

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2016

Reviewing the year 2016's work, one can see through the successes a strengthening and maturing of the long term strategic plan. The planned core focus of the organisation over the next few years is centred around a number of international events, high quality workshop offerings as well as improving the image of the organisation.

The primary objectives of the organisation are ever the guide of the organisation and are

- Strengthening SACAC's relationship with IFAC;
- Improving co-operation between industry and institutions;
- Developing capacity within the automation industry;
- Providing value for our members.

ACTIVITIES FOR 2016

Having funds available to cover more than day-to-day running expenses, has changed the playing field for SACAC. Indeed SACAC has taken the strategic move of being at the foremost with the international big league players. Some of the activities of the previous year include:

- Sponsoring postgraduate students to attend IFAC conferences;
- Undergraduate Faculty prizes for best control projects;
- Supporting attendance of EXCO meetings by members outside Gauteng;
- Completion of SACAC rebranding exercise along with a modernised website;
- A number of workshops have been run such as the Modern Techniques and software for Process Control Workshop, Observer Based Design Workshop and the Control Systems Day at North West University;
- Winning the bid to host the IFAC MMM 2019 Symposium;
- Preparations for hosting Control Conference for Africa in 2017.

OPERATIONS

Long term goals at top notch level was always going to require the energies of a greater number of our members. From the previous year workshops had been offered outside of the Gauteng region. Taking this further, a strategic move was taken to identify the activities that could both be offered and engage members of organisation. The organisation is indebted to the effort of members especially from the Cape Town region (Robyn Verrinder, Lidia Auret) who have been instrumental in the successes of the year through their participation.

The use of professional secretarial services through Keri and her team at Office Executives has helped to identify and implement effective appropriate modern communication facilities. I have enjoyed being in meetings with individuals sitting across different continents from America to that land down under, Australia, while planning some of the activities listed above. The logistical challenges have been worthwhile and necessary as this has allowed for greater involvement of key role players necessary for our planned long term activities.



FINANCES

Funds have been sourced from IEEE Control Systems Society to support SACAC's role in promoting the profession of automation and control. These funds shall be utilized to fund the travel and accommodation costs for ten authors from various African countries who shall attend Control Conference for Africa 2017. No doubt these funds will assist in hosting a high profile conference. We have offered postgraduate conference sponsorships and undergraduate prizes to help improve our profile as well as support our student members. Funds are also available to sponsor attendance to the IFAC World Congress in Toulouse France in July. A financial report detailing SACAC's day-to-day financial dealings as well as investments and disbursements shall be tabled later.

RELATIONSHIP WITH IFAC

In the last year the final steps have been taken to secure IFAC support for the Control Conference for Africa scheduled for December 7-8th 2017 at Lilies Farm in Johannesburg. This event will bring prestigious speakers to South Africa, whose support has been secured. Paper submission is open and all are encouraged to take part in this event. A key goal of this event would be to facilitate the setting up of IFAC National Member Organisations specifically from the African region. As mentioned before finances have also been secured from IEEE Control Systems Society to assist in the running of this conference. The formal applications through IFAC, IEEE CSS, budgeting, etc. have been a tremendous learning experience for many of our members. Do not miss out in this undoubtedly highest key event on the Control calendar for the year 2017, after the 20th IFAC world congress to be held in Toulouse, France from 9 – 14 July 2017.

Another IFAC Event targeted is the MMM 2019 Symposium championed by Kevin Brooks and Lidia Auret. The bid was submitted at the last MMM symposium in Austria and SACAC was awarded the right to host the MMM 2019 symposium. Immediate Past President Ian Craig shall provide more IFAC related details in his report on IFAC matters.

I leave behind a great team that is energetic, passionate and continues to spearhead the objectives of SACAC. Personally I am grateful for the teamwork that has been the hallmark of the last two years. I have no doubt that the team members will continue to champion the objectives under new leadership. I would have hoped to incorporate more academics from the South African fraternity, but I leave this among other activities to be championed under the incoming management. I am certain that SACAC will continue to flourish. To Kobus Oosthuizen, Derik le Roux, Kevin Brooks and all the EXCO members - the organisation is truly indebted to your passion and dedication. To all members of SACAC - thank you for your continued support and looking forward to the members' support of the plans for the organisation.

Otis Tichatonga Nyandoro
Outgoing President
February 2017
