



Minutes of the 185th Meeting of the Council of the South African Institute of Physics

Date: Friday, 27 February 2009, Time: 9h30 to 16H30
Boardroom, School of Physics, Westville Campus, UKZN

1. Opening and Attendance

The President, Prof. Chetty, chaired the meeting and welcomed everyone .

Present: Prof. N. Chetty (President), Dr. A.Z.A. Combrink, Dr. S.H. Connell, Prof. J.A.A. Engelbrecht (Treasurer), Dr. A. Forbes (Secretary), Prof. W.D. Heiss, Dr. P. Martinez, Mr. B. Masara, Prof. H. Moraal, Mr G.W. Bosman and Prof. E.G. Rohwer.

Apologies: Dr. I.M.A. Gledhill

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings

Person making submission	AF
Action required	Approve minutes
Summary	
Discussion at Meeting	Approved
Additional information:	Minutes C184_final.pdf

3. Matters arising from the Minutes

Person making submission	AF
Action required	Please refer to report
Summary	Please refer to report
Discussion at Meeting	Action list updated
Additional information:	Outstanding_Actions_Feb09.pdf

4. Report from the President

Person making submission	NC
Action required	Please refer to report
Summary	Please refer to report
Discussion at Meeting	<p>4.1 Council Elections Council members were asked to encourage nominations from the community for the new Council and for its many committees.</p> <p>4.2 Nithaya Chetty case at UKZN Prof. Chetty recused himself from the discussion. Council was informed that the charges against Prof. Chetty had been dropped by the UKZN due to his leaving the institution. The Council expressed its affirmation of Prof. Chetty as the SAIP president.</p> <p>Action: The secretary to draft a message to the membership informing them of the resolution of this issue.</p>
Additional information:	

5. Financial Matters

5.1. Treasurer's Report

Person making submission	JE
Action required	For noting
Summary	Current Financial status of SAIP
Discussion at Meeting	JE summarised the financial status of the SAIP. It was reported that the SAIP had surplus funds in the account at the end of the financial year, and that the SAIP submitted its tax return as a public benefit organisation.
Additional information:	Treasrep2009a.pdf

5.2. SAIP Office Account

Person making submission	JE
Action required	For discussion and decision
Summary	Proposal on handling of Office Account
Discussion at Meeting	A proposal for delineating the accounts of the EO and the SAIP was put forward. Resolution: SC, JE and BM to consider the proposal and make a recommendation to Council by email prior to the next meeting.
Additional information:	Proposal1.pdf

5.3. SAASTA Money

Person making submission	JE
Action required	For noting
Summary	Status of SAASTA money in SAIP account
Discussion at Meeting	JE reported that Prof Zingu is considering the balance of the SAASTA money as a "donation" to the SAIP, but to be used to promote Physics as per the recommendations of the Future of Physics panel.
Additional information:	SAASTA Money.pdf

6. Conference Matters

6.1. Limpopo (2008)

PM reported that the pro-forma report was complete, but that a detailed financial report was still outstanding. It was noted that the NRF had to date not yet paid a promised ~R118 000 to the University of Limpopo for the conference, and PM was requested to follow up on this.

Action: PM to contact NRF regarding payment of the agreed R118 000.

6.2. UKZN (2009)

Person making submission	FP and PM
Action required	For noting and discussion
Summary	A summary on progress to date
Discussion at Meeting	Dr. Matthews and Prof. Petruccione of UKZN presented the conference plan to Council. The following guidelines were agreed on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students should pay the base costs only, with a higher fee

	<p>for non-students;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The EO should be used by the local organising committee for planning and financial aspects of the conference. <p>Action: PM, BM and NC to look into funding options for students</p> <p>Action: AF to circulate to the organisers an email list of specialist group chairs.</p> <p>Action: PM to ensure a site visit is completed prior to the start of the conference.</p>
Additional information:	

6.3. CSIR (2010)

Person making submission	IG
Action required	For discussion and decision
Summary	Draft letter from the SAIP to the CSIR
Discussion at Meeting	Draft letter still outstanding. IG and AF to urgently write this for NC.
Additional information:	

7. Report of the Executive Office

BM gave a detailed report on the activities of the EO and the planned strategy of the EO going forward. It was suggested that the EO compile a report for the DST to highlight the value added as a result of the EO.

8. Specialist Groups

8.1. Specialist Group Reports

8.1.1. Applied and Industrial Physics

8.1.2. Astrophysics and Space Science Specialist Group

8.1.3. Education Specialist Group

Person making submission	EGR (and G. Arendse)
Action required	For discussion
Summary	<p>SAIP conference provides an opportunity for all specialist groups to communicate science to learners, students (undergraduate), teachers and the general public. What would be the best way to interact with these target groups? Should we</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. have a separate day (s) aimed at promoting science to these groups (non-specialist lectures, how I teach sessions, development of curriculum-related content workshops, ...) 2. find ways to get these target groups to attend the conference and thereby incorporate them in the programme. We could then let them share some of their "frustrations" and get lecturers involved in 1st year teaching to share their experience for instance. 3. have a public lecture on the 1st day – something general with an EXCELLENT science communicator? <p>We (education specialist group) seem to have "trouble" getting</p>

	<p>researchers to present at SAIP – they rather attend SAARMSTE. What are we doing to change this? Surely this should form part of the Shaping the Future initiative. Some researchers mentioned the fact that they “don’t get anything out of attending SAIP – publications”. Should we perhaps think of “changing” the status of the Education SPECIALIST Group – rather just an educational forum, i.e. if we are struggling to get “recognized researchers” to attend? How do we align the “activities” of the specialist group with the goals of marketing?</p> <p>If we want to make an impact, it is important to get “everybody” (or rather those interested) involved. There seems to be so many things happening that “we” don’t know of. What is the role of specialist groups in the “everyday running” of SAIP?</p>
Discussion at Meeting	<p>A lengthy discussion took place to address the issues raised.</p> <p>Action: NC, ER and Gillian Arendse to meet with SAARMSTE to discuss how the SAIP and SAARMSTE might work together in the future to help ensure a vibrant physics education group at the annual SAIP conference. ER to convene this meeting.</p>
Additional information:	

8.1.4. Lasers, Optics and Spectroscopy Specialist Group

Person making submission	EGR (and A. Forbes)
Action required	For noting
Summary	<p>(1) Photonics Initiative of South Africa (PISA)</p> <p>A final strategy document for Photonics in South Africa was submitted to the DST for consideration. A delegation from the PISA steering committee and working groups presented the strategy to the DG of the DST in November 2008, with a follow-up meeting in December 2008. The outcome is an interim proposal for funding (~R15m) for 2009/10 in order to get the initiative started while DST deliberate on the overall strategy.</p> <p>(2) Photonics events</p> <p>There are several training courses and workshops planned by the community to take place within the next 6 months, many of them sponsored by the African Laser Centre (ALC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Short course on Fibre Optics (NMMU/ALC); * Short course on an Introduction to Lasers (US/ALC); * Short course on Introduction to Laser Beams (NLC/ALC); * Workshop on Progress in ALC Projects (NMMU/ALC); * Workshop on “Lasers and Accelerators: Particle Acceleration with High Intensity Lasers” (US/iThemba Labs/NLC) – this was successfully concluded in January 2009; <p>These events are open to the entire community, are (or will be) widely advertised, and with particular focus on students.</p>
Additional information:	PISA_strategy.pdf

8.1.5. Nuclear, Particle and Radiation Physics Specialist Group

Person making submission	EGR (and S. Mullins)
Action required	For noting

Summary	<p>1) In November 2008, iThemba LABS was successful with the award of a grant of R4M via the DST-JINR collaboration for the procurement of a state-of-the-art, highly-segmented high-purity germanium "clover" detector.</p> <p>2) The launch of the South Africa-CERN Programme at iThemba LABS took place on the 15th December 2008 (http://www.tlabs.ac.za/public/docs/SA-CERN%20Launch%2015-12-08.doc)</p> <p>3) Discussions took place on 12th February 2009 between the African Laser Centre at Stellenbosch and iThemba LABS concerning laser ionization for the production of radio-active ion beams.</p> <p>4) A high-level scientific delegation from the Russian Federation will visit South Africa on the 17th and 18th February 2009. The delegation includes members from the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research (JINR) and the Russian Foundation for Basic Research, who will visit iThemba LABS. Other members will visit the University of Cape Town.</p> <p>5) iThemba LABS will be host the 11th Neutron and Ion Dosimetry Symposium (NEUDOS-11) from 12-16 October 2009 (http://www.neudos11.tlabs.ac.za/neudos11/default.htm)</p>
Additional information:	

8.1.6.Theoretical Physics Specialist Group

9. Physics Projects and Programmes

9.1. Emerging SA Space Programme

Person making submission	PM
Action required	For discussion
Summary	None
Discussion at Meeting	PM reported on the South African Space Agency and Space Policy. It was suggested that PM write an article for the Physics Comment outlining these new developments.
Additional information:	None

9.2. Physics 500

Person making submission	IG (and Kevin Meyer)
Action required	For discussion
Summary	Report to SAIP
Discussion at Meeting	It was noted that three aspects of this project are still outstanding: (i) more applicants are required for the database, (ii) the database is yet to be utilised for marketing and publicity, and (iii) the marketing committee should use the database in order to make contact with industry physicists.
Additional information:	Physics 500 Reportback to SAIP 27-02-2009v0.pdf

9.3. BSc Curriculum Project

Person making submission	HM
Action required	For discussion
Summary	<p>The idea to review the BSc curriculum was introduced at the HoD meeting at the Polokwane conference in July 2008. A steering committee consisting of H Moraal (convenor), DJ Grayson, B Masara, D Naidoo, C Rijdsijk, and PA Whitelock met during the last week of September, and submitted the attached progress report to Council for its meeting on 31 October 2008.</p> <p>The core of the recommendation is that we must review the curriculum with the focus on skills – problem solving, computational, and writing skills. These skills are greatly lacking when students enter the postgraduate level. A workshop under international leadership was foreseen for September 2009.</p> <p>At the last council meeting, council approved the appointment of Dr Saalih Allie as convener of this initiative. He met together with Brain Masara and Harm Moraal on 27 November 2008 to take the initiative further. It was decided to submit an application for funding to ICSU, with deadline 1 December. That failed on the technical point that only formal ICSU members could apply for those grants.</p> <p>At the SAIP executive meeting of 22 January 2009 Diane Grayson, Deena Naidoo and Case Rijdsijk were invited, and they proposed that this project should be advertised/promoted/introduced in some form at the SAIP conference in July 2009.</p> <p>Harm Moraal suggests that the steering committee should consider this as a possible Stias project – it is multi-institutional in nature, it needs international collaboration and guidance of experts who will have to be accommodated for substantial periods, and it has broad potential impact for other science disciplines.</p> <p>There has been no further progress since.</p>
Discussion at Meeting	<p>Council reflected that Saalih Allie does not appear to have the time to execute this project. Council expressed concern that a project that holds promise for the community is not being expedited.</p> <p>Action: HM to approach Patricia Whitelock to discuss a new way forward.</p>
Additional information:	None

9.4. History of Physics

Person making submission	HM
Action required	For noting
Summary	<p>The status of the manuscripts is fairly similar to that of the previous council meeting: about 2/3 of the 60-odd manuscripts have been received. Important outstanding manuscripts include those of the physics departments of UKZN, UCT, Fort Hare and Limpopo. The others are less crucial – they aren't from institutions as a whole, and if they are not received they won't cause a serious imbalance to the document.</p> <p>Harm Moraal spent a very enjoyable and relaxing month from 17 November to 12 December with Runan de Kock at Stias in Stellenbosch to edit and consolidate the manuscripts, and to conduct various interviews with role players of the 1950s and 1960s. Concrete progress stemming from this are extensive and well-structured manuscripts from iThemba LABS/NAC in the Western Cape, from Necsa/AEB/AEC, and a very gratifying, balanced account, written by Dr Neville Comins, about the commercialisation revolution at the CSIR</p>

	in the late 1980s. Several of the university department manuscripts are well rounded off, and are being finally approved by the contributors.
Discussion at Meeting	Council again expressed its thanks for the work of Prof. de Kock. It was brought to the attention of Council that Prof. de Kock has requested financial support for his participation at the SAIP conference in July at UKZN, in order to meet with key individuals and complete the project. Resolution: Council agreed to remunerate Prof. de Kock with an inflationary adjusted amount for his services on this project, and to reimburse him for airfare and accommodation pertaining to the annual SAIP conference to be held at the UKZN.
Additional information:	None

10. Committees of Council

10.1. Awards

10.1.1. Silver Jubilee Medal

Person making submission	AF
Action required	For noting
Summary	Call for nominations has been sent out
Additional information:	None

10.1.2. CB van Wyk

Person making submission	HM
Action required	For noting
Summary	Harm Moraal paid a visit to Prof CB van Wyk on 5 December 2008 to hand him the accompanying letter from the president. I was very cordially received, Prof van Wyk accepted with gratitude what we are doing with his donation, and he is humble in his grace.
Additional information:	CBvanWyk.pdf

10.1.3. CB van Wyk

It was noted that the awards certificates need the new logo embossed onto them.

Action: DH to look into finalising the wording and design of the new certificates.

11. Portfolios of Council

11.1. Communication

11.1.1. Website and Newsletter

Nothing reported.

11.1.2. Physics Comment

HM suggested that a short piece be written on the student participation at the Limpopo conference. The first issue of PC is due out in mid-March 2009.

12. Student Liaison

Person making submission	GWB
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Action required	For discussion
Summary	<p>Four issues will be focused on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Recognition for poster presentations at SAIP conferences. 2) SAIP conference evaluation. 3) Nomination for student representatives. 4) Science Unlimited.
Discussion at Meeting	<p>12.1 Posters at SAIP Council felt that the new format approved for the UKZN conference would address the issue of the lack of prominence of poster presentations.</p> <p>12.2 Conference evaluation Council agreed that a student evaluation of the annual conference would be useful and welcomed the idea. Action: GWB to see to the implementation of this evaluation process.</p> <p>12.3 Student representatives on Council It was agreed that student representatives of the specialist groups would automatically be nominated for the Council position of student representative. Action: NC to write this into the new constitution.</p> <p>12.4 Science unlimited The idea of students marketing on behalf of the SAIP was welcomed. Council recommended that the proposal be taken to the marketing committee for financial support.</p>
Additional information:	None

13. General

13.1. Constitution

NC reported on the development of the new constitution and its by-laws. Council was tasked with reviewing the draft documents and giving feedback. It was suggested that draft versions be made available to the membership prior to the next AGM.

13.2. CEC feedback

The letter from Case Rijdsijk (25/02/2009) was noted and discussed. Council thanked Case for his hard work. The physics olympiad initiative, SAPHO, was acknowledged as an excellent initiative and Council expressed its full support of this.

14. Next meeting

The next Council meeting will be held at the UKZN on Monday 6th July 2009.

Meeting closed at 16h34.

President: N. Chetty	Secretary: A. Forbes