

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is with pleasure that I report on the activities of the Association as follows:

### 1. Regulatory affairs

The publication of the new Air Quality Bill has made this one of the most momentous years in the history of the Association from this point of view. Most of the branches arranged workshops on the Bill; comments from all branches were collated for a submission to the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT). The revised version of the Bill recently published indicated that a considerable number of our comments were used in the updating process.

Members of the Association made up the majority of the South African National Standards (SANS) Technical Committee and working groups that drafted two proposed South African standards for ambient air quality. These should be published shortly for public comment. I would like to thank Yvonne Scorgie and Lucian Burger who voluntarily carried out a large portion of this work. Members of the Association also made presentation on the new standards to a number of audiences, among them an APOLCOM meeting at Witbank and two seminars by the Chemical and Allied Industries Association (CAIA) in Johannesburg and Durban.

### 2. Training and capacity building

There is no doubt that the success of the implementation of the new Air Quality Act will to a large extent be determined by the training which the responsible staff at local authority level receive. During a discussion with DEAT staff, we were assured that an implementation manual for the Act would be prepared and issued, and this is to be welcomed.

From the Association's side, several members are already involved in training at tertiary institutions on various aspects of air quality management. Preliminary discussions were held with the Institute for Environmental studies at the University of Pretoria on a course structure for senior air quality management staff; further discussions on a "fast track" intervention, possibly involving one of the Technikons will be held before the end of the year. In addition, holding short courses in conjunction with the Annual Conference has been discussed as an additional mechanism for capacity building. A manual for a preliminary course in ambient air quality monitoring has already been prepared, and a sponsor is being sought for publication.

No bursaries were awarded during the year. Council has decided that the bursary scheme should focus on postgraduate studies, and a number of applications for study during 2004 are under consideration.

The ongoing activities of the branches with regards to training and continuing education will be dealt with by the branch chairpersons separately.

### 3. Membership

Membership numbers have been negatively affected by the consolidation of smaller municipalities into regional municipalities, and by the creation of metropolitan authorities in the larger towns. The Association's administrator has been actively contracting the new bodies in order to involve the new entities in multiple-vote membership. Individual and company membership will be reported on by the administrator separately.

### 4. Administration

Piet Odendaal and Roy Stephenson have continued to deal with technical and administrative matters in their normal efficient fashion. Partly in response to concerns raised at branches who quite rightly want NACA funds applied to training and research activities, administrative cost including the cost of IUAPPA membership) has been dealt with at length during council meetings and considerable reduction has been achieved. This matter does however need continued consideration.

### 5. Branches

Although it has become a cliché to say that the success of the Association's work is mainly determined at the branches it remains true, and the branch committees are to be commended for their activity in promoting the Association's objectives during the year.

### 6. Publications

The newsletter was sent out by Piet Odendaal at the normal intervals. Editorship of the Journal was taken over by Sanjeev Raghubir. Both are thanked for their efforts. Members are requested to submit suitable material for publication in both, and to support the advertisers who make a considerable contribution to the cost of the publications.

### 7. Conclusion

During 2003, your Association has worked on what it is best at – providing collective expertise, at both the technical and policy input level, to decision makers

and practitioners in the field of air quality. The challenge for the year ahead is to reach the much larger audience that will in future have to become involved in air quality.

The work of the Association is to a large extent carried out by people voluntarily offering their time and effort

to further the objectives. To all of these not mentioned by name, thanks are due for continuing support in the cause of clean air.

Gerrit Kornelius  
**NACA President**