



WEBSTER NDODANA - NEW PRESIDENT TO LEAD ASSOCIATION THROUGH CHARTER IMPLEMENTATION



Webster Ndodana

The South African Association of Consulting Engineers has recently inaugurated its first African consulting engineer to the Presidency of the Association.

Webster Ndodana takes up the role at a time when the construction sector is in the midst of major transformation with the expected implementation of the Construction Charter set for 2006.

Says Graham Pirie, CEO of the Association: "The draft charter is expected to be finalised in the next few months and will likely be legislated early next year. We could not have had the able assistance of Webster at a better time. The Association will be encouraging our members to begin working towards the targets outlined in the Charter with urgency and I believe that he will play a key role in gaining the confidence and widespread support of

our member firms."

Webster Ndodana will be ably supported by his key office bearers - Mrs Althea Povey, immediate Past President; Cecil Rose, Deputy President and Felix

Fongoqa, Vice President.

The next edition of Inside Track will focus on our new President, his background and his focus for the year ahead.



Executive Committee 2006: Felix Fongoqa, Althea Povey, Webster Ndodana and Cecil Rose.

FIDIC HIGHLIGHTS THAT SA IS NOT ALONE

- ISSUES WE FACE ARE ALSO GLOBAL

One of the key messages to come out of the International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC) annual conference in Beijing, China, was that countries around the world are faced with, and grappling with, many of the same issues which we must deal with in South Africa.

Says Graham Pirie, CEO of the Association: "The increasing regulation with regards the environment, corruption, procurement and ethics is an international phenomena, - all governments worldwide are tackling these issues in much the same way as ours. It is quite frankly not going to go away, we need to learn to adopt these changes and adapt our business practices to fit.



The partners attending FIDIC from left are: Shaun Povey, Alsona Clarke, Martjie Swart and Tush Taute, seen at the Garden of Perfect Splendour.

"The one area where we have not yet been hit as hard by our own government is in the area of Carbon Credits. This is increasingly becoming a way of life for all businesses in Europe and the USA and each must earn these credits through responsible environmental practices in the way they do business.

"This impacts on engineers as we will increasingly have to examine, evaluate and adopt new and innovative methodologies of construction. Environmental impact assessments will increase in importance with regards to projects and increasingly we will be called upon to embrace new materials which do not stress the planet's finite resources."

Other areas which were discussed by speakers and presenters during the conference were ethical behaviour and codes of conduct, controlling corruption, alleviating poverty and improving health through sustainable development, responsible lending and funding, risk management and liability, and procurement in light of quality and cost.

Zhang Sheng of the World

Bank said that worldwide the control of corruption in procurement is high on the list of priorities and that governance issues are an important conditionality of funding.

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MEET KHELANE NDWANDWE - Young Engineer of the Year

The Young Engineer of the Year is Khelane Ndwandwe of Asakheni Consulting. He is a 35 year old graduate of Wits Technikon and Pretoria University who holds a National Diploma in Civil Engineering, a BTech in Structural Engineering and a BSC Hons in Structures from Pretoria University. He is currently completing his Masters Degree in structures at Pretoria University.

As part of his prize, Khelane recently attended the international FIDIC conference in Beijing, China, with a delegation of South African consulting engineers representing some of the foremost consulting firms in this country. This is the first time in his life that he has traveled outside South Africa and as he explains to us it was an all round unforgettable experience.

Says Khelane: "From the 4th to the 7th of September, I attended the FIDIC Conference in Beijing, China. It was the largest conference I have ever attended.

"In between the workshops, forums, training programmes and talks there were banquets and tours. My most memorable tour was to

the Forbidden City. Situated only 3km from our hotel, I managed to lose myself in the Forbidden City. From then on I was known as 'the Zulu guy who came to China only to experience a forbidden walk for he got lost in a Forbidden City!'"

Khelane reports that during the Young Professional Open Forum, the Chinese YPs were arguing that a YP must be between the ages of 30 to 45 as graduates younger than this are still considered wet behind the ears. He says this viewpoint was not welcomed by representatives from First World countries, as many of them were younger than 30 years.

"Disappointingly, countries from Africa, except SA, were not represented at YP level. The majority of participating young professionals were from countries like Australia, Japan, Canada, UK, and China. We have much to do to promote the concept of YP Forums with our African counterparts.

"I made a presentation on the formation of SAACE's YPF and some of our activities, which caught the attention of delegates and showed that in comparison, our YPF

is doing well."

Khelane's participation was well received by the YP delegates and he was elected into the FIDIC YP Steering Committee. A tremendous honour for the young engineer.

Besides participating in the conference, Khelane also participated in many of the city tours and he made these visits count.

Says Khelane: "During the tours I spent time comparing the quality of Chinese engineering with our local engineering and I realized that it is similar to ours. The real difference is that engineers in China are almost revered and are treated with utmost respect and this is something which we need to change here."

Khelane was impressed with the transportation systems and with how clean Chinese cities are, and high-lights that Beijing, despite having a population of about 15 million people, is so clean that you can hardly pick up a piece of paper in the street.

"In addition, the Chinese are managing to keep their cities emission free. The transportation system is sound but nothing compared



The Young Engineer of the Year - Khelane Ndwandwe

to what I later experienced in Hong Kong. Hong Kong has a world class airport and transportation system. If you lived there, you really would never need to buy a car!"

Khelane says that most of all, he enjoyed interacting with the YP's and other engineers from different parts of the world.

"It was such an unforgettable experience and I learnt so much, it has opened my eyes and I am grateful to everyone who gave me this opportunity and made the visit such a success. I am particularly indebted to SAACE and Kagiso Trust Investments and thank them for allowing me the honour of being Young Engineer of the Year."

Kagiso Trust sponsors young engineering talent

Kagiso Trust Investment, has sponsored the Young Engineer of the Year for two consecutive years, since the inception of the award.

Says Johnson "JJ" Njeke, Managing Director of the Kagiso Group and co-founder of KTI: "When we were approached by the Association to sponsor the Young Engineer award, we were reluctant to accede to the request. They were, however, persistent and requested an opportunity to present the vision and purpose of

their award. Having listened to the presentation we were persuaded that it was consistent with the ethos of Kagiso Trust Investments (KTI).

"At KTI, we believe that human capital development is one of the critical pillars to support the growth of our economy. Offering our young talent international exposure through the 'Young Engineer International Forum' provides this country with an opportunity to improve its professional skills base. The continuous search for knowledge and

excellence underpins the development of any individual to prosper in his professional career.

"KTI supports the Young Engineer Award because it exposes young engineers to their peers and provides them with an opportunity to learn new experiences and techniques which should help to enrich their professional careers.

"We are privileged to be associated with this initiative."



JJ Njeke, Managing Director of the Kagiso Group and co-founder of KTI.

SAACE MIS SURVEY REVEALS THAT THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR IS BUZZING IN LINE WITH BUSINESS CONFIDENCE

The South African Association of Consulting Engineers bi-annual management information survey (MIS), which is considered as a key indicator in the health and performance of the construction sector, has revealed that the sector is picking up in line with business confidence and that the positive economic climate currently being experienced is the most conducive for this industry than has been experienced in the last 20 years.

This is in line with the presentation made by Rudolf Gouws, leading economist, at The Construction Conference in October at Sun City, who said that South Africa's GDP growth had been falling for a very long time, but since this has been picking up the economy is now in a stronger and a more stable growth phase than it has been for a very, very long time.

The survey which is circulated to members firms of the Association showed that on average the larger firms are expressing greater satisfaction with the fee income earned, and despite the difficulties experienced by smaller firms, they too, expect better times ahead, says Graham Pirie, CEO of the Association.

"Smaller firms are slower in their optimism to the favourable working conditions in the construction sector, as they are finding it more difficult to cope with stringent labour and administrative requirements, black economic empowerment and the effective deployment of human resources.

"It is for this reason, that much of the efforts of the Association as a pioneer in the changing environment are focused on interpreting changing legislation and developing approaches to the application of these changes in business particularly for the smaller firms, which do not

have sufficient resources to handle this themselves."

Says Pirie: "Last year's growth projections in fee income for the first six months of 2005 were exceeded. Firms expected earnings to increase by 5% from the last six months of 2004, compared to an actual reported growth rate (nominal) of 7%. In current prices, fee income (annualised) increased from R4,601-million during the last six months of 2004 to R4,923-million.

"Real fee income (adjusted using the consumer price index), rose 5,9% y/y in the first six months of 2005, compared to an increase of 7,8% in the second half of 2004. This on the back of a real quarterly GDP (at market prices) which increased by 4,8% during the second quarter of 2005, following an increase of 3,5% in the first quarter of 2005.

"Continued strong confidence regarding the future of the industry supports the view that fee income is expected to increase during the next 12 months. Real fee income is expected to increase by 2,9% y/y during the last six months of 2005, compared to the same period last year.

"On a promising note, value added growth by the construction industry surpassed GDP growth yet again, and increased at an annualised growth rate 6,2% in the second quarter, following an increase of 5,1% during the first quarter of 2005."

Gouws agreed that the construction sector has now had sustained growth for the last six years, including this year, in which there will again be rapid growth, the longest continuous period of growth in real value added. He added that construction activity has in fact been running ahead of the growth of the economy.

The MIS reports that the outlook for the economy remains favourable despite warnings of possible interest rate hikes during next year and current working conditions are seemingly favourable.

Says Gouws: "Just about everybody thinks that times are very good, they are optimistic about the outlook whereas previously they had been in doldrums for a very, very long time. Particularly business people view our political situation as being a pretty positive one.

"According to historical figures, the construction industry had a very strong boom phase in the early 1960s, again in the late 60s and early 1970s. But for the decades after that this, the industry was in fact in the doldrums, we were going one way. After inflation, wages and profits were actually declining for a very long time, whereas from 1994 I think a turning point was reached and it is now returning to a phase of strong economic growth."

The positive economic climate currently being experienced is the most conducive for this industry than has been experienced in the last 20 years.

Gouws has stressed that construction activity is driven by fixed investment.

"If the plans announced by government kick in, then this will have at least two positive implications for economic growth. The first is the direct impact on domestic demand. The more important one is that we create better infrastructure which will lower the costs of doing business, facilitate exports and private sector expansion. That is why I am quite optimistic that the long term trend in investment indeed is upwards and that the private business enterprise investment which has already been rising very nicely of late will continue to expand.

"Perhaps then we will have something similar to what we had in the 1960s where growth in gross capital formation will be a major driver of economic growth in the years ahead," says Gouws.

Says Pirie: "The need for qualified engineers has become critical. As many as 83% of the respondents are looking to increase engineering resources, the highest rate since the inception of the SAACE MIS Survey.

"Interestingly, demand for technicians surpassed the need for technologists. The problem to find technical staff is less severe, with only 20% reporting problems, compared to 61% in the previous survey. The real problem remains in finding qualified PDI staff, as all firms reported difficulty in finding engineers, technologists and (to a lesser degree) technicians from a previously disadvantaged background.

"It is clear from the report that the greatest immediate concern is a lack of skills in the industry, irrespective of race or gender, amidst a growing utilization of existing capacity. Firms are subjected to rigid procurement policies and while the industry has succeeded in increasing black participation across all employment categories, increasing black participation at both senior management and professional levels is much harder to achieve, due to the unavailability of experienced black professionals in numbers sufficient to cater for the industry's requirements. The unfortunate reality is that, based on current estimates, experienced black professionals will be in short supply for a number of years to come."

A copy of either the full MIS Report or the extended news release is available at www.saace.co.za.

CONSTRUCTION CONFERENCE A RESOUNDING SUCCESS

The construction industry held an industry-wide conference at Sun City from October 9-11 attended by more than 500 delegates, representing private contracting firms both small and large, consulting engineers, architects, quantity surveyors and valuers. Attendance included substantial representation of black business in this sector, with a number of black contracting and consulting firms, as well as black business associations, being represented.

The theme of the conference was 'A celebration of the construction Charter - opportunity for growth and development'. The Association acknowledges the inclusive role that government played in chairing and facilitating the conference with James Maseko, DG of Public Works and Lydia Bici, Deputy DG of Public Works leading the first and second day's sessions respectively.

The sectoral approach to the conference proved to be a resounding success, providing many networking opportunities and demonstrating clearly that through the process of negotiation around the development of the Construction Charter, the sector has indeed attained greater unity of purpose and a level of agreement between the various parties never before seen in this sector which has been largely frag-

mented for years.

This could not come at a better time - with the industry set to benefit substantially from the building boom and positive economic climate currently being experienced by the industry.

Says Graham Pirie, CEO of the Association, which together with SAFCEC was responsible for organising the conference "This is the most conducive economic climate seen by the industry in more than 20 years and the unity of purpose and approach as developed through the Charter will ensure that we all work together as a team to ensure that our sector is both effective and efficient in its delivery of the infrastructure requirements for the next ten years.

"But more importantly that, in doing so, we as a sector will take cognisance of that fact that black business and participation needs to grow and benefit from this boom as well."

Draft five of the Construction Charter, which has been submitted to the Minister of Public Works for comment, was the cornerstone of the conference and it outlines the sector's agreements on how to proceed with the transformation of the industry and simultaneously promote responsible business behaviour in the sector.

Says Graham: "The various speakers addressed the



contents of the Charter and its impacts on the various constituents represented at the conference. We as an Association will be encouraging our members and their clients to begin working in accordance with the balanced Scorecard as a matter of urgency. The draft is expected to be finalised in the next few months and will likely be legislated early next year."

Says Althea Povey, Immediate Past President of the Association: "I am satisfied with the way in which the delegates responded to the Charter and the level of agreement with its contents that was evidenced. In addition, having reached the end of my term of office this week, it caused me to reflect on my year in office.

"I began the year knowing that a large part of my activi-

ties and focus would be concentrated on the Charter process, but I also made a wish that we would see progress in our industry towards speaking with one voice and thus would improve our interaction and dialogue with government. The positive debates and agreements between the Charter participants, including government, have been heartening, and the consistent call by the construction industry role players, throughout the conference, for unified action, shows me that this wish can indeed be attained.

"I believe that the relationships which have been built up between the parties involved now need to be nurtured with the same energy we would invest in maintaining personal friendships."



From left: Zulch Lotter, chairman of the national liaison committee and Francois Swart, CEO of Bigen and conference speaker.



The launch of National Department of Public Works' National Construction Week July 2006.

KZN NAMED AS BRANCH OF THE YEAR

At the Annual General Meeting of the Association, Graham Pirie, CEO, announced the results of annual branch of the year competition to be the KwaZulu-Natal Branch for the second year running.

Clive Swaisland, branch chair of KwaZulu-Natal accepted the certificate of recognition on behalf of the branch.

Says Graham: "This award is aimed at recognising the efforts of branch chairman and their committees in furthering the interests of the Association amongst members and clients in the region. Since their involvement is voluntary, it is only right that the branch which shows the most commitment is recognised."



Althea Povey hands over the certificate to Clive Swaisland with Graham Pirie looking on.

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FIDIC HIGHLIGHTS THAT SA IS NOT ALONE

In addressing the international consulting engineering delegates, he stressed that consulting engineering is a key element of the delivery process in China, particularly when it comes to capacity building within client bodies in order to improve their business performance - and to do this consulting engineers in China need to adopt new skills.

Says Graham: "The similarity of our situation to that of China is remarkable in this respect. We also face capacity issues, particularly at a local government level. Interestingly, despite the fact that consulting engineering, as a profession in China is relatively new, they have done well to attract numerous candidates and are training thousands of engineers every year. The profession is highly regarded and engineers are recognised as being critical in the rebirth of China.

"The World Bank highlighted quality, capacity building and integrity as being the foundations of sustainable development and it has embarked on an evaluation of consulting engineering services in a number of countries in order to determine the effectiveness of consulting engineers, particularly when price is the main feature of the competitive bidding process. The outcomes of the study are intended to assist the World Bank to be more supportive of consulting engineering and to help the industry to grow in a sustainable manner to be able to meet global infrastructure needs."

Asian Development Bank representative, Jin Liqun, said that members of FIDIC must understand the language of the developing world. He said that skills development is a pressing need in the Asian region in view of the rapid development of these coun-

POVEY HIGHLIGHTS THE NEED TO ROOT OUT ROGUES AND ADDRESS PROCUREMENT ISSUES

In her valedictory address, Althea Povey, outgoing President of the Association appealed to members at the AGM to focus on ethics and procurement in the coming year.

Says Althea: "The highlight of my year has undoubtedly been the visits to the Branches. These visits are, in my opinion, fundamental to the success of the Association, as, it is this grassroots level of interaction with both members and clients that allows the Association to gain insight into the overall state of the industry.

"However, at nearly every branch visit I attended the ethics of our industry was raised. There are clients who perceive that when it comes to tendering, we will cut one another's throats in order to get work. I even had clients

appealing to me to ask our members not to offer bribes to their officials. Now, I know that it is likely that the engineers participating in questionable behaviour may not even be members of the Association, but what I want to stress is that just one or two cases of unethical behaviour smears all of us.

"It is for this reason that I believe that ECSA's mandate to implement compulsory registration and CPD- will help us to root out the rogues in our industry. It is a matter of urgency and the reputation of our industry is at stake."

On procurement, Althea commented that tendering is a way of life, and good or bad, it is with us to stay.

"Perhaps this coming year we will negotiate procurement policies with the same intensity with which we have negotiated the Charter."

tries and economies, as well as due to population pressures. He stressed that there was a need to use engineers from the region to develop the region and that international consultants have a duty to expose local consulting engineers to world best practices.

As such, the bank is working towards regional trade agreements and the sharing of common resources, as well as, working on legal and governance frameworks which will humanise the approach to development and promote engagement of consulting engineering services on the basis of competitive selection.

He further noted that health shocks continue to plague the region and that many of the areas operate along a knife edge in terms of negative environmental impacts. As a result, engineers are faced with the need to embrace sustainable prin-

ciples to reduce continued environmental degradation and ultimately reduce poverty. This has become a business imperative—those that embrace the concept will assume a competitive edge.

Says Graham: "These issues are again top of mind in South Africa. We are also faced with the needs to alleviate poverty and improve health in a sustainable way and so our engineers face the same first and third world dichotomies. We have also had recent health shocks with regard to potable water and need to address this as a matter of urgency.

"With regard to skills development, we also need to attract more candidates to engineering and focus on regional skills enhancement of African engineers."

The next FIDIC conference is in Budapest, Hungary from September 24-27, 2006.

SAACE PIONEERS E-LEARNING IN CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

The South African Association of Consulting Engineers has taken up a contract with Lifelong Learning Solutions, a broadcast and multimedia learning company which will broadcast the Engineering and Construction Channel (ECTV) from February next year, for the broadcast of ten e-learning programmes relating to the built environment and consulting engineering.

This makes the Association the first of the voluntary association to take this road, making them a pioneer in broadcast e-learning and CPD points management. This says Graham Pirie, CEO of the Association, is in line with the Association's desire to be seen as interpreting the environment and pioneering change for its members. "With continuing professional development (CPD) requirements set to kick in for the engineering sector from January 2006, we saw this an opportunity to lower the cost of learning for our members, increase the convenience and assist them with attaining the compulsory CPD points in category one of the Engineering Council of South Africa's (ECSA) CPD policy."

ECSA's policy states that over a five year period, each registered engineer must achieve 25 credits in order to renew their professional registration. This impacts on consulting engineers specifically because if the requirements are not met, professional registration is not renewed. This has serious implications for engineers in private practice, since loss of registration means loss of the right to practice, as in terms of the legislation only registered engineers may offer engineering services.

ECSA's CPD programme has been legislated and becomes effective from 1 January 2006. It outlines some basic conditions such as:

- 25 credits must be achieved



Recording of the first television broadcast to be aired on 1 February 2006.

- over a 5 year period.
- Engineers must achieve a minimum of 3 credits per year
- Each year credits must be obtained in at least two of the three specified categories of activities
- At least 1 credit must be obtained in Category 1 each year
- The other 2 credits can be obtained in any of the other categories

Graham says that in terms of its agreement with LLLS, broadcasters of ECTV, the Association has bought the rights to ten programmes, to be broadcast at a rate of one per month between February and November 2006.

"Each of the programmes will be devoted to a different topic of interest to consulting engineers presented either as a 1-hour workshop or seminar and each will have a CPD component. All engineers in our member firms who pay the e-learning fees, will receive the broadcast at home or in the office at a pre-determined time via their DSTV decoder and satellite dish. This has obvious benefits for engineers who are not based in the major centres and who would normally have to travel to attend workshops and seminars.

"As a bonus to this, immediately after the programme, using either cellphone mes-

saging or via the internet, the engineer can complete a CPD test. Within seconds, he receives a result which verifies that he has viewed the programme, passed the test and been allocated his CPD point."

Says Johan Gerber of LLLS: "Each e-learner also has password protected access to his profile on the website and may at any time log in and view which programmes he has viewed and how many CPD points he has attained. On a regular basis, these records which are maintained on our CPD server platform, will be transferred electronically to ECSA.

"I have been operating this concept of e-learning and CPD points management now for more than 8 years amongst the medical sector, which includes doctors, dentists and veterinarians. So this is proven methodology and an established vehicle for CPD delivery and management.

"We will be launching the separate network ECTV in February with the first programme of the Association and ultimately create a network of the same scale and depth as the medical one, taking in architects, quantity surveyors, construction con-

tractors, mechanical and electrical engineering and others in the built environment.

"Subscription to the service via the e-learning fees is open to anyone who has an interest in keeping up to date with trends, developments, news and continuing education in the broader built and engineering environments. The economies of scale provided by serving an entire sector like this, ensures that all e-learners in that sector have access to all programmes and still pay the same e-learner fee, ultimately reducing the cost per CPD point for individuals."

The question arises, what happens to the Association's School of Consulting Engineering (SCE).

Says Johan van Schalkwyk, manager of the SCE: "As this is an initiative of the School itself, it will remain very much in the picture. As a voluntary association, the Association through the SCE, will be responsible for sourcing the topics and presenters, and assuring the quality of the content in line with CPD requirements. This is to ensure that our members have access to the best quality e-learning programmes suitable for attaining CPD points.

"This e-learning format will be designed to complement the full workshop and seminar programme of the school and will not replace the one day and full day courses currently offered by the School. There will continue to be a need for in-depth training and development and we will continue to offer this to our members in either public venues or in-house at their firms.

"The focus of the e-learning is to assist members to attain the one compulsory point as easily as possible and with as minimal inconvenience as possible."

For more information on ECTV call Johan van Schalkwyk on (011) 463-2022 or visit www.llls.co.za to register online.

APPOINTMENT OF THREE BROKERS A MAJOR BOOST FOR BEPMEDS

The South African Association of Consulting Engineers has recently stepped up its support of the Built Environment Professions Medical Scheme (BEPMEDS) and has voiced its support of the BEPMEDS board in its decision to accredit further broking firms to offer the product.

Says Roelof van Tonder, Manager International Business Development for the Association and BEPMEDS Trustee. "One of the benefits to being a member of the Association, is access to this medical aid scheme which is endorsed by the Association as a quality medical insurance product.

"The Association and the Board of Trustees realised that one of the factors that

prevented faster growth of this closed scheme, was the lack of wider broker participation in promoting the scheme. Some member firms utilise the services of brokers which were not accredited to offer the product and so the broader promotion of the product has been easier said than done. This despite the fact that the scheme offers very cost effective coverage compared to most other open schemes.

"To date, the product has been available through only one broker - Profhealth Benefits Consulting (PBC) based in Pretoria.

"However, the Association has actively supported the BEPMEDS Board of Trustees' decision to accredit three new leading firms of healthcare consultants with immediate

effect.

"Alexander Forbes, Glenrand MIB and NMG have now all been accredited to offer the BEPMEDS product. Although these firms have national representation, the Board is also planning to accredit further local health-care consultants in the regions, which can add significant membership to the scheme.

"This will substantially improve the accessibility of the product for our members."

The scheme's administrators Sovereign Health will be responsible for the accreditation process and will provide broker support services.

PBC will continue in its broking role to existing clients and also assist in the co-ordination of the marketing of the scheme through a liaison role

with the three professional associations - The Association of South African Quantity Surveyors (ASAQS), the South African Association of Consulting Engineers (SAACE) and the South African Institute of Architects (SAIA). However, as the involvement of the new broking firms expand, so the role of PBC will change from broker to marketing co-ordinator and facilitator.

Says Roelof: "We can assure members that PBC will, therefore, continue to service its existing broking clients but on a positive note, those firms which have not yet joined BEPMEDS, may now do so and still retain the services of Alexander Forbes, Glenrand MIB and NMG."

First Annual Association Golf Day

The Association held its first ever golf day at Irene Golf Club on Thursday, 29 September 2005, with a field of 128 players forming 32 four-balls. After the afternoon field, playing in a Betterball Stableford format, were back at the club house, well-known golf personality, Gerhard van Zyl, aka 'Dr Ball' gave a golf exhibition.

Says Roelof van Tonder, manager IBDS: "Since this was a National Liaison Committee initiative, we targeted all member firms, who in turn invited their clients. As

a result, it was focused on private clients and public sector clients.

"We believe that the benefit to the Association is in entrenching relationship between the association and its members, whilst gaining wider market exposure through our members' clients.

"It was a worthwhile opportunity for the Association to network with its members and clients in a relaxed, informal environment."

In total the day attracted 12 sponsors which included: Jeffares & Green, Bigen

Africa, WSP Group, Stewart Scott, RSV, Semane Cons, Brooke Patrick, ASYST Intl, Mega Super Cement, BVI, PDNA, and BEPMED.

The next event will take place on 7 September, this time on a course that offers increased participation.

RESULTS:

Winning Team Zwingli Visser and W Spies from BVI Group. Z Visser also won the Longest Drive, sponsored by BMW on 9th Hole.



Willem Pretorius (GMH/CPP Consulting Engineers), Mavela Dlamini (Johannesburg Roads Agency); Rico Reineke (Ekurhuleni Municipality); George Hattingh (GMH/CPP Consulting Engineers),



Zwingli Visser and W Spies from BVI Group.

SAACE'S 20TH ANNUAL CONSULTANT'S RELAY
The Association recently hosted the 20th Annual SAACE Consultants Relay. This event has been growing in recent years and it is the intention of the organisers to encourage a greater number of built environment professional associations and institutes to participate in this event.

Held at the Fountains Valley Resort in Pretoria this year, the event included 300 teams from consulting engineering firms as well as a number of firms of architects. Seen at the relay are Graham Pirie (SAACE), Egon Wortmann (ASAQS) and Des Linder Trustee and Chairman of (BEPMEDS).



Message from Graham's desk



FEEDBACK FROM DIRECTOR'S MEETING AT FIDIC

This year's FIDIC conference was one of the best attended conferences I have been to. There were more than 1 000 delegates from more than 63 countries, in fact I think this is the best attended event since it was hosted in Cape Town.

As always, while at the conference, I participated in the Directors Meeting, which was again very useful. It is a key opportunity for me to gauge and benchmark our activities against other associations worldwide and I am pleased to be able to say that we are really on a par, if not better in some areas.

What has become apparent through the topics discussed at this forum of association directors from around the world is that encouraging clients to use a system quality based selection as opposed to pure cost based selection is a worldwide problem, it is not only ourselves who are grappling with competitive bidding procedures. I took heart in the fact that we are not alone in this. It seems that in countries like Australia where it has been embraced, it has done much to elevate the profitability of consulting practices.

Another issue which arose

was that of gender; it is becoming increasingly obvious that in the modern age, we need to attract more women to engineering. There are just not sufficient women in our industry to provide us with diversity. And this again is a global problem, not bound to specific cultures or countries. Much has been achieved in some countries, for example in Scandinavian countries through deliberate interventions by government and private sector. Closer to home, Ghana is another success story.

Much of our time in these director's meetings is spent in discussing how to manage the image of our associations and our industry, as well as sharing strategies on how to attract the attention of relevant decision makers. What has come out of this particular forum is that globally the directors have agreed to create a virtual resource library to be housed at FIDIC which will allow all directors to access and share information on a global basis. This I think will really leverage the experiences of other countries and allow all of us to learn from one another's initiatives.

For example, my counterpart in New Zealand has

recently gone through a process of creating a guidance document relating to Scope of Works. This is a direct response to the competitive bidding environment where an adequate Scope of Works becomes essential to a successful outcome.

In another area, we are leading the way; and this is in Risk Management. Dr Hendrik Kirsten, who serves on our Risk Management Committee, has been very involved in formulating a guideline document on Risk Management and we have committed our association to developing a document for use by FIDIC at the international level and which will also be used to formulate a similar guideline for the United Kingdom.

On matters of risk, what has come out of the 9/11 tragedy is that the US engineers are focusing to a greater degree on security. The trend in US design is largely focusing on what they refer to as 'hardening' of infrastructure in order to cater for the increasing concerns about security and make buildings and infrastructure impervious to terrorism activities.

Trends in dispute resolu-

tion, were also discussed and in the UK, adjudication is becoming a more preferred means to dispute resolution than either arbitration or mediation. Their preference for adjudication is due to the fact that it is seen as a speedier means to resolve issues and is substantially more cost effective. As a result, claims in the UK in respect of non-performance and contractual issues have reduced substantially.

Also on the increase in the UK is the concept of partnering or alliancing, where the consultant and the contractor create an alliance and share the risks associated with the project. This of course has implications for the insurance industry which will need to develop new insurance products catering for the special needs of the parties. In conclusion, in my view, our linkage to FIDIC is not just a 'nice to have', it gives us a window on the world and allows us to monitor international trends and global best practice.

The papers presented at the conference itself can be accessed at www.fidic.org.

Editor's note

Dear readers

This is of course our last Inside Track for the year. Looking back on our issues this year, it has been a very busy year, with many new developments, not least of which is the Construction Charter. 2006 looks set to be a busy year indeed and in addition to the increasing amount of work that you will all be dealing with as infrastructure starts going up ahead of the Soccer World Cup, ECSA has also introduced compulsory CPD and so it becomes important for all engineers to take time out of work to brush up on their skills. The Association is trying to make it as easy as possible for all its members to attain the required credits. The School of Consulting Engineering is spearheading this innovation and to ensure its continued success, it requires the participation of as many engineers as possible. Do sign up, it is a cost-effective option for CPD.

Seasons greetings
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CALENDER OF EVENTS

Date	Event	Venue
18 January	Presidential Media Breakfast	Johannesburg
1 February	First Broadcast of 'Engineers in Practice' Topic CPD	ECTV on DSTV
1 March	2nd broadcast of 'Engineers in Practice' Topic QMS	ECTV on DSTV
2-7 April	GAMA Conference	Tanzania
17-19 May	SAPOA Conference	Durban
2 August	SAACE Glenrand MIB Excellence Awards Banquet	Johannesburg
22-30 September	FIDIC Conference	Budapest
10-13 October	IMESA Conference	TBC

MAILING LIST

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