

SAPPMA AGM highlights achievements

THE Southern African Plastic Pipe Manufacturers Association (SAPPMA) used the occasion of its 13th Annual General Meeting held in Johannesburg recently to celebrate the successes achieved by this non-profit association over the past 12 months.

Addressing the SAPPMA members and other interested parties in attendance, CEO Jan Venter said that they looked back at the past year with a great deal of satisfaction at what had been achieved, despite difficult socio-economic conditions and financial pressures bearing down on the industry.

"It is clear that the unstable political climate in the country has taken its toll on the economic front - in particular the country's infrastructure. Whilst plastic pipes continue to dominate this market, a serious lack of growth was also recorded in the industry over the past ten years," Venter said.

He added that this fact was reflected in the latest D+ grading of the country's infrastructure by the South African Institute for Civil Engineers (SAICE). "Business conditions are not ideal and long-term planning is a very shaky science at present. Even so, we managed to not only survive, but in many regards, grow and expand our footprint this past year. This bears testimony to our industry's perseverance and a resilient attitude that refuses to give up or compromise on quality in the face of adversity."

Maintaining and influencing standards

SAPPMA's main focus fell on maintaining standards and ensuring that only top-quality pipes are manufactured and enter the local market. This was done through disseminating technical and design information to the decision makers and consulting engineers, marketing the SAPPMA and IFPA brands to

external and internal audiences and ensuring ongoing training for manufactures and installers.

"We continue to strive for unquestionable quality when it comes to the production and installation standards of plastic pipes. To achieve this, we audited more than 40 companies this past year, and SAPPMA members received at least one unannounced visit," Venter said. He added that these audits were generally well received as members realise its value as differentiator and that they welcomed objective comments on their operations.

Additional quality standards that would to further differentiate SAPPMA members are also

currently being developed. This is an extension to work that was started years ago and will be addressing approximately 14 SANS Standards by evaluating the type of testing, test frequency, materials etc.

"We are proud to announce that this project is nearing completion and will provide a great marketing tool for pipe manufacturers," he explained. To this end, SAPPMA is also represented on SANS Technical Committees and provides valuable insights where new standards are adopted and existing ones are amended and reviewed.

Enquiry no: 52