

## **Chairman's Report 2015 SAIA AGM**

2015 Annual General Meeting of the South African Institute of auctioneers.

The primary reason of this AGM is to elect a new board of directors to move SAIA into the future. It is a time to reflect on the last two years being the period that this, the serving board have been the custodians of the SAIA office and a time to consider and reflect on the achievements and work in progress that we have been working on. It is also a time to analyse the issues that hinder the development of our Association and our industry as a whole.

Some people say that the auction industry on the face of it appears to be the easiest industry to be involved in. I've often been ridiculed personally at dinner parties and functions where people believe that we seem to make money terribly easily by purely standing up and shouting some numbers and walking away with loads of money. If they only knew what goes into trying to develop an auction business in a very competitive arena under a constant cloud of being in an industry that is sometimes seen as dodgy and underhand. Our association can go a long way in lifting this veil and enhancing our Industry as a whole.

So in order to start I would like to state that SAIA is in good shape and has developed during this board's tenure. We have maintained our membership levels and this year we have increased our income with year-to-date income totalling in excess of R500,000. Our membership levels are constant and we continue to have in excess of 160 corporate members per year. Last year we took the decision to employ a further member of staff to assist with the administration and to help roll out some of the developments. Sonja Styger

Sonja has worked tirelessly with the board to improve some of the administration headaches that we are experiencing and her efforts certainly have certainly helped to accelerate some of the initiatives that we have been speaking about but have been unable to introduce due to the work pressures that we all experience in this business.

Our webpage [WWW.auctioneering.co.za](http://WWW.auctioneering.co.za) has been a huge success and I'm pleased to state that the Webmaster, PCW New Media are here today to give you an insight to the new and improved looking site that we will soon enjoy.

For those of you that utilise the page, you will note Google searches that it ranks very high on the Google search engine and we are all able to share the cross pollination of the buying community when they visit the page to view our members auctions.

Not only does this webpage assist our members promote their sales, SAIA makes money from the income from this page which allows us to employ the services of Gerda Heyman who acts as our PR agent following the void left by Tarryn Jordaan some years ago. Auctioneering.co.za needs your support and I'll ask you to make use of them if you're not doing so already.

Our accounting system has been developed and under the stewardship of Martin Dibowitz as our financial director we're able to report audited figures for the second year. We have discussed and hope to implement other money raising initiative which will help bolster our finances.

Finally we have introduced new certificates which have an embossed stamp on and this will hopefully eradicate some rogue companies from purporting to be members of SAIA and creating your own certificates, you will receive your new certificates today.

All in all we have a stable organisation however in order to grow and develop we need you the members to play a bigger role in developing SAIA into an organisation that we can all continue to be proud of.

Sadly we do however have our issues and I'd like to reflect on some of those. SAIA talks broadly for the auction industry however it is not an all-inclusive organisation. Being a voluntary organisation we do not have all auctioneers within our organisation. Furthermore we are an organisation that lacks clout and as it has been stated to me on a number of occasions we are toothless society. Because of this perception some of our members have little regard for our organisation nor the work we do or indeed their fellow members. These parties selfishly develop their businesses without worrying about the effects of some of their behaviour either to very sellers and buyers that support our industry. This has to stop!

In this regard Philip Powell as our head of governance has worked tirelessly with Sonja to develop a conflict resolution process and is busy building a

disciplinary process in order for us to deal with any of our members that are not toeing the line. Failure to abide with our code must have consequence, however more on that later.

The industry code that the previous committee under the stewardship of TirhaniMabunda went along way to bring our organisation on and was a major improvement on original code.It was decided that the last board meeting it would form the basis of our new code of conduct. Unfortunately we have not been able to progress this development and it will require an immediate work by the new committee to sculpture the Industry code into our code of conduct should we wish to introduce a disciplinary process which I believe is long overdue. We call out to the members to come forward to assist in this process.

There are a number of opportunities that SAIA need to develop as we build our organisation. Personally I think we need to take SAIA back to the provinces to allow like-minded auctioneering companies within regions to self-police the industry and their fellow members. In addition we can identify possible new members and bring them into our fold. I would hope that the new board would move forward and develop localised groups of auctioneers in the provinces who police their areas of business.

We need to promote the fact that we are proud members of our organisation. Without the public's knowledge of SAIA's existence, auctioneers will all be viewed as the same.

We have started the process of developing some marketing material that you can purchase and proudly display at your auctions so buyers learn to understand what SAIA is and what it stands for. You will see later today how our webpage has improved and we intend to roll out further improvements and enhancements to the webpage which will include the ability to load press releases and run a daily blog.

Finally we would like to introduce an annual charity to our organisation and with members support we will help the charity raise money through charitable auctions and use the positive publicity that this will generate to our own benefit. Later today you will hear about the charity we have chosen for this year.

Sadly our organisation and our industry as a whole continues to be threatened by the media. The old adage **all publicity is good publicity** is certainly not true when it comes to the auction industry. For some reason the press love articles relating to auctions and more importantly love sensationalising the articles when in actual fact there is no story. All of these articles are generally negative to the auction industry and we need to work hard to develop positively minded articles that appear in the media to try and raise our profile. It is for this reason that I would ask all of you to assist in developing the profile of SAIA this can be done by buying some of this marketing material and displaying it at your auctions or putting self-adhesive stickers on your motorcars so people start to see and read about our organisation and the qualities we stand for. To wrap up I would like to make a plea to each and every one of you to take an interest in SAIA. This AGM will result in a new board being elected I would ask anyone who wishes to help with our development to please stand in our election. Sadly there is little or no benefit in being an office bearer. It does require time and effort but not as much time and effort as a lot of you may be led to believe. If each and every board member undertakes to develop some initiative, no matter how small that improvement could be, it will go a long way in helping build an association we are proud to be members of. I'm very pleased to hear that five of the existing board members will be standing in the election however we need another five office bearers so please think carefully about this and make yourself available. Unfortunately to date we have had very few nominations if any and I will ask you to please think very seriously about standing for office.

I thank you for all being here today and I hope you find the rest of the day of interest.

Thank you