

CORROSION INSTITUTE OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

14 September 2001

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the 27th Annual General Meeting of the Corrosion Institute of Southern Africa. A very special welcome to those members who have travelled a long way to be with us this evening and also to our visitors.

This last year has seen little improvement in the South African economy with a subsequent negative influence on the steel fabrication and corrosion protection industry. On a more positive note, an increasing number of fabricators are becoming involved in the export market, with one of the major fabricators reporting that some 85% of all orders in the past year, were for projects beyond our borders. This of course generates welcome revenue.

This past year has also been a fairly difficult year for the Institute with a continuing apparent lack of interest on the part of many of our members. It was for this reason that Research International, a Market Research company were commissioned to carry out a survey on our behalf. A summary of the results of this survey was published in the March/April edition of our journal Corrosion, Paint and Coatings. A number of issues requiring attention were highlighted. These included amongst others communication with members, access to technical information, directions to solutions and response to queries. Further, the Institute was seen as being too academic, as discriminating on the basis of qualifications and not being ethnically representative.

Not all the findings were negative – it was felt that the Institute treats people well, respects the individual and that the contents, timing and social aspects of the technical meetings are acceptable.

The findings of this survey have allowed the Council to determine a strategy that we believe, will re-align the Institute and enable it to better satisfy the needs of our members. I want to thank Mr Mike Anderson, Mr Duncan Lewis and especially Mr Stuart Folkard (who as you probably know was emigrated to Australia) for their assistance in running this project.

Our website is now fully operational, providing a lot of information regarding the Institute's activities such as the education and training programme, technical meetings, conferences etc. as well as listings of our sustaining members. My thanks to Mr John McEwan and Mr Rob White for facilitating the setting up of the website.

I will now report on the activities for the past year.

Technical Programme

In Gauteng, the programme committee under the Chairmanship of Mr Mike Anderson, did a sterling job in providing a varied and interesting technical programme for the year with subjects ranging from protective coatings and the environment, galvanising, cathodic protection, water treatment and stainless steel metallurgy. Generally the attendance at these meetings has been disappointing. We were sorry to accept Mike's resignation from Council, this being necessitated by pressure of work. Our sincere thanks to Mike for all his hard work.

Our colleagues in Kwa Zulu Natal have continued to maintain their excellent attendance, having hosted eight technical meetings with an average attendance of 33.

In the Western Cape, three technical meetings were held with the attendance being between 30 and 40.

Education

During this part year, Dr Colin Alvey resigned from Council, again due to the pressure of work. We were very sorry to lose him especially in his capacity of Chairman of the Education Committee. Our thanks to Colin for his efforts in maintaining the Institute's focus on education. Prof. Chris Pretorius has taken over this portfolio.

During the past year the Corrosion Engineering Course was run twice, in Gauteng with 24 candidates in June 2001 and 18 candidates in August. Both these courses generated a substantial income. In addition, in Gauteng, we also ran an SAQCC Level 2, Inspectors Course with 7 candidates attending.

Colin also again held the position of SAQCC (Corrosion) for the past year and I would now like to read excerpts from his Annual Report.

During the period July 2000 to July 2001, a total of 33 students qualified as Level 1 Coating Inspectors. Since the inception of this course, a total of 251 Level 1 Inspectors have qualified in South Africa.

During this same period, a total of 8 students qualified as Level 2 Inspectors bringing the total number to 23. A total of 12 students qualified as Painting Supervisors bringing this total to 118, and 49 students qualified as General Heavy Duty Coatings Applicators bringing this total to 79.

There has been no progress on the Cathodic Protection Technicians Certification Scheme.

During 1999 all Level 1 and Level 2 Inspectors were invited to register. The response has unfortunately been very poor with only 4 applications in total having been received. Two registrations have been granted – one Level 1 and one Level 2 inspector.

As from April this year, the Skills Development Levy doubled from 0,5% to 1.0%. However, it would appear that contributing companies have met with little success in receiving the promised refunds for training their staff. This is mainly due to the fact that the training courses have to meet SAQA and NQF requirements, which have yet to be adequately defined.

Committees and Regions

There being absolutely no activity on the part of both the Pipeline Committee and the Coatings Committee, a unanimous decision was taken to dissolve these committees. At any time in the future, should there be sufficient interest, the relevant committee can always be re-established.

The Kwa Zulu Natal Committee have unfortunately suffered the loss by resignation, of 4 of their committee members – earlier in the year Mr Stuart Folkard resigned as he was emigrating and more recently Messrs Michael Brett, Bruce Eagleton and Graham Pole. Our thanks to them for their loyalty and hard work over the past few years. I would like to thank

Mr Malcolm Smith, who filled the roles of Chairman and Secretary, for all his input and to wish Mr Richard Elsass, the incoming Chairman all the best for the coming year.

This last year has, for the Western Cape Region, proved to be more successful in terms of activities and attendance, than last year with the committee Chairman, Mr Roly Maidment attributing this success largely to Mr Craig Stevenson's efforts in setting up an electronic mailing system. I am also sorry to report that Mr Chick Malcolm, who served as Treasurer in this region for 11 years, has resigned from the committee on the grounds of ill health. Our thanks to Chick and our best wishes that he gets well soon. Our thanks also, to Roly for his support and work during this past year, and our best wishes to him for the forthcoming year.

Membership

Our membership currently stands at a total of 328 being comprised as follows :

Sustaining members	99
Honorary members	10
Retires members	31
Fellows members	13
Members	72
Associates	59
Affiliates	44

The membership is down by 10, from last year. This is however the result of the strong stance we have taken with regard to defaulters.

Journal

Industrial Publications have now been publishing our official journal, Corrosion, Paint and Coatings for almost two years. The general consensus is that it continues to maintain a very high standard providing interesting topics and good coverage of general industry events, enhancing the image of the Institute. Our thanks to Gerd Muller and his team for their efforts.

Awards

One of the most important functions of the Institute is to recognise excellence in our Industry and to promote the development of corrosion engineering by means of awards. This year we did not have any suitable candidates for either the Silver Medal or the Industrial Award.

The Institute has recently introduced the Bronze Medal, which is awarded for loyal support and service to the Institute. I am pleased to announce that we will be awarding a Bronze Medal to Mrs. Ami Leeftang, in recognition of her support and hard work for the past number of years, in the organisation of our annual dinner. This is only the second time this medal has been awarded with the first having been presented to Mr Stuart Folkard, prior to his leaving for Australia, as an expression of our gratitude for all his support and hard work, firstly in his capacity as Chairman of the Kwa Zulu Natal region and latterly as Vice President of the Institute Council.

I am also pleased to report that we are awarding the Ivan Ogilvie scholarship this year. The recipient is Mr Allan Scott who is studying fulltime for a Master's Degree at the University of Cape Town.

Social

The regional golf days continue to be very popular providing a relaxed social occasion for our members and of course, to the benefit of well deserving charities. These events do not just happen – they involve a lot of behind-the-scenes effort. Our thanks to Mr Walter Barnett and Mr Geoff Harris who were responsible for arranging the golf day in Gauteng and to Mr Michael Brett and his team for that in Kwa Zulu Natal.

Thanks

In these current economic times, it is appreciated that ever-increasing demands are being made on people's time. I want to thank all the Council members for giving of their valuable time and for their support and hard work during the past two years.

I would also like to thank Walter Barnett, my dear friend and mentor, for his support and for always being there for me. Finally, my special thanks to Beverley van Niekerk, our administrator, for her fortitude, patience, support and hard work.

Meryl Nixon
PRESIDENT
14 September 2001