



NANKHOO CONSULTING ENGINEERS



IMESA CONFERENCE

2019



PREPARED BY
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The Institute of Municipal Engineering of Southern Africa, otherwise known as IMESA, is a platform which has been created to exchange ideas and viewpoints on all aspects of Municipal engineering. The aim of the organisation is to expand the knowledge and best practices in all Local Government Municipalities.

In order to highlight issues and to provide insight into matters which the engineering fraternity is dealing with, IMESA hosts annual conferences, where papers are presented and products are exhibited by various engineering related companies and suppliers. This conference also creates a valuable platform for the discussion of ideas with like-minded engineers and municipal representatives. This year proved to be no exception, as IMESA hosted an informative and insightful conference on the shores of South Africa's playground, Durban. The conference was held between the 4th and 7th October 2019 at the Durban International Convention Centre (ICC), and was attended by two of the technical design team from Nankhoo Consulting Engineers (NCE), Nikhil Amaidas and Yajur Jeawon. Hanslab Environmental Consultants (HEC), the sister company of NCE also set up a product Exhibition Stand where they showcased the various services and capabilities of their company.

The conference was given the theme of 'Conquering Municipal Challenges' this year, as this seemed an apt theme for the current situation in many municipalities country wide.

PRESENTATIONS:

Some highlights of the Paper Presentations and Speakers at the 2019 IMESA conference:



First of the speakers was Neil Macleod, the keynote speaker for the conference. Mr Macleod spoke in depth about challenges in the municipal engineering field and challenged the engineers present to not use history as a burden, but rather to understand issues of the past and adapt current systems and methods in order to provide better service delivery in our current day. Furthermore, Mr Macleod, implored Supply Chain Management (SCM) to assist engineers by providing clear framework and support so that legislation does not hinder service delivery.

Mr Thami Hlangwa, from Umgeni Water was the next speaker. His speech highlighted the water issues facing municipalities, and was focused on service delivery backlogs as well as lack of infrastructure.

Following on from the two introductory speakers, were the speakers who had been selected to present their scientific papers highlighting solutions to municipal challenges. There was a total of 16 papers which were presented. These papers ranged from case studies of present-day projects, to futuristic solutions that are theoretical in nature, however, all were thoroughly absorbing and provided one with food for thought as to the innovations that can be implemented by engineers for solving municipal engineering problems.

The highlight of the conference was that most papers were written by young engineers, between the ages of 24 to 30. For these young minds to show innovative and daring approaches to benefit society is truly inspiring for the future.



As a part of the IMESA experience, the attendees were presented with an opportunity to attend a site tour. The NCE representatives, Nikhil and Yajur attended the site tour of Durban Harbour. The Durban Harbour tour saw attendees board a mini yacht and be given a guided tour of the surrounding harbour. On the tour, a knowledgeable employee of the harbour explained the significance of each aspect of the harbour, as well as future developments which are set to take place. Issues such as pollution and stormwater control were also covered, as these have become major issues for the harbour, owing to the spike in urbanization over the past 10 years or so.

Whilst on the tour, the group was given a special treat. A group of dolphins were spotted, and many members of the group implored the captain to change the course of the boat so as to get a closer look. This was a sight to behold, and shows that despite the many serious issues being discussed on the tour, one may take the time to enjoy the natural beauty of the environment which we as engineers should be looking to nurture and preserve.

As one may imagine, by the end of the conference, engineers were inundated with graphs, data and a lot of technical information. So, a bit of entertainment and fun went down well at the Social Evening which took place at Greyville Race Course. It was here where the engineers and municipal engineers were able to let their hair down and meet and greet with one another. The entertainment was stellar, with comedian Masood Boomgaard leaving the audience in stitches with his brand of stand-up comedy. The food and drinks paved the way for the DJ to keep everyone dancing long into the night, and to make sure that the night would be truly unforgettable.

To conclude, one may applaud IMESA for hosting a fascinating and interactive event. This is a much-needed platform for municipal engineers and representatives, and assists in creating a dialogue between major stakeholders. IMESA has shown that they are a premier organisation that is not afraid to take on the important issues that are plaguing our municipalities. Nankhoo Consulting Engineers has benefited from attending the conference through gaining much insight into challenges facing municipalities and possible means to solve them. Durban proved to be a perfect host for the IMESA 2019 Conference, and it is an exciting prospect to witness the growth and influence of IMESA in the near future.

