



The Operations Research Society of South Africa



Category II Recognition Award

(To a current member of ORSSA for a single, outstanding achievement with respect to the practice of OR on a national level)

Stephanus Esterhuyse Visagie

Citation. By Jan van Vuuren, on behalf of the Executive Committee of ORSSA.

Stephanus Esterhuyse Visagie was born in Calvinia on 5 September 1972. After completing his secondary school education at Calvinia High School in 1990 and performing military service in 1991 (where he rose to the rank of lieutenant), he enrolled for undergraduate studies in the natural sciences at Stellenbosch University in 1992. He currently holds a bachelor's degree with physics and applied mathematics as majors (obtained in 1995), a master's degree in applied mathematics (obtained in 1997), a master's degree in transport and logistics management (obtained in 2002) and a doctorate in operations research (obtained in 2006), all from Stellenbosch University.

In 1998, he was appointed as lecturer in logistics within the then Department of Transport Economics and Logistics at Stellenbosch University and promoted to senior lecturer in operations research in 2003 within the same department which had by then changed its name to Department of Logistics. In 2007, he was promoted to associate professor of operations research in the same department and became head of operations research there in 2012. During the period 2010–2011 he was also a visiting lecturer at the Högskolan i Borås in Sweden, where he taught linear programming as part of its International Business Engineering degree programme.

At Stellenbosch University he teaches courses on linear and nonlinear programming, metaheuristics and game theory. He has supervised thirteen master's students to successful completion of their post-graduate studies and has published nineteen papers in peer-review journals on operations research-related topics. He and his post-graduate students are regular presenters at ORSSA conferences. His research interests centre around solving concave knapsack problems (which was also the topic of his PhD thesis) as well as the streamlining of retail warehousing operations.

Stephan has been a member of ORSSA since the mid 1990s, and has served in various capacities on the Executive Committee of the Society: as treasurer (in 1998), as additional member (during the period 1999–2003), as business manager of the journal ORiON (during the period 2004–2010) and since 2011 as editor of this journal.

During the period 2009–2015, Stephan has been involved in research aimed at providing decision support to the Pep Stores national retail chain in terms of improving operations at their Kuilsriver and Durban distribution centres. As a result of funding that he received from Pep Stores, he has been able to award bursaries to a number of his post-graduate students working on topics in this area. In fact, this work has been the inspiration for eight honours year project topics, four master's thesis topics and two current PhD thesis topics. Work emanating from this research project has also led to the publication of eight papers in peer-review journals. For one of these research papers, entitled *Order-sequencing on a unidirectional cyclical picking line*, Stephan was awarded the prestigious Tom Rozwadowski Medal by ORSSA in 2014 together with Jason Matthews.

For practicing operations research of a high calibre on a national level within this particular research project, Stephanus Esterhuyse Visagie is, on this 15th day of September 2015, duly awarded a Category II ORSSA Recognition Award. I call on the President to confer the award.