SAIOH news

The Southern African Institute for Occupational Hygiene (SAIOH) remains committed to serving its members and advancing the occupational hygiene profession. As part of this commitment, the Institute regularly shares updates and highlights key developments with its community. SAIOH thrives on the active participation and ethical contributions of its members, whose engagement continues to shape and strengthen the field. The Institute, therefore, welcomes and encourages feedback on the topics presented in this publication, as part of its ongoing effort to support dialogue and collective progress.

SAIOH PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Prof. Cas Badenhorst: SAIOH President
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Prof. Cas Badenhorst, SAIOH President
Photograph: courtesy of SAIOH

As we move through another busy quarter, I'm pleased to share just how much momentum the revised SAIOH 2026 Strategic Plan continues to build. While there is still work ahead, we are seeing real progress that will strengthen our governance, member services, communications, and long-term sustainability as an Institute.

Building capacity in our Professional Certification Committee

Improving turnaround times for our members has been a key priority, and I'm glad to report that the Professional Certification Committee (PCC) has been strengthened with the appointment of two part-time examiners, Dr Hennie van der Westhuizen and Mr Deon Jansen van Vuuren, who stepped into their roles on 1 June 2026. Their addition contributes valuable capacity to our Chief Examiner, Dr Goitsemang Keretetse, and will help speed up certification assessments.

We also welcome Ms Tracy Mphaphuli into the role of PCC Support Officer. Tracy is no stranger to SAIOH; she has been part of our team for many years, and her institutional knowledge will strengthen administrative support, improve communication with applicants and members, and help create a smoother, more responsive certification process.

A new voice for SAIOH communications

I am delighted to announce the appointment of Ms Kaamini Reddy as our new Communications and Digital Media Manager, effective 3 August 2026. Kaamini will lead the development of an integrated communications, marketing, and digital media strategy to grow the Institute's visibility, reputation, and reach. Her portfolio includes strengthening our brand and visual identity, managing member communications, overseeing our website and digital presence, coordinating marketing campaigns, and supporting stakeholder engagement. One of her first major projects will be a full redevelopment of the SAIOH website. I would like to thank the Western Cape Branch for their earlier support in this space – we look forward to working with them further.

Leadership update

I am pleased to welcome Mr André van Rooyen, who formally accepted the position of SAIOH Vice President, following his election. André's extensive experience in professional certification, governance, and occupational hygiene will be a real asset to our strategic leadership. With André stepping into this role, Ms Naadiya Mundy, who continues as our Immediate Past President, has taken up the position of PCC Vice Chair, helping to ensure continuity and strong governance within the Committee.

Quality management system

Work continues steadily on reviewing, updating and implementing our quality management system (QMS). A great deal of effort has gone into aligning the QMS with our Memorandum of Incorporation, governance framework, committee structures, and operational processes, including reviewing policies, procedures, role descriptions, and quality controls. This is a strategic priority, and we remain committed to completing this work before the end of 2026. Once finalised, it will give us a stronger governance foundation, greater operational efficiency, and clearer responsibilities across the Institute.

Investing in our branches

To keep building on our Strategic Plan, we held a SAIOH branch workshop on 31 July 2026, bringing together the national office and our branches to review structures, identify opportunities, and strengthen collaboration. I look forward to seeing how the outcomes of this workshop will be shaping how we grow member engagement and service delivery across the country.

Governance and what is ahead

We continue to strengthen our governance through revised Council role descriptions and committee responsibilities. Preparations are well underway for our 2026 Annual General Meeting, scheduled for Thursday, 29 October 2026 (virtual mode), where I look forward to sharing more on our strategic progress, financials, and governance initiatives. Planning for Council elections for the 2027/2028 term and stakeholder engagement is also progressing well.

Our Annual Scientific Conference

Planning for the 2026 SAIOH Annual Scientific Conference is going exceptionally well, and I know many of you are looking forward to it. Expect local keynote speakers, technical presentations, professional development courses (PDCs), research and poster sessions, great networking and, of course, our annual SAIOH Awards. Keep an eye on our website and communication channels – more details on speakers, registration, sponsorship, and the full programme will be released in the coming weeks.

In closing

It has been a season of real progress for SAIOH – in governance, certification, communications, member engagement, and conference planning, and 2026 is shaping up to be a defining year for our Institute. None of this would be possible without you. I want to thank our volunteers, committee members, Council members, and staff for your continued dedication. Together, we are building a stronger, more sustainable Institute – one that keeps advancing the occupational hygiene profession across southern Africa.

THE WORKPLACE IS CHANGING – IS OCCUPATIONAL HYGIENE CHANGING WITH IT?

Kaamini Reddy: SAIOH Communications and Digital Media Manager
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The South African workplace looks very different today from the one many of us entered at the start of our careers. Technology has changed how and where we work. Artificial intelligence is beginning to influence how work is done. Psychosocial risks are receiving greater attention. Climate change is bringing new questions about working environments and exposure. Yet, many of the risks with which occupational hygiene has dealt for decades have not disappeared. Workers are still exposed to dust, respirable crystalline silica, noise, chemicals, and other workplace hazards.

During 2024/2025, the Department of Employment and Labour conducted 107 808 occupational health and safety inspections across South Africa, with an average compliance rate of 60%.[1] More recently, figures presented at the Department's 2026 Occupational Health and Safety Conference included 127 992[2] occupational injury claims, and 928 occupational disease claims. The numbers remind us that protecting people at work is about more than statistics – it is about real people, real lives, and our shared responsibility to ensure everyone returns home safe and healthy.

So, while the workplace is changing, the question for occupational hygiene is not simply, "What is new?" It is how we continue to anticipate, recognise, evaluate, and control workplace health hazards as the environment around us changes and evolves constantly.

Old risks, new realities

Silica exposure is a powerful South African example. Our history of mining and occupational lung disease has shaped much of the country's occupational health knowledge. Yet, silica exposure, silicosis, and effective dust management remain relevant today and continue to be occupational hazards. More recently, rapidly progressive silicosis has been associated with exposure to high concentrations of respirable crystalline silica generated during the manufacture of artificial stone, a relatively new industry.

Alongside these established hazards, occupational hygienists are encountering a changing risk landscape. Psychosocial factors and human-centred approaches to work are becoming part of broader workplace conversations. Technology offers new ways to monitor and manage exposure. Artificial intelligence presents both opportunities and questions for the profession. Climate change may alter the environments in which people work and the hazards they face. These issues do not sit neatly apart from one another, and neither can the professions working to address them.

Seventy years of knowledge, and a changing workplace

This conversation matters in 2026, the year that marks the 70th anniversary of the National Institute for Occupational Health (NIOH). Established in 1956 as the Pneumoconiosis Research Unit (PRU) at the request of the burgeoning mining industry in South Africa, its early work focused on occupational lung diseases affecting mineworkers. Over seven decades, that work has grown into a broader multidisciplinary contribution to worker health through research, surveillance, training, and occupational health services.

It is fitting, then, that the SAIOH 2026 Annual Scientific Conference is being hosted in collaboration with the NIOH during its 70th anniversary year. The relationship also speaks to something at the heart of occupational hygiene today: good practice depends on collaboration. Occupational hygienists work alongside occupational medicine and nursing professionals, researchers, ergonomists, scientists, regulators, employers and employees, and industry. Each sees the workplace through a different lens. Worker health benefits when those perspectives connect.

What does this mean for the occupational hygiene professional?

This question sits at the heart of the SAIOH 2026 Annual Scientific Conference, themed *Building Stronger Partnerships for Healthier Workplaces*. Taking place from 28 September to 1 October 2026 at Thaba Eco Hotel in Johannesburg, the Conference will bring the occupational hygiene community together with experts from occupational health, research, academia, government, industry, and related disciplines.

The programme reflects both where the profession has come from and where it may be heading. Silica exposure and modern silicosis. Psychosocial hazards and ergonomics. Artificial intelligence. Ethics. Climate change and worker health. Dust management. Digital technology.

Alongside the scientific programme, PDCs will provide practical learning in areas such as professional certification and competency, psychosocial factors and ergonomics, silica exposure and worker outcomes, and ethical challenges facing occupational hygiene professionals. For practitioners, there is also the opportunity to earn continuing professional development (CPD) points through conference and PDC participation.

But perhaps the greatest value lies in being in the room. It is the opportunity to hear what is changing, learn from specialists working in different environments, test your own thinking, meet colleagues, test the waters for partnerships and collaborations, and take new knowledge back to your workplace.

Be part of the conversation

Occupational hygiene has always been about protecting people from the health risks that arise from their work. That purpose has not changed. The workplace has. As technology, climate, human factors, and established occupational hazards increasingly meet in the same working environment, the profession has an opportunity to ask how its knowledge, practice, and partnerships need to evolve alongside them.

That is a conversation worth having together. Join occupational hygiene professionals and colleagues from across occupational health, research, academia, government, and industry at this year's Conference.

Come for the knowledge. Come for professional development. Come for the connections. And come ready to add your perspective to the conversation.

Registration for the SAIOH 2026 Annual Scientific Conference is now open. Register and book your place (https://www.saioh.co.za/page/SAIOHConference2026)

SAIOH NATIONAL COUNCIL FEEDBACK

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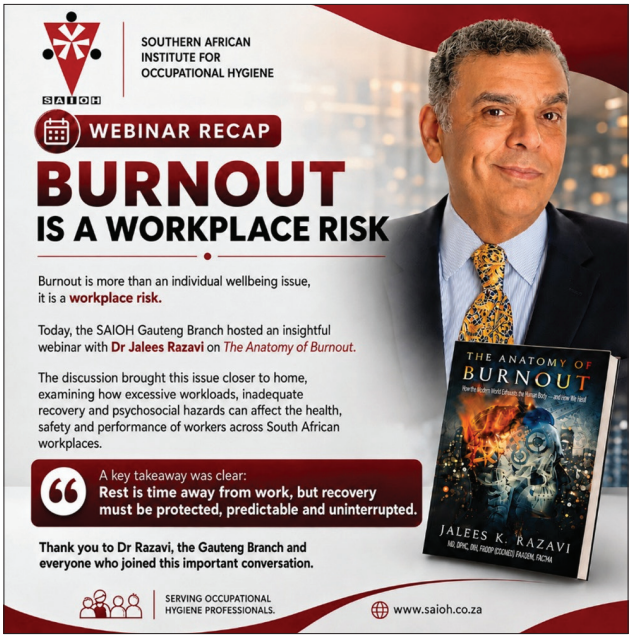
SAIOH Management update: 26 May–21 August 2026

Governance and operational engagements worth noting include:

- SAIOH administrators' meetings were held on 17 June and 19 August 2026.
- A SAIOH PCC Executive Committee meeting was held on 19 June 2026.
- A SAIOH National Council meeting was held on 26 June 2026.
- On 1 July 2026, SAIOH members representing Management and the PCC attended the quarterly meeting of the Professional Bodies Forum, convened by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA).
- An ad hoc meeting pertaining to SAIOH Ethics was held on 8 July 2026.
- The SAIOH Occupational Hygiene Skills Forum (OHSF) convened a meeting on 9 July 2026.
- The Occupational Hygiene Approved Inspection Authority (OHAIA) Association convened two online training sessions on 24 July and 14 August 2026. The discussion related to components of the Physical Agents Regulations 2024, including illumination, vibration, and heat stress. The OHAIA Association held an online meeting on 21 August 2026 to discuss several topics, including membership update, marketing, matters relating to the South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) and its technical committees, the National Department of Employment and Labour, and feedback provided by SAIOH Management. The next meeting is scheduled for 20 November 2026.
- SAIOH received an Amazon award from the International Occupational Hygiene Association (IOHA) for the development and delivery of a four-part webinar series on health risk assessment for African workplaces, and a complementary African 'Occupational Hygiene Resource Pack' consisting of at least eight tools/templates/checklists and supporting resources. Amazon has provided financial donations to international professional development entities like IOHA, and to related groups like the Occupational Hygiene Training Association (OHTA), to support global occupational health training and microgrants.
- On 23 July 2026, SAIOH launched a call for nominations from its members for three National Council portfolios for 2027/2028, viz. Branches, Technical, and Marketing and Communication. Nominations closed on 7 August 2026.
- Members of the SAIOH Management Board and the Mine Ventilation Society of South Africa (MVSSA) met on 21 August 2026 to initiate discussions for formalising an official collaboration and Memorandum of Understanding between the two entities.
- SAIOH welcomes the appointment of Ms Contance Kekana (Department of Mineral and Petroleum Resources) as President of the MVSSA, and looks forward to strengthening the collaboration between the two entities in pursuit of shared objectives in occupational hygiene.
- SAIOH extends warm congratulations to Mr André van Rooyen, formerly the PCC Vice Chair, who was elected as the Institute's Vice President at the end of June.
- Members of the SAIOH Management Board conducted interviews in June and July 2026 with shortlisted candidates for the post of Communications and Digital Media Manager. An official appointment has been made, and SAIOH welcomed Ms Kaamini Reddy in this new role, effective 3 August 2026.

SAIOH branch activities

- The Western Cape Branch held an online meeting on 19 June 2026.
- The Gauteng Branch held an online meeting on 21 August 2026 to officially introduce the members of the new Branch Committee and share its strategic objectives for the 2026/2027 term. Dr Jalees Razavi, an occupational and environmental medicine specialist from Canada, was invited to present his recently published book titled *The Anatomy of Burnout*, which is available from Amazon (https://www.amazon.com/Anatomy-Burnout-Modern-Exhausts-Body_and/dp/B0GX8B5SH4).



Communications, marketing, and training – local and international

SAIOH publishes its newsletter and President's page in two electronic media formats, namely *Occupational Health Southern Africa* (OHSA), and the *African Occupational Safety and Health* (A-OS&H) magazine. These publications are issued every two-to-three months, with the most recent issues published in June and August 2026, respectively. As the issues are published online, the links are shared with SAIOH members via the Mailchimp system and posted on the SAIOH website.

Several e-mail notifications on occupational hygiene and health webinars, conferences and short courses, SAIOH branch meetings, and vacancies for occupational hygiene practitioners, were distributed during the reporting period, including:

- A Short Learning Programme on Legal Knowledge for Occupational Hygiene, aligned with the Occupational Health and Safety Act, was delivered by North-West University. This course equips participants with an understanding of workplace compliance, safety regulations, and key occupational hygiene requirements. The start date was 31 August 2026, and the course duration was two weeks. More information is available at: https://uce.ajourney.academy/student/#/enrol/catalogue/66778492-a3d9-416a-85d8-0e2173e19a41/moreInfo
- The Beryllium Health and Safety Committee (BHSC) Fall Meeting will take place on 27–28 October 2026, jointly hosted by General Atomics and the University of California at San Diego (UCSD) in San Diego, California. More information on the meeting and registration can be accessed at: https://berylliumhealthandsafetycommittee.com/fall-2026-registration
- The latest edition of the OHTA newsletter, *Global Link*, was published in June 2026 and includes the announcement of a new offering – the OHTA 1002 Specialist Course on Occupational Hygiene in the Pharmaceutical Industry. The latest edition can be accessed at: https://mailchi.mp/ohtatraining.org/ohta-global-link-march-10344855
- The Ergonomics Society of South Africa (ESSA) hosted a webinar on 11 June 2026, titled 'Beyond the Physical, Cognitive and Organisational Domain', where Matita Tshabalala from Nelson Mandela University presented 'The importance of organisational change management in the adoption of human factors and ergonomics'. A second ESSA webinar was hosted on 19 August 2026, where Jan Ryno Smith presented 'Anthropometry in ergonomics practice'. The session introduced the principles of anthropometry and demonstrated how anthropometric data are applied in ergonomic analysis and design.
- The latest policy brief from the *Public Health Bulletin South Africa* (PHBSA) examines the role of artificial intelligence in addressing key challenges in public health emergency management in resource-constrained settings, with a focus on its applicability to strengthening health system performance in South Africa. More information is available at: https://www.phbsa.ac.za/ai-public-health-emergency-management-south-africa/
- SAIOH member Mr Jaco van Rensburg was invited by the South African Society of Occupational Medicine (SASOM) Western Cape Chapter to present an update on the Noise and Physical Agents Regulations, at their meeting held on 23 June 2026.
- A special edition of the SAQA publication *Z'khiphani* is dedicated to one of the most significant developments in South Africa's post-school education and training sector, viz. the implementation of the transitional arrangements for pre-2009 qualifications. SAQA's aim is to ensure that every stakeholder understands what the transition means, why it is necessary, and where to access official information and support. The publication is available at: https://saqa.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/Zkhipani-August-2026-Special-edition.pdf
- The latest issue of the IOHA newsletter, *Global Exposure Manager* (GEM), issue 2, August 2026, is available at: https://ioha.net/wp-content/uploads/acymailing/upload/GEM_Magazine_Issue_Two_2026_FINAL.pdf
- IOHA called for proposals for PDCs for the 40th IOHA International Scientific Conference. PDC submissions were accepted from 1 July

to 1 September 2026.Taking place from 4 to 8 October 2027, in Montréal, Québec, Canada, IOHA 2027 returns to the city where the first IOHA Conference was held in 1987.

SAIOH 2026 Annual Scientific Conference

This year's Conference will be hosted by SAIOH in collaboration with the NIOH, in celebration of the latter's 70th anniversary, and is themed *Building Stronger Partnerships for Healthier Workplaces*. The SAIOH Conference Organising Committee held a breakfast meeting on 22 June 2026 at the Conference venue, Thaba Eco Hotel, and toured its conference and accommodation facilities. The Committee met again on 17 July 2026, online, to progress planning and the development of the Conference programme.

Important dates

- Notification of abstract acceptance: 25 August 2026
- Accepted presenter registration deadline to confirm attendance: extended to 11 September 2026
- Deadline for regular registration for Conference and/or PDCs: extended to 11 September 2026
- Deadline for submission of the PowerPoint oral presentation for review and uploading to the system: 18 September 2026

Registration is open for the Conference and the associated PDCs; more information is available at: https://www.saioh.co.za/page/SAIOHConference2026. The following PDCs are confirmed:

PDC date, time, and format	PDC title and presenters
PDC – 01 **Monday, 28 September 2026** 10:00–14:30 (in-person attendance only)	**Site visit to the National Institute for Occupational Health (NIOH)** Presenters: NIOH staff members – Prof. Spo Kgalamono, Dr Jitcy Joseph, Dr Delerise Fassom, Zinhle Maphumulo, Edith Ratshikhopha
PDC – 02 (afternoon only) **Monday, 28 September 2026** 15:00–17:00 (virtual attendance only, free session)	**From OH assistant to OH technologist to occupational hygienist: Navigating SAIOH certification, CPD, and competency assessments** Presenters: SAIOH PCC members – Dr Ivan Niranjan, Dr Goitsemang Keretetse, Corlia Peens, Naadiya Mundy, Sean Chester, Robert Randolph, Deon Jansen van Vuuren, Garth Hunter, Jaco van Rensburg
PDC – 03 (full day) **Tuesday, 29 September 2026** 08:30–16:00 (in-person and virtual attendance)	**Beyond posture and chair design: The influence of psychosocial factors on work health, wellbeing, and performance** Presenter: Dr Miriam Mattison (Rhodes University and the Ergonomics Society of South Africa)
PDC – 04 (morning only) 08:30–12:00 (in-person and virtual attendance)	**Beyond the dust: Understanding silica exposure, modern silicosis, and worker outcomes** Presenters: Dr Vanessa Govender (Masakhane Health and University of the Witwatersrand), Dr Nico Claassen (University of Pretoria)
PDC – 05 (afternoon only) 13:00–16:00 (in-person and virtual attendance)	**Ethics in action: Real-world challenges for occupational hygiene professionals** Presenters/panel members: Profs Johan du Plessis, Anja Franken, Suranie Horn, Sonette du Preez, Cas Badenhorst (North-West University), and Dr Casper Joubert (Stellenbosch University)

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE

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Quarter 2 assessment cycle

The PCC successfully executed the second quarter (Q2) 2026 written examinations on 12 June, followed by the oral assessments in mid-July. This assessment cycle saw strong nationwide participation, with 63 candidates sitting for the written examinations and 46 presenting for their oral assessments. A comprehensive summary of the certification assessment results from February through August 2026 is provided in Table 1.

The Skills Set Development Team continues to refine and strengthen the assessment process, meeting bi-monthly to enhance oral assessment scenarios and guidelines.

Committee meetings and strategic engagements

The PCC Executive Committee convened its second online meeting of the year on 19 June 2026, addressing a wide range of strategic matters, including CPD compliance, assessment papers and reviews, moderation processes, technical papers, ethics, engagements with the IOHA and its National Accreditation Recognition Committee (NARC), and liaison with the Department of Employment and Labour.

The PCC Assessment Team met on 3 July 2026 to discuss the role of the Chief Examiner and the integration of two newly appointed Assistant Chief Examiners, further strengthening the assessment framework.

The SAIOH OHSF convened on 8 July 2026 to review SAQA's recognition of prior learning requirements and assess their alignment with SAIOH's qualification criteria. The OHSF met again on 9 July 2026 to advance discussions on the development of short courses for members, tertiary curriculum approval processes, and the requirements and deliverables of international professional associations.

Strengthening the PCC

As part of our commitment to our members, several important appointments have been made within the PCC:

- Ms Naadiya Mundy: PCC Vice Chair. Her expertise and dedication will be instrumental in advancing PCC initiatives.
- Ms Tracy Mphaphuli: PCC Support Officer, working alongside Ms Rebecca Doolan, PCC Assessment Officer. This strengthened support structure will improve administrative efficiency and response times.
- Mr Deon Jansen van Vuuren and Dr Hennie van der Westhuizen: Assistant Examiners, supporting Chief Examiner, Dr Goitsemang Keretetse, across application intake, assessment setting, administration of written and oral assessments, moderation, and complaint management.

Acknowledgements

We extend our sincere appreciation to Mr André van Rooyen for his valuable contribution to the PCC, and congratulate him on his new appointment as SAIOH Vice President.

REFERENCES

1. South Africa. Department of Employment and Labour. Annual Report 2024/25. Pretoria: Department of Employment and Labour; 2025.
2. South Africa. Department of Employment and Labour. Occupational Health and Safety Conference 2026: Presentation on occupational injury and disease claims. Pretoria: Department of Employment and Labour; 2026.

Table 1. SAIOH PCC certification assessment results, as of June 2026

	Written assessments				Oral assessments			
Certification category	**Assessed**	**Passed**	**Failed**	**Pass rate**	**Assessed**	**Passed**	**Failed**	**Pass rate**
	n	n	n	%	n	n	n	%
OH assistant	85	77	8	90.6	-	-	-	-
OH technologist	47	29	18	61.7	45	24	21	53.3
Occupational hygienist	24	1	23	4.2	6	4	2	67.0
Total	156	107	49	68.6	51	28	23	54.9