



Fellow of the Operations Research Society of South Africa



Johannes Michiel Hattingh

“Most problems can be thought of as the realization that you have a goal or goals where you cannot achieve infinite satisfaction. OR is the science where you model these objectives and constraints first before you solve the problem.”

Citation. *By Marthi Harmse, on behalf of the Executive Committee of ORSSA.*

Johannes Michiel Hattingh (or Giel as he is known) was born in Parys in the then Orange Free State of the Republic of South Africa on 16 May 1940. Fifteen years later Giel matriculated in the same town. Crossing the Vaal River he enrolled for a BSc degree with majors in Mathematics and Statistics at the then Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, which he obtained *cum laude* in 1962. A year later he completed the degree Hons BSc (Mathematics), two years later the degree MSc (Statistics) and in 1971 Giel obtained the degree DSc (Statistics and Operations Research), all at the same university on the banks of the Mooi River.

At a young age Giel started working as a technical clerk at SASOL (1957–1960). After obtaining his MSc degree, he started lecturing at his alma mater in 1966. Three years later Giel was promoted to senior lecturer and in 1976 to full professor. From 1981 to 1984 Giel was the Director of Computer Services and from 1985 to 1989 the Chief Director of Planning and Information. In 1990 Giel became Professor and Chairman of the Department of Computer Science and Information Systems. In 1998 he was appointed Professor of Computer Science and Head of the TELKOM Centre of Excellence, as well as the Head of the Research Subprogramme on Computer Science, Informatics and Operations Research in the Focus Area on Business Mathematics and Informatics – positions he still holds.

Giel has been a member of ORSSA for many years. He is also a full member of the South African Computer Scientists and Information Technologists Society, of which he was President in 1997 and 1998. Giel has been advisor for many masters and PhD students in Statistics and Operations Research, Computer Science and Information Systems as well as from the Business School. He has published extensively, especially in the fields of Decision Support Systems, Mathematical Programming and Artificial Intelligence. He is involved in collaborative research with partners in Germany and the United States of America. Giel completed post doctoral courses, went on various study tours, attended many conferences and was keynote speaker at various occasions both locally and internationally. He co-authored three papers at IFORS 2002 and again at IFORS 2005.

Over a considerable period of time Giel has served the field of Operations Research, particularly at the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, now the North-West University. He was therefore duly and unanimously elected as Fellow of the Operations Research Society of South Africa in August 2005.