

# SARF ROAD NEWS

The South African Road Federation  
Quarterly Newsletter | **June 2020**



## Message from the President of the South African Road Federation (SARF)

### Prioritise safety as economy opens up, says SARF President

No sector has been spared the negative impact of the Coronavirus and the lockdown of our country and economy. The South African government responded swiftly to the pandemic, and SARF's members and partners took heed of the regulations to minimise the devastation of the pandemic.

With the lifting of the lockdown, I encourage our members and stakeholders to prioritise safety and integrate it rigorously into processes and plans across their organisations.

As workplaces and construction sites go all out to make up for lost time, infection rates are also beginning to soar. It is a dangerous time, and we must ensure that safety underpins everything we do.

Despite this difficult start to the year, there are successes to report.

SARF is one of the country's primary training providers when it comes to the continuing professional development needs of the road sector. The pandemic has seen us fast-track the delivery of our training programmes online. We are now two years ahead of where we thought we would be pre-Covid-19. It has been encouraging to see the Education Committee embrace the new normal, and start delivering programmes virtually. To strengthen this effort, we welcome feedback and input from course participants and our members.

It has also been promising to see the technical and regional committees continue their work virtually.

Our members and teams are increasingly taking part in international webinars. This is imperative to ensure we continue promoting both South Africa's road sector and the work of the South African Road Federation beyond our borders.

The 39th Road Pavements Forum, a well-established networking event, was also successfully delivered online at the end of May.



The pandemic is far from over. The road industry can learn from other sectors, such as the aviation industry, which has demonstrated the importance of prioritising projects, ensuring the right people are assigned to these projects, managing cash flow and strategic planning.

Please remain safe in your homes and workplaces.

**Phil Hendricks**

President of the South African Road Federation

## Deal with IRF connects SARF members to leading international experts

A deal signed between SARF and the International Road Federation (IRF Global) based in Washington DC has given SARF access to webinars hosted by the IRF and presented by top international road sector experts.

As well as live webinars that the IRF hosts regularly, the deal gives SARF members and staff access to over 50 webinars that have been presented over the past four years. They cover themes such as asset management, road safety, road funding, highway design and management, and smart mobility.

### South Africa's road sector joins transport stakeholders from 70 countries

SARF President, Phil Hendricks, says, "Our membership with the IRF connects us to a network of members in over 70 countries across the world. This arrangement gives us access to a rich pool of knowledge and to the insights of leading global advocates for better roads."

SARF members and staff were quick to log in to the webinars. Of the 215 delegates that took part in the 'Performance-based reports for Low Volume Roads' webinar which was live-streamed on 29 April, 42 were from South Africa. The 'Road Safety Audits and inspection from concept to implementation' webinar on 6 May saw 62 South African delegates join some 4,000 people from across the world.

"South Africa is not alone in the challenges it faces when it comes to how are our roads are planned, built, funded and managed, and how safety is promoted across road networks. These webinars unpack issues and offer best practice solutions that we can apply to our work and take back to our stakeholders and clients," says Phil.

### SARF aligned to IRF's goal to promote roads and enhance connectivity

Patrick Sankey, IRF President and Chief Executive, says, "Looking beyond the current circumstances, IRF Global remains fully committed to its role as the world's leading advocate for the road sector. Our sector is the backbone of world economies, and we will continue working with our members and partners to ensure governments around the world are making the needed investments in road and transport infrastructure that stimulate the economy, save lives, and enhance connectivity."

SARF's work in South Africa is aligned to the IRF's mission to encourage and promote the development and maintenance of better, safer and more sustainable roads.



## SARF's training programmes launched online

SARF has risen to the challenge presented by the Covid-19 pandemic and is starting to deliver its training programmes online. Two courses have already been successfully presented using the Microsoft Teams portal.

At the beginning of the year, 50 training courses had been planned covering topics such as structures, storm water and hydrology, road safety, management and planning, traffic engineering and road pavement engineering. Venues across South Africa and Namibia had been selected for 20 of the courses.

But after just seven courses had taken place – providing professional development to 235 people – things changed very quickly. About 20 courses had to be immediately postponed.

SARF Operations Director, Basil Jonsson, says, "It became apparent that the Covid-19 pandemic was here to stay for some time, so we embraced the 'new normal' and began exploring different options to ensure training could resume."

SARF President, Phil Hendricks, says, "To quickly adopt and use new technology is not easy but Basil and the SARF Education Committee have done extremely well in selecting courses, preparing the presenters, and familiarising themselves with the new technology."

### First two virtual courses successfully delivered

In early June, the 'Traffic Safety Officer/Roadworks Traffic Management' course saw 22 delegates participate. This course focused on the compliance, legislative and competency elements they need when carrying out road works projects.

Says Basil, "Course presenter, Andre Fabricius from AnFab Consult, did a great job. He had prepared animated slides and videos that he shared with the delegates on their screens.

"After the first course, we gave other course presenters access to the link so that they could get tips and ideas. A lot of preparatory work is involved as presenters need to adjust to a completely new way of teaching."

On 10 and 11 June, Ron Berkers from Tshwane University of Technology, successfully delivered 'Introduction to Road Materials Engineering' to 32 engineers, technologists and technicians. This course provided a practical, hands-on introduction to road building materials and road construction techniques.

### Upcoming online training courses

"We already have more courses planned for virtual delivery, and are working with presenters to add to SARF's virtual training programme line-up," says Basil.

#### SARF's upcoming virtual courses include:

**24 – 25 June** – New Advanced Traffic Safety Officer / Roadworks Traffic Management Training;

**30 June – 1 July** – Bituminous Binders for Roads;

**8 – 9 July** – Asphalt: An Overview of Best Practice;

**28 July** – Community Engagement;

**30 July** – The Use of Reclaimed Asphalt in the Production of Asphalt;

**16 July** – Assessment and Analysis of Test Data;

**23 July** – Concrete Road Design and Construction;

**4 – 6 August** – Manage Labour Intensive Construction Projects;

**11 – 13 August** – Traffic Impact Assessments; and

**18 – 20 August** – Non-Motorised Transport Practitioners.



*City of Tshwane engineers Jaco Cronje and Werner Burhns successfully logged in to SARF's Introduction to Road Materials Engineering course earlier this month.*

## Road Pavement Forum

### 39<sup>th</sup> Road Pavements Forum a great success

The Road Pavements Forum held on 28 May went off without a hitch. It was the 39th chapter of the event, which sees road sector stakeholders share and debate road-related matters relevant to the South African roads industry. It was also the first time the event had ever been held virtually. A total of 377 engineering and road sector professionals registered for the event and participated via the Zoom portal.

This year's Forum was arranged by SARF, the Southern African Bitumen Association (SABITA), the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the Society of Asphalt Technology (SAT), the Aggregate and Sand Producers Association of South Africa (ASPASA) and The Concrete Institute.

#### **Speakers address the impact of Covid-19 on mining, road infrastructure contracts and construction**

The programme, put together by Basil Jonsson and SABITA's Saied Solomons, comprised four key speakers.

Dr Thuthula Balfour, who is Head of Health Department at the Minerals Council of South Africa, shared her experience of dealing with the pandemic's impact on the mining sector.

Dumi Nkabinde, Regional Manager for SANRAL Eastern Region, provided insights into SANRAL's response to the pandemic which is seeing SANRAL migrate its procurement process online, making it easier for bidders to achieve compliance and pitch for tenders.

Russell Adams, spokesperson for the Public Private Growth Initiative, gave feedback on what lockdown level four meant for the construction industry.

Melanie Hofmeyr, Chief Director for Road Design, Transport and Public Works in the Western Cape Government, outlined the contracts coming up in the province and also unpacked the structure and purpose of the new roads branch.

#### **Live-chat on key issues**

Throughout the event, the live-chat feature on the Zoom application was abuzz with comments and engagement on the issues the speakers were raising.

## Excellent planning, delivery

Many people who participated commended SARF's Basil Jonsson and SABITA's Saied Solomons for the way the Forum had been planned and produced. Most agreed that online events have the potential to draw more people than a physical event and that meetings are likely to be held virtually until the end of the year.

The event was made available on YouTube, and within a short space of time, over 250 people had viewed it.

The event is available on <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYFGQ6A5Oxsp7WJSKO5amXQ>.



*The RPF has provided a platform for road stakeholders to debate important issues relating to SA's road network for many years.*

## Road safety

### SARF's child road safety success leads to further funding

Children in nine schools in Mogale City on the West Rand who were previously at a high risk of being injured or even killed on their daily journeys to and from school are at last, safer. This is thanks to a Fondation Botnar-funded project being implemented by SARF in the municipality. It has involved identifying schools where children are exposed to danger, and then taking action to reduce their risk. This has been achieved by implementing comprehensive road safety management tools, improving and upgrading road and transport infrastructure and changing road user behaviour.

Fondation Botnar, in partnership with the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP), launched the Botnar Child Road Safety Challenge (BCRSC) in 2017. Six priority countries were selected for the Challenge. Given the high levels of road crashes and fatalities on South Africa's road network, South Africa was one of the countries selected. The other countries were India, Mexico, Romania, Tunisia and Vietnam. SARF was selected as the primary recipient of Fondation Botnar's grant to South Africa.

The excellent work that SARF has done in Mogale City since the grant was awarded led to a second tranche of funding from Fondation Botnar to expand the project.

## Road safety efforts focus on high risk schools

SARF established that there were 100 road crash fatalities in Mogale City over a 30-month period, from 1 January 2015 to 30 June 2017. While SARF was unable to obtain reliable data regarding the number of child fatalities in Mogale City, in response to this shocking statistic, the area was earmarked for the Fondation Botnar programme.

Schools selected for the first phase of the project included:

- Athlolong Primary School;
- Lengau Primary School;
- Mosupatsela Secondary School;
- Tsholetsega Public School;
- WD Oliphant Primary School; and
- Bosele Intermediary School.

In the second phase of the project, the following schools were added:

- Boipelo Intermediary School;
- Diphlane Primary School; and
- Phatudi Primary School.



*One of the interventions SARF is implementing near schools in Mogale City focuses on improving road signage.*

## Stakeholder news

### SARF President joins international experts for SATC's first webinar

After much deliberation, the directors and organising committee of the 39th Southern African Transport Conference (SATC) decided not to go ahead with the 2020 event. Instead, as part of their commitment to keeping debates around transport issues alive, they decided to host a series of webinars. The webinars are being planned to provide local and international perspectives on the effect of Covid-19 on the transport sector.

The first webinar was held on 10 June this year. Presenters included SARF President and Client Director of Transport (Africa) at Aurecon, Phil Hendricks, who was joined by Martin Humphreys, Lead Transport Economist at the World Bank, and Susanna Zammataro, the International Road Federation's Director General.

Phil's presentation focused on the impact of Covid-19 on sustainable transport in South Africa.

"Aurecon South Africa, currently rebranding as Zutari, is gathering information on the impact of Covid-19 on sustainable transport in South Africa and surrounding regions," said Phil. "In order to reflect an industry-wide perspective of the subject, we are collating the opinions of a range of different people. These include our internal transport subject matter experts and young professionals as well as the heads of several major transport sector organisations.

"Our final report will only be made available next month, so my presentation looked at our preliminary findings on the impact of Covid-19 on sustainable transport in South Africa. It unpacked the opportunities we have identified, and how we are planning to maximise these in the coming months."

For more about the webinar, visit <https://www.satc.org.za/>



The banner features the Southern African Transport Conference logo, which includes a stylized flag with horizontal stripes in red, green, blue, and yellow. Below the logo, the text "Southern African Transport Conference" is written in a bold, sans-serif font, with "2020" in a large, white font on a red background. The banner is decorated with colorful geometric patterns in shades of yellow, orange, and red.

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*After much deliberation the Directors and Organising Committee have made the decision not to go ahead as planned with the 39<sup>th</sup> annual Southern African Transport Conference and Exhibition.*

The SATC has always served as a forum to debate current transport related issues and we plan to remain doing just that.

Click here to view the Webinar from 10 June 2020.

We will be hosting a series of webinars that will unpack local and international perspectives on transport and Covid-19. Click here for more information. Next Webinar, 12 August 2020

**Website:** <https://sarf.org.za> | **Tel:** +27 11 394 5634 /1459 | **Email:** [info@sarf.org.za](mailto:info@sarf.org.za)