



Corrosion Institute of Southern Africa President's Report 2019/2020

What a tumultuous time we have experienced since the beginning of my term. It has probably been the most disruptive time that most of us have experienced in our lives with us being forced to rethink social activities, protocols, business practices and hygiene. Most of us are not naturally "anti-social" and I am sure that it has taken much retraining and self-discipline to adhere to the new codes of practices and behaviour patterns that have become the new way of life.

Just 14 months ago for some of us to not shake someone's hand and to cover our faces for most of the time was a thought that never came to mind yet here we are the social engineering project having run its course and everyone's behaviour has been altered in some way or the other. New arrangements for travelling in public transport, for social gathering restrictions, attending church activities and even finding government institutions and other service delivery agencies and private companies closed due to COVID upon arrival has become quite a bearable burden. The power of fear has revealed itself once again.

Enough of the doom and gloom, my tenure also started off with a fairly healthy financial situation as compared to the preceding years thanks to my predecessor's focus on improving income but without an Executive Director, the incumbent who had resigned just prior to the AGM, and with a new financial controller that had to still learn the ropes. Thus plans were afoot to firstly recruit a new Executive Director then hold a strategic planning session and subsequently focus on aspects highlighted in the work session to strengthen the Institute foundation and to begin the building upon that new base. Part of the plan was as executive to mandate the new Executive Director to implement what came out of the strategic plan and of course the population of the professional body, draw up a plan to improve member benefits, drive the marketing plan and grow the number of accredited courses at the disposal of the Institute.



Whilst a temporary acting caretaker general manager was appointed to hold the fort, the critical “rate determining step” necessary to implement the strategic plan was the finding of the correct person to fill the Executive Director position. The first attempt to appoint the new director resulted in drawn out negotiations with the selected candidate after which at the end of January 2020 the offer was withdrawn and a second call for candidates went out in February 2020.

A record total of 28 applications were received however as uncertainty created by the COVID lockdown loomed over us the process was temporarily halted and the applicants’ details were retained until things resolved to allow the crucial appointment.

In the interim, until the appointment of the new Executive Director, Ms Linda Hinrichsen kindly took over the day-to-day management of the Institute acting as the general manager. Just prior to the acceleration of Covid 19 infection, the executive committee agreed on a plan to minimise the risk of infection by our staff and allowed all staff to work remotely from home. To this end Rain contracts were procured to enable the remote working. I thank Linda for her willingness to stand in during that tiresome time.

Due to COVID all annual events such as the golf days, awards dinner, fishing day, council dinners were cancelled including AfriCorr2021 that was essentially moved to 2022 however its continued proceeding will be held online due to the uncertainty surrounding COVID’s possible implications. No contact face to face courses were held under COVID level 5 and 3. Also under COVID lockdown the Executive committee continued to meet online regularly to monitor expenses and the day to day and strategic issues at hand. The executive team, some council members and the staff at CorriSA gave more than what was expected and I thank every member for their commitment and sacrifices. Additionally, outstanding issues such as the unqualified audits from previous years were redone in terms of international auditing standards resulting in them both being qualified. In July the procedure to appoint the new Executive Director recommenced and the short-listed candidates were called in for online interviews. From the 1st September 2020 the successful candidate took up office.



As things stand now, we have several initiatives that are ongoing: -

- Engagement with an SOE (Transnet) to become more involved with the Institute
- Recommence with the professional body process
- Recommence with presenting courses under a strict COVID protocol
- Progress with the new website that incorporates the “Database” that will allow members more freedom to edit some of their own details via the website (provide them greater control over their own data). The beta testing is tentatively scheduled to commence in May 2021
- Tabling of initiatives such as marketing, structure, aim and membership benefits, the relationship with the academia and with other industry bodies and the relationship between CorriSA and the Professional body at the strategic work planning session that will be prioritizes after this AGM so that the Institute can have a longer-term view and plan of its priorities.

I thank all our members for their continued support and I look forward to the Institute developing into the functional, efficient and effective entity that we want it to be.

Greg Combrink
CorriSA President