



One of the requirements of our new SAIA Constitution is that there should be a report from the President to members presented at the conclusion of his term of office. This was deliberately added to ensure the transparency and accountability of the tenure of the President and Board members. I am however more pleased than obliged to present to you my report for my term of office from August 2000 to August 2002.

I had one single burning ambition when I assumed office 2 years ago, and that was to transform this Institute into a credible and respected organisation, one that would enjoy the wholehearted support of its members and the respect of the public.

This is not to suggest that the Institute was not credible before my time, or that it was not a respected organisation. It is to suggest, however, that the changing times required that the Institute be more than what it was. The difficulty came in defining the 'more' and that in itself became the subject of much debate and analysis by the entire Board of Representatives.

The examination began at the beginning – trying to understand the nature of the changes that were taking place in the society in which we lived and worked. What became clear much later was that these changes were not limited to South Africa – although much of how we experience it is – and that architects around the globe were struggling with the same issues.

Societies around the world are changing rapidly; this much is certain. Three powerful forces are driving this change, one of which is the rate of urbanisation. Although not a phenomenon restricted to our time, it is one that has reached the exponential part of the S-curve in our time. Over half the world's population is now urbanised. This has taken some time, but the percentage increase will become staggering from here on as the birth rate begins to grow. According to many experts, urbanisation is a disintegrating force. With the population of the world's cities growing at the staggering rate of 180,000 people daily, much of this effect will be most manifest in emerging and poor countries. It must be remembered that the problem of rural poverty is often linked to the role of cities.

The second force is one that is more unique to our time and that is the phenomenon of globalisation. The world has not yet come to terms with it, although it is trying to define it in terms and agreements. What we do know is that communities have been exposed to the experiences and products of societies from around the globe in an unprecedented manner and this has led to a new trade – tourism.

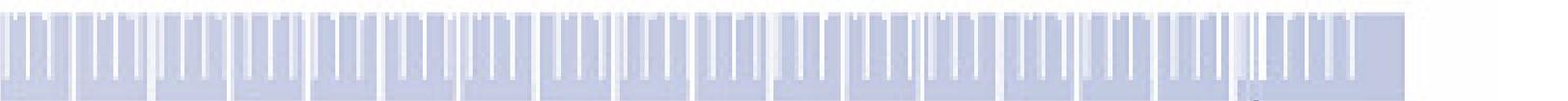
The third phenomenon is the technological explosion that is taking place and that is truly unique to our time. Virtual reality is a reality. The exchange of information, technology, imagery, meaning, even aggression and tragedy, takes place instantaneously and impersonally. You may voyeuristically partake in the conflict of the Middle East from the comfort and distance of your sitting room.

We also now are beginning to understand something else about these three forces: the sum of these three forces has and is destroying the cultural and social traditions of many societies, particularly those most recently exposed. These societies, dismembered from their traditions and flooded by seemingly important choices, struggle about blindly searching for new icons that will give or add meaning to their lives. And whilst the choices seem important, mostly they are as trivial as the choice between Pepsi and Coke.

The ability to choose has been democratised – it is no longer the privilege of royalty alone, or of the Church, or of the nobility, or of the upper classes, or of the learned classes, or even of the working classes. The unemployed also have choices. Given the wide range of choices, the man who has one pound in his pocket is King in the land of the poor.

But something interesting – and positive – has emerged from this flood of choice, and that is the search for quality, for the best, for excellence. Second-rate products no longer cut it. TIME magazine in June 2000 called it the 'design economy' and referred to it as the crossroads where prosperity and technology meet culture and marketing. Design, like music and art, is being democratised. In response, supermarket chains across the States are employing experts – even architects – to advise them on the best range of products to sell. The best has become a virtual commodity.

Cities and states are also logging onto the attraction that excellence holds for tourists: the best architects and engineers are being commissioned to create these new tourist centres or structures of excellence. Singapore, Berlin, Bilbao, Kuala Lumpur, London, Paris, all have commissioned the best architects – not necessarily the most famous – to design icons of excellence. And the world travels vast distances to see them. It is no accident that, like King Zoser of Egypt in 2778 BC, President Mitterand, Chancellor Helmut Kohl, and Prime Minister Blair committed their governments to vast expenditure on new and significant buildings. And like King Zoser's architect, Imhotep who was greatly revered in his time and went on to become deified, the architects of these new pyramids receive knighthoods and are the recipients of the architectural equivalent of the Nobel Peace Prize.



None of the above undermines in any way the valid search for excellence: on the contrary, we should be thankful that in a world where, according to Theodore Sturgeon, “90% of everything is crap”, there is a growing demand for excellence. And so it was no accident that the Board, in their wisdom, adopted a Vision Statement that saw the Institute as the Centre of Architectural Excellence in South Africa. It is our desire that when anyone speaks of excellence in architecture, the Institute and its members should first spring to mind.

All of our strategic thinking was measured against this yardstick. Jan Ras even used it to measure the alacrity with which members responded to his mail shots for the convention. This yardstick has served us well.

The need for credibility and recognition was not founded solely on the ego: we knew that the legislative landscape governing our profession and the construction industry was about to change in a most radical way. We also recognised that the Institute could not be found wanting at this time, either by its members – who were seeking guidance on the myriad of changes impacting on their livelihood – or by the public who had a justifiable expectation that those with expertise and training should not fail them at this time. It was time, in my opinion, for the Institute to emerge as a leader in the construction industry, and no longer a follower, or at worst, a whinger.

I can today, with sincere conviction, state that this Institute has done itself proud. It has done so through the dedicated and committed actions of many individuals who serve on umpteen Boards and sub-committees around the country and who argue passionately for the improvement of the built environment and for the role that architects can play in achieving that objective.

Turning from the general then to the particular, the sheer magnitude of activity undertaken by this Institute never fails to amaze me. Let me highlight a few of these activities.

## 1 STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW

The Board undertook the preparation of a Strategic Plan at the commencement of its term of office and has used this to guide the prioritisation of its activities and the determination of the budget. One of the areas where we have not made much progress is the implementation of the ISO 9001 quality certification. Information relating to the certification process will be made available to all members in the near future. We are indebted to Anton Roodt – who has attained certification – for sharing his experience with us.

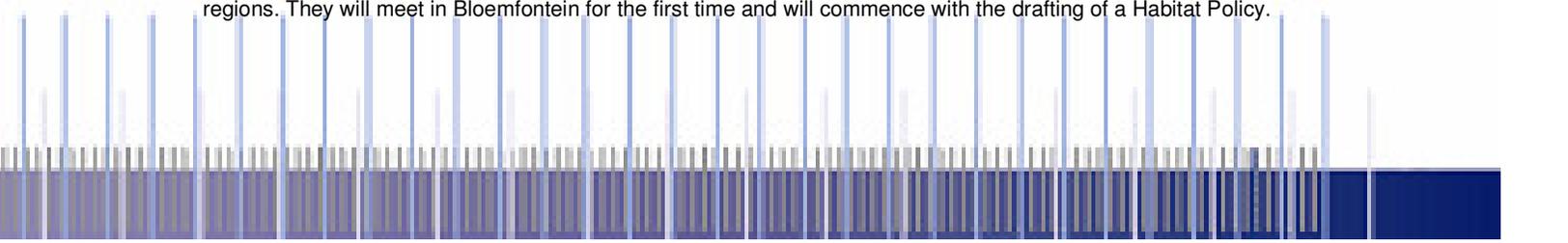
Another objective that we have struggled to meet has been our ability to market our profession and our members. Niël Crafford has established a subcommittee to identify what existing marketing opportunities are being lost to us, and what further steps we can afford to take to achieve our goal. Recent events regarding the publication of our official journal has created new opportunities and I am hopeful that progress can be made in this regard. Nonetheless, some success was had and I refer particularly to the series of architectural programmes flighted on KykNet-TV featuring work of Ora Joubert, Gawie Fagan, Niël Crafford and others.

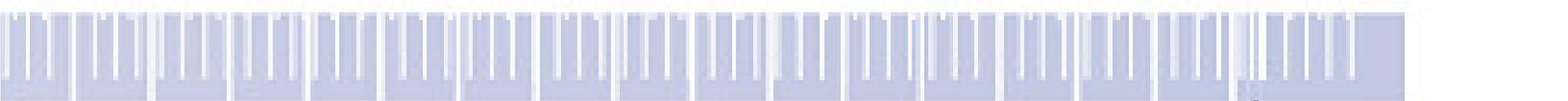
One of the first goals to be implemented was the adoption of a Code of Ethics and Rules of Conduct. The necessary disciplinary procedures were subsequently drafted and the publication thereof is being finalised by the Practice Committee. The Board was *ad idem* that there would be no credibility without the highest level of ethics being established.

In support of this, and to protect the profession from the abusive practice of working at risk, the Board adopted a Risk Work Protocol and supporting documentation is being finalised by the Practice committee. The Board has given Bryan Pringrove the opportunity of getting the support of PROCSA for this initiative, but failing this, we will proceed nonetheless.

## 2 POLICIES

The draft Environment Policy has been circulated for consideration and will be adopted in due course. The draft Empowerment Policy has been put on hold until the report on the BEE Initiative has been released. The Heritage Policy was substantially debated around the country and was subsequently adopted by the Board. The Communications Policy was debated, circulated and adopted. The Institute is amiss in not having declared its views on Human Settlements within SA. Accordingly the Board has agreed to the establishment of a national Habitat Committee with representatives from all the regions. They will meet in Bloemfontein for the first time and will commence with the drafting of a Habitat Policy.





### 3 PUBLICATIONS

The publication of our official Journal has been taken over by Picasso. I am delighted to inform you that the new Journal will, from August of this year, be available for sale at news agencies and that the number to be published will go up from 4 000 to 40 000. This means that our members' work will reach a far wider audience in future.

Work has commenced on this year's SA Digest and the Editorial Panel is Suzanne du Toit, Sally Hugo-Hamman, Robert de Jager, Iain Low, and myself. The Panel is determined to get the magazine to a standard where it can withstand international scrutiny. I am particularly pleased to note that students at architectural schools throughout South Africa increasingly use the Digest as a reference document. I hope that this is equally true of architects and members of the public.

The new relationship with Picasso on the journal has opened up the possibility of developing an e-zine that can both support and enlarge upon the contents of the journal and publicise the work of the Institute. Other publishers, CAR included, have acknowledged this symbiotic relationship and the conclusion is that such undertakings can play a major supportive role one to the other. I am excited by this prospect and look forward to its development in the ensuing year.

### 4 BLOEMFONTEIN CONVENTION

Some of the recipients of the SAIA Awards of Merit and Conservation Awards have been invited to the Convention to talk about their work. In this way we are hoping that members will have a greater insight into what was considered to be work of excellence. The recipients of the PG Group SAIA Award for Excellence will also be announced. The work will, I have no doubt, add substantially to the body of excellence in South African architecture. It remains our conviction that the Sophia Grey Lecture Series continues to be used as a platform for architectural debate and celebration. I am of the opinion that the message of Bloemfontein as the Annual Festival of Architecture in South Africa is beginning to get through.

### 5 SPONSORSHIP

SAIA is pursuing Corporate Membership through a careful process of screening to ensure that only companies who share our ideals of promoting excellence in architecture join. We are happy to report that although this process is slow, we are reaping benefits. To this end we wish to welcome Dulux, the PG Group and Electrolux as Corporate Members. We encourage members to participate in the Colour Awards and other activities organised by these companies.

### 6 ADDITIONAL INSTITUTES

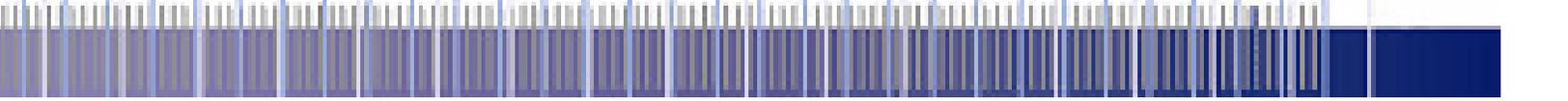
It is the view of the Board that an appropriate structure should be found for closer interaction with architects employed in education, research and the public sector. These groups could deal with the very specific requirements of academics and could also hold design, theory and history courses for members for CPD points. Similarly, Public Sector architects have specific needs outside of those of practicing members. The Public Service is the one service that will most successfully satisfy the needs of disadvantaged communities and so the architects within their service have a crucial role to play to guide expenditure and development in a sustainable way. We hope to reach a suitable solution that will facilitate closer interaction with these colleagues soon.

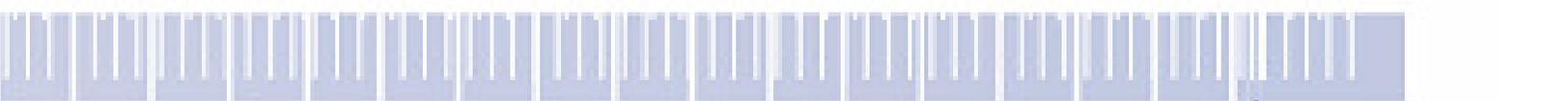
### 7 INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

As I indicated earlier, the international community of architects is also debating what effects the changing social order is going to have on the architectural profession. I shall welcome the opportunity of discussing these issues with our UIA colleagues in Berlin at the end of July. I look forward to participating in the debate with architects drawn from all corners of the world.

I know that members do query what benefit there is to be had in international affiliation: suffice to say, the various accord documents prepared by the UIA on subjects such as The Role of the Architect; Education for Architects; The Role of Voluntary Associations; Host Country Agreements and many others have played a significant and informative role in our debate with SACAP on both the Requirements for Registration, and the Identification of Work subcommittees. I am pleased to advise that all acknowledges the need for South African professionals to be globally competitive and that it is recognised that the UIA Documents provide a benchmark of best practice for the profession. This alone has justified our subscriptions, if such justification were required.

With regard to the Commonwealth Association of Architects, its Council has resolved to appoint the SAIA as a service provider to the Practice, Education and Communication Committees. It would appear as though the Administration of the CAA's Validation Process will be done by the RIBA, a turn of events, which I think, holds promise for both organisations in the longer term.





Regarding the Africa Union of Architects, we are thrilled to announce that our former SAIA President, Brian Johnson, has been elected as the new President of the AUA. This is a rare privilege not only for Brian, but for SAIA and its members as well. I have no doubt that together we will be able to make real progress on a number of issues affecting our profession on this continent.

## **8 REGIONAL INTERESTS**

There seems to be an overwhelming case for us to secure our professional interests in the SADC region. I have mentioned before that other national institutes are proceeding in this way. New Zealand is talking of shutting down its national institute and becoming a chapter of Australia. We need to secure our own territory so that we can benefit from any economic growth in the region. There have already been enquiries from Namibia, Botswana and Swaziland to their joining SAIA. The alternative is to develop a SADC Regional Institute. The Board has agreed to pursue this notion in principle with our neighbouring countries. Some of the benefits that could arise are the signing a Trade-in-Services Agreement with them in terms of already signed agreements between governments. Another benefit would be achieving a uniform Architectural Education Standard for the Region. It should be relatively easy as we are all part of the CAA/RIBA Validation system. Any trade agreement is going to need to have a common and acceptable academic qualification as a prerequisite. A common education protocol will facilitate mutual professional recognition. As with academic qualifications, the various Registration and Institute bodies will have to agree to a common Registration Requirement within SADC countries. The various Accords prepared by the UIA will be of great assistance here.

## **9 CPD**

As the new Act requires re-registration, it is almost certain that practitioners will have to participate in a number of CPD Courses in order to re-register. Accordingly the Board has had discussions with the Heads of Schools to ensure that the content of these courses has relevance to our profession.

## **10 SACAP**

The determination of the Categories of Registration and the Identification of Work has been included into the work of a single subcommittee of which I am proud to be a member. These are, without doubt, two of the most crucial issues facing the profession. I am very keen that our members participate fully in this discussion and, to this end, requested the Regions to debate this. Setting aside the professional issues for the moment, the quality of the built environment can be vastly improved if we get this one right.

The work of the subcommittee has culminated in two documents for further consideration. The first sets out the requirements for registration in each category and the process for gaining recognition in a higher category. The education requirements for registration in each category must still be finalised.

With regard to the second issue, a matrix has been produced which determines identification of work against a horizontal measurement ranging from low site sensitivity to high site sensitivity, and a vertical measurement of complexity ranging from low to high. The matrix is based on the argument that the more complex a building is, and/or the more sensitive the site is, the more skilled the practitioner needs to be.

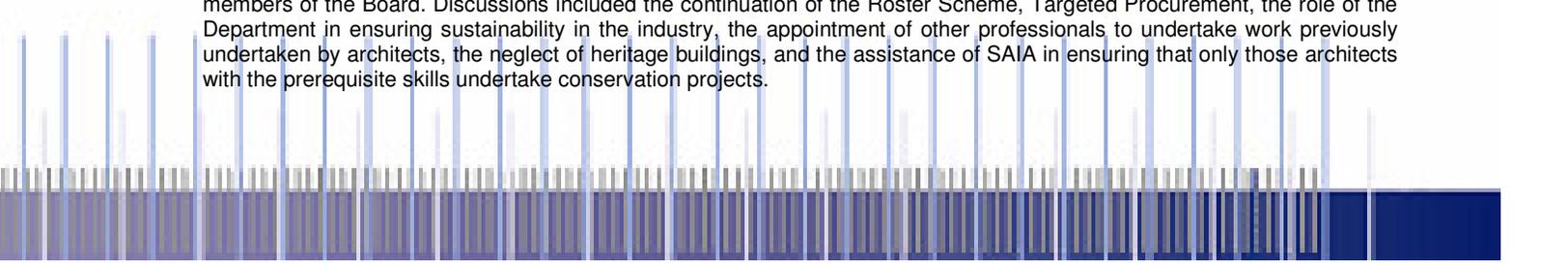
An updated report will be tabled at the convention.

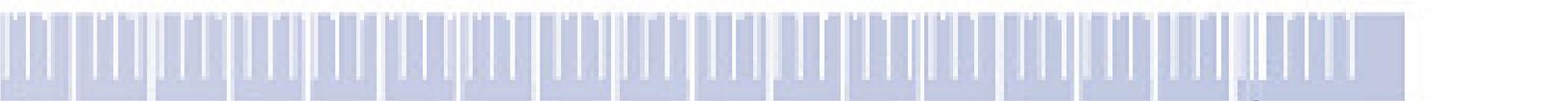
## **11 RULES FOR ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITIONS**

New guidelines, incorporating the requirements of the UIA, were released for comment, and a booklet will be available soon – my thanks to Jan Ras for his sterling efforts. A Guideline Booklet is one way that the Regional Institutes could most usefully engage with their local authorities. It would enable them to establish a co-operative understanding with these tiers of government that could be most helpful in the future.

## **12 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

SAIA remains in contact with the Department and an important meeting was held between senior Department officials and members of the Board. Discussions included the continuation of the Roster Scheme, Targeted Procurement, the role of the Department in ensuring sustainability in the industry, the appointment of other professionals to undertake work previously undertaken by architects, the neglect of heritage buildings, and the assistance of SAIA in ensuring that only those architects with the prerequisite skills undertake conservation projects.





### 13 MINISTRY OF HOUSING

SAIA continues to highlight the poor quality of human settlements being constructed in South Africa. I am indebted to Prof Ambrose Adebayo for his sterling support in this regard and for organising two conferences in Durban where the need for the participation of architects in the provision of housing was stressed.

### 14 MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

The Trade Agreements that exist between South Africa and its regional neighbours have built a solid base from which to pursue Trade In Services Agreements. Time has not allowed us to conclude any agreements on this matter but it remains an important component of our international relationships, particularly if NEPAD is successful.

### 15 SAIA ROME SCHOLARSHIP

The announcement of the recipient for the 2003 Scholarship will be made at the Convention and a report from the present incumbent also given. Financing of this Scholarship remains problematic, the weak Rand/Pound not being of any assistance. Nonetheless, we will continue our efforts to secure sponsorship to make this Scholarship sustainable. Its architectural importance and cultural significance can be seen from reading the excellent History of the Rome Scholarship prepared by Paul Kotze.

### 16 ADP

The past two years have seen the demise of the Alliance of Development Professions, driven in part by the unfolding legislation for the Built Environment. The net result is that members of the various professions no longer share an intimate office for discussing issues of mutual interest, and that the professions do not speak to the Ministries with one voice. The recently held Built Environment Professions Convention held at the Sandton Convention Centre, has highlighted the need for a voluntary association to engage with the recently formed Council for the Built Environment. It is my hope that the various Presidents will meet to take this initiative forward in the interests of the profession and the built environment.

### 17 CIDB

Government's White paper released in 1998 and entitled 'Creating an Enabling Environment for Reconstruction, Growth and Development in the Construction Industry' has led to the establishment of a statutory body known as The Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB). The Institute has been a participant in the establishment of this Board from the outset and wholeheartedly supports this government initiative. Although our nominations to the Board were not successful, we acknowledge the competency of the Board ably led by its Chairman, Brian Bruce, CEO of Murray & Roberts. The appointment of Spencer Hodgson as CEO is welcomed, not least because he is an architect, having trained at the Bauhaus. I am pleased to announce that the CIDB has appointed me to represent SAIA in the Stakeholders Forum.

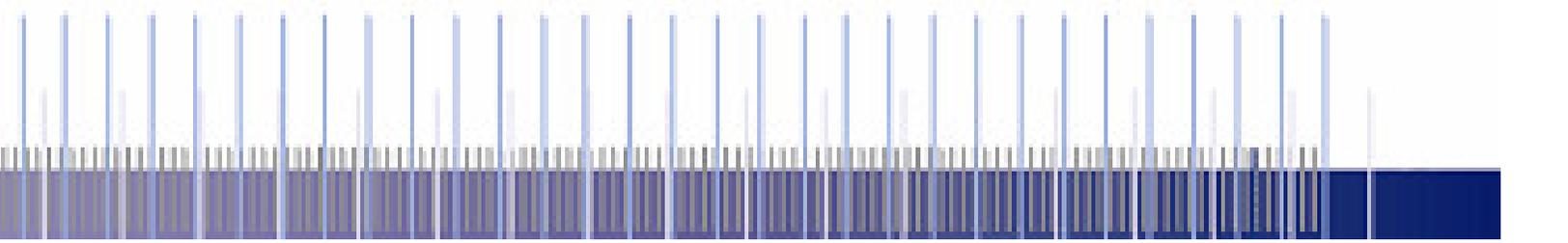
The intent of this initiative is to strengthen the construction industry so that it can play its rightful role as a significant contributor to the nation's economic growth. We shall keep the Regions informed of its work. Regional participation by relating specific experiences to the Board - for forwarding to the CIDB - is vital to this important initiative.

### 18 CBE

A further government initiative has been the establishment of the Council for the Built Environment (CBE). I am particularly pleased that government has recognised the crucial role of the built environment, and I am thrilled that one of our members, Malcolm Campbell, has been appointed as Chairperson. I know that with Malcolm there, a wonderful opportunity exists for SAIA to make a major contribution to this crucial debate.

### 19 SACAP

Here too, it is a wonderful privilege to announce that Malcolm Campbell has also been appointed as President of the South African Council for the Architectural Profession (SACAP). Malcolm is going to have his hands full with the huge challenges that these two Boards present and we not only wish him well, but commit ourselves to assisting him in any way that we can during this vital period.



## 20 CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE DESIGN IN ARCHITECTURE

I was able to make contact with an ex-South African architect, Chris Butters, who is now the Director of an organisation known as NABU – Norwegian Architects for Sustainable Development. They are funded by one of the Norwegian government departments and also generate income by offering courses and papers in sustainable design and environmental best practice. Arising out of our discussions came a proposal, since submitted to the Norwegian Government – for the funding of a similar initiative in South Africa. Although I had hoped that we would be able to make an announcement at this Convention to coincide with the World Summit, we remain hopeful for a positive response.

## 21 SAIA AFFAIRS

The finances of the Institute are more clearly spelled out in the Financial Statements that will be tabled separately at the Convention. Regrettably I must report that we were unable to remain within budget over this term. Trying to balance the funding requirements for a strong Institute with the dire financial realities of our members is no mean feat. It is therefore crucial that we identify additional and new forms of income, which is one of the reasons why we created a corporate membership category. Providing secretariat services to the CAA is another opportunity. It must be born in mind that 25% and 34% respectively of the Institute's income was generated independently of individual membership subscriptions during the 2001 and 2002 financial years. I can assure members that the Board and its Management Committee view fiscal discipline as a prerequisite for a credible Institute and will continue to operate in a manner that recognises the financial sacrifices that members make.

Our membership base remains strong with 62% of all SACAP registered architects having joined SAIA. It is crucial that we improve on this figure and the Board has set itself the task of recruiting those registered architects who are not yet members.

Gold Medals – it has always been my view that we should recognise those members who have made an outstanding contribution to architecture in South Africa during their lifetimes, and not after. Hence it has been my real pleasure to confer the Institutes highest award, the Gold Medal to Bryan Pringrove, Brian Johnson, Rodney Harber, David Jack and Pius Pahl.

### **Practice and Professional Development Committee**

#### ▪ **Stanley H Segal; Chairman**

Over the past two years the committee has continuously advised practitioners on particular problems they have encountered in practice, and significant progress has been made in the preparation of new notes and updated material for inclusion in the SAIA Practice Manual. The committee is currently finalising the supporting documentation of the Risk Work Protocol, and The Code of Ethics and the Procedure for Enquiries related thereto, were made available recently.

Members of the committee represented the Institute on several JBCC committees, the SAIA/SACAP fees committee, the Construction Education & Training Authority, and the PROCSA committee preparing the new Client/Professional Consultant Agreement. There is continuing liaison with the Department of Public Works concerning professional fees and the DPW Roster system.

The CPD - a subcommittee of Practice - has continued to actively promote and run mid-career courses for the architectural profession, which focus largely on practice related problems. Additional short-courses, for example on accessibility, have recently been introduced, and these short sessions will be extended to include additional topics like sustainability and heritage.

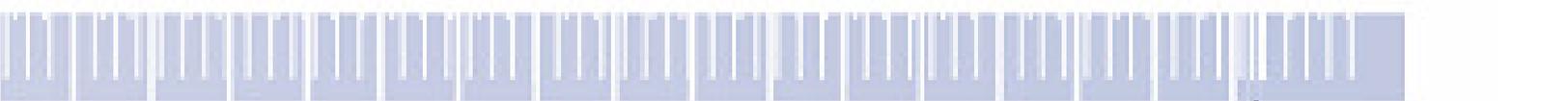
The future work of the Practice Committee is dictated by the members and we rely heavily on input from the Regions in this regard.

### **Heritage Committee**

#### ▪ **Trish Emmett: Chair**

The National Heritage Committee, dormant for a number of years, was reinstated by the Board of Representatives. The first meeting was held in Durban during June 2000. Virtually all the regions were represented, including delegates from ICOMOS and SAHRA. Discussions focussed on the new Heritage Act, Conservation Awards and the need for architectural archives or the establishment of a national archive. All the regional representatives reported on the status of conservation in their regions.

It was subsequently agreed that a National Heritage Policy was required. The second meeting was held on Robben Island during August 2001. This proved to be an inspirational venue and resulted in the drafting of the heritage policy document titled "The Robben Island Heritage Vision". Other items under discussion at the meeting included the need for a database of conservation architects, CPD courses in conservation, a national list of SAIA Merit Award buildings and the usual reports back.



Trish Emmett, as one of the five people making up the work group for the UIA Region 5 (Africa), attended their first Conference for Architectural Heritage held in Alexandria, Egypt during March 2002. She presented a paper titled “Lessons from Robben Island – Conservation and Reconciliation in South Africa”, which traced the areas in South Africa most affected by apartheid, where buildings have been converted to apartheid museums. Architects present at the Conference came from Syria, Palestine, Greece and Russia but no other architects from Africa outside of Egypt. We need to liase with architects throughout Africa regarding heritage. To this end we are investigating a trip to Zanzibar including Stone Town in 2003.

#### **APIGIS: Report on behalf of the Trustees**

##### **▪ Ron Remmers, Managing Trustee**

The scheme has established itself in the market and over the past year showed a net increase of 34 new policies. The Trust continued to share in the income and in accordance with the participatory structure, the Regions received proportional payouts totalling R22 909. We expect similar payouts this year. The Regions have emerged as a valuable marketing channel for the scheme and in order to equip regional secretaries, the Trust decided to contribute towards expenses for a training Workshop on APIGIS to be held in Bloemfontein at the time of the Convention.

We highlight the most notable developments during the past year:

- The previous year’s decision that the Trust would contribute up to 50% of the excess amount payable in the event of a claim was implemented.
- The eligibility criteria were adjusted so that practices where professional technologists, who are members of recognised professional institutes, hold up to 50% equity are accepted onto the scheme.
- While managing to maintain premium rates, it was decided to raise the available minimum cover from R500 000 to R750 000. Although this may impact on the premiums of smaller or low risk firms, the Trustees made this adjustment in order to adequately cover administrative and legal costs associated with a claim.

In accordance with requirements, the Board of Trustees will be increased to 10 this year, and the following matters will be finalised once they are aboard:

- Revising the application form to ascertain a firm’s risk exposure more accurately.
- Providing better and more affordable run-off cover for retired members.

Our thanks go to the present Trustees for their eager participation over the last term. We received excellent service from the scheme managers Marsh (South Africa) Pty Ltd, and appreciate the open door policy of Manwood, the Lloyds underwriter. We are pleased to report that other insurers are matching the affordable rates APIGIS introduced, thereby providing comparable options to members. Lastly our appreciation and thanks to participants who, in giving feedback on the scheme, help us to keep APIGIS dynamic and in touch with the needs of our profession.

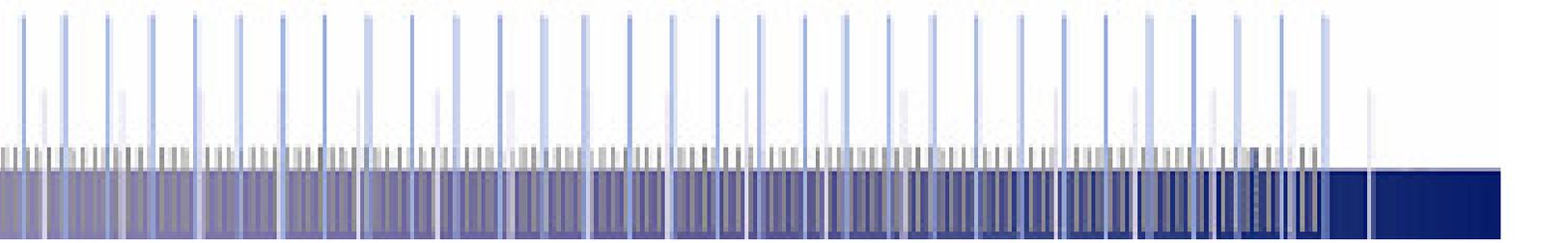
## **22 TRANSFORMATION**

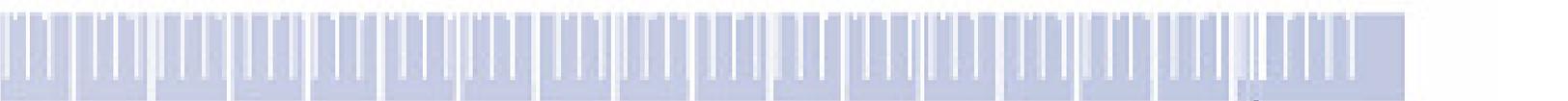
It would be hugely remiss of me not to conclude my report without addressing this important issue. The Institute has always recognised the constitutional right of government to address the imbalances of the past, and to take such steps as are necessary to implement actions that will satisfy this requirement.

The Institute has also argued for the implementation of a procurement system that is fair and that acknowledges the contribution that the profession, as a whole, can make to improve the quality of the built environment to the benefit of all. We have also stressed that in many areas the Department of Public Works is one of the biggest investors in capital works and that professionals operating in these areas are, to a large degree, dependent on this investment. Without a steady flow of work, these practices will close down.

The current roster system is creating many real difficulties and is in urgent need of a critical review. However, there is a greater problem that requires our committed attention and that has to do with a recalcitrant tendency to view colleagues in our profession in terms of them and us. It is time that we cease devising schemes to circumvent equity shareholding – whether it be through the roster system or through shell companies –and get on with the business of ensuring that our practices, at shareholder level, are reflective of our society.

The graduates setting up practices now will, by virtue of their shared experiences at University, probably overcome this problem at the outset. However, current practices would do well to reflect seriously on this need and take a long-term view of the situation.





## 23 PERSONAL THANKS

None of the above would have been possible without the dedicated participation by the many members who serve on various boards and committees on SAIA's behalf. It has been one of the many pleasures of holding this office that so many individuals were prepared to sacrifice their time for the benefit of the profession and the country. I am nervous of listing names for fear of the committing the sin of omission, but I must name Bryan Prisgrove, Stan Segal, Samuel Pauw, and Eugene Barnard as people who have committed an extraordinary amount of time to the Institute. My thanks must also go to the individual members of the Board whose support during my term has been unwavering. I thank also the Regions and the Regional Secretaries for their commitment and assistance whenever called upon. It has been a pleasure working with them. I want to acknowledge the contribution of Jan Ras: in every committee there are those who talk a lot, and there are those who do a lot. Jan does both. His sense of humour has had us in hysterics at times, but when it comes to delivery, Jan quietly goes about making it happen. Any President would look good having a VP like Jan to assist. And then there is Su (or Susara as Jan calls her). Apart from the infernal smoke-break, I could not have had a better Executive Officer than she. Cool, calm, unflappable, strong, resolute, committed – she is all of these things and more. I shall remain seriously indebted to her for a long time.

Lastly, I must thank all the members of SAIA for granting this wonderful opportunity to me. I have had the privilege of occupying many offices in my time, but this one has been a singular pleasure and honour. I trust that I leave the office in better condition than I found it, for the office leaves me a better person than it found me.

