

The South African Institute for Non-Destructive Testing (SAINT) has funded the establishment of the SAINT Professional Body for NDT (SPBNDDT) since its inception with an objective of the SPBNDDT becoming self-sufficient by the end of 2017.

I would like to report on some of the activities regarding our efforts to meet this objective.

End Users

Members of the Board met with Eskom, probably the largest of the end users earlier in the year in an effort to pursue them to include Professional Designations in their requirements for NDT personnel. The meeting was fruitful, they clearly know where we are coming from and we now understand their point of view. One of the major concerns is the lack of diversity in the Board, particularly around representation from the end users. Eskom has members on the Board and it was pointed out that they are not actively participating. I think the onus is on us to find a way to encourage them to be more active in our body.

Another concern is why we have not linked into ECSA. The long history of ECSA and NDT was explained to Mr Morris Morake; however, he suggested that we re-visit this issue.

Our efforts to have Designations included in the Eskom documents failed, however Mr Morake recognises our work and instructed his team to stay engaged with SPBNDDT. The concern is that we may move forward and they are left behind.

I have had an engagement with ECSA and their initial response is that NDT should proceed with its own Professional Body. However, they have requested further meetings to explore NDT Engineer qualifications and registration.

No progress has been made with other end users such as Sasol, PetroSA and Transnet.

Different certification schemes are affecting the mobility of technicians and placing large demands on their finances. I am proposing a meeting with all end users to request that they inform industry of their NDT needs, and try to find common ground for requirements that overlap.

Service Providers

Without the End User mandate for professional designation, Service Providers are still reluctant to mandate designations themselves.

Industrial Radiographer Personal Authority Program

I am pleased to report that the SPBNDDT proposal to the Regulator regarding training, examination and independent examinations has materialised. Designation by the Director General to manage this process was received in May 2017 stating that Directorate Radiation Control appoints SAINT to act on its behalf.

Directorate Radiation Control formally informed all Authority Holders of the change in September 2017. This has triggered roadshows around the country to inform industry what to do.

Three (3) Training Bodies, namely ANDTc, SAIW, SANDE have received interim approval from SPBNDDT to provide the one-week Basic level Radiation Safety training. Final audits will follow shortly. Radiation Control has agreed that the NECSA Training the Trainer in radiation safety is no longer one of the conditions. SPBNDDT will describe in consultation with the schools and Radiation Control the criteria for lectures

To date, these training bodies have presented five (5) Basic level training courses and fifty-six (56) students completed the SPBNDDT central examination. Analysis of the examination papers has highlighted subtle differences between the schools notes causing a small impact on the results. Discussions with the school lectures are ongoing to ensure notes are harmonised and the examinees are not disadvantaged.

Byron Georgiou has completed development of a new module to allow registration of Industrial Radiographers on the SPBNDDT database and I am pleased to report that the module is live and working very well. After demonstration and training of relevant staff at a number of company's feedback is positive.

Management of this process will certainly help the funding crisis we face. Accreditation of schools, examination fees, affiliate fees and Industrial Radiographer Personal Authorities has the potentially to sustain the Body.

The Industrial Radiographer program has thus far been welcomed by industry and I am optimistic that the program will be successful and meet all of Radiation Control and Service Provider expectations.

Members

Numbers are growing slowly however should increase substantially with the registration of Industrial Radiographers. I currently have visibility of more than 400 industrial radiographers and am work hard to identify the rest. To those that have already responded to my questionnaire, thank you. Information collected will also assist in completion of our position paper.

Contacts

Contact is maintained with the following;

DOH Radiation Control including their Inspectorate, MERSETA, QCTO, SAQA, Department of Home Affairs, VUT, SANAS.

Report on other activities

I reported last year that development of a PANI type program here in South Africa is planned. After much discussion with a number of NDT Level 3's particularly Mr Graham Wilson of Eskom this exercise will need careful thought and planning to ensure the correct departure point.

Graham with extensive experience of the PANI reports certainly opened my mind to the problems of such a program. I believe his potential contribution and wisdom should not be wasted and I will certainly seek his advice going forward. It is a pleasure to talk to someone that shares many of my concerns regarding training, certification and end users not supplying adequate instruction to their service providers.

I still believe as a country we need to instigate some type of investigation with the objective of identifying solutions, which will allow industry to optimise performance, minimise the magnitude of operator variation in the application of NDT inspections, and satisfy the needs of the end users.

Thank you to Board members of SPBNDDT, in particular to Simon Wilding and Elaine MacDonald for your support and assistance.

Thank you Manfred Johannes for your valuable counsel.

The objective of being self-sufficient should be realized in this next financial year.

Lastly, I would like to wish Pat Garland a speedy recovery. He is currently not able to walk and receiving rehabilitation in the Netcare hospital next to SABC, Auckland Park, Johannesburg.

Thank you.

Original signed

Garth Appel.

Manager SPBNDDT