

SPOTLIGHT

on collaboration with the Institute of Metals

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SAIMM/Institute of Metals Collaboration

In mid-1984, SAIMM reached an agreement with the South African Region of what is now the Institute of Metals† to combine the physical-metallurgical activities of the two organizations. This was the outcome of several years of informal collaboration, and followed the recognition in 1982 by the SAIMM Council that applied physical metallurgy had grown in importance to South African industry and should have a place alongside the two areas already well-established for SAIMM commitment and support—mining and extractive metallurgy.

For its part, the Institute of Metals (SA) was aware that it lacked the resources to adequately organize the variety of meetings, courses, visits, etc., needed to meet the technical and professional needs of its 300 or so members, for whose benefit it wanted, in any case, to develop interaction with the main body of the local metallurgical community.

Arrangements with SAIMM

Under the co-operative arrangements, initially two members of the Institute of Metals (SA) Committee (who had also to be members of the SAIMM) were co-opted to serve on the SAIMM Council until such time as an appropriate number of physical metallurgists could successfully stand for election, and Committee members were invited to join each of the appropriate SAIMM Committees dealing with affairs relating to general and physical metallurgy, viz Technical Programme (Physical Metallurgy), Working Group—Physical Metallurgy, Journal, Training, Careers Guidance and Education, and Membership (has to be SAIMM Council Member). The work of each of these Committees has been reviewed in detail in the SAIMM annual reports. The issues of the *Journal* containing the annual report and AGM proceedings have been sent to each member of the Institute of Metals (SA) as part of an arrangement (completed with this issue) for them to receive free six issues of the *Journal* that contain papers or reports relating to their particular interests. Such papers are now appearing with increasing frequency: nine were published in the past twelve months, along with sixteen mining papers and five on extractive metallurgy. As this continues, it will be a convincing demonstration of the contribution that physical metallurgy makes to metallurgical development in South Africa.

The Institute of Metals

Evening meetings have always been an important feature of the technical programme of the Institute of Metals (SA), valued because they provide a way to keep in touch. Perhaps this is why, although attendances vary,

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† The Institute of Metals was formed in January 1985 by the merging of the Metals Society and the Institution of Metallurgists.

there is always a good response if there is provision for participation. This observation was supported by the last meeting, which was held on 26th August, after the end of the period covered by the recent annual report. The occasion was a lecture competition, sponsored by local industry and judged by three of its senior managers. Six competitors gave brief and lively accounts of developments in areas of their choice. An opportunity to take refreshments and to make and renew contacts was built into the programme. Involvement and interaction were the keynotes of the event, which all declared to be enjoyable and useful.

The Institute of Metals represents a much broader range of professional concern and metallurgical interest than the term *physical metallurgy* indicates. As a result of the merger between the professionally oriented Institution of Metallurgists and the Metals Society, with its role as a learned society and open-membership structure, the new Institute is in a strong position to satisfy the principal requirement of its Charter, 'to promote and develop all aspects of the science, technology and use of metals in the practice of metallurgy'. In this context, metallurgy applies to all materials that in their fundamentals are similar to metals.

In professional matters, the Institute has the responsibility placed on it by the UK Engineering Council to set academic and training standards in its field of metallurgy, materials science, and technology, and to maintain and enhance the competence of its members. It is already well advanced in the accreditation of undergraduate courses, in the establishment of training procedures, and in organizing courses for continuing education.

With its membership of over 12 000, drawn from all sections of the materials community, its many affiliations at home and abroad, and its resources for organizing conferences and providing information services, the Institute is able to bring together all the various and fragmented interests involved in the industrial use of engineered materials. In presidential addresses to the Institute, Sir Hugh Ford has suggested that it should direct its attention towards individual industries, and work closely with designers, fabricators, and users of products, to seek ways to increase the effective application of existing materials.

Association with SAIMM

Particularly now that the SAIMM is also moving towards a broader base of multi-disciplinary membership and emphasizing its relationship with the whole mining and metallurgical industry, the Institute of Metals (SA) should have much to contribute in the areas of metal processing and product development.

The Institute of Metals (SA) looks forward to a continued close and rewarding association with the SAIMM and, through it, with South African industry.