

2025 President's Address



It is good to look back over this first year of my term as IMESA President and be able to note a few achievements.

One of my objectives was to re-establish an IMESA branch in Bloemfontein. The Free State/Northern Cape Branch became dormant after retirement, relocation and emigration of key members. With interest shown at the 2024 IMESA Conference and at capacity building workshops held in Bloemfontein earlier this year, I was encouraged to hold a branch seminar in June 2025. From that event we had enough people to hold a formal branch meeting on 15 August 2025, at which a Chair and Treasurer were elected to kick-start further branch activities. We look forward to seeing the branch grow and become the integral part of IMESA that it used to be.

Our #IMESAseesyou social media campaign has been well supported and gives recognition to a few of our very many engineering colleagues who are crucial to the industry but often go unnoticed. The month of August was assigned to women in engineering and showcased the amazing skills and talent we have access to.

It has been an honour to represent IMESA throughout the year at various events and to interact with high level stakeholders on the crucial issues that continue to challenge all our local municipalities. In February 2025, IMESA responded to the State of National Address (SONA) by sending an open letter to the Office of the President addressed to President Cyril Ramaphosa to express support for the infrastructure measures that were highlighted.

IMESA Projects and Strategic Liaisons

CIDB National Stakeholder Forum
IMESA continues to engage with the CIDB National Shareholders Forum and has members actively involved in both CBE and CIDB.

Civil Engineers South Africa (CESA)
The Excellence Awards presented jointly by CESA and IMESA will once again take place at this year's annual IMESA Conference and we are looking forward to the recognition of excellence projects in each of the three categories.

Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA)
Mr Kasserchun has been appointed as IMESA's representative for ECSA's Biennial Engineering

Appreciation Campaign

#IMESAseesU

This campaign is for every civil engineering professional and their team making an impact, seen or unseen. Because no role is too small when you're shaping the world.

Every role matters. Every story counts!

Follow us on social media & TAG someone you want to appreciate.

Want your team to feature in our posts? Contact us for more information

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IFME Board members at the board meeting Warsaw, Poland in March 2025

Symposium Advisory Board. He attended the first meeting held on 29 January 2025 in Johannesburg and was elected to chair the advisory committee. ECSA needs help to set up and run the symposium and was looking for one VA to co-host the event. The first symposium will be held in March 2026 in Gauteng.

IMESA has had engagements to consult on the proposed changes on Identification of Engineering Work (IDoEW) proposals. Our Northern Provinces Branch was actively involved in the rollout of ECSA workshops in Limpopo, Mpumalanga and North West.

As a strategic priority for 2025/2026, the executive committee have committed to compiling a needs and numbers analysis, previously provided by Allyson Lawless at SAICE. The challenges include obtaining accurate and comprehensive information as well as assigning resources to handle the large quantity of data analysis that is required.



National Treasury
IMESA raises municipal supply chain management challenges and issues related to interpretation of policy on behalf of the municipalities at every opportunity.

In work that I was doing with COGTA and University of KwaZulu-Natal to establish disaster management approaches for local government, a possible collaboration with IMESA to rollout the study results into workshops at branches was discussed.



South African Local Government Association (SALGA)
It is appreciated that SALGA continues to endorse the IMESA conference and interact with the members and delegates on a range of interventions.



Water Research Commission (WRC)
IMESA is continuing to roll out workshops on flood guidelines and water related capacity building requirements under the five-year agreement signed with WRC. The commitments to the end of the financial year (June 2025) have been met successfully and the second year (July 2025 – June 2026) is in place with capacity building workshops scheduled for Limpopo, Northern Cape, Eastern Cape and Western Cape.

Other opportunities for collaboration are being considered.



International Federation of Municipal Engineers (IFME)

We were unfortunately not able to attend the most recent IFME Board Meeting

held in Chicago, USA in August 2025 but I attended the IFME Board Meeting that was held in Warsaw, Poland on 25th-29th March 2025. It is an interesting city that opted to replicate the original structure after 85% of the city was destroyed in the two world wars. It is now a vibrant and clean city.

IFME wants to do more to improve civil engineering in communities globally and to increase awareness of the member services available within IFME. The member countries can share resources, like green building standards and share articles from their magazines for other organizations to publish. It was interesting to hear that China has only one VA organization nationally, but it has 2 761 member units.

From IFME networking, IMESA is working with Australian representatives on the possibility of making available the comprehensive infrastructure asset management training platform that has been compiled by the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (IPWEA). Their Asset Management Pathway provides a lifelong learning program from



CESA Infrastructure Indaba held on 18-19 March 2025, at the Indaba Hotel, Johannesburg



foundation and skill application to recognition and leadership strategic development, in the context of sustainable service delivery requiring integrated planning between customers, assets and finance.

Membership and Branches

As mentioned earlier, it is good to have the Free State/Northern Cape Branch back on the list of active branches and to see the energy and enthusiasm in all our branches which is generating more events for local members with good attendance of both members and non-members to network and learn from each other. In August this year, the Woman's Day events held in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban were well attended and the feedback was very positive. Golf Days, site visits, training workshops and road shows have added to the activities made available to members.

Another of our strategic priorities for 2025/2026 is to extend our reach and establish branches in our neighbouring countries. If you have an interest in assisting, do let us know.

IMESA has branches covering the following regions:

- Northern Provinces (Gauteng)
- Free State/Northern Cape (Bloemfontein/Kimberley)
- KwaZulu-Natal (Durban)
- Border (East London)
- Eastern Cape (Port Elizabeth)
- Southern Cape/Karoo (George/Mossel Bay)
- Western Cape (Cape Town)

EXCO and Council

Our executive committee has expanded to 15 members with the addition of an Operations Director to oversee the Young Professionals

Portfolio (YP²) which includes driving new membership. After the successful implementation of activities to support graduates and promote ECSA registration in KwaZulu-Natal Branch, our other branches are establishing committees to focus on this aspect. The main aim is to enhance professional and personal growth of younger members and to attract graduates to the municipal engineering environment.

Our regional council representatives continue to drive all IMESA operations and ensure that the institute meets its objectives. I personally am very grateful for the input and support that our institute management team has provided this year.

The institute continues to maintain a secure financial position thanks to careful management of income and expenditure for membership and conferences.

IMIESA Publication

The dedicated team of Alastair Currie, Joanne Lawrie and Asha Pursotham supported by additional resources continue to ensure that our magazine maintains high standards as the official business-to-business communication platform for the Institute and all its members. Newsletters and additional facilities for communication between all infrastructure stakeholders will be expanded over the coming year.

Obituary

It was very sad to receive news of the passing of Mr David (Dawie) Benjamin Botha in September 2025. He joined IMESA in July 1976 and was an active member throughout, providing key support in several projects from 2010-2013. He and other members will be commemorated at our AGM on Tuesday, 04 November 2025.

LOC Chairperson Address

On behalf of the Local Organising Committee and the Border Branch of IMESA, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to the 88th Annual IMESA Conference here in East London. It is an honour to host you in our beautiful city this October, and we are delighted to see delegates gathered from every corner of South Africa to share knowledge, ideas, and expertise that will shape the future of our engineering profession.

I wish to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the dedicated members of the Local Organising Committee, who have worked tirelessly to ensure that this conference is a success. Our thanks also go to the IMESA Head Office team, whose commitment and meticulous planning year after year allow us to deliver an event of this extremely high calibre. Together, this partnership between the local committee and Head Office is what makes the annual IMESA conference a true highlight on our industry calendar.

East London, as you will experience over the next few days, is a city rich in engineering heritage and opportunity. From the iconic Port of East London, South Africa's only commercial river port, to the Bridle Drift and Nahoon Dams, which have supplied water to our communities for decades, engineering is woven into the very fabric of this region. The city stands as a testament to how civil engineering can overcome challenges of topography and infrastructure to support growth, industry, and the lives of its people.



The dolos is one of East London's most iconic engineering contributions to the world, the dolos is a uniquely shaped concrete block designed to dissipate the energy of waves and protect harbour walls and coastlines from erosion. Its interlocking design makes it incredibly effective in absorbing the force of the sea, and today dolosse (plural) are used in harbours and coastal protection projects all over the world. For East London, the dolos is more than just an engineering marvel – it is a proud symbol of local ingenuity, resilience, and innovation, showing how engineering can have a lasting impact far beyond its place of origin.

We hope you take the time not only to engage fully with the technical programme, but also to experience the warmth of our city and the hospitality of its people. Join us on the Thursday evening at our Social Evening on the picturesque Olivewood Golf Estate with a variety of entertainment planned for everyone. May this conference be a platform for learning, networking, and building lasting professional connections.

Thank you for being here and may your time in East London be both rewarding and memorable.

Ryan Nell

Chairman:
IMESA Border Branch and LOC

Local Organising Committee (LOC)

Ayanda Skwebu – Vice Chairman / Technical Tours

Deon McQuirk – Finance

Celeste Vosloo – Secretariat / Companions Programme

Debbie Anderson – Head Office

Melanie Stemmer – Head Office

Oliver Ive – Technical Advisory Committee Chair

Adrian van der Merwe and Andre Naude – Golf Day

Kim Hensberg – Companions Programme

Lee Mellin – Transport & Accommodation

Jonathan Clarke – Technical Tours

Ayanda Skwebu



Deon McQuirk



Celeste Vosloo



Debbie Anderson



Melanie Stemmer



Oliver Ive



Adrian van der Merwe



Andre Naude



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Jonathan Clarke

