



News in Brief

July 2008

Cooperation between EPA and the Engineering Council of Namibia

On 1 April 2008, a delegation of the EPA, consisting of the President, Mr Braam Cilliers, the Past President, Mr G Seydack, and the Treasurer, Mrs Sophie Tekie, informally met with the President of the ECN, Mr Markus von Jeney, and the ECN Registrar, Mrs Ronell Slabber, to discuss possibilities for cooperation between the EPA and ECN.

Whilst the ECN utilises its full capacity in performing its functions according to its statutes, being the Engineering Profession Act, 1986, cooperation between the EPA and the ECN where possible was welcomed. This could include information sharing and mutual "profile building", e.g. by the placement of relevant information on the respective institutions in each other's publications.

The parties share a common interest in professional development, and the ECN envisages that Continuous Professional Development (CPD) should be entrenched in the revision of the Engineering Profession Act as a future professional registration requirement.

The delivery of CPD, the coordination of training programmes, and training in general were seen as areas in which the EPA should take the initiative. The establishment of a database of organisations that deliver engineering training in Namibia was seen a step in this direction.

A specific need for the mentoring of engineers-in-training towards their professional registration has been identified by both the EPA and the ECN. As the ECN would not be in a position to involve itself in the delivery of such mentoring, the EPA could fulfil an important role as a facilitator of such mentoring programmes.

The ECN has identified a need for induction programmes for engineers, and it seems that the Ministry of Works, Transport and Communication might be interested in supporting such programmes.

Concerns about the awareness of engineering standards and the need for the maintenance of these in engineering practice were discussed. The role of the ECN in this regard was the enforcement of relevant provisions in the Engineering Profession Act. The EPA could fulfil a role in raising awareness of engineering standards in the industry.

EPA's Young Engineers Construction Project: Bridge Building Competition 2008

The Bridge Building Competition is an annual event hosted by the EPA to promote engineering as a career. Senior Secondary schools throughout Namibia offering Mathematics and Physical Science are invited to partake in the Bridge Building Competition. This year's event took place on Saturday 21 June 2008 at the Academia Secondary School in Windhoek. The EPA President Mr. Braam Cilliers officially opened the event, welcoming students and teachers and wishing them all success in the competition.

A total number of 46 teams from all corners of Namibia consisting of three members each participated in this competition. The rules together with the material and tool kits are handed to each team on the day of the competition, the kit consisting of wooden dowels, a hacksaw, a cutter, glue and string. The teams commence planning and building at 9:00 in the morning. Cut-off time is 15:00. A panel of judges weighs and evaluates the bridges on workmanship and ingenuity, before the bridges eventually are being put to the test as to much load they can carry before breaking.

This year's winning bridge weighed 238.7g and carried a load of 114.9kg. The winning team, made up of Hercules Koortzen, Mario Koegelenberg and Jennilee van der Merwe, was from the Etosha Secondary School in Tsumeb. The team from DHPS Windhoek took the second place and another team from the Delta Secondary School in Windhoek took third place. The first three teams received cash money for each team member and a cheque for their school, the prizes amounting to N\$750.00 per team and school for the first prize together with a floating trophy, N\$600.00 for the second prize and N\$450.00 for third prize respectively.

In his closing remarks the EPA President encouraged students to consider engineering as a career. Some of these scholars are our country's future engineers. Competitions such as this help to stimulate additional interest in those, who may consider engineering as a profession besides promoting the industry as a whole to scholars, laymen and current engineers alike.

Our congratulations go to all participants in the competition for their enthusiasm and camaraderie, but in particular to the winning teams and respective schools. A special word of thanks goes to the EPA judges, Mr. Dirk Reed, Mr. Francois le Roux and Mr. Braam Cilliers, as well as the headmaster and teachers of Academia Secondary School for the facilities and assistance.

The Engineering Professions Association is a non-profit organisation that amongst other aims and functions promotes engineering as a career at schools, career exhibitions and projects of this nature. The EPA relies on sponsorships from consulting firms and related businesses to make such events possible. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the following firms for their generous sponsorships:

S A I C E
V K E (Namibia) Inc. Consulting Engineers
Lund Consulting Engineers
Pro-Services
Element Consulting Engineers
Emcon Consulting Engineers
Bicon Namibia Consulting Engineers
WML Consulting Engineers
PPS Namibia
Association of Consulting Engineers (ACEN)
JS Hardware & Hobby

Qualified to partake in the international bridge building competition hosted by SAICE on 29 August 2008 in Pretoria the winning team accompanied by an adult is scheduled to fly to South Africa.

Pictured: the winning team with their teacher from Etosha Secondary School flanked by EPA President Braam Cilliers (on the left) and Past President Günter Seydack (on the right):



EPA Fun Day – Bowls

In order to foster relationships amongst members and other stakeholders of the industry it was decided to host the **EPA Bowls Day**. This event, aimed at providing fun and relaxation for all, is scheduled for Friday afternoon 15 August 2008 from 14h00 onwards and invitations have been sent to all members via e-mail. Come and join in for a day of FUN!

Upcoming Courses

The EPA in cooperation with the South African Road Federation (SARF) will be facilitating the following courses later this year:

- SA Road Traffic Signs Manual: 22 – 23 September 2008
- Road Pavement Rehabilitation: 6 – 7 October 2008

Invitations with more details on the venue, times, costs, course contents, presenters etc. will follow shortly.

Publication on Engineering in Namibia

In order to further promote the engineering profession in Namibia, the EPA plans to rely on the professional assistance of Picasso Headline (publishers) to assist with a Namibian publication that will showcase Namibian engineering projects and expertise.

It is envisaged that it will be an annual publication similar to the *Architectural Digest* that has been published over the past few years in Namibia through the Namibia Institute of Architects (NIA).

The EPA is currently busy with negotiations with Picasso Headline and the next step will be the establishment of an editorial and project screening committee. A call on companies to submit their prestigious Namibian engineering projects will follow after the establishment of the committee.

Your comments regarding this initiative will be greatly appreciated.

Concrete Canoe Competition 4 April 2009

The EPA of Namibia in association with the Canoe Federation of Namibia plans to host this event for the first time ever in Namibia on 4 April 2009 at the Avis Dam. The event will be hosted in combination with the National Dragon Boat Competition of the Canoe Federation of Namibia.

There are a host of valid reasons why this event would benefit both the Engineering profession in general as well as the relevant schools and institutes of higher learning that will be participating. Following is a short extract from the American Society of Civil Engineers' website providing a brief history of the National Concrete Canoe Competition. In 2008 they hosted their 20th Competition.

"It's in our sidewalks, the foundations of our homes and in buildings, bridges, roads and dams around the world. While concrete has become the most widely used building material in the world, it remains a mystery to many. However, the use of concrete in floating vessels is not new. In fact, the history of concrete boat building dates back to 1848, when Joseph Louis Lambot built thin-walled reinforced concrete boats for use at his estate in Miraval, France. Concrete was also used to build barges during World War II to replace scarce steel supplies.

*The Concrete Canoe Competition was designed to provide civil engineering students an opportunity to **gain hands-on, practical experience and leadership skills by working with concrete mix designs and project management.** Organizers, sponsors and participants are dedicated to building awareness of concrete technology and application, as well as the versatility and durability of concrete as a construction material, among civil engineering students, educators, practitioners, the concrete industry and the general public. They also strive to increase awareness among industry leaders, opinion makers and the general public of civil engineering as a dynamic and innovative profession essential to society."*

The EPA hopes that the Concrete Canoe Competition will develop into an annual event that will assist in putting the Engineering profession on the map! The idea is to team schools and institutes of higher learning with experienced individuals or companies to assist them with the design and management of the project. It is very important that the organising committee gets the buy in and support from all EPA members. Your feedback and assistance with this event will be much appreciated.