

SAIOH news

The Southern African Institute for Occupational Hygiene (SAIOH) remains steadfast in its dedication to its members and the ongoing advancement of the occupational hygiene profession. In pursuit of this commitment, we regularly provide updates and share key developments with our community. SAIOH flourishes through the active participation and ethical contributions of its members, whose engagement continues to shape the field. To further strengthen our collective efforts, we welcome and encourage feedback on the topics covered in this edition of the Journal.

SAIOH PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

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Karen du Preez, SAIOH President
Photograph: courtesy of SAIOH

Occupational hygiene in South Africa: from compliance to accountability

South Africa has sharpened its focus on occupational hygiene, embracing a rigorous framework to identify, assess, and control workplace hazards that impacted worker health. At the heart of this initiative lay a structured process, anchored by occupational hygiene surveys, risk assessments, and ongoing monitoring, designed to uncover hazardous conditions and guide corrective action.

SAIOH's Annual Scientific Conference 2025 keynote speakers revealed that the hygiene journey was not just technical – it was legal, strategic, and deeply human. Mr George Khan's keynote address reframed the legal landscape, challenging the myth of employer and hygienist immunity. South African law, long shaped by outdated frameworks, evolved toward strict liability and reverse onus provisions. Occupational hygienists were no longer shielded by proximity to employers; they were accountable to workers, communities, and the law. This shift underscored the importance of competent, certified professionals such as Approved Inspection Authorities (AIAs), whose roles in conducting surveys and verifying controls became more critical than ever.

Dr Vanessa Govender urged hygienists to look beyond measurement, to prevention. Her work on occupational lung diseases (OLDs) in the mining sector revealed that, while all OLDs are preventable, not all are curable. Prevention is, therefore, the highest duty. Her keynote address emphasised the power of high-fidelity data and artificial intelligence- (AI)- driven surveillance models that link exposure, medical outcomes, and workforce records – tools that elevate hygiene to strategic leadership conversations.

Ms Constance Titi Kekana built on this theme, showcasing how real-time monitoring and intelligent control systems have reshaped exposure management. From predictive analytics to ventilation on demand, these innovations support both regulatory compliance and proactive risk reduction. However, gaps remain in technology integration, regulatory readiness, and future skillsets, calling for accelerated progress to achieve zero harm.

Millysind Ebygale Ruiters introduced the newly launched Occupational Health and Safety Strategy of the National Department of Employment and Labour (DEL), aligned with the International Labour Organization's global framework. With its three pillars, viz. strengthening occupational health and safety systems, enhancing coordination, and improving workplace management, the strategy reinforces the occupational hygiene process as a national priority. Its five strategic result areas and commitment to monitoring and evaluation mirror the hygiene framework's emphasis on continuous improvement.

Prof. Stefan Linde reminded us that sampling is not a "one size fits all" process. Whether assessing chemical, noise, skin, or biological exposures, the strategy needs to match the investigation's purpose. His keynote echoed the hygiene framework's call for precision, highlighting how sampling methods, timing, and analysis need to be tailored to yield meaningful, actionable results.

Together, these insights affirmed that occupational hygiene is more than a regulatory obligation; it is an initiative-taking, multi-disciplinary strategy to protect health, ensure accountability, and embed resilience. By integrating legal clarity, data intelligence, and structured processes, South African employers and professionals build safer and smarter workplaces for all.

NATIONAL COUNCIL FEEDBACK

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Governance meetings:

- The SAIOH Management Board convened, online, on 6 November 2025, followed by two special board meetings on 11 and 19 November 2025.
- The annual SAIOH Council meeting took place in a hybrid format on 21 October 2025, during the SAIOH 2025 Conference in Umhlanga.

Key engagements and activities:

- The DEL formally appointed SAIOH's representative to the Noise Technical Committee, in relation to the forthcoming Noise Exposure Regulations (NER).
- In collaboration with Nelson Mandela University, the DEL hosted an in-person workshop on the NER and Physical Agents Regulations (PAR) in Gqeberha on 17 November 2025.



- Several SAIOH management members attended the Occupational Hygiene Approved Inspection Authority Association (OH AIA Assoc.) meeting on 21 November 2025.
- On 18 November 2025, SAIOH President, Karen du Preez, delivered an online presentation to Environmental Health students at Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), introducing them to SAIOH and its role in the profession of occupational hygiene.
- The SAIOH administration team held two internal online staff meetings on 13 October and 19 November 2025.

SAIOH Strategic Plan

SAIOH's five-year strategic plan (2023–2027), led by Jaco Pieterse, continues to guide institutional priorities and is reviewed regularly at Management Board and Council meetings.

SAIOH also participated in the Department of Health's Occupational Health and Safety Operational Planning workshop, on 29 and 30 July 2025 at OR Tambo International Airport, represented by Claudina Nogueira.

Ethics

SAIOH is pleased to share an update on the development of its new ethics course, created in partnership with North-West University (NWU). This initiative forms part of our ongoing commitment to uphold and advance ethical standards within the occupational hygiene profession. The course content has been fully developed and is currently undergoing final quality assurance checks to ensure that it meets SAIOH's rigorous standards for accuracy, relevance, and completeness. The official launch is anticipated for mid-2026. Members will be kept informed as we approach the release date.

In the interim, members whose ethics certification is due for renewal in early 2026 may continue to access the 2024 SAIOH Ethics webinar, presented by Terry McDonald. The presentation remains highly relevant and aligned with current professional ethics frameworks. Please note that the accompanying quiz has been updated to reflect the latest standards and expectations. This dual-track approach ensures that all members have access to credible, up-to-date ethics training, whether renewing certification or preparing for the new course rollout.

SAIOH branch activities: September–November 2025

SAIOH branches across the country have remained active and engaged through a variety of meetings, training initiatives, and conference contributions.

- **Western Cape Branch:** an in-person branch meeting and social activity was held on 21 November 2025, offering members an opportunity to reconnect and discuss regional developments.
- **KwaZulu-Natal Branch:** the KZN branch committee played a pivotal role in supporting the hosting and logistics of the SAIOH 2025 Conference, from 20 to 24 October 2025 in Umhlanga.
- **Gauteng Branch:** the Gauteng branch held its third meeting of the year, online, on 12 September 2025, continuing its commitment to accessible member engagement.
- **North-West Branch:** in collaboration with the NWU Occupational Hygiene and Health Research Initiative (OHHRI), the North-West branch hosted a successful one-day training course on 15 October 2025. The course, titled 'Application of ISO 23875 in Operator Cab Filtration, Pressurization, and Certification', was presented by Jeff Moredock of the International Society of Environmental Enclosure Engineers (ISEEE) at NWU. Mr Moredock also contributed to the SAIOH 2025 Conference

by presenting a four-hour hybrid professional development course (PDC 03) on 21 October, followed by an in-person full-day course (PDC 07) on 24 October.

- **Eastern Cape Branch formation:** efforts to establish an Eastern Cape branch are underway, led by Council Branch Coordinator, Ms Lizette Greeff, and Dr Shaun Ramroop of Nelson Mandela University in Gqeberha.
- **Inactive branches:** the Central (Free State), Northern Cape, and Mpumalanga Branches, and the Zululand Discussion Group remain inactive.

SAIOH 2025 Annual Scientific Conference

The 2025 SAIOH Annual Scientific Conference, hosted in KwaZulu-Natal, was a resounding success, bringing together professionals, thought leaders, and stakeholders from across the occupational hygiene spectrum. Held in a hybrid format at the Coastlands Hotel and Conference Centre in Umhlanga, the event showcased SAIOH's commitment to excellence, innovation, and inclusivity. With a robust programme of keynote addresses, professional development courses, technical sessions, and strategic engagements, the conference advanced best practices and reaffirmed occupational hygiene as a cornerstone of worker health and national resilience. Eight hundred and eleven delegates attended this five-day conference.

SAIOH 2026 Annual Scientific Conference

Development is underway for the SAIOH 2026 Conference, in collaboration with the National Institute for Occupational Health (NIOH). Initial planning meetings have been held with the NIOH Executive Director, Dr Spo Kgalamono.

International Occupational Hygiene Association Board, National Accreditation Recognition Committee, and Occupational Hygiene Training Association feedback

SAIOH remains actively engaged with international partners and initiatives, reinforcing its commitment to global best practices and professional development.

OHTA and IOHA newsletters

The Occupational Hygiene Training Association (OHTA) and the International Occupational Hygiene Association (IOHA) continue to publish regular newsletters. These are shared with all SAIOH members via e-mail and are also available on the SAIOH website: www.saioh.co.za. Members are encouraged to visit the OHTA website, www.ohtatraining.org, for additional resources.

New IOHA President

SAIOH congratulates Mr Matthew Olota, originally from Nigeria and now based in Canada, on his appointment as IOHA President. He is the third African to hold this prestigious position – an inspiring milestone for the continent.

Member achievement: Mark Harrison

We are delighted to recognise the achievement of Mr Mark Harrison of Occupational Hygiene Monitoring Services (OHMS), who has successfully completed the British Occupational Hygiene Society (BOHS) written projects. Mark is now eligible for the final oral assessment and the awarding of the BOHS Diploma in Professional Occupational Hygiene Competency. This internationally respected qualification is acknowledged by the SAIOH Professional Certification Committee (PCC) as meeting the requirements for assessment at the registered occupational hygienist (ROH) level. Mark previously attained technologist

status by completing all six OHTA modules and earning the OHTA ICertOH certificate. Congratulations, Mark, on this outstanding accomplishment!

Representation on IOHA

Corlia Peens continues to represent SAIOH on the IOHA Board and the National Accreditation Recognition (NAR) Committee, providing regular feedback to the Executive Committee (ExCo) of the PCC. IOHA now comprises 53 member associations, globally.

SAIOH Technical Committee feedback

SAIOH's Technical Committee continues to advance key research and guidance initiatives aimed at strengthening occupational hygiene practice and regulatory alignment.

- Welding fumes research and position paper: Led by Dr Ivan Niranjana and Technical Portfolio Coordinator, Dr Goitsemang Keretsetse, the Committee has completed a comprehensive position paper on the measurement and analysis of welding fumes. Developed in collaboration with the OH AIA Assoc., after a final review the paper was circulated to SAIOH members and the DEL, and published on the SAIOH website.
- Heat stress management: A second technical initiative is underway to develop procedures and a SAIOH position paper on heat stress management. SAIOH is working with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and Dr Johan Kielblock to support the research. The dual focus remains: to produce a robust technical paper and to inform SAIOH's recommendations for strengthening the PAR.
- Real-time monitoring: Prof. Stefan Linde (NWU) has taken the lead in developing a position paper on real-time monitoring in occupational hygiene. This work is ongoing and will contribute to future technical guidance.
- Ergonomic risk assessment: Under the leadership of Naadiya Mundy, a new sub-committee has been formed to develop procedures and/or guidelines to support SAIOH occupational hygiene professionals in conducting ergonomic risk assessments. Initial meetings have taken place, marking a promising start to this important initiative.

New SAIOH website and Quality Management System

The SAIOH Administration Team is actively working on populating the new SAIOH website, ensuring that it is a comprehensive resource for members. We look forward to launching the new website soon and delivering an improved and streamlined platform for the SAIOH community. Chapter 2 of the PCC's Quality Management System (QMS), which outlines the PCC assessment rules and procedures, is available on the SAIOH website, and offers essential guidance and supporting documentation.

SAIOH communications and editorial engagement: November 2025 update

SAIOH continues to maintain a strong editorial presence and pro-active member engagement through multiple platforms and initiatives.

SAIOH representatives attended the hybrid *Occupational Health Southern Africa* Editorial Board meeting on 20 November 2025. These engagements ensure that SAIOH's voice remains active in shaping regional occupational health discourse.

SAIOH publishes its newsletter and President's Page in two electronic media formats:

- *Occupational Health Southern Africa* journal
- *African Occupational Safety and Health (A-OS&H)* magazine

These publications are released every two-to-three months, with the most recent editions published in September and August 2025, respectively. All issues are distributed to members via Mailchimp and posted on the SAIOH website. SAIOH's latest submissions to the A-OS&H magazine and *Occupational Health Southern Africa* were completed in October and November 2025, respectively.

Global newsletters

The November 2025 edition of the *OHTA Global Link* and the September 2025 issue of the *IOHA Global Exposure Manager* were shared with members via Mailchimp and uploaded to the SAIOH website.

Member communications

SAIOH maintains daily engagement with its members through direct e-mail notifications, phone calls, and virtual meetings. These communications provide timely updates on:

- Legislative changes and new standards
- Industry news and technical developments
- Professional opportunities in occupational hygiene
- Products, services, courses, and webinars related to occupational hygiene, occupational health, and environmental safety

Recent events and announcements

SAIOH sent targeted communications promoting key events and learning opportunities, including:

- NWU Workshop (Potchefstroom): *Support for Occupational Hygiene Practitioners' Knowledge and Experience of the Skin as an Exposure Route* – an in-person workshop linked to an NWU research project.
- CSIR & MHSC Stakeholder Workshop (3 October 2025): a hybrid event on *The Impact of Overexertion on Women's Health and Safety in the Mining Industry*, hosted at the CSIR Convention Centre.
- ESSA Annual Conference (15–16 October 2025): hosted by the Ergonomics Society of South Africa (ESSA), this event highlighted key developments in ergonomics and workplace design.
- SASOM Annual Conference (15 November 2025): a hybrid event on tackling artificial intelligence (AI), informal work, and the future of occupational health and medicine in Africa, held at the Protea Hotel Fire & Ice! in Pretoria.
- Safety-First PPE Conference (10–11 March 2026): rescheduled to take place at Emperors Palace, Johannesburg. SAIOH has been invited to present a paper, with Karen du Preez, Cas Badenhorst, and Jeanneth Manganyi confirmed as speakers.
- ICOH 2026 History Conference (15–17 April 2026): SAIOH continues to promote the 8th International Congress on the History of Occupational and Environmental Health, in Leuven, Belgium.

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE

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The PCC ExCo held its fourth meeting of the year online on 26 September 2025. This was followed by a virtual full PCC meeting on 7 November 2025. Oral assessments were conducted online between 3 and 21 October 2025; the final written assessments took place on 3 October 2025.

Governance and quality assurance updates

Following several rounds of review, the SAIOH QMS Chapter 2: *PCC Assessment Rules and Procedures* was formally approved by the PCC ExCo and is available on the SAIOH website.

Reaching an additional milestone, the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) has updated the SAIOH requirements on its website (<https://pbdesig.saqa.org.za/viewProfessionalBody.php?id=844>) to reflect the PCC's current standards.

Assessment development and training

- The PCC sub-committee tasked with developing the Occupational Hygiene Skill Set for the Self-Assessment and Gap Analysis (SA-GA) Tool has made significant progress. The document is undergoing final checks before submission to the PCC ExCo.
- The team is also developing oral assessment scenarios and refining the PCC Oral Assessment Guidelines.
- Online training workshops for PCC assessors were held on 14 February and 30 May 2025 to support consistent application of the new tools and processes.
- A free hybrid PDC (PDC 04) was hosted at the SAIOH 2025 Conference on 21 October. The first hour introduced the SA-GA Tool to all SAIOH members, while the second session provided in-service training for PCC assessors on the new oral assessment system.

Written assessment challenges and solutions

Efforts to transition the written assessment to an MS Excel-based platform – intended to replace the current learning management system (LMS) and proposed Moodle system – have faced technical and security challenges. Due to concerns around AI integrity and paper leaks, the PCC ExCo resolved to revert to hard-copy assessments at venues, invigilated by at least two PCC assessors. All papers are now couriered to and from assessment centres, coordinated by the PCC Administration Team.

Oral assessments

Oral assessments continue to be conducted online via Zoom or Microsoft Teams, with recordings retained for verification and quality assurance. In-person assessments remain an option, where preferred.

CPD management and compliance

- Registered SAIOH members can now upload continuing professional development (CPD) activities throughout the year via their MySAIOH profiles.
- Effective 1 February 2025, all CPD returns are audited before certificates are issued. Compliance includes proof of claims, payment of annual fees, and a valid Ethics Certificate.
- CPD points are now calculated annually, replacing the previous five-year rolling cycle. Minimum annual requirements are:
 - ROH: 12 points
 - ROHT: 10 points
 - ROHA: 9 points
 - Retirees/fellows: 4 points
- Requests for amnesty or extensions must be submitted in writing, with a strong motivation, to the PCC ExCo via the PCC Administrator (Lee@saioh.co.za).

Sector updates and noteworthy developments

- The South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) has confirmed that 56 OH AIAs are now accredited.
- The DEL's new occupational hygiene report formats came into effect on 30 June 2025 and are strictly enforced during assessments.
- SANAS has commenced assessments and competency declarations aligned with the new NER.

Certification assessments

A summary of results for the assessments that took place from February to October 2025 is provided in Table 1. The PCC assessment dates for 2026 are in Table 2.

Occupational Hygiene Skills Forum

The SAIOH Occupational Hygiene Skills Forum (OHSF) continues to play a pivotal role in strengthening the quality and recognition of occupational hygiene training across South Africa, and beyond.

In 2025, the OHSF actively participated in the OHTA Approved Training Provider Forum meetings, contributing to global dialogue on training standards and quality assurance. The Forum's fourth meeting for the year took place on 25 November 2025.

Table 1. SAIOH PCC certification assessment results as of October 2025

Certification category	Written assessments				Oral assessments			
	Assessed	Passed	Failed	Pass rate	Assessed	Passed	Failed	Pass rate
	n	n	n	%	n	n	n	%
OH assistant	105	95	10	90.5	0	-	-	-
OH technologist	59	48	11	81.4	47	28	19	59.6
Occupational hygienist	44	14	30	31.8	21	13	8	61.9
Total	208	157	51	75.5	68	41	27	60.3

Table 2. SAIOH PCC written and oral assessment dates and deadlines, 2026

Assessment type	Deadline for applications and payments	Final deadline for all assessment payments	Assessment date
Written	9 January	6 February	27 February
Oral	-	-	27 March*
Written	24 April	15 May	12 June
Oral	-	-	10 July*
Written	7 August	28 August	9 October
Oral	-	-	13 November*

*Oral assessments begin on this date and will be conducted over a two-week period