

# SAIOH news

*As part of our service to members, in this newsletter we provide feedback on the latest developments within the Southern African Institute for Occupational Hygiene (SAIOH). SAIOH exists for its members and is reliant on them to continue to serve this noble profession ethically. Therefore, we invite your inputs and feedback on any matters communicated below.*

## PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

**Naadiya Mundy:** SAIOH President

e-mail: [president@saioh.co.za](mailto:president@saioh.co.za)



**Naadiya Mundy**

Photograph: courtesy of SAIOH

### Work environments: harmonising ethics and occupational hygiene

In the rapidly evolving contemporary work landscape, characterised by technological advancements, globalisation, and evolving work paradigms, fostering a workplace that is both safe and ethically responsible is critical. Honesty, transparency and integrity should be deeply ingrained in organisational policies, decision-making processes, and employee behaviour. These principles promote a positive work culture.

Employees often look up to their leaders as role models; ethical leadership both influences employee behaviour and contributes to increased trust and cohesion within the organisation.

Occupational hygiene professionals play a vital role in the responsible use of technology. Safeguarding data privacy, ensuring fairness in artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms, and promoting responsible digital behaviour are imperative for maintaining ethical standards and employee trust.

A healthy workforce is a productive workforce. Acknowledging the importance of mental health, workplaces must implement strategies to reduce stigma, offer mental health resources, and cultivate a supportive work environment. Addressing stress, anxiety, and other mental health issues is essential for employee wellbeing and organisational productivity.

Remote work has become common since the COVID-19 pandemic. Employers should provide guidance on setting up workspaces, emphasising ergonomics, and encouraging regular breaks to mitigate any potential health risks associated with remote work.

Effectively managing occupational stress in the workplace is important as it can have detrimental effects on employee health, morale, and productivity. Employers should develop stress management programmes, encourage regular breaks, and provide access to stress-relieving activities to mitigate the adverse effects of stress on employee health and wellbeing.

## Further reading

1. Iavicoli S, Valenti A, Gagliardi D, Rantanen J. Ethics and occupational health in the contemporary world of work. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2018; 15(8):1713. doi: 10.3390/ijerph15081713.
2. Evans GS, Kloke H, Jahn S. Review of ethics for occupational hygiene hazard monitoring surveys using sensors. *J Occupational and Environmental Hygiene*, 2023; 20(10):439-451. doi: 10.1080/15459624.2023.2247018.

## NATIONAL COUNCIL FEEDBACK

**Naadiya Mundy:** SAIOH President

e-mail: [president@saioh.co.za](mailto:president@saioh.co.za)

**Deon Jansen van Vuuren:** SAIOH General Manager

e-mail: [deon.jvvuuren@gmail.com](mailto:deon.jvvuuren@gmail.com)

## Strategic plan and objectives

The targets within SAIOH's continuously evolving five-year strategy are consistently being met by our diligent Management Board. A signed-off strategy plan was circulated to all our members and launched at the annual general meeting (AGM) in October.

## Ethics

SAIOH's Memorandum of Incorporation (MoI) is in the concluding stages of approval and was disclosed to SAIOH members during the AGM, where it was accepted.

## SAIOH branch activities

The Western Cape branch hosted its second in-person meeting on 9 June 2023. Johan Coetzé discussed the use and application of Bayesian statistics in occupational hygiene. The Mpumalanga branch convened its second hybrid branch meeting on 11 August 2023 at Seritiza Coal in Middelburg. There were two presentations by personal protective equipment (PPE) providers and one by Trysome, regarding new technology to control indoor air quality (IAQ) in heavy-duty mining vehicle cabins. The KwaZulu-Natal branch hosted its second hybrid meeting on 31 August 2023. Prof. Jerome Lavoue (University of Montreal, Canada) spoke about industrial hygiene statistics and the use of ExpoStats for analysing occupational hygiene data.

## SAIOH Annual Scientific Conference 2023

The hybrid 2023 SAIOH Annual Scientific Conference, which took place from 23 to 26 October this year, paired with the International Occupational Hygiene Association (IOHA) meeting, was a resounding success. A record number of SAIOH members attended, as follows:

- Five Professional Development Courses: 199 attendees (93 in person and 106 online)
- The two-day conference had 203 attendees per day (in total: 300 in person and 106 online)
- A total of 605 attendees (393 in person, and 212 online)

The Gala and awards evening, held under an elegantly decorated marquee, was a night to be remembered. We are pleased to announce that the Botswana Association of Occupational Hygiene (BAOH) will host the 2024 SAIOH Annual Scientific Conference.



Image: courtesy of SAIOH

## International feedback

The SAIOH Professional Certification Committee (PCC) nominated Deon Jansen van Vuuren as the interim caretaker representative on the IOHA Board and the National Accreditation Recognition Committee (NARC). The nomination was approved by the SAIOH Management Board and the IOHA President was informed of this change.

The IOHA Board of Directors held its autumn meeting and AGM in Cape Town, hosted by SAIOH, on 22 October 2023. This coincided with the SAIOH 2023 conference.

### Sad news

PC (Schu) Schutte died on 28 September 2023 after a short illness. Schu was a world-renowned researcher who specialised in heat stress management, acclimatisation, ergonomics, and fatigue management. Schu worked at the Chamber of Mines Research Organisation (COMRO), which later changed its name to the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) MiningTek, until his retirement. Although retired when he took ill, he was still actively involved in occupational hygiene, and assisting SAIOH and the mining industry in these fields of speciality.

## SAIOH Technical Committee feedback

The SAIOH Technical Committee's research, pertaining to the measurement and the analyses of welding fumes, is in limbo. A sub-committee is being formed by SAIOH and the Occupational Hygiene Accredited Inspection Authorities (OH AIA) Association, to develop a position paper on this matter.

Our second technical committee has started developing technical procedures and a SAIOH position paper on heat stress management. A follow-up meeting took place in March 2023 and, on 31 July 2023, Schu Schutte (ex-Miningtek) presented a hybrid workshop on heat stress management. This joint mini conference, held

at the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research's International Conference Centre (CSIR ICC), was attended by 187 SAIOH members – in person and online.

The Council Technical Co-ordinator, Wessel van Wyk, is finalising a position paper on real-time monitoring. As soon as this is approved by a sub-committee of the SAIOH PCC Executive Committee, it will be circulated to all SAIOH members and stakeholders.

## Communications

SAIOH continues to communicate daily with its members and stakeholders, using various platforms.

## FROM THE PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE (PCC)

**Lee Doolan:** SAIOH PCC Administrator

e-mail: [lee@saioh.co.za](mailto:lee@saioh.co.za)

**Deon Jansen van Vuuren:** SAIOH General Manager

e-mail: [deon.jvvuuren@gmail.com](mailto:deon.jvvuuren@gmail.com)

**Corlia Peens:** PCC Chairperson

e-mail: [corlia.peens@sasol.com](mailto:corlia.peens@sasol.com)

## Certification assessments

A summary of results from the March to September 2023 assessments is provided in Table 1.

The third quarter (Q3) PCC written assessments took place on 15 September 2023; virtual oral assessments were conducted from 13 October 2023 and concluded in November 2023.

## PCC assessment improvements


The PCC technical teams continue to revise the PCC oral assessment format and questions in line with the occupational hygiene self-assessment tool; 14 of the 17 occupational hygiene modules have been completed.

Table 1. SAIOH PCC certification assessment results (November 2023)

Certification category	Written assessments (March–September) Q1, Q2, Q3				Oral assessments (March–November) Q1, Q2			
	Assessed	Passed	Failed	Pass rate	Assessed	Passed	Failed	Pass rate
	n	n	n	%	n	n	n	%
OH assistant	138	131	7	94.9	138	131	7	94.9
OH technologist	69	42	27	60.9	52	27	25	51.9
Occupational hygienist	48	29	19	60.4	40	28	12	70.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>79.2</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>80.9</b>

Two PCC technical teams are working in parallel. The first is updating the SAIOH self-assessment tool and revising the PCC oral assessment format, and the second is developing questions and the required answers. Improvements in the assessment format will ensure that the growth in the field of occupational hygiene is covered and that the assessment format and tools are relevant and current. The PCC Chief Examiner is improving the application and written assessment formats.

### Occupational Hygiene Skills Forum (OHSF)

The OHSF was instrumental in coordinating the development of a series of asbestos training courses. The most recent, 'Asbestos Assessments in Buildings, Section 1: Introduction' is now available for use by OHSF-registered training providers. The assessments are administered by SAIOH for a fee per candidate. Please contact Lee Doolan for more information ([lee@saioh.co.za](mailto:lee@saioh.co.za)). 


## SAIOH invited to SASOHN conference

The Southern African Institute for Occupational Hygiene (SAIOH) received an invitation to attend the 42nd South African Society of Occupational Health Nursing Practitioners (SASOHN) Conference, held at the Emperors Palace Convention Centre on 22–24 November 2023.

Karen du Preez, SAIOH Vice-President, attended the full-day conference programme on 23 November 2023.

The theme of the conference was *Orchestrating the best OHS team* and compared the elements of an occupational health and safety (OHS) programme and the stakeholders involved in OHS services, to instruments that form part of a symphony orchestra.

It emphasised the importance of collaboration and team-work to produce the 'symphony' of protecting the health and wellbeing of employees.

Congratulations to SASOHN President Michelle Bester and her team on a successful conference and thank you for inviting SAIOH. 



SAIOH Vice-President, Karen du Preez (right), with SASOHN President, Michelle Bester (left), at the 2023 SASOHN Conference  
Photograph: courtesy of SAIOH

## Occupational & Primary Health

Healthy employees

Successful business

With over 28 years' experience, we provide industry-leading **occupational health solutions** including **medical surveillance** and **primary care** to enhance your business' financial health. We have the expertise to engage and guide your business, to successfully integrate your workplace wellness requirements by making sure of the following:



Risk insights and management are reported



Employees are declared fit for duty through a medical



All occupational health legal requirements are met successfully



Early risk identification and management measures are put in place



Mobile and walk-in clinics, where medical surveillance is provided, are present



Injury-on-duty and COID claims are effectively managed



Chronic conditions are monitored