



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT THE UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH BELLVILLEPARK CAMPUS, BELLVILLE, CAPE TOWN ON 7 SEPTEMBER 2004

Present:

Please see attached attendance register

Proxies:

Rialine Cruywagen, Olaf de Wet, Dave Evans, Philip Fourie

Apologies:

Rialine Cruywagen, Olaf de Wet, Dave Evans, Trinette Evert, Philip du Toit, Paul Potgieter

1. WELCOME:

Wim Gevers welcomed everyone present and commented on the good attendance.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: 8 SEPTEMBER 2003

The minutes were considered read and were approved.

Proposer: Theo Stewart

Secunder: Hans Ittmann

3. MATTERS ARISING

None

4. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

See attached report. Wim Gevers gave an overview of the report and it was accepted after a correction was made to section 7.1. The three UNISA lecturers managed to get funding at the last moment to attend the IFORS OR Teachers Workshop in the Philippines.

Proposer: Hans Ittmann

Secunder: Paul Fatti

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

See attached report. The financial report was accepted.

Leo Tomé was commended for earning advertising income of R16 300 through the newsletter. The number of newsletters issued per year has been increased from 3 to 4.

All bad debts have been written off – a large number of members were removed from the database due to inactivity.

The balance sheet only concerns the national account and not the chapter accounts.

ORSSA's financial situation looks healthy, but needs to be monitored. There was a small loss, largely caused by the Executive Committee strategy session, which was a once off cost of approximately R10 000.

There was also an ad hoc expense of R1 580 for the development of the new website.

Proposer: Dave Masterson

Secunder: Ozias Ncube

6. EDITORS' REPORTS

6.1 Newsletter

Leo Tomé read his report. See attached.

6.2 ORiON

Jan van Vuuren gave an overview of his report. See attached.

All abstracts are available on the website. Full papers will be available for members once the website is password protected. Full papers have already been scanned back to Volume 13 for publication on the website.

7. CHAPTER REPORTS

7.1 JOHANNESBURG

The report was handed out with the agenda and was considered read. See attached.

7.2 PRETORIA

The report was handed out with the agenda and was considered read. See attached.

7.3 KWAZULU-NATAL

The report was handed out with the agenda and was considered read. See attached.

7.4 VAAL TRIANGLE

Marthi Harmse gave an overview of the chapter's activities. See report attached.

7.5 WESTERN CAPE

Margarete Louw gave an overview of the chapter's activities. See report attached.

8. EURO, IFORS AND OTHER LINKS

8.1 ORSEA

The second conference of the Operations Research Society of Eastern Africa (ORSEA) will take place in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from 17 – 19 November 2004.

The deadline for abstracts is 16 September, full papers have to be in by the end of September and the deadline for registration is 15 October.

The First Operational Research Practice in Africa (ORPA 2005) conference will be held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso from 7 – 8 April 2005. It is being organised in collaboration with EURO, IFORS and INFORMS.

8.2 EURO

There will be no EURO conference in 2005 due to the IFORS meeting in Hawaii. In 2006 the EURO conference will take place in Reyjavik, Iceland and in 2007 it will be held in Prague, Czech Republic.

8.3 IFORS

IFORS 2005 will take place in Honolulu, Hawaii. Advance planning is needed to attend. More information is available from the website: www.informs.org/Conf/IFORS2005

The deadline for submissions for the IFORS prize for OR in Development is 31 Dec 2004. A shortlist of 8 papers is selected for presentation at the conference and the registration fee is waived. For more information, contact Prof. Paul Fatti on fatti@stats.wits.ac.za

IFORS 2008 will take place at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg. Hans Ittmann has been nominated as the conference chairman and he accepted. Hans will need everyone's support. Professional services will also be contracted to help. South Africa needs to be marketed as a safe venue. A brochure is needed for distribution at IFORS 2005.

9. PROPOSED CHANGES TO CONSTITUTION

Proposed changes to the ORSSA constitution were circulated to members 30 days in advance of the AGM. Wim Gevers handed the chair over to Hans Ittmann and discussed the proposed changes one by one.

1. Membership – the changes were accepted without discussion.
2. Office Bearers – see point 3.
3. Executive Committee – Theo Stewart proposed an amendment, namely to replace the wording “immediate Past President” with “most recent Past President resident in South Africa”.
4. Election of the Executive Committee – Dave Evans proposed the following amendment: “Only the members present at the Annual General Meeting, and those for whom a valid proxy is held by a member who is present and representing them at the meeting, may participate in the election of the Executive Committee”. Theo Stewart tabled a motion that the new Executive Committee should examine the conflict between voting for the election of the Executive Committee, which may only be done by members present at the AGM, and voting by proxy at the AGM for all other matters, as per the voting rights. The Executive Committee should then propose changes to the next AGM.
5. Voting rights – the change was accepted without discussion.

Theo Stewart tabled an amendment to his motion, requesting the Executive to examine proxy votes and propose changes to the next AGM. Neil Manson seconded the amended motion and it was accepted.

6. Tenure of office – Theo Stewart suggested the following amendment to get rid of the word “appointed”: The President of the Society shall hold office from 1 January one year after taking office as Vice President. The change was accepted.

7. Financial matters – the change was accepted without discussion

8. Language medium – the change was accepted without discussion

The proposal for the 2005 fees for was accepted.

10. ORSSA 2005

ORSSA 2005 will be a joint conference with the SA Institute of Industrial Engineers, organised by the Vaal Triangle Branch and held at Secunda.

11. ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR 2004/2005

Nominations were invited from the floor for the newly created positions on the Executive Committee (see section 9).

Newsletter business manager: Leo Tomé was nominated by Marthi Harmse and seconded by Hans Ittmann.

ORiON business manager: Stephan Visagie was nominated by Hans Ittmann and seconded by Marthi Harmse.

Webmaster: Petrus Potgieter was nominated by Ilze du Plooy and seconded by Wim Gevers.

The following members were elected unanimously:

Vice president	Marthi Harmse
Secretary:	Esbeth van Dyk
Treasurer:	Dave Evans
Newsletter editor:	Cobus Potgieter
Newsletter business manager:	Leo Tomé
ORiON editor:	Jan van Vuuren
ORiON business manager:	Stephan Visagie
Webmaster	Petrus Potgieter
Additional members	Hans Ittmann Theo Stewart Ozias Ncube
Co-opted:	Paul Fatti (IFORS representative)

12. GENERAL

None

ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Name	Membership type
S Benecke	Student
F Binneman	Student
B Bothma	Full
G Crosse	Student
SJ Davis	Student
I du Plooy	Full
N Dyers	Student
P Fatti	Full
M Fick	Full
L Frick	Full
MFP Harmse	Full
H Ittmann	Full
A Janse van Vuuren	Student
J le Roux	Full
DK Kantu	Student
B Kok	Student
H Kruger	Full
M Louw	Full
E Magorokosho	Prospective
M Makaya	Student
N Manson	Full
KT Manyuchi	Full
D Masterson	Full
O Ncube	Full
I Nieuwoudt	Full
N Ntene	Student
FG Ortmann	Student
L Potgieter	Student
JJ Potgieter	Student
MJ Ramokgadi	Full
J Roux	Student
T Stewart	Full
T Stylianides	Full
L Tomé	Student
JB Uys	Student
FE van Dyk	Full
L van Eck	Student
JH van Vuuren	Full
SE Visagie	Full

Chapter reports

KZN ORSSA chapter

This fledgling chapter has grown from eleven to thirteen members since April 2004. Only one talk was held. This was on April 27 when Dr. Duncan Wilson spoke on the advantages of a Random Effects Model in Applied Statistical Research. He showed how a non-traditional use of Best Linear Unbiased Prediction (BLUP) could be used for predicting site index in forestry. More than 20 people attended the talk and it was repeated in house at Sappi Forests Research at the request of their tree breeders.

As yet no AGM has been held, but it is hoped that this can be combined with a talk in Durban in the near future. We also hope to somehow break into the Richards Bay area as there must be OR type work being done up there.

Although Killian Manyuchi has chosen to remain affiliated to the Gauteng OR chapters, he has agreed to help with getting things underway down here. This will certainly be a great help.

Yvonne Fletcher
Chairperson
2 September 2004

Western Cape Chapter

During the past 8 months the Western Cape Chapter already had 3 meetings. We kicked off these years activities with the Annual General meeting of the Western Cape at the Bellville Business School, on the 17th of March 2004. The meeting was followed with a talk on the impact of seasonal trends on provision forecasts, done by Nancy Brown from PIC Solutions. After the very interesting talk the members gathered at the Lapa for a cocktail party. The second and third meetings was held at the University of Cape Town, the first of which was a talk on data mining and its applications, done by Goran Dragosavac from the SAS Institute on the 5th of May. This was followed on the 2nd of June by a talk on Soft OR problems with hard impacts and how Operational Research can help conducted by Arabinda Tripathy. In July the Western Cape chapter sponsored a newsletter for school children, initiated by Elmari Roos and also used the newsletter to promote Operational research at school level. We hope to promote ORSSA in the Western Cape even more during the remainder of this year by contacting additional corporate companies and inviting to part take in our activities.”

Margarete Louw
Chairperson
3 September 2004

Pretoria Tak

Weens verskeie omstandighede was nie ek (of enige van die ander bestuurslede) in staat om behoorlik aandag aan die Pretoria tak te gee nie. Daar is dus nie iets om oor verslag te doen nie. Ek sal 'n takbestuursverkieping reël.

Gys Wessels
Voorsitter
23 Augustus 2004

Johannesburg Chapter

The Chapter's activities have continued over the past 12 months at a similar level to recent years. We have held two "schools events" – not because of any deliberate doubling of intensity or effort, but simply because timing problems during 2003 resulted in that year's one being held after the national society agm. Both were very successful and well received by the schools involved, but as in earlier years, relatively poorly attended; as I probably said in my last report, we clearly need to put more effort into our "marketing" to the schools and firstly find a time of year which doesn't clash with other school events (practically impossible these days, if our experience is anything to go by), and then to establish more effective channels for "getting to" the schools. Even one of our regular attendee schools cancelled this year at the last second because of a combination of clashes with other events, and the key teacher/minibus driver being sick!

The Chapter agm was held in November. A talk was given by Robin Hendry on the current status of risk management. As many of you will be aware, this has become a very high profile, much wider, topic in recent years than things like actuarial statistics for insurance companies, and trying to instil safe practices in employees making explosives – (an aspect I used to be very close to personally.) Events such as Enron and Worldcom have thrust it into the forefront of corporate governance, and Robin gave us a fascinating insight into both the breadth of what it now is, and the maths and assorted business processes which are involved these days – quite close to the original "multi-disciplinary" roots of OR, in a way. An indication of how well received the talk was was the fact that he was interrupted so much for discussions that the original 45 minutes extended to 75, and when the agm finished 20 minutes later, the members who then moved into the bar for the cocktail party, found that he was still on the same topic, being interrogated further by the non-members who had skipped the agm.

The Highveld Christmas dinner was held this year in Kyalami, where Dave Evans continued the trend set by Dewald Roode, of reminiscing fairly light heartedly about his life in OR, and what our role should be these days. The stories ranged from a simulation model of a dog, metabolising heart drugs, to corporate "spreadsheet" models which were being used to redesign the South African Explosives industry ten years before spreadsheets, and attempts to "optimise" activities in a bush war environment which were hysterical! He also emphasised Dewald's comments about making sure that we make a "positive difference" with OR being more important than necessarily getting the ultimate, elegant, optimal solution.

From the chapter committee's perspective, arguably the most interesting event of the year was a session held in May, when Hans Ittmann talked about his role with various international bodies in carrying OR and ORSSA's flag into Africa, and Dave Evans gave feedback on the national executive committee's earlier workshop in Cape Town and then opened a debate on the role of the Chapter. Firstly, the attendance was very encouragingly large, with several members having come through from Pretoria, and secondly an extensive and very involved discussion took place throughout the workshop, giving the Chapter lots of bright ideas about what we should be doing for our members. The only shortcoming of that was that by the time we did finally call it a day, a relatively large number of the attendees had to rush away, leaving an unusually small number to continue discussions more socially in the bar. Thanks to all the participants; it was a very worthwhile session.

By the time the agm is held, a "joint inland" seminar will have happened at the Sasol Oil head office in Randburg, set up by Marthi Harmse, consisting of a talk by Alexander Verbraeck, and I extend the Joburg Chapter's thanks to the Vaal Triangle Chapter for arranging this. Our calendar year will finish as usual with a talk linked to the agm and cocktail party, and we are already lining up an interesting speaker on optimisation in high level planning in the mining industry – watch this space.

As always, my thanks to my committee, and the sterling support they have given me through the year – we look forward to another successful one in 2005.

D W Evans
Chairperson
30 Aug 2004

Operational Research Society of South Africa Vaal Triangle Chapter

Annual Report 2004

The main objective of the Vaal Triangle Chapter of the Operations Research Society of South Africa (ORSSA) for 2003 was to raise awareness concerning Operations Research in the Vaal Triangle. The chapter joined forces with the South African Institute for Industrial Engineering (SAIIE) to establish the Vaal Triangle Chapter of ORSSA and SAIIE.

In 2004 the main objective of the chapter was to become more sustainable – financial and otherwise. The chapter is deeply indebted to Mr. Jannie van der Westhuizen, General Manager, Sasol Group Human Resources, who acts as sponsor for all activities of the chapter since February 2004.

One industry visit and four symposia were arranged for 2004:

1. Plant visit to South African Breweries

On Friday afternoon 20 February 2004 the South African Breweries (SAB) plant at Alrode was visited. After a slide show that gave an overview of the business, the plant was visited and the product could be sampled. One of the attendees commented as follows: "[At SAB] optimisation ... is a corporate lifestyle. It is implanted through excellent management processes – from the outside of the corporation to the inside of factory walls and human hearts. It nurtures productivity, well-being, pride as well as joy in the life of all employees."

2. The use of advanced planning in the optimisation of supply chains: a Sasol Polymers case study

On 19 May 2004 Wayne Steel from Sasol Polymers made a presentation on a project that Sasol Polymers embarked upon to position the Sasol Polymers business supply chain in the externally focused phase of the development phases of supply chain management. Since an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system cannot deliver the analytical and planning objectives required, modules of AspenTech's Advanced Planning and Scheduling (APS) system – Manager for Interactive Modelling Interfaces (MIMI) – were implemented across most of the Sasol Polymers business units. These modules include Demand Forecasting, Business Unit Planning and Business Unit Scheduling. The presentation evoked an extensive discussion – both inside the auditorium and outside while enjoying refreshments.

3. Optimisation for nutritive value and affordability in a plant-based product using linear programming

On 18 August 2004 Sarie Duvenhage from the Vaal University of Technology made a presentation on a project to investigate the impact of fortification on maize meal and bread flour, as staple foods, on the formulation of a plant-based premixed product optimised for nutritive content and affordability for very low-income households. This presentation enthused the attendees not only by touching on topics such as priority handling in linear programming, how to address gaps in data and conjoint analysis, but also by pragmatising a holistic approach that includes hard and soft techniques, the use of technology to benefit communities and the power of one.

4. Simulation for multi-actor business engineering

On spring day (1 September 2004) the “northern” chapters (Vaal Triangle, Johannesburg and Pretoria) were privileged to receive a visit from Alexander Verbraeck from the Delft University of Technology. Alexander highlighted two problems that need to be tackled to be able to use simulation successfully in inter-organisational and multi-actor settings. The first problem entails the model complexity for inter-organisational models which is much bigger than administrative models for one organisation. The second problem refers to the multi-actor aspect itself – different organisations have different ideas about models and different standards within their companies, do not always want to share details about the exact working of their business processes and might not want to co-operate with the simulation study at all. Some positive results to address these problems were illustrated with several concrete models for supply chains, airports, and insurance companies. Discussions extended well after the scheduled time among inspired attendees.

5. Enterprise risk management

The last event for the year is planned for 13 October 2004 when Robbin Hendry will address the chapter on enterprise risk management.

As in the past, people from different disciplines attend activities of the chapter from all over Gauteng, North West, Mpumalanga and the Free State. Lively discussions are held during interactive presentations and thereafter while having something to eat and drink. Presentations were loaded on the intranet of Sasol and on the websites of the societies. After the symposia, some attendees started doing OR type of work themselves or commissioned it. Interactions were established between different organisations and between industry and academics.

Some challenges that still need to be addressed include people to join the societies and the committee of the chapter. In this regard some progress was made by securing corporate funding from Sasol Technology for people who wanted to join ORSSA. Furthermore, the chapter would like to host a joint ORSSA/SAIIE conference in future.

The Vaal Triangle chapter of ORSSA and SAIIE would like to thank the executive committees of the societies as well as the committee responsible for the Graduate Development Programme for Industrial Engineering at Sasol for their support. We would also like to thank SAB for sponsoring the plant visit and Sasol Limited for sponsoring all other events. Chrisma Pieterse from Sasol Limited is also thanked for the excellent way she arranged most of the events.



Marthi Harmse
Chairperson

ORSSA Newsletter Report: October 2003 – September 2004

The 2003/2004 year saw three editions, the October 2003, March 2004, and June 2004, of the Newsletter being printed. At the 2003 executive meeting, in Pretoria, it was decided that the newsletter will become a quarterly publication. Because of the society's year currently stretching from October to September this will only take place in the 2004/2005 year, with 2004 seeing the first Christmas issue of the newsletter.

In the beginning of 2003 when the new look Newsletter was introduced the following objectives were set.

- Keep the current format and standard for the inside pages of the newsletter.
- The newsletter should always have either 12 or 16 pages.
- Have a colour gloss cover over and above the 12/16 pages.
- Have colour advertisements to cover the costs of the cover and postage, and hopefully in the end the whole newsletter.
- To lower the cost of the newsletter incurred by the society.
- Determine and implement a strategy to use the newsletter as a marketing tool for ORSSA.
- Portray OR in SA as a professional occupation with professional people.

I believe that all of these objectives were once again met during the 2003/2004 year.

The following table shows the finances for the 2003/2004 year.

Description	Income	Expense
Advertising	17 250.00	
Postage		5 143.02
Newsletters		21 725.66
Total	R 17 250.00	R 26 868.68

This shows an expense of R9 663.68 for the three issues of 2003/2004 relative to a projected expense of R 16 830.00 should the newsletter have stayed in the old format without advertisements.

The society's lack of a critical mass is a problem. This is with regard to both the price per newsletter as well as recruiting advertisers. With the current membership figures our advertisements are on the edge of being expensive. Further more; printing one newsletter costs approximately R5 650.00, with every 50 costing an additional R 200.00. I believe that the newsletter, in its current form, has the potential to be a great asset to the society, given that we can push up the member

numbers. Hopefully the new membership portfolio, combined with the fact that the products that the society offer have become much more professional looking, will turn the tide in this respect. Another idea in this regard would be to offer a package to the other, as well as emerging O.R. societies, in Africa access to our services, e.g. the newsletter. In this way we can support the initiative as well as strengthen our position by increasing our circulation.

Taking the income generated through adverting into account the three issues of the newsletter costs R 37.17 per member. Taking all the positives the Newsletter in the current printed format offers the society, e.g. good marketing, goodwill from the members, prestige, etc., this is a bargain any way one looks at it!

Referring to the marketing aspect, one of the advertisers for example takes 65 copies per issue that they distribute amongst their clients. Something they might not have been so keen to do if the Newsletter were not in the current format.

There has already been R 16 335.00 secured for the 2004/2005 issues. This puts the society in a good position with regard the Newsletter expenses for the next year. The fact that the newsletter has been increased to four issues should however be taken into account with the projected expense being R39 000.00 for the 2004/2005 year.

It was planned to extend the newsletter team to three members during the 2003/2005 year. Due to a lack of willing candidates this did however not realise. The extension of the management team of the Newsletter has however become essential because of the financial aspect of the newsletter becoming a full-time portfolio in itself. This need initiated the proposed change in the constitution that will allow for a business manager for the newsletter. This will ensure continuity as well as lighten the workload for the editor. The fact that the advertising aspect of the newsletter will also be run more actively will hopefully see us reach the goal of having the advertising pay for the newsletter during the 2004/2005 year.

This will be my final year as editor of the newsletter, with my portfolio hopefully changing to that Business Manager of the newsletter. I found the last two years to be challenging and rewarding and would like to thank every one who supported me, especially those members who contributed material to the newsletter. I would like to extend a special word of thanks to Hans Ittmann who not only contributed to each issue, but who also supported me whole heartedly with the changes I made with regard to the new look, the number of issues, and the recruiting of advertisers.

Once again I would like to extend an invitation to everybody to contribute to the newsletter. The newsletter is the mouth piece of the society and can only exist through your contributions.

Leo Tomé
14 August 2004



September 5th, 2004

REPORT BY THE EDITOR

At the 33rd Annual ORSSA Conference (held last year in Pretoria) a new management team was elected for ORiON. My sincere thanks to the outgoing management team in the persons of Paul Fatti (who stepped down after many years of excellent service to ORSSA as ORiON editor) and Wim Gevers (now president of ORSSA, who has done a sterling job as business manager of ORiON) for the significant time and effort that they have poured into ORiON over many years.

However, they are not leaving the management team of ORiON; both have accepted an invitation to remain on in the capacity of associate editors, and they are also willing to advise us on management issues surrounding ORiON, based on their many years of experience. Paul and Wim have kindly agreed to oversee the publication of volumes 18 and 19 of ORiON as their final duties as editor and manager respectively (Volume 18 appeared in June 2004 and Volume 19 is now in the post – you will receive it when you return home after the conference). Publication of ORiON from Volume 20 (due by December 2004) onwards will be the responsibility of the new management team. Once these volumes have appeared, we will have caught up our longstanding backlog of ORiON issues.

This is my first report as editor of ORiON and the new business manager is Stephan Visagie. It is inevitable that a new management will bring along with it certain changes; building on the achievements of the past, yet seeking to improve the quality of service that ORiON brings to the members of ORSSA. Let me just give you a brief idea of the objectives that Stephan and I have set ourselves for Volume 20 onwards:

1. **Blind refereeing of manuscripts**

Our thanks go to Wim for ensuring that ORiON remains an accredited journal on the new government list of subsidised journals, in accordance with the guidelines contained in Act no 101 of the 1997 Higher Education Act. One of the conditions of this listing is that the refereeing process should be blind; *i.e.* referees should not be aware of the identities of the authors of papers that they review (in addition to the usual practice that authors should not be aware of the identities of referees who reviewed their submissions).

- a. In order to facilitate blind refereeing, the new instructions to authors (inside the journal covers and on the society webpage) will request that papers be submitted without listing the names and affiliations of authors on the title page, instead only listing this information in a cover letter to the editor. The new style sheets that are available to prospective ORiON authors from the ORSSA webpage also suppress author details
- b. In order to streamline and standardise the refereeing process we have prepared a new standard refereeing report form for referees, which is made available to authors to help them improve their manuscripts, as well as for reasons of transparency, when refereeing decisions are communicated to authors.
- c. Each paper will be reviewed by a minimum of two referees before a decision is made whether to accept or reject a submission, as was the practice in most cases in the past.

2. **Electronic publication of ORiON**

We envisage eventual electronic publication of ORiON on the ORSSA webpage. This will be a password protected publication process, so that only members of ORSSA and paying subscribers to ORiON will have access to the electronic version of the journal, as with most other journals currently published electronically. This will be one of the tasks of the new webmaster. It is not certain at this stage, whether electronic publication will commence with Volume 20 of ORiON, or at a later stage (this depends on how smoothly the electronic publishing process unfolds).

3. **New look for ORiON**

We were tasked by the national executive in September 2003 to design a new and more modern look for

ORiON, which is in line with the upgrade in the ORSSA newsletter's new look last year. The following decisions have been taken with regards to a new look for ORiON, and will take effect from Volume 20 onwards:

- a. *All papers are to be typeset in LaTeX.* Authors will still be able to submit manuscripts in either MS Word or in LaTeX. However, the final versions of accepted papers will be typeset in LaTeX (by the business manager in cases where original submissions were in MS Word and authors are not familiar with LaTeX) in order to create a standardised look for all papers from Volume 20 onwards. Stephan has written a LaTeX style sheet especially for ORiON, and this is available (via the ORSSA website, or via email, upon request) to authors who wish / are able to make submissions in LaTeX. Stephan has copies of the front page of one of the papers that will be appearing in Volume 20 here, which we circulate in order to give you an impression of the new paper format.
 - b. *A new front cover for ORiON.* A new, glossy front cover is being designed for ORiON from Volume 20 onwards, using multiple colours, so as to bring ORiON in line (in appearance) with other journals. Stephan has design copies of the new covers of Volume 20 here, which we also circulate.
 - c. *A new page size and paper quality.* A new page size is envisaged for ORiON, namely 190 × 260 mm, currently used by many journals, which is considerably larger than the current A5 size. A thinner and finer paper quality (90gvm matt paper) will also be used from Volume 20 onwards.
4. **Preprints to authors**
As part of a cost-saving initiative, preprints will no longer be sent out to authors in hard copy form as standard practice, when their papers appear in ORiON. Instead, authors will be provided with a high quality, photo-finish electronic copy of their paper in pdf format. Authors will then be able to run off as many copies of this file as they require, at no cost to ORSSA.
5. **Accelerated turn-around time of papers**
In today's publish-or-perish environment a long turn-around time for papers may affect a journal adversely, in the sense that contributors may prefer to send papers to journals with fast turn around times, at the cost of journals with slower turn-around times. We are therefore placing *a very high priority* on relatively fast turn-around times for ORiON as from Volume 20 onwards – and to achieve this we rely heavily on the support of referees. A period of 12 weeks for first readings will be our goal, and a period of 8 weeks for subsequent iterations, in the event that corrections are required
6. **Two issues per annum.** We will be aiming for two separate issues per volume of ORiON again in future. However, as an interim measure both issues will appear combined in one bound volume, for volumes 19 and 20, so as to facilitate catching up on the current backlog of ORiON.

We hope that the new look of ORiON and the accelerated turn-around time of manuscripts will inspire OR practitioners to submit manuscripts of a number and quality that will enable us to publish the two issues per volume of ORiON separately again as from volume 21 (2005) onwards. In fact, there have been 15 paper submissions to ORiON since January 2004 – most of which are of a high quality. These manuscripts are all in various stages of the refereeing process, and although I expect that not all 15 papers will eventually be accepted, this is nevertheless a good start for Volume 20 onwards, making us optimistic that two separate issues of ORiON per annum will once again be possible in future, once we have caught up our backlog. My sincere thanks go to the referees who have served ORiON since January, sometimes under considerable pressure of other commitments – your support is invaluable.

My thanks go to Stephan, who has put considerable time and effort into designing and facilitating the new look for ORiON. As a result of Stephan's commitment the Society will have a journal that it can be proud of.

Stephan and I welcome any comments or suggestions that you might have about our vision for ORiON. Finally, we would like to invite you to promote choice of ORiON as publication vessel amongst members of ORSSA, and to support the journal by also submitting your own work for possible publication.



Jan H van Vuuren
ORiON Editor