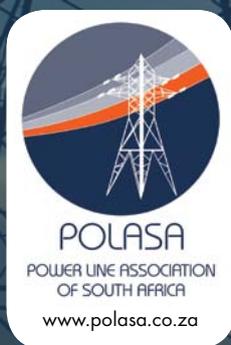


POLASA 2016 IN REVIEW

By by Kobus De Beer, Director, Polasa



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The Association was formed as an independent sub-association of the SAISC (Southern African Institute of Steel Construction) some years ago to focus on the needs of the South African power line producers and constructors in view of work lost to importers and a number of companies shutting down. POLASA has gone from strength to strength over this difficult period.

Four years ago the “burning platform” was the lack of work and the lack of continuity of work placed with industry. ESKOM also had serious problems to provide unrestricted access to line construction sites due to delays in right-of-way approvals, water licenses and the many requirements to accommodate local communities.

Today the industry has more than 2 000km of new lines on order of which some 1 600km still has to be built in the current and next financial years – the new “burning platform” is to find resources and balance the work flow between the number of competing companies, also from Europe and Asia.

The terms of reference and purposes of the Association

- Membership of POLASA is open to all contractors for ESKOM’s transmission and distribution line requirements.
- POLASA is managed by an elected Board of Directors from the industry, each focusing on specific areas of relevance.
- There are no barriers to participation by foreign companies pre-qualified and approved to manufacture and build lines in South Africa for ESKOM.
- The purpose of the Association is to actively promote the development, growth and flexibility of its members in South Africa and to facilitate participation in training and education as well as the development of export markets in collaboration with the SAISC activities.
- POLASA actively seeks to add value to ESKOM’s actions and requirements by creating platforms to facilitate high

level bilateral discussions between ESKOM and industry.

- Currently regular meetings with ESKOM executives take place in areas of common interest such as Safety, Design, Engineering, Quality, Contracting and Execution, etc.
- The Association fully supports healthy competition between entities but endeavours to resolve issues that restrict the industry from performing at optimum levels of productivity, quality and safety. Strict compliance with anti-competitive legislation is maintained.
- POLASA was instrumental in providing supporting evidence for the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to recommend that the following products be formally “designated” ie that these products must be fully locally made in South Africa, including the supply of all steel required:
 - Poweline hardware – 100%
 - Steel power pylons – 100%
 - Monopole pylons – 100%
 - Steel substation structures – 100%
 - Street lighting steel poles – 100%
 - Steel lattice towers and masts – 100%
- POLASA has actively supported ESKOM in implementing the above, particularly regarding buying practises in the various districts and remote locations. All POLASA members are being encouraged to use the opportunity to develop more productive and cost effective facilities and to actively pursue export markets.
- The SAISC publish various design and engineering handbooks, conducts education and training courses, organise seminars, talks and conferences, publishes quarterly journals and maintain international contacts in the fields of structural design, fabrication and construction. This is extended to include transmission line requirements where appropriate.

Membership applications can be made at kobus@saisc.co.za or by contacting Kobus de Beer (011) 726-6111.