

**SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF TOWN AND REGIONAL PLANNERS  
REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT: OCTOBER 1991**

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**INTRODUCTION**

During the last year there have been significant changes that affect the working environment within which Town and Regional Planners operate. One such change is legislative. The repeal of the Group Areas Act removed a major constraint to rational planning; and this coupled with revisions to the Physical Planning Act, the Regional Industrial Development Programme and changes in legislation about land present an exciting array of challenges to our profession.

Another source of change is socio-political. The "public interest" we serve is looking to the profession to provide a more diverse and creative range of products. An era in which Town and Regional Planners were called on mainly to produce technical solutions within a pre-determined policy framework is giving way to one where Planners are being requested to formulate the choices in a given situation, to engage in extensive consultation about these, and indeed, to play a role in formulating policy itself.

Not surprisingly, therefore, we can look back on a particularly active year for members of the profession and our Institute.

**Meetings and membership**

The Council and Executive Committee have each met on 4 occasions; and there has also been a lot of activity at Branch level. Membership has increased in most categories.

	1990	1991
Corporate	609	611
Graduate	201	276
Associate	14	30
Retired/hon/life	50	45
Total	870	962

**Finances and budget**

The Institute's finances are in a sound condition, which reflects capable man-

agement by the Hon Treasurers and our Secretary, Franca Giudici. Japie Hugo, our Hon. Treasurer since 1988 resigned at the end of the Institute's financial year. I would like to thank Japie for his able management of our finances and his contribution to a wide variety of Council matters. Tiaan Ehlers has taken over as Hon. Treasurer and prepared the budget.

The budget for 1991/92 is almost R120 000. Approximately 30% of expenditure is on creative activities to promote and enhance the profession as a whole and benefit the Institute members, and about 70% is on support functions to maintain the Institute as a professional organisation. Our target, however, is to reverse this and devote 60% to "creative"/"promotional" activities. But in terms of rising costs, and despite a number of rationalisation measures, such as rescheduling Council and Executive Council meetings to virtually eliminate accommodation expenses, it is very difficult to cut back further without seriously curtailing our ability to operate effectively. This means that we need to expand the income budget considerably to achieve our target. At present 96% of income is from membership fees. The issue of additional sources of income will be high on the agenda for Council and Branches in the year ahead.

**Goals for the Council**

My predecessor, Christo Kannenberg introduced 3 goals for the Council when he took office in 1988. These were:

- Evaluation of the structures
- Changes to the Rules
- Promotion of the Profession

Council has retained these and added a fourth: Communication.

Progress has been made in all these fields.

- (a) Adaptions to our structures and modus operandi has enabled the Council to streamline its management functions, to enable it to focus more strongly on policy matters and its "creative" or "promotional" activities, and given the Branches more independence. Minor adjustments continue to be made to enable us to use our limited resources as effectively as possible.
- (b) Changes to the Rules have been completed, thanks to the sterling work of Paul Waanders. These have been sent out to members for approval as is required by our Constitution. Notable among the changes are the revised goals and objectives of the Institute; the inclusion of a Code of Ethics and procedures for establishment of new branches and membership.
- (c) Promotion of the profession is being pursued at Council and Branch level under the able guidance of Christo Kannenberg. This involves a variety of initiatives.
- (d) Communication is a new goal. It draws attention to the need for Town and Regional Planners to become far more active and skilled in communicating in a number of spheres:
  - amongst each other within the planning fraternity, including planners, planning technicians and assistants who are not Institute members;
  - with client bodies ranging from communities who live in the environments we plan to organisations which supply goods and services and set the legislative context for our work.
  - with professionals in allied fields.
  - and with the public at large.

## Branches

A new branch of the Institute has been established: the Far Northern Transvaal and it is progressing well under leadership of Andre Lindeque and Hannes Lerm. An application is being made by planners in the Border region to establish another new branch. The branches have all been active, as indicated in their reports. A noteworthy feature is the increasing prominence of women planners who now chair two of our Branches: Liz Hicks in Natal, Bibian Brown in Eastern Cape & Border. The other Branch Chairmen are:

Cape : Tommy Brummer  
OFS : Koos Duvenhage  
Far North : Hannes Lerm  
Transvaal : Johan Swemmer

Another significant aspect of branch activities during the last year or so has been the attention given to re-assessing the role of planners in the "New South Africa". The Cape, Natal and Transvaal branches have all run one-day conferences on directly this theme.

Emerging from the debate at these conferences has been several clear messages:

- (i) that the profession can and should broaden the scope of its activities;
- (ii) that it should play a leading role in the transition period on development and planning matters; and
- (iii) that Planners should become far more involved in facilitating public participation.

I have had the opportunity of visiting most of the branches this year (Transvaal, Cape, Eastern Cape and Border) and have visits scheduled to the Far North and OFS branches during the next few months. In the first place I can confirm that the Institute is "alive and well" in various parts of the country. Secondly, this has provided the chance to discuss local and national planning views with members in different areas and it has emphasised, for me, the importance of improving communication among our membership. We all have a great deal to tell and to learn from each other.

## Handbooks

This year the Institute produced Handbook I - General Information and Handbook II - The Town and Regional Planning Profession for the first time, thereby completing the 6 volume series. Robert Lamont-Smith played a major role in the final editorial and publishing stages while Franca managed printing and production. Updated versions of Handbook IV - Scale of Fees and Handbook VI - Directory of consulting Town and Regional Planners were also brought out thanks to Dave Nichol and Franca. These handbooks are important sources of information for members of the Institute and others who use the services of Town and Regional Planners.

## Newsletter and Journal

This year saw the publication of a further 3 issues of the Newsletter. The new format introduced by Editor, Dr Piet Claassen in 1990 has proved most successful and provides our members with a regular and high quality flow of news. Two issues of the Journal appeared, thanks to the efforts of Professor Colin Tod Welch and his editorial panel.

## Merit Award

This Institute's biennial merit award for 1991 received 9 submissions (the highest number since its inception in 1987). Convenor of the adjudicating committee, Robert Lamont-Smith reported that the entries were all of a high quality. The Merit Award was made to the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront Development project. The Institute congratulates the planners involved in this project. The award will be presented early in 1992.

## Nola Green Memorial lecture

The 1991 Nola Green Memorial Lecture was presented in Durban on 17 April by Prof Albie Sachs of the ANC's constitutional commission. In his challenging address "A new city for a new South Africa" he proposed an approach to development and planning based on human rights. Prof Sachs introduced the concept of a minimum floor of social and economic rights in relation to aspects such as security of tenure, shelter, access to basic services, facilities and opportunities. An edited version is being prepared for publication.

## Conferences

The 1990 national conference held in Bloemfontein is widely regarded as a success, thanks to the hard work of Pierre van Biljon and his assistants in the OFS branch. The Eastern Cape branch is already hard at work organising the Institute's 1992 conference. The theme "The First World - Third World Ratio - a recipe for prosperity or poverty" will focus debate on re-integrating our cities and regions, and on the role of Town and Regional Planners in the future South Africa. The Conference is being publicised widely with a view to attracting international participants. Our best wishes go to John Horenz and his assistants. We are all looking forward to the conference.

Other branches have been active in organising one-day conferences. In addition to those mentioned earlier, the Border branch under Christo Theart's guidance held a conference on "Planning perspective for the Greater East London Metropolitan area"; the OFS Branch on "Land use control in the new South Africa"; and the Far North has one scheduled for 27 November.

## Draft legislation

Prof Sakkie Badenhorst heads the Institute's Committee monitoring new legislation and will be producing an updated report later this year. During the year the Institute has made a number of submissions to government on draft legislation. Dr Piet Claassen, Christo Kannenberg, Dr Bertie Van Zyl, Nico Kriek, Dan Smit and Piet Van Zyl in particular made valuable contributions.

## Consolidated funds

Piet Van Zyl continues to manage the Institute's Consolidated Fund which once again this year awarded student prizes at the Universities and a mid-year bursary was awarded to Mr Mthombeni.

## Planning issues

In 1990 Council established a Planning Issues Committee to examine and report on issues that the Institute and the profession should be addressing in these changing times. Headed by Bruce McCormack, this committee is presently engaged in a series of meetings with political organisations across the

spectrum and development agencies to identify what issues these bodies feel the Institute and the profession should be concentrating on. A second aspect of this committee's work is the production of policy/practice notes for our members. Drafts, which will be sent out to branches for comment, cover topics such as Public Participation, City Form, Rural Development and Upgrading.

**An inter school** competition is in the process of being organised, possibly to commence in July 1992.

**International contacts** are becoming easier again and an increasing number of individual Planners have been welcomed at overseas conferences. The Institute is monitoring opportunities for renewed institutional contacts.

### **Conclusion**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Hon. Secretary Barbara Quilliam, our Hon. Treasurer, Tiaan Ehlers and Secretary, Franca Giudici as well as all members of the Council and the Branch Committees for their hard work and support during the year. The considerable achievements of the Institute this year are due to your efforts. Well done!