it wasn't all about 'getting a flow rate'. On the contrary, Mr Sims encouraged the art and science of looking for clues as to how well the systems work, such as dust or mist deposition, the use of a Tyndall lamp, and how to generate



**Peter-John (Jakes) Jacobs (SAIOH Council member and Past President) presented a gift on behalf of SAIOH, to Mr Aymen Jemni from Barcelona, Spain (left), after his PDC delivery, as a token of appreciation for his willingness to participate in the SAIOH Annual Conference. Mr Jemni, a technical expert on EMFs, also presented a keynote address in the scientific conference programme**

*Photographs (published in print and online for this report):  
Norman Khoza – SAIOH Council member 2019: Branches Portfolio  
Julie Hills – SAIOH Immediate Past President 2019  
Deon Jansen van Vuuren – SAIOH Council member 2019 and  
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different amounts of smoke, as required for the testing. If SAIOH members are presented with the opportunity of attending a future course in ventilation presented by Mr Adrian Sims, they would be advised to waste no time in booking a place.

The second PDC, 'Noise control engineering – proven and effective solutions', was presented by Mr Dennis P Driscoll, President and Principal Consultant, Associates in Acoustics, Inc. Denver, Colorado (USA). The reason that this PDC is consistently rated very highly at conferences of the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) is that noise control is a passion for Mr Driscoll. He lives with his wife's significant hearing loss from an accident, and suffers from a degree of hearing loss himself. His understanding of the impact of hearing loss and his desire to make a difference to the audience's awareness of noise was evident in the delivery of his PDC, where Mr Driscoll freely shared his knowledge and personal experiences, as well as access to a treasure trove of noise control tools. The PDC was informative and of a very high standard, with Mr Driscoll encouraging participants to ask questions related to noise issues in workplaces.

The third PDC, 'Electromagnetic fields (EMFs): measurement and control of human exposure to non-ionising radiation', was facilitated by Mr Aymen Jemni, Application Engineer from Wavecontrol S.L., in Barcelona (Spain). The PDC was run twice (on 23 and 24 October), and was well attended by



**Academic Presence – SAIOH members Daniel Masekameni (left) and Goitsewang Keretsetse, who both lecture at the School of Public Health, University of the Witwatersrand, attended and presented at the conference**

more than 30 SAIOH members over the two days. The PDC included an introduction to non-ionising radiation and EMFs and their health effects on the human body, the best control for exposure to EMFs, information on applicable standards, high-risk work environments, the types of instrumentation and their use in quantifying exposure to EMFs, and a practical EMF sampling demonstration.

Given the high level of interaction from participants, it was clear that occupational hygienists are interested in developing a better understanding of the health risks associated with EMF exposure and how to quantify this risk.

### **SAIOH MINING FORUM LAUNCH**

As part of the SAIOH five-year strategic plan, a decision was taken to form a special Mining Forum within SAIOH during 2018, to focus on and better understand the practice of occupational hygiene in the mining sector. It is envisaged that the Mining Forum will enable SAIOH Council and PCC members to understand better how SAIOH can support members and assess candidates from this sector.

The SAIOH Mining Forum champions from Council, Cas Badenhorst and Brian Mongoma, opened the launch by outlining the aims and objectives of this important forum. The keynote address was given by Dr Brian Davies AM (University of Wollongong, Australia) who spoke on diesel particulate matter (DPM) control strategies in the mining industry. Dr Davies has many years' experience in the mining sector in Australia and his core message was that emissions need to be controlled at source by implementing regular servicing and maintenance of diesel-powered vehicles and machinery.

Invited guest speakers from various mine-related departments and NGOs covered important topics, including dust and DPM exposure statistics, status of health reporting, methods of controlling dust and noise, future education opportunities in occupational hygiene, the use of real time and predictive



monitoring tools, occupational hygiene-based research in the mining industry, and the practice of occupational hygiene in the Botswana mining industry. The presentations were excellent and confirmed that the Forum will be a two-way relationship, as SAIOH's mining partners can certainly add value and teach important lessons to SAIOH members from different industries and sectors. The launch was followed by a social function, including a braai on the terrace, generously sponsored by Dale Kennedy of Ergomax, one of the exhibitor companies at the Conference.

### SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE SESSIONS

The scientific conference started on Thursday 25 October with a keynote address by Dr Sally Spankie of the Institute of Occupational Medicine (IOM) in Scotland, titled 'Working with REACH – over a decade of helping companies to meet their regulatory obligations'. She described how the control of chemical exposures is being driven in the European Union (EU) by the implementation of Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation of Chemicals (REACH), where research and partnerships have aided the development of safety reports for over 20 000 chemicals. These reports help all types of manufacturers and chemical users to work safely with chemicals and to implement best practice control measures.

The first plenary session comprised five presentations related to the control and reduction of worker exposures to chemicals in the work environment. The presenters were able to communicate how control interventions in various situations, from formal work environments to informal workers and transporting of employees, can be achieved. The real understanding for most of the audience was the extent and scope of work and environments where we practise as occupational hygienists, and the reality of typical South African workplaces, where occupational hygiene skills are most required. The chemical session was wrapped up by an excellent keynote address by Mr Adrian Sims, titled 'Testing of LEV systems: status and practice in the UK'. He highlighted the need for common sense and emphasised that we should not rely solely on measurement data to understand the effectiveness of LEV systems.

The second plenary session covered control scenarios related to various physical stressors, including noise, the effectiveness of hearing conservation programmes, and behavioural safety as a control measure. Mr Dennis P Driscoll gave an impressive keynote address titled 'Hearing loss prevention: what are the barriers and what does it take to succeed?' As in his PDC session, Mr Driscoll was able to demonstrate practical and common sense approaches to achieving control of noise.

The last session of the day included presentations by representatives of SAIOH sister organisations in occupational health. Prof Daan J Kocks, Chair of The South African Society of Occupational Medicine (SASOM), presented the new requirements and proposed accreditation system for occupational health service providers in South Africa, and Ms Susanne Martinuzzi, representing the South African Society

of Occupational Health Nursing Practitioners (SASOHN), provided a practical example of how good controls aided in the decrease of biological lead levels at a lead nitrate plant in South Africa. The SAIOH AGM followed the final session.

The SAIOH gala dinner and awards evening was the social highlight of the conference, complemented by a superb performance by the world-renowned Drakensberg Boys Choir, a truly once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for conference participants.

The second day of the conference, Friday 26 October, kicked off with the third plenary session and a keynote address by Dr Brian Davies AM, on learnings from the development, implementation and maintenance of a control strategy for DPM. As in his presentation during the Mining Forum Launch, Dr Davies highlighted the need for common sense approaches and an informed understanding of emission sources in effectively reducing worker exposures to DPM.

The DoL's occupational hygiene specialists discussed the Hazardous Biological Agents Regulations and how the central theme of control drives the protection of workers in this sector. They also addressed the practical control and prohibition of compressed air lines.

A further session identified the difficulty in collecting reproducible and valid welding fume measurements, concluding that, whilst the occupational hygienist can spend much time and resources trying to perfect the science, the time would be best spent controlling the obvious emissions and reducing worker exposures.

The final keynote address, 'Human body exposure to EMFs', was delivered by Mr Aymen Jemni, and was followed by three brief presentations on the role of the occupational hygienist in emergency planning, the measurement and control of exposure to solar radiation, and using statistical measurement data to set the required level of control in a pathology laboratory.

The conference drew to a close with a SAIOH special session dedicated to PCC issues. This turned into a fun and interactive session with various groups of experts and members across all three categories (ROHA, ROHT and ROH) developing assessment scenarios across the full spectrum of skills sets required for a practising occupational hygienist. Those who stayed for this final session did not regret their decision, and the level of participation from the stalwart attendees was exceptional. This was the first time that SAIOH members were chased out of the conference venue to enjoy lunch and depart on their journeys home.

A full set of abstracts with author information is available for download from the SAIOH website, [www.saioh.co.za](http://www.saioh.co.za).

The SAIOH Council and PCC members would like to thank all the members who participated in this venture, and contributed to the success of the Annual Conference. The amount of learning material generated during the four days was phenomenal and will save the PCC many hours in the formulation of, and addition to, their assessment database.



## SAIOH AWARDS FOR 2017

As is normal practice, SAIOH honoured its Annual Award winners at the Gala Dinner. SAIOH congratulates all of the nominees and winners in each category.

Name and Affiliation	Award Winner for 2017
Ms Kirsten Hamilton, Safetech	Top Achiever: Occupational Hygiene Assistant Assessment
Mr Albie Louw, The Safety Network – Africa	Top Achiever: Occupational Hygiene Assistant Assessment
Mr Anton Breedt, ASOH Consulting and Laboratories	Top Achiever: Occupational Hygiene Technologist Assessment
Ms Christia Steynberg, Industricon	Top Achiever: Occupational Hygienist Assessment
Mr Kevin Renton, National Institute for Occupational Health	Occupational Hygienist of the Year
Ms Matshidido Mbenge, Debswana Mines	Student of the Year – Vocational Educational and Training
Mr Stefan Linde, North-West University	Article of the Year: Linde SJL, Franken A, Du Plessis, JL. Occupational respiratory exposure to platinum group metals: a review and recommendations. Chem Res Toxicol. 2017; 30:1778-1790.
Ms Robyn Hyslop, North-West University	Student of the Year: Tertiary Institution



**A Touch of Class – The world-renowned, award-winning Drakensberg Boys Choir provided spectacular entertainment at the SAIOH Gala Dinner and Awards Evening**

### BRANCH CHAIRS BREAKFAST MEETING

The SAIOH Council took advantage of the presence of most of its Branch Chairs and representatives to hold a special planning meeting on Friday morning, before the start of the conference proceedings of the second day. The meeting afforded the opportunity to discuss branch needs and support mechanisms, content ideas and the future development and roll-out of SAIOH branches across the Southern African Development Community (SADC), in line with SAIOH strategic objectives. Projects and responsibilities were allocated to representatives who attended the meeting, and SAIOH hopes to see visible improvements and good alignments for its branches going forward.

### CONFERENCE EXHIBITORS AND SPONSORS

SAIOH Council and members would like to acknowledge the support of the conference exhibitors and sponsors. Without their patronage, the Annual Conference and associated events would not have been possible. We thank AMS Haden, Apex, Aquaticoh, Envirocon, Fellowes Beswick, H.A.S.S., Noise Clipper, Safety and

Allied Products, Schauenburg Systems, SKC, Ultimate Optical, Wavecontrol, Anglo American, BarNel Designs, Biograde, Ergomax, Occupational Hygiene Monitoring Services, Specialist Asbestos Training Services and Vine Promotions.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SAIOH Council would like to thank Naadiya Nadasen, the KwaZulu-Natal branch committee, the SAIOH administration staff, and supporting Council members for organising and contributing to this successful conference. Very positive feedback was received from members, invited guests and exhibitors on the content and quality of the programme, venue and organisation.

### SAIOH 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The SAIOH Annual Conference 2019 will be organised and hosted by the SAIOH North West (Rustenburg) branch in conjunction with the Mining Forum team. The dates and venue will be communicated as soon as these are confirmed; the proposed venue is in the vicinity of the Rustenburg and Hartebeestpoort areas.

Visit [www.occhealth.co.za](http://www.occhealth.co.za) to see more photographs from this event.

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