This year, IMESA witnessed the most attending delegates in its 76 years of hosting conferences.

A record number of 960 people gathered at the breezy, modern Boardwalk Hotel and Conference facility in Port Elizabeth to share information, case studies, and thoughts on how municipal engineers could work together to meet people’s needs. A total of 91 exhibitors displayed their products and services in the exhibition hall and the overall feedback from delegates have been exceptionally positive.

Some of the presentations that stood out for delegates were that of using the concept of franchising to ensure infrastructure delivery and job creation, delivered by Oliver Iye; as well as an emergency stormwater upgrade at the Virginia Airport of the eThekweni Municipality, by Godfrey Vella. Delegates also thoroughly enjoyed the after-lunch motivation talk by Prof Piet Naude from the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) who challenged the audience to apply more than their left-brain engineering skills in their daily work. The award-winning NMMU choir surprised the audience with a flash mob during Naude’s talk.

Another highlight was the entertainment and comic relief of Thursday evening’s gala dinner.

A significant moment as engineering industry bodies gather on stage: Panel Chairperson Mr Dup van Renen, SAICE President Mr Peter Kleynhans, CESA President Mr Naren Bhojaram and IMESA’s President Mr Frank Stevens engage and comment on the key conference themes, as well as the detrimental effect of political interference on service delivery. A survey was handed out to delegates to determine the main reasons for poor service delivery in South Africa at the start of the event.

Let’s continue to improve!

Having returned back to Durban from an excellent IMESA Conference, one feels both excited and slightly nervous! Apart from the superb information that was shared, and the invaluable networking opportunities, once again, one became aware of the many challenges facing municipal engineers - perhaps not only in Southern Africa, but globally. Events such as these makes one realise the critical role that municipal engineers play in South Africa. During the panel conclusion on Friday, Panel Chair, Dup van Heerden raised the question whether we should continue what we are doing and do it better, or change the way we do things. I think the panel was in agreement that many of the things we do as municipal engineers are indeed working. The conference illustrated these pockets of excellence. I emphasised the importance of benchmarking ourselves against our peers. It is only through benchmarking that we’d know whether we are improving or not! And speaking of improvement, the Port Elizabeth LOC really raised the bar in terms of organising this year’s conference. It is clear that Durban would have to go the extra mile to ensure a bigger and better conference in 2014! And we certainly hope to keep up the standard that was set this year!

Let me use this opportunity to thank and congratulate the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality for pulling together one of the best conferences in the history of IMESA!

Frank Stevens, IMESA President

CONFERENCE FEEDBACK...
The second issue of the Municipal Chronicles focusses on IMESA’s annual calendar highlight: the IMESA conference.

We received excellent feedback during the event - both for the presentations and the exhibition stands. The conference report and some of the photographs will be shared online! Keep a look out on the IMESA website for more details! Also be in touch with IMESA if you would like to share additional conference or general feedback:

Ingrid Botton
support@imesa.iims.co.za

Let’s continue to improve!

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Frank Stevens, IMESA President
WORD ON THE GROUND....

Some snapshots and comments from the Conference

Bhavna Soni, senior manager water operations, Ethekwini

"The conference venue is excellent. However, it would be useful to have break-out panels, to provide more focus. It is a bit big"

Iaian Watson, director, Knight Piesold

"Because of the lack of integration between engineering and procurement. It would be good to see more procurement people at the next conference"

Maletsatsi Manhe, technical manager, Ga-Segonyana Local Municipality

"We try to attend the IMESA conference annually because of the excellent information sharing and networking opportunities"

Mpumelelo Sedia, Politician, Ngaka Modiri Molema district municipality

"The conference was an eye opener. As a politician, it was good to hear the challenges that engineers encounter"

Chester Kan, technical director, Aurecon

"The survey is very useful. It is certainly a step in the right direction, to determine the root of the problem at municipal level"

Sophia Elizabeth Fourie, asset manager, Royal HaskoningDHV

"It is by far the best IMESA conference that I have attended thus far. The organisations is absolutely fantastic"

Makhwenkwe Dombo, senior business consultant, Vetasi

"I feel that there is a lack of learning transfer between the conference and the delegates who attend each year"

Sarel van Balen, Masters civil engineering student, Stellenbosch

"As a student, it is very valuable to be part of the conference. I would like to see larger student representation amongst IMESA members"

Other conference highlights...

This year’s conference included several highlights, including the technical site visits (Left), the open days for school children (Centre), and the entertaining Gala dinner.
IMESA Branch feedback

Western Cape branch

EVENT FEEDBACK
- Western Cape AGM, Seminar and technical tour held on Thursday 12 September 2013
- Held at Steenbras Dam, Water Treatment Plant
- The day’s theme was “Developing the Future” and initiated wide debate from an interactive audience
- The keynote speaker was Minister Anton Bredell, Minister of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning for the Western Cape
- The day provided an interesting technical tour at the water treatment facility
- Copies of the presentations, photos, event register and more can be downloaded from the IMESA website (www.imesa.org.za), under branch page, Western Cape

KwaZulu-Natal branch

EVENT FEEDBACK
IMESA KZN Branch held its 3rd quarterly meeting in Northdene, Durban on 6 September 2013.
- The venue was the Northdene Research and Development Centre
- Presentations were done by:
  - Mr Jan Kruger of Fiberpipe (Pty) Ltd on “GP Pipes – Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow”
  - Presentations on Aquaculture and Biomass by eThekwini Municipality
- Site Visit - An on-site tour was done round the Northdene facility
- A total of 56 members attended the meeting.
- Lunch was sponsored by Fiberpipe (Pty) Ltd

Northern Province branch

EVENT FEEDBACK
- IMESA Northern Province Branch held its AGM on Friday 30 August
- The venue was Lux Mundi Community Church in Garsfontein, Pretoria
- Presentations will be done by:
  - Mr Vishal Poona / Mr Ignacio Pena of Joat – “Principles of Non-Revenue Water Reduction:”
  - Mr Dean Hansford of i2O Water – “Application of Advanced Pressure Management”
- As this is the Christmas meeting and lunch, sponsored by i2O Water, there will be no site visit

Border branch

EVENT DETAILS
- The Branch will host its Annual Mini-seminar on 20 November 2013 at the East London Golf Club
- The Theme of the seminar is “Innovation in Infrastructure”
- The AGM will be held at Grazia Fine Food & Wine at 6pm on 20 November 2013
- Sincere thank you for the sponsor of the event, i2O Water

CONGRATS TO
- Mr Oliver Ive, an IMESA Border Branch member, for presenting at the IMESA Conference in PE