

One institute. One purpose. One common goal.



As we commence a new financial year, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the year that has passed and, more importantly, to look ahead with renewed energy, commitment, and optimism.

The past year has seen a whirlwind of exciting new visions, new proposals, new developments, new structures and, not least of all, renewed vigour within a wide range of activities in the different branches within the SAIMM.

So, in this new financial year, we not only face virtually a new chapter for the Southern African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy (SAIMM) but we also welcome in our next new President whose role it will be to provide the leadership, vision, and direction that will continue to guide the Institute through the consolidation of the proposals and developments proposed of last year.

Amongst those proposals is one to enhance the structure of the Publications arm of the Institute. The plans are to do this by expanding its structure, adding to its staff, enhancing its publishing activities through modern technology, and expanding its outreach in order to consolidate and develop further its role as one of the top journals covering the disciplines of mining and metallurgy in the world.

To achieve this, the proposal is to enhance the roles of the publishing team, on one hand by appointing an executive editor to the Editorial Board and, on the other hand, by formalising a standalone Publications Steering Committee (currently operating as the Publications Committee Task Team), which will be led by a chairman.

The Editorial Board will expand its activities by exploring new avenues to become more selective in order to enhance or improve the calibre of the Journal's papers accepted for publication, to ensure that reviewers will be of the highest calibre and appropriately selected for each paper, and that turnaround times in the reviewing and publishing process will be faster and, thus more professional than has been the case to date. In addition, the Editorial Board will be required to consider books submitted to the SAIMM Publishing Department for publication while also promoting those books that have already been published when appropriate, using various methods and selling at various venues.

The roles of the Publications Steering Committee will be to promote the outreach of the journal ensuring all stakeholders are approached and encouraged to present papers reflecting the latest advancements in their mining, mineral, and metallurgical sectors. This will include links with allied professional bodies, universities, research organisations, government departments, SOEs, and a wide range of operating mining, mineral, and metallurgical industries.

Linking with other activities within the SAIMM is of equal importance. Close association of the Publications Steering Committee, for example, with the Technical Programmes Committee has given rise to ideas for a new conference topic on occasion, whereas papers from running conferences have provided valuable specialist papers and themes for the journal. Future associations with other SAIMM departments lend themselves to further potentially valuable mutually beneficial interaction, especially in the cases of the Young Persons Council, the Academy, and the ESG Committee.

With new beginnings come new responsibilities and, undoubtedly, many tasks at hand. The success of the Institute depends not on the efforts of one individual or one committee, but on the collective contribution of all involved.

The SAIMM has a proud history and plays an important role in bringing together professionals, academics, researchers, industry leaders, and emerging talent across the mining and metallurgical sectors, both locally and internationally. Maintaining and strengthening this legacy requires collaboration, commitment, and a shared willingness to contribute to the advancement of our disciplines and our Institute.

Journal Comment Continues

In summary, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation and thanks to all committee members across the Institute – including my own Publications Committee - for the hard work, support, time, and dedication you have contributed and for continuing to grow and participate in this new year. Much of the work undertaken by the committees happens behind the scenes and is little recognised, and yet this is fundamental to the continued functioning and success of the SAIMM. Your willingness to serve, contribute ideas, support initiatives, and give your time is deeply valued.

In closing, may I also extend my best wishes to our new President, all office bearers, council members, committee members, staff, volunteers, and members for a successful and rewarding year ahead. May this new chapter be one of progress, productive collaboration, and continued development for the SAIMM and for all those who are involved in it.

R.M.S Falcon

Editor/Chairperson of the Editorial Board