



THATCHERS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA DEKKERSVERENIGING VAN SUID-AFRIKA

Newsletter 6/2012
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NEWSLETTER



Mr Kosie Theunissen
NATIONAL CHAIRMAN

1. VISION OF NEWLY ELECTED NATIONAL CHAIRMAN

TASA is suffering financially. This state of affairs is most probably due to the economic relapse. There seems to be a general shortage of work and the banks are unrelenting. We would like to see that TASA has an improved worth for its members. Much energy of management has been spent in the past on the SANS 10 400/10407 specifications which was worth while. Many new ideas have been put forward which hopefully will come to fruition this year.

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The most important items are:

1. The management of TASA by an independent person that has marketing and technical qualifications
2. The U-value that is in great demand
3. R and K values that can ensure the future of thatch roofs
4. Controlling fungi which play a major role in the maintenance of thatch roofs
5. See how we can involve the industry

These five discussion points are nothing new and especially with the Western Cape region, but it is crucial that the all the members subscribe to the effort needed especially regarding the technical aspects so that it becomes a joint vision. TASA will also have to obtain the assistance of major industries.

It is important that the industries be identified and become associated with us. I would also like to see that the knowledge TASA members have, is transferred to new members.

I am positive that I can make a contribution to the future of TASA. It is already quite an substantial and major achievement to have a TASA established.. In the past it was just talk and we were unsure as to how and where to start. The future must be seen in the same light in that it is possible to succeed.

A short technical meeting is envisaged and input from members are needed.

2. MEMBERSHIP AND TRAINING

- 2.1 This office receives frequently requests from thatch contractors to be allowed membership without the application of the pre-requisites e.g. 6 months probation. When an opportunity arises for a possible contract which requires TASA membership, they expect TASA to negate it

principles and requirements for membership for their short term benefit. This also applies to short term members in arrears of their fees or because of bad workmanship and being dispelled from TASA.

- 2.2 The absence of a training facility for thatch contractors created a vacuum in the industry. On the one hand we have self educated and established contractors with a wealth of experience and not in favour of training and on the other hand many that want to enter the market begging for training and training material. The restrictions in the TASA constitution requiring the contractor to be practicing for two years before membership will be considered as well as the absence of a Training Manual stipulating specification requirements, is hampering membership growth.

TASA endeavoured to overcome the above problems through the appointment of mentors to aspirant contractors but it did not serve the purpose. Various aspects of the trade were wrongly interpreted possibly due to ignorance or lack of information. Sound business principles were glaringly absent.

- 2.3 Cases referred to the High Court are escalating. These legal actions cost a fortune and are causing horrendous damage to the image of the Thatching Industry. Serious attention should be given to information and training sessions.

Insurance Companies are also crying for assistance to train assessors on the insurance of thatch roofs and damage.

What we have already done:

Some of our members assisted SANTAM in the production of a training video and manual. A one day workshop was arranged for ETANA by Messrs John Smith of Biggarsberg Thatchers and Hanro de Jager of Redruth Thatchers, but they again request further training workshops.

- 2.4 Established members of TASA often ask what the real benefit is of membership. They want something in return for their money and efforts. The solution most probably lies in an independent management body and manager with a holistic independent and objective outlook.

3. TASA DELEGATION TO THE NETHERLANDS AND GERMANY

A TASA delegation comprising of eight members will visit the above countries on invitation of the International Thatching Society in early October 2012

We trust that they will return with new ideas that will inspire members and secure the future of TASA

Kind regards

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NATIONAL CHAIRMAN

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