



From the Editor's desk



The range of topics and the locations of the authors in this month's edition is an indication of the international nature of the *Journal*, which is confirmed by the fact that of the 141 papers that were published in the *Journal* in 2017/2018, 58 were from outside South Africa. This is one of the criteria that ensures that the *Journal* is listed on the Department of Higher Education and Training's (DHET) list of accredited journals.

A recent communication from a Retired Fellow contained the comment 'I remember when the *Journal* reflected the activity of the SAIMM - describing the events on a more personal level, interactions between members and news of members. Passionate written debates on the technical content were commonplace'. The Publications Committee have taken this to heart and wishes to encourage the readership of the *Journal* to provide constructive feedback for discussion on papers that are published in the *Journal*.

In the first 6 months of 2018, a total of 200 manuscripts were received by the publications team for consideration for publication in the *Journal*. This is in addition to the conference papers that had to be processed for publication and highlights the tremendous load that is placed on our referees. An important element in the refereeing process is the iteration that occurs between referee and author. A referee is asked to referee a paper based on his or her knowledge of and expertise in the subject matter. The referee's comments and suggestions for changes and corrections to the manuscript are returned to the author. It is expected that the author will respond and give feedback to the referee that the comments and suggestions for changes and corrections have been noted and acted upon. It occasionally occurs that the author disagrees with the referee's comments and the editor is called upon to mediate. These steps are an essential part of progressing a manuscript through the refereeing and reviewing process and ultimately producing a quality paper. If the author does not respond to the referee then time is wasted and the referee naturally becomes reluctant to referee any future papers. This situation has to be avoided and it is incumbent on authors to respond to the referees.

During the course of the year we have gradually migrated the reviewing of papers that are submitted to the *Journal* to the Open Journal System (OJS) which can be viewed at <https://saimmjournal.co.za>. Authors and reviewers are required to register on the OJS and this has enabled a substantially paper-free process to manage the progress of a paper from submission to publication. Refining of the system to suit all the needs of the *Journal* continues.

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