

Committee on  
Scholarly Publishing  
in South Africa

**Report on  
Grouped Peer Review of  
Scholarly Journals in  
Architecture,  
Built Environment and  
Engineering**



science  
& technology

Department:  
Science and Technology  
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The Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) was inaugurated in May 1996. It was formed in response to the need for an Academy of Science consonant with the dawn of democracy in South Africa: activist in its mission of using science and scholarship for the benefit of society, with a mandate encompassing all scholarly disciplines that use an open-minded and evidence-based approach to build knowledge. ASSAf thus adopted in its name the term 'science' in the singular as reflecting a common way of enquiring rather than an aggregation of different disciplines. Its Members are elected on the basis of a combination of two principal criteria, academic excellence and significant contributions to society.

The Parliament of South Africa passed the Academy of Science of South Africa Act (*No 67 of 2001*), which came into force on 15 May 2002. This made ASSAf the only academy of science in South Africa officially recognised by government and representing the country in the international community of science academies and elsewhere.



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# Acronyms/Abbreviations

<b>ABEE</b>	Architecture, Built Environment and Engineering
<b>AJOL</b>	African Journals Online
<b>ASOCSA</b>	Association of Schools of Construction of Southern Africa
<b>ASSAf</b>	Academy of Science of South Africa
<b>CAB</b>	Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International
<b>CHE</b>	Council on Higher Education
<b>CIB</b>	International Council for Research and Innovation in Building and Construction
<b>COPE</b>	Committee on Publication Ethics
<b>CPD</b>	Continuous professional development
<b>CSPISA</b>	Committee on Scholarly Publishing in South Africa
<b>CSSA</b>	Concrete Society of Southern Africa NPC
<b>DHET</b>	Department of Higher Education and Training
<b>DOAJ</b>	Directory of Open Access Journals
<b>DST</b>	Department of Science and Technology
<b>EAB</b>	Editorial Advisory Board
<b>EBSCOhost</b>	Elton B Stephens Company (EBSCOhost) Research Databases
<b>EPWP</b>	Expanded Public Works Programme
<b>ESCI</b>	Emerging Sources Citation Index
<b>GSSA</b>	Geological Society of South Africa
<b>HEQC</b>	Higher Education Quality Committee
<b>HESA</b>	Higher Education South Africa
<b>IBSS</b>	International Bibliography of the Social Sciences
<b>IBZ</b>	International Bibliography of Periodical Literature on the Humanities and Social Sciences
<b>ICChemE</b>	Institution of Chemical Engineers
<b>ICONDA</b>	International Construction Database
<b>IEEE</b>	Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers
<b>IEL</b>	IEEE/IET Electronic Library
<b>IET</b>	Institution of Engineering and Technology
<b>IMESA</b>	Institute of Municipal Engineering of Southern Africa
<b>ISI</b>	International Scientific Indexing
<b>JEDT</b>	Journal of Engineering, Design and Technology
<b>JESA</b>	Journal of Energy in Southern Africa
<b>JoC</b>	Journal of Construction
<b>JSAICE</b>	Journal of the South African Institution of Civil Engineering
<b>NRF</b>	National Research Foundation
<b>NSEF</b>	National Scholarly Editors' Forum
<b>OJS</b>	Open Journal Systems
<b>PRP</b>	Peer review panel
<b>RICS</b>	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
<b>SABINET</b>	South African Bibliographic and Information Network
<b>SACAP</b>	South African Council for the Architectural Profession
<b>SACPLAN</b>	South African Council for Planners
<b>SACQSP</b>	South African Council for the Quantity Surveying Profession
<b>SACS</b>	South African Committee for Stratigraphy
<b>SADC</b>	Southern African Development Community
<b>SAIA</b>	South African Institute of Architects
<b>SAICE</b>	South African Institution of Civil Engineering
<b>SAICHe</b>	South African Institution of Chemical Engineers
<b>SAIEE</b>	South African Institute of Electrical Engineers
<b>SAIIE</b>	Southern African Institute for Industrial Engineering
<b>SAJCE</b>	South African Journal of Chemical Engineering
<b>SAJG</b>	South African Journal of Geology

<b>SAJIE</b>	South African Journal of Industrial Engineering
<b>SAIMechE</b>	South African Institution of Mechanical Engineering
<b>SAIMM</b>	Southern African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy
<b>SciELO SA</b>	Scientific Electronic Library Online South Africa
<b>TLABS</b>	iThemba Laboratory for Accelerator-Based Sciences
<b>UFS</b>	University of the Free State
<b>WoS</b>	Web of Science Citation Index

# Preface



## Committee on Scholarly Publishing in South Africa (CSPiSA)

### Discipline-grouped Peer-review Reports on South African Scholarly Journals

This is the seventh in the series of discipline-grouped evaluations of South African scholarly journals. Eventually, it is hoped that all scholarly journals in the country will have been subjected to independent, multiple peer review as part of a quality assurance process initiated by the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf). The quality assurance process is a precursor to the identification of journal titles to be loaded on to the open access platform, Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO) South Africa. Only open access journals of a sufficiently high quality will be included in this fully indexed, free online, multi-national platform, now also directly featured on Clarivate Analytics' Web of Science portal.

The traditional focus of peer review is on a single journal article, book chapter or book. It is less common to subject journals to independent, multiple peer review, as these are usually evaluated in qualitative, reputational terms, or bibliometrically, by means of impact factors.

The peer review of South African scholarly journal titles thus required the development of a new methodology that was piloted successfully with the first two discipline-grouped peer review reports, published in 2010, on the *Social Sciences and Related Fields*, and the *Agricultural and Related Basic Life Sciences*. This work was not achieved without difficulty, as the process was unfamiliar to reviewers accustomed to reviewing single articles.

ASSAf has confidence in this ambitious programme, which is aimed at ensuring that the bulk of South African scholarly journals are of a high quality. The process goes beyond the familiar journal assessment approaches mentioned above by providing concrete recommendations to enable the editor(s) of journals, especially those not deemed to be of a sufficient standard, to take corrective action and provides an opportunity for them to reapply for evaluation.

The process centred on multi-perspective, discipline-based evaluation panels appointed by the Academy Council on the recommendation of the Academy's Committee on Scholarly Publishing in South Africa (CSPiSA); journal editors were requested to complete specially designed questionnaires, and peer reviewers were selected from a spectrum of scholars in the fields concerned. Each editor was asked to provide answers to a set of questions, which were used to address the scope and focus of the peer-reviewed articles in the journals under review, the authorship generally, and the presence or absence of enrichment features, such as editorials, topical reviews, book reviews, and news and views articles. (The editors' questionnaire and peer reviewers' set of questions are appended to this report.)

Each discipline-based evaluation panel met to discuss the individual peer reviews and questionnaires and consolidated them into a consensus review for each journal. Final formulations and recommendations were prepared, including suggestions for improvement from both the peer reviewers and the panel. The responsible editors were given an opportunity to check the accuracy of the information in each individual journal report, and the final version of the report was approved by the ASSAf CSPiSA and the Council of ASSAf.

As the latest in the series of reports, it is evident that much has been learned from the previous discipline groups and that, going forward, the process will become more streamlined, such that subsequent reports will follow in rapid succession.

I would like to thank the Chair of the Panel, Prof Gerhard Venter and members of the evaluation Panel, and particularly Prof Robin Crewe, who is responsible for overseeing ASSAf's peer review panels' activities, for his leadership in this quality-assurance process. I acknowledge the important role played by the staff of the Academy in supporting the process; Ms Susan Veldsman, Director of

the Scholarly Publishing Unit, and the Project Officers who worked under her direction, namely, Ms Desré Stead and Ms Mmaphuthi Mashiachidi. Ms Patricia Scholtz is thanked for copy-editing. Finally, I acknowledge the contribution of the many individual peer reviewers who have each contributed towards strengthening the quality of South African scholarly journals.

**Prof Roseanne Diab**

Executive Officer: Academy of Science of South Africa

# Foreword



The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) congratulates the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) for yet another publication of the *Grouped Peer Review of Scholarly Journals*. The report is aimed at improving the quality of the journals in our higher education system, thereby influencing the standard of research conducted in the respective fields. It is in the interests of our higher education system and society in general that the quality of research conducted in the system should be continually improved.

The DHET published the Research Outputs Policy (2015) in the *Government Gazette* (Vol 597, No 38552). The policy, which is a revised version of the Policy and Procedures for Measurement of Research Output of Public Higher Education Institutions of 2003, came about after almost ten years of implementation of the previous version after a long drawn-out process of studying several publications and a consultative process within and outside the higher education sector.

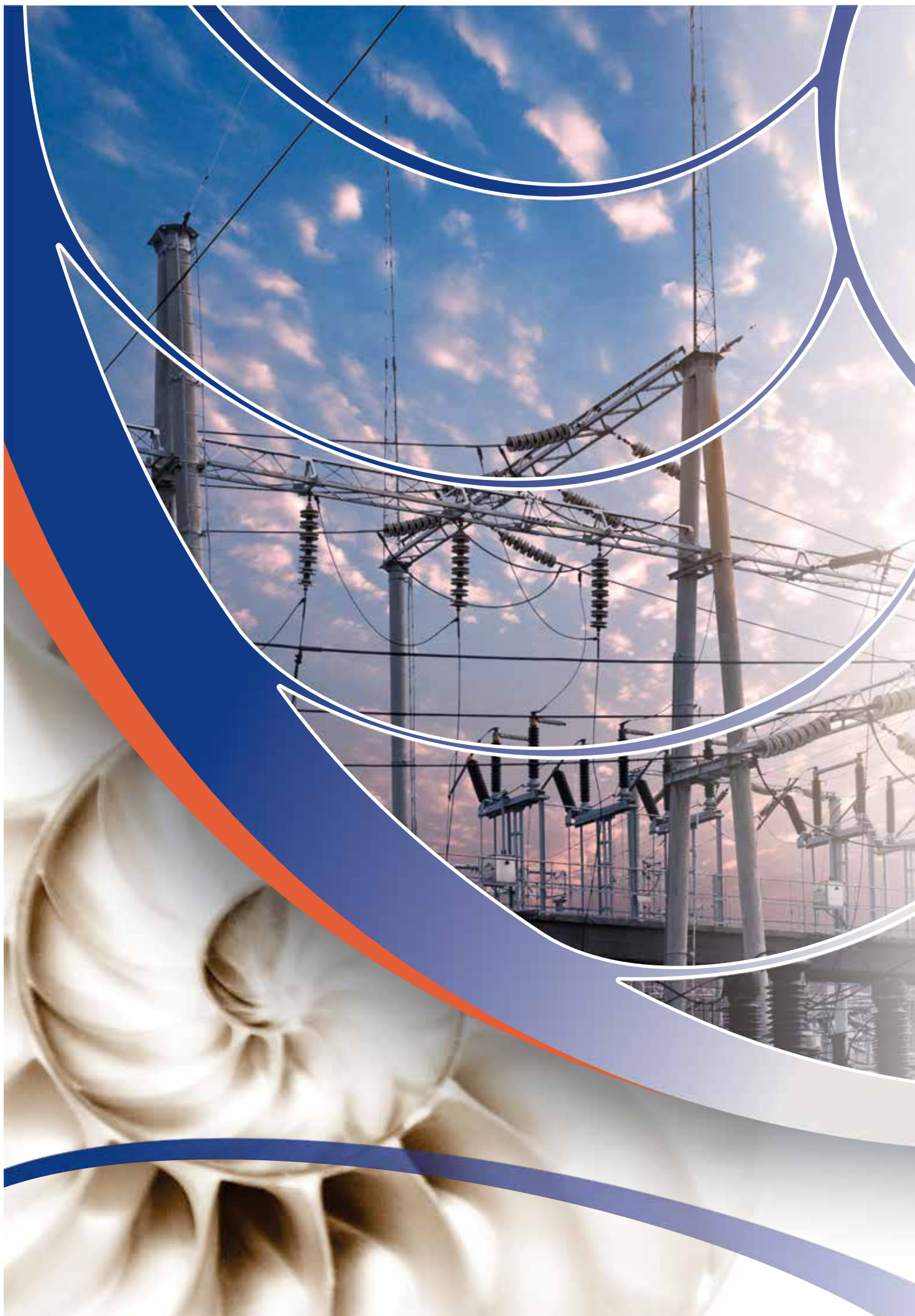
Three additional journal indices were included over and above the initial three. Further changes include the rule that at least 75% of articles published in a journal must emanate from multiple institutions. Overall, though, the effected changes to the policy were aimed at improving the quality of publications from the higher education system. Based on evidence, the Policy and Procedures for Measurement of Research Output of Public Higher Education Institutions of 2003 had managed to spur the quantity of publications from the system. However, as part of analysis of data and pattern, the DHET observed that the quality of some publications was questionable. Thus, the policy encourages all South African journals to aim for international standards in order to apply for inclusion in accredited international lists or indices. A number of studies suggest that predatory journals come about partly because of pressure to publish and to accrue maximum subsidy. As such, the policy reminds institutions and academics of the importance of research integrity, ethics and the essence of knowledge dissemination rather than maximum benefits accompanying publications.

The DHET continues to explore various means of improving the quality of publications and to deal with the scourge of predatory journals. We would like universities to pay serious attention to improving quality of publications using the known measures employed internationally such as peer review and the accepted norms of scholarship. If need be and as the Research Outputs Policy indicates, the DHET will even consider introducing penalties to non-complying institutions. The effort towards improvement of quality in our higher education system is everyone's responsibility.

**Mr Mahlubi Mabizela and Ms Fhumulani Maanda**

University Education Policy

Department of Higher Education and Training



# 1 Periodic Peer Review of South African Scholarly Journals: Approved Process Guidelines and Criteria

## 1.1 Background

During the launch meeting of the ASSAf-led National Scholarly Editors' Forum (NSEF) held on 25 July 2007, the 112 participants supported ASSAf and its Committee on Scholarly Publishing in South Africa (CSPiSA) in taking the lead in the implementation of Recommendation 5 of the 2006 ASSAf report on *A Strategic Approach to Research Publishing in South Africa*. This recommendation dealt specifically with the need for a system of quality assurance for over 260 of the country's journals which are accredited by the Department of Education (now Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)):

**Recommendation No 5: that ASSAf be mandated jointly by the Departments of Education and Science and Technology to carry out external peer review and associated quality audit of all South African research journals in five-year cycles, probably best done in relation to groups of titles sharing a particular broad disciplinary focus, in order to make recommendations for improved functioning of each journal in the national and international system.**

## 1.2 ASSAf Peer Review Panels (PRPs)

The quality assurance system for journals is conducted primarily through discipline-grouped peer reviews carried out by a series of purpose-appointed peer review panels (PRPs) drawn from the ranks of researchers and other experienced scholars in and around the fields concerned in each case, as well as persons with practical (technical) publishing experience. The proposed ASSAf PRPs are overseen by the CSPiSA, but appointed by the Academy Council. Their draft reports are sent to relevant stakeholders for comment and input, before finalisation by the PRP concerned, and ultimate consideration sequentially by the CSPiSA and the ASSAf Council.

The following quote from the ASSAf report clarifies the approach to be followed in the review of the journals and some aspects of the approach proposed:

*The periodic, grouped **quality assurance-directed peer review of South African** research periodicals would function analogously to the quality audits of the CHE/HEQC, would be developed as an outcome of the Editors' Forum, and would focus on: the quality of editorial and review process; fitness of, and for purpose; positioning in the global cycle of new and old journals listed and indexed in databases; financial sustainability; and scope and size issues. The **ASSAf panels** carrying out the reviews would each comprise 6 – 8 experts, some of whom would not be directly drawn from the areas concerned, and would require data-gathering, interviews, and international comparisons, before reports with recommendations are prepared, approved, and released to stakeholders such as national associations, the Departments of Science and Technology and of Education, the CHE/HEQC, the NRF and HESA.*

It must be emphasised that the main purpose of the ASSAf review process for journals is to improve the quality of scholarly publication in the country in a manner that is consonant with traditional scholarly practices – primarily voluntary peer review. It is not an attempt to control these publications in any way. ASSAf respects the independence and freedom of researchers and of the research process itself as important preconditions for the critical and innovative production of new knowledge. At the same time, the work of South African researchers has to be assessed, both qualitatively and quantitatively, as part of the global community of scholars and scientists, and in this respect ASSAf has an obligation to contribute to the improvement of quality of such work where possible.

## 1.3 Initial Criteria

A number of criteria were explored in the part of the ASSAf report (Chapter 4) that dealt with the survey of the over 200 then-current editors of accredited South African scholarly journals.

Other possible criteria were proposed in other sections of the report, or have since been suggested by members of the CSPiSA or the NSEF. These are grouped and listed below, and are consolidated in the questionnaire presented in Appendix A.

### 1.3.1 Editorial process-related criteria: Generally based on the *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review* developed by ASSAf

- Longevity of the journal (continuous or discontinuous), in years.
- Number of original peer-reviewed papers published per year during the last five years, plus number of manuscripts submitted, plus number rejected out-of-hand or after peer review; average length of published papers; and 'author demography' of papers submitted and published.
- Number and nature of peer reviewers used per manuscript and the overall number per year, including institutional and national/international spread, plus quality (as per the *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*) and average length of peer-review reports.
- Average delay before publication of submitted manuscripts and frequency of publication.
- Professional stature and experience of the editor; how he/she is selected; how long the editor has been in service; and the success or otherwise in addressing the major issues in the field, through commissioning of reviews/articles, editorial comment, etc.
- Number and professional stature/experience of editorial board members, plus selection processes, turnover, and nature of involvement in handling of manuscripts or in other functions. If international members serve on the board (desirable), whether they are a mix from developed and developing countries.
- Existence and nature of editorial policy/guidelines, plus how often these are revised/updated; conflict-of-interest policy (e.g. how manuscripts are assessed when submitted by an editor or board member as author/co-author).
- *Errata* published – how many per year?
- Value-adding features, such as editorials, news and views pieces, correspondence on papers, reviews, policy/topical fora, etc. – how many, and how are they generated? What proportion are they of the total pages in journal issues?
- Any peer-review process of the journal already in place (e.g. by professional association).

### 1.3.2 Business-related Criteria

- Frequency and regularity ('on time') of publication.
- Print runs (redundant stock, direct versus indirect distribution to readers).
- Production model and service provider(s).
- Paid and unpaid advertising.
- Sponsorship and *quid pro quos*.
- Paid and unpaid subscription base and how this is marketed. Cost level of print and (if applicable) e-subscriptions.
- E-publication. If this is done, what are the website/portal and access possibilities for users? What evaluation is done, especially in respect of tagging and searchability?
- Whether there are html/xml and PDF versions, or only PDF, and whether multimedia is used.
- The portals for open access, if provided. If not e-published, whether this is being considered, and how.
- Total income and expenditure per annum.
- Distribution to international destinations.
- Indexed in Web of Science (WoS) and/or International Bibliography of Social Sciences (IBSS), or any other international database? If indexed, for how long and how continuously?
- Offers to purchase from multi-national publishers.
- Copyright arrangements.

### 1.3.3 Bibliometric Assessments

- Citation practice – how many authors are listed?
- If applicable, what are the WoS-type impact factors (and various derivatives) over the last five years?
- Are reviews a regular/increasing feature?
- If articles are not in English, are English abstracts mandatory?

## 1.4 Process Guidelines for Setting up the Panels, Peer Reviewers, Panel Meetings and Reports for the Subject Peer Review of Journals

### 1.4.1 Background to ASSAf Peer Review Panels

The quality assurance system for journals is implemented primarily through discipline-grouped peer reviews carried out by a series of purpose-appointed peer review panels (PRPs) drawn from the ranks of researchers and other experienced scholars in and around the fields concerned in each case, as well as persons with practical (technical) publishing experience. The proposed ASSAf PRPs are overseen by the CSPiSA, but appointed by the Academy Council. Their draft reports are sent to relevant stakeholders for comment and relevant input, before finalisation by the PRP concerned, and final consideration sequentially by the CSPiSA and the ASSAf Council.

### 1.4.2 Role of the Scholarly Publishing Unit

An ASSAf project officer of the Scholarly Publications Unit is assigned to support each panel chair, but reports to the Director of the Scholarly Publishing Unit in terms of review logistics and the production of draft and final review reports. The project officer is responsible for the following issues and activities:

- selecting and appointing panel members;
- obtaining completed questionnaires from editors;
- organising panel activities, including meetings; selecting independent peer reviewers for each journal or groups of titles;
- drafting consolidated version 1 reports; and
- obtaining CSPiSA and ASSAf Council approval for final, publishable panel reports.

### 1.4.3 Setting up Panels

The proposed PRPs are chaired by an ASSAf Member and appointed by the Council, which assumes accountability for the PRP's work in helping to develop a credible quality assurance mechanism for South African scholarly journals.

### 1.4.4 Selecting Panel Members

- The appointment process of PRP members is managed by the Chair of the CSPiSA until the panel and its chair have been appointed.
- CSPiSA members are asked to assist in preparing a list of at least 12 – 13 names, of which the last 4 – 5 shall be considered to be potential alternates to the first 7 – 8.
- A typical PRP consists of 6 – 8 members.
- Each name must be accompanied by critical personal and career details, as well as by a brief motivation, to enable the CSPiSA, and later the ASSAf Council, to apply its mind to the question of constituting the best possible, most competent PRP.
- The draft list of potential members is published on the ASSAf website, and is also circulated for comment to members of the National Scholarly Editors' Forum at least two weeks before the Council meeting where the appointments are to be made.
- All comments received will be noted in making the final decision.
- All provisionally listed persons are required to complete and submit conflict-of-interest forms prior to the Council's consideration of the list in question.

### 1.4.5 Criteria for Membership

- The individuals selected to serve on a PRP should have experience and credibility in the disciplines under review or in related disciplines, or be senior scholars who may be from a completely different discipline. Generally, the composition of a panel, in an approximate ratio of 3:3:2, should be a mix of disciplinary specialists, specialists in areas cognate to the broad disciplinary area concerned, and 'wise people' who are steeped in scholarly practices and drawn from any broad disciplinary area.
- The panel members should have demonstrable expertise and experience in both the editing and peer-review aspects of research journals.
- It is not necessary that all PRP members be experts in both editing and peer-review aspects – a mix of senior academics and a few active editors (of journals not under review) is appropriate – but all should have some appreciation of both editing and peer review.
- At least one member should have direct practical (technical) experience of publishing.

Persons selected as panel participants will typically be drawn from ASSAf's Membership, academic institutions, science councils and consultants.

### 1.4.6 Conflict of Interest

- It will be necessary to take care to avoid real or perceived conflicts.
- Committee expertise, balance and conflicts of interest are discussed at the first meeting (and may again be discussed at any later meeting) of the PRPs, and recommendations to resolve problematic issues can be brought through the SPU (Secretariat) to the ASSAf Council for possible amendment of the composition of PRPs.
- Panel members are requested to submit written conflict-of-interest statements, and are bound to report any new potential sources of conflicts of interest during the quality review process.

### 1.4.7 Organising the Panels

The organisation of the panel is conducted by its chair, supported by the assigned project officer. The activities related to organisation typically include:

- Planning and costing the review and panel activities.
- Obtaining completed questionnaires from each editor/equivalent (concerning publishing logistics).
- Identifying suitable peer reviewers for each journal or group of titles (concerning content quality).
- Assembling hard copies of journals or providing access to the journal online.
- Establishing panel meeting dates, assigning tasks, and collating materials.
- Preparing and distributing pre-meeting and post-meeting materials (draft version 1 reports, i.e. assembled peer reviews and editors' questionnaires, in template form).
- Taking responsibility for post-meeting activities, including draft version 2 report preparation, circulation for comment to panellists and editors, and preparation and processing of final reports.
- Evaluation of panel processes.

### 1.4.8 Selection of Peer Reviewers (See above)

- At least two, but preferably three, independent peer reviewers, as well as alternative reviewers must be agreed upon by the panel for each title or group of similar titles.
- Members of the CSPiSA and the ASSAf Membership in general will be given an opportunity to volunteer through a specific written call.
- Other candidates will be sought from lists of the National Research Foundation (NRF) and active science council research staff.
- The process of selection is overseen by the panel chair. The final agreed appointments of willing volunteer reviewers are made by the panel itself.

- Conflicts of interest must be avoided – thus current or former editors cannot become peer reviewers of the journals concerned; this also applies to current members of editorial boards.
- The project officer must arrange access to hard or e-copies of the journals under review by independent experts.
- The core questions to be answered in each case must be provided to peer reviewers, who should be asked to ensure that these questions are all addressed in their reviews.

#### 1.4.9 Panel Meetings and Procedures

##### Preparations

- The ASSAf project officer is responsible for drawing up the version 1 report on each journal. Each reviewer's answers should be consolidated under the standard headings of the draft; each input as a separate paragraph. The editors' questionnaire should also be inserted as a single item under 'questionnaire' and 'business aspects'.
- The documentation (editors' questionnaires, peer-review reports) should be sent out by email to all panellists at least two weeks prior to the panel meeting.
- Conveners of sub-sets of journals should be alerted at this time to their role at the forthcoming panel meeting – to present the journals in the set, and to make recommendations for discussion and elaboration. If unable to attend, they should be asked to submit written notes for presentation to the panel by the convener.
- Ideally, hard copies of issues of journals to be considered should be available at the meeting, but if logistically impossible, this can be dispensed with.
- A quorum of at least two-thirds of the members of PRPs must be guaranteed at any meeting, otherwise a new date must be sought.
- Panellists should be informed at the same time that hard copies of all documentation will be available at the meeting in bundles containing the completed editors' questionnaire and reviewers' reports for each journal title.
- The responsible project officer should ensure that at least two peer reviews, and preferably three, are in hand for each title by the time of the initial send-out of materials, or, by default, by the date of the meeting, for tabling on the day.

##### Meeting

- Journal titles should be considered in sub-sets.
- Consensus on each of the criteria should be agreed seriatim as per a convener's spoken summary, and noted by the project officer in attendance.
- Particular attention should be paid to reaching agreement on recommendations in respect of:
  - (a) An invitation to the publisher/editor to join the SciELO South Africa platform (if the journal is open access, and meets the special criteria on frequency of publication and annual number of original peer-reviewed articles).
  - (b) A recommendation to the DHET on accreditation in its list of South African journals in which any article is considered as a valid research output.
  - (c) If not recommended, suggestions for improvement that would make it possible to make an invitation and/or recommendation under (a) or (b).
  - (d) Suggestions for improvement or enhanced function in general.

#### 1.4.10 Post-meeting Procedures and Panel Reports

- When producing a version 2 report, the three paragraphs in each item have to be consolidated to produce a consensus version.
- A detailed and motivated draft version 2 report of each peer review panel's findings and recommendations is prepared by the assigned project officer, working closely with the panel chair.
- The project officer and convener should reach agreement on the record of the meeting in respect of all outcomes within no more than two weeks.

- The meeting record should be sent for comment and ratification to all panellists (including those who were not able to attend the meeting) and replies should be received within one week.
- The convener should prepare a final version of the meeting record, and submit a copy of each journal-specific item as a privileged communication to the editor concerned for written comment within no more than two weeks.
- The convener should identify any editor's comment that might materially change the recommendations in the record, and submit these to the panel for consideration and decision.
- The finally agreed-upon record should be submitted to the CSPiSA for approval before its submission to the ASSAf Council and public release.

## 2 Special Considerations Concerning South African Architecture, Built Environment and Engineering Journals

Architecture, Built Environment and Engineering (ABEE) disciplines are constantly changing worldwide, and especially in South Africa. Here, social and economic change within new and much broader political agendas, as well as the flourishing and fruitful blending of many cultures (both seen against international trends marking increasing globalisation), present particular challenges for the ABEE professions. These have been historically dominated by a particular socio-cultural group.

These professions and academic disciplines face at least four forms of transformative challenges, at national, continental and/or global levels:

- First, political transformation, most often referred to in South Africa as the urgent re-balancing of severe previous racial and class disadvantage under apartheid, moving the country towards much greater representivity and a full democracy.
- Second, transformation in the professions in terms of what they face in urgent contextual challenges such as population increase and very rapid urbanisation requiring re-structured urban forms in the country (this extends to new ideas about 'professions' and the organisation of an effective total workforce in these fields).
- Third, transformation underway in the international and national 'knowledge superstructure', i.e. the intellectual space where teaching, training and research takes place, involving libraries, journals, publishers, etc. The space was dominated previously by the Global North, but is now increasingly redistributing itself in a globalising world where knowledge has 'power' and where the global economy is commodifying access to knowledge.
- Finally, transformation which problematises the nature of the knowledge that 'scholars' deal with vis-à-vis other sectors of the wider community: related professions, industries, policymakers, communities, etc., including the dominance of certain 'canons' in intellectual endeavour, as well as the subordination of local (although not necessarily indigenous) knowledge.

These challenges are not unique to the ABEE disciplines, but the 'boom-and-bust' cycles of investment in the built environment makes these perhaps more accentuated at least in some of the disciplinary areas.

These considerations affect the way in which the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) has conducted this further edition of its discipline-grouped journal peer reviews to evaluate scholarly journals accredited by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). The ABEE Panel has assessed a wide range of journals falling within a rather broad group, both in respect of the spread of disciplines and their range of longevity (launch dates vary from the 1890s to 1990s), as well as their orientation (some are more professionally focused and others

more academically focused). The key issues, as usual for academic validation, are evidence of authoritative editorial oversight and of effective independent, multiple peer review. The Panel has accordingly reflected on the need to institute more competitively and more broadly constituted editors-in-chief and editorial boards, who have time-limited terms and better-specified functions.

Associated with this is the need to reflect changing demographics in the relevant academic departments and professions vis-à-vis contributions to scholarly journals in the fields concerned. Widening the peer-review network, as well as the nature and scope of material accepted for publication can play a key role (e.g. inclusion of features beyond academic research submissions per se, such as policy debates, professional news and views, reviews of publications/buildings/infrastructure/projects, etc.) This should NOT mean any dilution of the imperative of editorial discretion and multiple peer review for acceptance of research papers, but may mean that some journals need to increase the proportion of material that is not peer-reviewed. Here the Panel recommends that to be accepted for DHET accreditation, at least half of the substantive content (in pages or words) in any journal should be peer-reviewed over any year of publication.

The change of editorial function can be key to improved management, and here there is a need for editors-in-chief and editorial boards and publishers to work within the generally agreed ASSAf guidelines. This means that journals urgently need to become less dominated by staff and submissions from any one or small number of particular academic institutions (in any case prescribed by the 2015 DHET research outputs subsidisation policy) extending links with professional and other associations, and be as open as possible to participation across the country's (and region's) ABEE system. Journals should seek to become 'open access' online whenever this is possible, and the imposition of article processing charges can help to achieve this if necessary. Journals should also permit the open-access placement of articles on institutional repositories (the 'Green Route').

While some of the journals reviewed are well-established and well-managed, their overall focus may also need to change in the sense of acknowledging other valid forms of relevant knowledge – and here widening the content set is key, permitting 'knowledge exchange' – i.e. not just between academics, but between academics, professionals, policymakers, communities, etc. (and the stress is on 'exchange', not merely 'transfer' of knowledge from academia to others). It is important that these journals both permit publication routes for emerging academics and new professionals, but also retain (in some cases regain) publications from more established researchers who have tended recently to 'migrate' their work to publications overseas.

Finally, and of relevance to this last point, South Africa is in a privileged position in terms of its access to the existing global 'intellectual infrastructure' compared with many countries, and especially those in sub-Saharan Africa. However, the growing intellectual power of other macro-regions, such as Brazil, India, China and Russia (with which the country is associated in the BRICS), and shifts in the centre of gravity of the global intellectual infrastructure require a certain re-calibration of focus, both for journals and for intellectual activity in the country. A key example here is the SciELO SA platform linked to many South American countries and the South-South collaborations this platform facilitates.

In essence, many of the journals reviewed here have been created and have 'grown up' in quite an 'enclosed' environment, and indeed seem to have had limited ambitions. As a Panel, we believe the time has come for higher aspirations, better management, new internal developmental policies, and pro-active diversity in the locally published ABEE journals. The potential definitely exists, with clear strengths and also real challenges, but these opportunities need to be grasped. To that end, we hope in this publication to provide guidance on how these aspirations can be achieved. The report also provides an important over-arching review of fields of endeavour that are fundamentally important for the development of a prosperous, united nation.

It should be noted that the period of review of these journals was from 2012 / 2013 to 2015, just prior to the new DHET research outputs policy coming into effect.

### 3 Panel Members

- I. Prof Gerhard Venter (Chairperson), Professor: Mechanics Division, Stellenbosch University
- II. Dr Jacobus Lowry Conradie, Head: Accelerator and Engineering Department, iThemba Laboratory for Accelerator-Based Sciences (TLABS)
- III. Prof Diane Hildebrandt, ASSAf Member; Professor: Chemical Engineering; Director: MaPS, University of South Africa
- IV. Prof Paul Jenkins, Professor (previously Head of School): Architecture and Planning, University of the Witwatersrand
- V. Prof Elsabe Kearsley, Professor (previously Head of Department): Civil Engineering, University of Pretoria
- VI. Prof Paul Musonge, Associate Professor: Chemical Engineering, Durban University of Technology
- VII. Prof Amira Osman, Professor: Architecture Department, Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment, Tshwane University of Technology. (Previously Associate Professor, Architecture Department, University of Johannesburg)
- VIII. Prof Alphose Zingoni, Professor: Structural Engineering and Mechanics Group, Department of Civil Engineering, University of Cape Town

Director, Scholarly Publishing Unit: Ms Susan Veldsman

Servicing Project Officer, Scholarly Publishing Unit: Ms Desré Stead

Servicing Project Administrator, Scholarly Publishing Unit: Ms Mmaphuthi Mashiachidi

### 4 Consensus Reviews of Journals in the Group

#### 4.1 Architecture and Built Environment

##### 4.1.1 *Acta Structilia*

**Focus and scope:**

**(Purpose of journal, positioning, focus, scope, readership)**

*Acta Structilia* is the official publication of the South African Council for the Quantity Surveying Profession (SACQSP).

The editorial staff considers articles in English and Afrikaans, written from any evidence-based point of view on subjects in any applicable field of scholarship in the discipline, i.e. architecture, urban and regional planning, quantity surveying, construction and project management, building and property economics, engineering and property development.

The journal is forwarded to all relevant research units and universities, southern African research libraries, selected research institutions and libraries abroad, and to subscribers. It strengthens the relationship of South African researchers with the international scientific community through endorsement by bodies like the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS).

The primary target audience includes professional people in local and international industries, local and international scholars, as well as researchers, professionals and students.

The SACQSP subscribes to and uses the journal for continuous professional development (CPD) purposes. It is thus read by about 1 500 members of this organisation.

**Editing functions:**

**(Standing, local institutional spread, international participation)**

**Consensus review:** The journal draws on the good international disciplinary reputation of the Editor-in-Chief, Deputy Editors, Editorial Associates and members of the Editorial Board. A good spread of different national and a few international institutions is represented, but some core national universities do not participate while other institutions have several members on the board. Since the review took place, the Editorial Team was revised as follows: Editor, Deputy Editors, Assistant Editor(s), and Editorial Board.

**Questionnaire:****(Editorial process-related criteria)**

The journal was established in 1993, but was only accredited by the DHET in 2003. It is a biannual publication. The journal recently became part of the Open Journal Systems (OJS), and is fully open access on its new journal web page at: <http://journals.ufs.ac.za/index.php/as>. There were 1 111 downloads of Volume 19; 469 of Volume 20 and 155 of Volume 21 in 2014. The journal appears regularly on scheduled dates (June & December) and there have been no significant interruptions. During the review period (2012 – 2014), 32 peer-reviewed original papers (22 full articles and ten review articles) were published. Thirty full articles and 21 review articles were submitted. Two full articles and one review manuscript were rejected without peer review. Six full articles and ten review articles were rejected after peer review. There was only one author of a peer-reviewed paper with a non-South African address.

On average, five to six peer reviewers are approached per manuscript but a minimum of three are used depending on how many reviewers decline the invitation. Selection of peer reviewers is based on expertise in the subject field and recognised international status. Peer review is conducted in a 'blind way'. The implementation of valid reviewer critique and article improvement is very rigorous and is closely monitored by the editors. Peer reviewers receive follow-up information. Reviewer performance is assessed and information is captured in a database. A total of 89 peer reviewers were used in one year in the period under review. Forty reports were received. Twenty-three reviewers declined the invitation to review and 26 did not respond. Five of these reviewers had non-South African addresses. The editors keep printed and online copies of all reviewers' reports for audit purposes. The average period between receipt of a manuscript and its publication is six months in print and online.

The Editor was appointed competitively and has held the position for the past 22 years since the journal's launch. The appointment expires when the Editor resigns. Since the review period began, a new Editor was appointed. The Editorial Board handles peer review from time-to-time on request based on their expertise in the subject field. The Editorial Board also advises on editorial policies and practices. Members of the Editorial Board have held their positions from two to 22 years and the Editorial Advisory Board (EAB) for four to 22 years. Members are appointed by invitation based on national and international authority and fields of study, and are recommended by the heads of departments within applicable subject fields with the option to accept or decline the invitation. The period of appointment is five years, but with the option to stay on as a member. Members are appointed from inside and outside the country to provide specific topical expertise, to supervise and ensure that the standards of the journal are maintained.

The journal has 'Instructions to Authors' that provides guidelines which are aligned with ASSAf's *Code of Best Practice*. With regards to conflict of interest, the Editors follow a policy of not involving reviewers who work at the same institution as where the authors are employed. There is no *errata* policy but corrections are published if necessary.

The percentage of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material is between 95 and 100%.

[Note: In the period 2015 to 2017, 56 peer-reviewed original papers were received. Of this total, 20 full articles and nine review articles were published. Seventeen were rejected before peer review and six after peer review. During this period there were four authors who were not South African.]

**Content:****(Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features)**

**Consensus review:** The quality of the articles varies, but the majority could be classed as average to good. A good number of articles (average of ten) are published per annum which is in line with international journals in the field. The journal focuses on local and regional problems. The journal has published work by some of the most highly regarded South African academics in the field and presents an excellent sample of the diversity of research in this field. However, it remains an entry level journal for young academics in collaboration with their study leaders

or research mentors. The journal publishes articles by authors from across the country but insignificant numbers of international articles over the three-year review period. International authorship is mainly limited to papers co-authored with a local author. The inclusion of a greater variety of scholarly features might improve the readership of the journal.

At present, the journal has a local, parochial focus despite its international endorsement. Its location at the University of the Free State (UFS) appears to be stifling, rather than encouraging, transformation. The international relevance of local studies do not feature strongly enough. Its current low output and its format, which is limited to only academic articles, could be reviewed to allow for a wider scope and broader readership.

Having said that, the journal has an important role to play in the advancement of local research and the publication of work concerning local and regional matters that would not otherwise be published in international journals. Its multi-disciplinary focus is also eminently suited to built-environment research, something that is not considered by international indexing databases which tend to reward narrow disciplinary focus. It therefore allows an opportunity to publish important work that may not be accepted by more focused journals. It further has a crucial role to play as an incubator of young academic talent.

The journal has the potential to play these roles at a macro-regional basis and may want to consider reaching out to academic institutions across the continent. Despite these shortcomings, the journal is well put together and has a good online presence. Nevertheless, it performs poorly in terms of downloads. It should be noted that there appears to be a level of transparency in the way in which the journal is presented online and all governance and publication guidelines are available. As the structures are already there, it is a matter of expanding the vision and marketing to a wider audience.

**Essential technical features:**

**(English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation)**

**Consensus review:** All articles have abstracts in both English and Afrikaans. The abstracts are sometimes long-winded and not well focused. They are often in paragraphs and also include references which are not standard international practice. There was no publication of *errata* in the volumes under review. The citations follow standard practice and the Harvard referencing style is used. The manuscripts are clearly presented and designed, however the journal could consider a layout style that will compress articles and perhaps reduce the size of long tables and charts.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability:**

**Consensus review:** The journal is suitable for use as a general on-going stimulus for local graduate students and young staff in the built environment discipline and it plays a crucial role in developing the publication record and skills of young South African academics. Topics seem to relate strongly to practice with practical implications drawn from findings.

The journal has rigour and good quality, but in comparison with most national publications the journal seems not to be on the same level as international journals in the field.

**Business aspects:**

**(Business-related criteria; Bibliometric assessments)**

The journal is published and is owned by the UFS. From 2013, the regular print run of the journal is 100 copies. Production is done by SunMedia Bloemfontein (a journal production and printing company). Distribution is done by the UFS and SACQSP. The journal does not carry paid or unpaid advertising. The research section of the UFS supplies an annual subsidy to produce *Acta Structilia*. There are approximately 800 subscribers via registration with the SACQSP. The SACQSP pay for these registered persons per issue bi-annually each year.

The editorial workflow of the journal is managed with an online management system mostly via email correspondence. The journal is free online and is part of Sabinet's SA-e-publications database and is also available via African Journals Online (AJOL). The journal has not had offers to purchase from multi-national publishers but *Acta Structilia* signed a partnership licence

with Proquest to reproduce the journal content within the Proquest database which means international coverage of the articles.

Copyright was transferred to *Acta Structilia* when an article was accepted for publication. However, the copyright policy has been changed since the review period and copyright is now transferred to the author. Authors must submit a formally signed declaration accompanying their manuscript which indicates that the manuscript has not been offered elsewhere for publication and that the paper is their own original work.

The journal is listed on the following indexes: AJOL, Sabinet, Google Scholar, Scopus, and Elton B Stephens Company (EBSCOhost) Research Databases. The journal uses article counters on the university's online journal administration site to monitor the journal's 'performance'. Front details and English abstracts are mandatory. In 2010, the journal was independently reviewed by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors as well as the South African Council for the Quantity Surveyors Profession.

#### **Suggested improvements:**

**Consensus review:** In order to achieve appropriate transformation and wider scope, young contributors and readers in particular must be targeted. Improved visibility of the journal may increase both the number and the quality of the papers published. This may happen at least at the level of the wider southern Africa region – ideally internationally. Getting the journal indexed by Google Scholar may help with this. This could be achieved through having geographically focused issues. The inclusion of a greater variety of scholarly features might improve the readership of the journal.

The Editor should attempt to introduce younger, knowledgeable academics into the journal to serve as editorial board members, referees and consultants. The journal should also consider the inclusion of members from international institutions as well as members from a greater spread of national institutions to strengthen the board composition. Board members should be appointed on a competitive basis and serve limited time periods.

The journal should also be widely disseminated and the Call for Papers should be used regularly to improve paper quality and submission rates. As page charges may be an obstacle towards encouragement of wider participation in the publication, further sponsorship options should be investigated. Alternatively, the journal can move to a totally online version distributed to the SACQSP members through a newsletter with an html-enabled index to cut down on printing costs.

Articles can be strengthened by shorter, more focused abstracts – a word limit of 200 to 250 words is recommended for abstracts with no paragraphs or references included. Literature reviews identifying international research on similar topics and indicating a clear gap in research could be encouraged as a rationale for a specific study, as well as adequate and precise details on methodology. The relevance of the findings and recommendations to the international context, to the discipline-specific concerns, as well as relevance beyond the discipline need to be requested in the author guidelines and call for contributions.

It should also be encouraged that articles relate to international cutting-edge research by requesting authors to clearly demonstrate how their research relates to that of other scholars.

Finally, consider a layout style that is compact and improve the format of the tables and charts. Again, this needs to be included in the guidelines to the authors.

#### **Panel's comments:**

- Including the journal on the SciELO SA platform will make it more widely accessible (extending it over the borders of South Africa).
- The Editor has been in this position for 22 years and is due to remain until resignation and some Editorial Board members have also held their positions since the journal's inception. (The journal has since appointed a new Editor.)
- The Editorial Board is predominantly based at one institution so there is a need to broaden

and diversify the board to include local and international members from other institutions. The journal is currently working on strengthening its Editorial Board.

- It is endorsed by the RICS and as an international body perhaps the journal could be made more internationally accessible and competitive.
- The journal has published only research articles but there is a range of discussion pieces, letters and shorter reviews that can be included to make it a well-rounded journal. This includes contributions by younger writers.
- Readership needs to be extended and authorship needs to be wider.
- The journal should include some contributions from sub-Saharan Africa.

**Panel's consensus view:**

- I. The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.**
- II. The Publisher/Editor can be invited to join the SciELO SA platform once the SciELO-related criteria have been met. The journal will need to commit to publishing 12 research articles per year.**
- III. The Editor should seriously consider opening up the editorship and Editorial Board to a wider participation, e.g. across universities and profession, and on a competitive basis.**

#### 4.1.2 Architecture SA

**Focus and scope:**

**(Purpose of journal, positioning, focus, scope, readership)**

**Consensus review:** *Architecture SA* is the journal of the South African Institute of Architects (SAIA). Its focus is architectural practice matters, architecture, urban design, architectural theory and history in South Africa. It includes pertinent work from Africa and elsewhere. The journal focuses on mainly architecture and urban design but other disciplines such as fine art, geography, sociology, anthropology, etc. are also covered at times. It is the only architectural and urban design journal in South Africa available for architectural academics and practising architects who wish to publish scholarly and professional work. The primary target audience are South African and SADC (Southern African Development Community) professional architects, members of the South African Council for the Architectural Profession (SACAP), members of SAIA, as well as architectural students at the eight universities where there are schools of architecture.

**Editing functions:**

**(Standing, local institutional spread, international participation)**

**Consensus review:** With regard to its standing within the professional community, the Panel believes that while the journal has a fair to solid national reputation this has not had influence beyond the borders of the country. The strong national position is also evidenced by the standing of the editorial staff and the broad range of perspectives and work shown and discussed.

The journal is rather inward looking and localised to South Africa. There are articles by authors from across the country, but no international contributions. It is clear that if the editors wish to provide the journal with some international impact, they will need to achieve a wider scope of authorship and editorial involvement in order to achieve this.

**Questionnaire:**

**(Editorial process-related criteria)**

Earlier journals of the professional architects' institutes were combined in the early 1930s and the journal was first established as *The South African Architectural Record*. Subsequently its title was changed to the *Institute of SA Architects Journal*, *The Plan Journal* and currently *Architecture SA* or in its accredited form as the *Journal of the SA Institute of Architects* from approximately 1980. The publication frequency is six issues per year. It is accessible online at [www.journalofSAArchitecture.co.za](http://www.journalofSAArchitecture.co.za) and [www.saia.org.za](http://www.saia.org.za).

The journal is pre-scheduled to appear on given dates and appears regularly on the scheduled dates. There have been no interruptions in publication since 1983.

Only 12 peer-reviewed full articles were published over three years (2013 to 2015). Some letters were published, but not regularly. Review articles were regularly published, mainly on individual buildings or on the general review of the work of various prominent architects. Book reviews are regularly published, in virtually every issue. A total of five conference papers were published in the same period. The SA institute uses the journal as a means of communication with its members. A regular 'Opinion Piece' is written by various prominent architects. A regular review article on specialised architectural construction matters and methods is published. Articles are regularly published on architectural conservation.

Twenty-two articles and nine conference papers were received for peer review in the last three years. Six articles were rejected without peer review and four articles were rejected after peer review. Four conference papers were rejected after peer review. The proportion of peer-reviewed papers that had at least one author with a non-South African address is approximately 20%.

Two reviewers are usually approached for each article. There is a panel of reviewers from inside and outside of South Africa that are constituted by the Editorial Advisory Committee. Selections are usually made on the advice of this committee and the panel represents a wide spectrum of academic and professional expertise, background, age and gender. Peer review is conducted in a 'double blind' way, in that the authors, institutions and reviewers are never aware of any of the identities involved (however with a small number of authors and relatively limited academic and professional readership, this is not always successful). Valid reviewer critique and article improvement are rigorously implemented by the various authors and monitored by the Editor. Peer reviewers are informed of the outcomes. Reviewer performance is captured in a database. The previous Editor stated that on average eight reviewers were used per year. In the previous two issues (numbers 77 and 78) four reviewers were used. Approximately 25% of these reviewers had non-South African addresses. Peer-review reports are accessibly retained in the journal's records. The average period between receipt of a manuscript and its publication is approximately three months (in print).

The previous Editor fulfilled the role from 1983 to 1987 and again from 2003 to 2015. When that Editor resigned, a new Editor was appointed in a competitive process, however that Editor resigned after one issue. The current Editor was appointed through a competitive process and has fulfilled the role since November 2015. The current appointment is reviewed by the Management Committee of the SA Institute of Architects on a regular basis.

The Editorial Advisory Board advises on editorial policies and practices and it provides leadership in terms of academic and professional knowledge, and best practice. One board member acted as reviewer due to specialist knowledge in the field of the article, although this is not common practice. The current Editorial Advisory Board has been in place for approximately four and a half years. Previously, board members were appointed competitively however this proved to be unsatisfactory. The current members of the board were headhunted due to their interests and service to the profession and advancement of the knowledge base of architecture in South Africa. The period of appointment is five years. All current members are South African.

General principles of best practice in terms of editorial policy are followed as far as possible however, there are no published guidelines. The Editorial Advisory Board has recognised that this aspect needs urgent attention and they have embarked on this endeavour. There is no conflict-of-interest policy. Any conflict of interest that might arise is managed in terms of general principles. This is another area that the board has flagged that needs immediate attention. The board is working hard to bring all editorial and policy guidelines in alignment with the ASSAf *National Code of Best Practice*. On the odd occasion when errors have been made it was corrected as *errata* in the subsequent issue.

The journal publishes critical editorials, news and views, analyses of articles being published, critical topical reviews, analytical book reviews, correspondence on published articles and critical analysis of architecture, urban design, construction techniques, architectural conservation, professional matters and the theory and history of architecture. On average, 15 to 25% of pages in each issue represents peer-reviewed original material.

**Content:**

**(Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features)**

**Consensus review:** While the quality of the peer-reviewed articles is generally good, there are some major problems. Some issues of the journal have had no peer-reviewed articles at all and peer-reviewed articles are still few and far between. Often, when an edition has a peer-reviewed article, it will only be one article per journal. Presenting a single article in two parts in different editions of the journal does not make it easy for readers. Importantly, the regular contributors in the past years have been from only a few individuals and much content is of buildings self-appraised by other architects.

This journal's target audience is architects and related scholars. For such an audience, it follows a typical format in which there is predominance of (mostly new) buildings presented with plenty of images and relatively little text. The journal has a good sample of the best work done in the country in the discipline – there is a lot of very high-quality architecture being produced. In terms of practice, this means that the journal is a good showcase for work in South Africa. However, in terms of research and teaching, this is not adequate. Overall the journal is quite conventional in its editorial approach – although there have been some recent more proactive attempts to change. There are some useful additional scholarly features, especially in relation to design and book reviews.

In general, the work presented is above average and the articles are well written, with a good standard of production. The thematic focus of the editions is very good (especially the report on the International Union of Architects Durban congress, which was a welcome break from the otherwise rather conventional approach to discussing architecture). The editorials are almost always very carefully thought-out and pertinent.

**Essential technical features:**

**(English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation)**

**Consensus review:** Proper English language abstracts are used and there is suitable publication of *errata*. Citation practice varies in style and quality but peer-reviewed articles are generally well referenced. The journal can benefit from having publicly accessible 'guidelines to authors' (accompanying a transparent call for ongoing contributions). The journal is well presented and has good layout and design.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability:**

**Consensus review:** To some extent the journal is suitable as an ongoing stimulus. However, there is limited room for seeing international trend in practice and learning. There is no external stimulus to the South African context and the predominance of a few individuals neither reflects nor affirms the diversity of this transforming context. The journal can be compared with a few international journals such as *RIBA*, *CIOB: Construction Research and Innovation* and *Global Construction Review*.

The journal is directed towards practice. However, if the journal intends to cater for the needs of learning and research (including in practice), it must adopt a different approach. Some examples of such approaches include: *Journal of Construction*, *Concrete Beton* and the *Journal of the South African Institution of Civil Engineering*.

**Business aspects:**

**(Business-related criteria; Bibliometric assessments)**

The owner of the journal is the SAIA and it is published by Picasso Headline. The regular print run is 5 630 copies. The production and distribution is done on behalf of the SAIA by Picasso Headline. The journal carries paid advertising. It does not receive sponsorship. Page charges or article-processing charges are generally not charged unless refereed articles is of such length that page fees would be necessary. Editorial workflow is managed via an Online Management System and via e-mail through the Editor and Picasso Headline. The complete journal is available free online on the South African Institute of Architect's website. Architecture SA has had offers to purchase from multi-national publishers but no details were provided. The copyright belongs to the SAIA and Picasso Headline. There is no licensing agreement with authors.

The journal is indexed by some South African university library services. No impact factors or altmetric indicators have been determined. 'Front details' and English abstracts are mandatory.

This is the journal's first independent peer review.

**Suggested improvements:**

**Consensus review:** Some key issues have already been acknowledged by the Editor.

The journal could benefit from including more work from the rest of the continent, either carried out by South African architects or by showcasing work by other African architects.

There is a need for an open, transparent call so that contributions better represent diverse demographics.

It is also important to remember that 'what cannot be measured cannot be improved'. This is relevant in terms of monitoring readership either online or 'offline' so that the directions of the discipline could be discerned by the editors of the journal.

The Editorial Advisory Board should work to improve the percentage of international content by encouraging international board members, international contributions, and international reviewers for papers. Cross pollination of ideas will emerge from this effort. The Editorial Advisory Board should also give some attention to increasing the breadth of the focus of the journal and also have the journal hosted on a platform that will make it easily accessible such as that provided by Sabinet.

The journal needs to move more proactively to a wider geographic coverage, especially as there are few such journals in Africa. *Architecture SA* thus needs to make sustained targeted invitations with the intention of diversifying the range of contributors, regionally and internationally.

The descriptive pieces need to be appraised in a wider context – currently there is too much national 'self-congratulation'. It could also benefit from providing modification of the architect's voice with a second opinion.

The predominance of self-appraisal of buildings by architects is problematic as it potentially inhibits critical discourse. A different way of presenting the topics must be investigated.

The low number of peer-reviewed articles per issue needs to be urgently addressed. Special conference issues from architecture conferences and seminars could also be used to improve the quality and number of peer-reviewed articles in the journal.

With regard to content, the quality of the regular 'perspective' seems to vary and needs to be better considered. It is also advisable to include architectural technology topics in the journal issues.

Urgent improvement in the number of articles and diversity of perspectives is required. The journal should encourage articles from applied research so that practitioners would benefit from new ideas, especially from international practice.

*Architecture SA* is potentially a useful outlet for scholarly writing for South African academics and this needs to be further encouraged.

There are no policies in place which indicates a problem with governance, however the journal may be governed by the institute's policy. Governance would need to become more rigorous.

**Panel's consensus view:**

- I. The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.
- II. The Publisher/Editor should not be invited to join the SciELO SA platform at this stage.
- III. The editorship and Editorial Advisory Board should be opened to wider participation, e.g. across universities and the professions. The scope of submissions and readership should be widened.
- IV. It is recommended that at least 50% on average of the journals' content be scholarly or research-oriented to justify the DHET status.
- V. The Editor should seriously consider implementing the above recommendations. In addition, the Panel believes that strict recommendations need timelines to show change over the next few years.

#### 4.1.3 Town and Regional Planning

**Focus and scope:**

**(Purpose of journal, positioning, focus, scope, readership)**

*Town and Regional Planning* is a national journal for independently adjudicated research articles on any topic in the field of the town and regional planning sciences. Each peer-refereed article is indicated as such in the journal. The editorial staff considers articles in English and Afrikaans, written from any authoritative point of view on subjects in any applicable field of scholarship, i.e. urban and regional planning, spatial systems, sustainable planning, planning innovation.

The journal is forwarded to all relevant research units and universities, southern African research libraries, selected research institutions and libraries abroad, and to subscribers. Primary target audiences are professional people in local and international industries, local and international scholars as well as researchers and students. It is the official publication of the South African Council for Planners (SACPLAN) which subscribes to and distributes the journal to its members. It is thus read by approximately 3 400 members of this organisation, other professionals in the industry, local and international scholars, researchers and students.

**Editing functions:**

**(Standing, local institutional spread, international participation)**

**Consensus review:** The current Editor and Deputy Editor are both based at the UFS. At the time of the review, the journal's webpage did not provide information about the Editorial Board. The new platform for UFS journals provides information on the composition of the Editorial Board and there is a mix of scholars from both inside and outside South Africa.

**Questionnaire:**

**(Editorial process-related criteria)**

The *Town and Regional Planning* journal was established in 1971. It is published bi-annually by the UFS, with special editions, on request. It is published open access and available online at: <http://journals.ufs.ac.za/index.php/trp>. In 2014 the visit and download record was 132 (Vol 64) and 136 (Vol 65).

It is pre-scheduled to appear in May and December. There have been no significant interruptions. Over the last three years, 25 full articles and seven review articles were published. In the same period, 37 full articles and 15 review articles were received. Four full articles and three review articles were rejected without peer review; and eight full articles and three review articles were rejected after peer review. Two peer-reviewed papers had at least one author with a non-South African address.

On average five to six reviewers are approached per manuscript but it depends on how many reviewers decline the invitation to review. Selection is based on expertise in the subject field. Peer review is conducted 'blind'. There is very rigorous implementation of valid reviewer critique and article improvements which is closely monitored by the Editors.

Peer reviewers occasionally received follow-up information. The journal has a reviewer performance database. Eighty-six peer reviewers were invited in one of the last three years.

Fifty-two reports were received. Thirteen declined the invitation to review and 21 did not respond to the invitation. Ten reviewers had non-South African addresses. Editors keep printed and online copies of all review reports for audit purposes. The average period between receipt of a manuscript and its publication is 11 months for both print and online issues.

The Editor has been in the position for 15 years. In 2000, the owner of the journal at the time (South African Planning Institute) put out a tender to all universities in South Africa to tender for the editorship of the journal. In the second round of tenders, the University of Free State's Department of Town and Regional planning won the tender. The appointment expires when the Editor resigns. This is the third Editor in the past 42 years of publication.

Occasionally the Editorial Board members are requested to peer-review individual manuscripts based on their expertise in the subject field. They also advise on editorial practices. The Editorial Board and the Editorial Advisory Board have been active from 2011 to 2016. Appointment is by invitation based on national and international authority and fields of study, and on recommendation by the heads of departments within applicable subject fields with the option to accept or decline the invitation. The period of appointment is five years, but with the option to stay on as a member. Members are appointed from both inside and outside the country. The board provides specific topical expertise and also supervises and ensures that the standard of the journal is maintained as the official publication of the SACPLAN.

Editorial guidelines are in the form of 'Instructions to Authors'. There is a conflict-of-interest policy. The Editors follow a policy of not involving reviewers who work at the same institution as where the authors are employed. ASSAF's *Code of Best Practice* guidelines are followed and the adjudicator report form has been adjusted to incorporate these guidelines. There is no formal errata policy but the Editor considers publishing *errata* if it is deemed necessary. Value-adding features such as Critical Editorials are published. Pages in each issue represent 95 to 100% of peer-reviewed original material.

[Note: Recent statistics show the download record was 9 822 articles from January to September 2017.]

**Content:**

**(Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features)**

**Consensus review:** The articles are generally of good quality and they offer a contribution to scholarly knowledge in this domain. However, some appear to be in-depth analyses done with rigour and rich referencing, while others seem to be superficial in argument and referencing. There are few innovative topics. The number of peer-review articles that were published in the past three years (25) seems a bit low, yet one can also argue that quality trumps quantity in this regard.

There is a mix of authors from South African universities to researchers in research institutes and official government sectors. However, there are no international authors, with the exception of one article from Botswana in the volumes that were reviewed.

The sample of work is adequate, but does not appear to be broad in terms of the sources of those articles, nor the coverage of topics outside of a relatively narrow disciplinary focus. The articles are almost all focused on local issues, particularly methods of surveying, mapping and planning in South Africa. Their perspective tends to be academic with few examples drawn from fieldwork or transnational analysis.

There are no additional scholarly features; there appears to be a single book review over the last three volumes. Some articles seem to be opinion pieces rather than refereed articles, however the online journal does not distinguish them.

**Essential technical features:**

**(English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation)**

**Consensus review:** Abstracts are written in English, Sesotho and Afrikaans which is an advantage for local readers. There is no evidence of *errata* in the issues that were reviewed. All articles are

well referenced and in all cases a substantial bibliography is provided demonstrating that the journal exercises sound academic practice in the publication of its articles.

The online version is not image heavy but it does include tidy, clearly laid out pages and crisp maps and diagrams. Sources of images are acknowledged.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability:**

**Consensus review:** The *Town and Regional Planning* journal is suitable ground for encouraging local graduates and young staff to publish. The Editors should encourage publication of articles that are co-written with recent graduates and young staff.

The journal is similar to an international planning and architecture journal in layout, referencing style and presentation, however the graphic imagery and thematic focus in the planning and architecture journal give it a better quality. In comparison with two other international journals, *Urban Forum* and *Town Planning Review*, this one appears to be parochial (almost exclusively local case studies) and graphically unadventurous. Over the last two years the number of international submissions has increased. The online interface, unlike the international journals, lacks cross-referencing tools, such as keywords and author titles.

Referencing tools such as keywords and author titles are available on the new online website: <http://journals.ufs.ac.za/index.php/trp>.

**Business aspects:**

**(Business-related criteria; Bibliometric assessments)**

The owner and publisher of the journal is the UFS. The regular print run is 250 copies (the online version is more popular). Production is done by SunMedia Bloemfontein (a journal production and printing company) and distribution is done by the UFS. No advertisements are carried. The research section of the UFS supplies an annual subsidy to produce the *Town and Regional Planning* journal. There are approximately 3 400 subscribers who subscribe to the e-journal via SACPLAN and 100 paper subscribers. An agreement was reached with the Namibia Institute of Town and Regional Planners for all their members to become subscribers of the journal. The same will be done with Lesotho and Botswana in the near future. This will give them the right to nominate one person who qualifies to the editorial team and one member to the Editorial Board. The same will apply to subscribers from other countries.

Page fees are charged but they are administered and paid to SunMedia for editorial fees. The editorial workflow is managed via an online Management System (mostly via e-mail correspondence). It is freely accessible online (open access); it is part of Sabinet e-publications collections and is on AJOL. The journal has not had offers to purchase from multi-national publishers. Copyright was transferred to *Town and Regional Planning* when an article is accepted for publication. This has been revised since 2014 and copyright is now transferred to the author(s). Authors must submit a formally signed declaration accompanying their manuscript which indicates that the manuscript has not been offered elsewhere for publication and that the paper is their own original work.

The journal is indexed on AJOL, Sabinet SA e-publications, Google Scholar, Scopus via SA e-publications, and Africa-Wide Information database via EBSCOhost. Article counters are used on the UFS online journal administration site. Mandatory 'front details' for papers and English abstracts are important and should be applicable and valid at the time of publication. The Editors have tried a few times to get the *Town and Regional Planning* journal included in IBSS and ISI indexes.

**Suggested improvements:**

**Consensus review:** The journal should strive to widen its readership and impact which may entail reviewing its institutional basis at UFS, as even engagement with other universities in South Africa is limited.

*Town and Regional Planning* needs to develop its content and size and aspire to a wider impact; and promote transformation within its activities.

There is a need to extend readership and authorship beyond the boundaries of South Africa and develop a strategy to this end, which may entail recruiting non-South African members to the Editorial Board.

The Editor has been in position for 17 years and is due to remain until voluntary resignation. The Editor should seriously consider opening up the editorship and Editorial Board to a wider participation, e.g. across universities and the professions, and on a competitive basis (not just by invitation).

*Town and Regional Planning* could consider a wider range of publication features such as reviews, position papers, debates, and correspondence, etc.

To encourage less established researchers to publish, shorter policy or practice-oriented papers could be considered (i.e. less fully analytical). These however need to be clearly distinguished from peer-reviewed work (50% minimum of peer-reviewed work is recommended).

**Panel's consensus view:**

- I. **The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET accredited list.**
- II. **The Publisher/Editor can be invited to join SciELO SA once the SciELO-related criteria have been met. The journal will need to commit to publishing 12 research articles per year.**
- III. **The Panel advises that strict timelines be put in place for achieving these recommendations.**
- IV. **The journal should seriously consider opening up the editorship and Editorial Board to a wider participation e.g. across universities and the professions.**

## 4.2 Chemical Engineering

### 4.2.1 *South African Journal of Chemical Engineering*

**Focus and scope:**

**(Purpose of journal, positioning, focus, scope, readership)**

The *South African Journal of Chemical Engineering* (SAJCE) is the official journal of the South African Institution of Chemical Engineers (SAIChE). The journal creates an opportunity for South African and international researchers in the field of chemical engineering to publish their work, informs the local chemical engineering community about local research and developments in chemical engineering and showcases South African achievements in the field of chemical engineering research and development internationally.

The primary target audiences are both local and international industry and academia. As part of the SAIChE Institution of Chemical Engineers (IChemE) collaboration SAIChE has become part of IChemE's partnership with Elsevier. At the time of the review, the journal was in the process of being transferred to Elsevier which would further expand its reach and visibility internationally.

**Editing functions:**

**(Standing, local institutional spread, international participation)**

**Consensus review:** The Editorial Board is representative of researchers from academia, industry and research institutions in South Africa as well as some international researchers. The South African members of the Editorial Board cover a wide range of ages, experience, research reputations and institutions, making it very representative. The Deputy Editor-in-Chief is regarded as an internationally leading researcher.

**Questionnaire:**

**(Editorial process-related criteria)**

Although the journal was established in the 1980s, there was a hiatus in publishing and it was re-established in 2011. It is generally published annually or biannually but occasionally in the past it was published three times a year. It is an open access journal and was previously available at: [www.saiche.co.za](http://www.saiche.co.za), until its move to Elsevier: <https://www.journals.elsevier.com/south-african-journal-of-chemical-engineering>.

The visit and download record was not available at the time of the review. It is estimated that the journal was read in ten countries. Readers come from approximately four countries on the African continent.

The journal was not pre-scheduled to appear on given dates. There was a significant interruption in publication from years 2004 to 2010.

During three years (2013 – 2015), 26 peer-reviewed full articles and one letter was published. The number of manuscripts received totalled 65. All submitted manuscripts are peer-reviewed so none were rejected prior to review and 29 manuscripts were rejected after peer review. Approximately 50% of peer-reviewed papers had at least one author with a non-South African address.

Three peer reviewers are usually approached to review each submitted manuscript. Reviewers are selected by Editors according to their field of expertise. Peer review is conducted in a 'blind way'. Implementation of reviewer critique is quite rigorous. Authors must strictly follow the criticism of all reviewers and reviewers must indicate that they are satisfied with the revisions made by the authors. Rejection of a manuscript by one reviewer is in most cases a reason for an Editor to reject the manuscript. Peer-reviewers do receive information on the outcomes of the reviews. Reviewer performance is assessed and information is captured in a database. On average, 24 peer reviewers are used per year. An estimated 60 to 75% of these peer reviewers had non-South African addresses. Peer review reports were accessibly retained in the journal's records. The average period between receipt of a manuscript and its publication online is under one year.

The Editor was appointed in 2011 for an unspecified period. This was not a competitive appointment. The Editorial Board handles peer review and advises on editorial policies/practices. The members have been in office since 2011. The Editorial Advisory Board has also been active since 2011. The members were not appointed competitively. The appointment has no specified period. Members are from both inside and outside the country. The board provides specific topical expertise.

The journal has editorial guidelines which are aligned with ASSAf's *Code of Best Practice*. There is a conflict-of-interest policy. There is also an *errata* policy. Formal errors and layout not meeting the journal guidelines are checked by a Managing Editor of the Institution of Chemical Engineers (IChemE-UK).

The journal does not publish value-adding features such as critical editorials and reviews.

100% of the pages in each issue represent peer-reviewed original material.

**Content:**

**(Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features)**

**Consensus review:** Over the last few years, there have been two issues published per year and the articles are generally of a high quality, with an adequate number of articles per issue. The papers cover a wide range of topics which focus on local and international issues, particularly on energy, water and other environmental topics. There is a representative spread of researchers from local institutions in South Africa. In addition, there are a large number of international submissions, particularly from other developing countries.

The SAJCE is a sample of the best work done in the discipline in the country and on the continent.

**Essential technical features:**

**(English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation)**

**Consensus review:** Abstracts are in proper English and are of a reasonable length. There are no regular *errata*. The citation practice is good, thorough and precise, and adheres strictly to journal guidelines. The appearance of the journal is professional, with very good presentation, design and layout. The papers are available online and are of very high quality. A single blind peer-review process is used and typically a minimum of two independent expert reviewers are used to assess the quality and originality of the research.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability:**

**Consensus review:** It is very suitable as a general ongoing stimulus for local graduate students and young staff. It can be compared with leading international journals. It has a CiteScore of 2.73. This compares very favourably to the CiteScore of 2.79 for the research journal of the British Institute of Chemical Engineers, *Chemical Engineering Research and Design*. The move to the Elsevier platform should provide a stimulus for more established researchers both locally and internationally to publish in the journal.

**Business aspects:****(Business-related criteria; Bibliometric assessments)**

The SAJCE is owned by the South African Institution of Chemical Engineers and is now published by Elsevier as part of IChemE open access journals. It does not have a regular print run as this is an online journal. It does not carry advertising. The journal is not financially sponsored. Page charges or article-processing charges are imposed by Elsevier. The journal has an Online Management System. It is an open access journal.

All content contained on or accessed from the site is owned by SAIChE and is protected by copyright. SAIChE has exclusive right to publish an article. Authors have copyright but license exclusive rights in their article to the publisher. In this case authors have the right to retain patent, trademark and other intellectual property rights (including raw research data).

The journal is indexed on Web of Science, Sabinet and Journal Consortium. The impact factor is 0.45 on journal consortium. There are mandatory 'front details' for papers and English abstracts. The journal has not been independently peer-reviewed before.

**Suggested improvements:**

**Consensus review:** The Editor should seriously consider limiting the number of papers published by members of the Editorial Board. Articles sourced via national and international conferences should be actively pursued in order to increase visibility and quality.

**Panel's consensus view:**

- I. The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET accredited list.
- II. The Editor should be invited to join the SciELO SA platform however it is currently under publishing license with Elsevier.
- III. The Editor should seriously consider limiting the number of papers published by members of the Editorial Board. Articles sourced via national and international conferences should be actively pursued in order to increase visibility.
- IV. In addition, the Panel believes the journal covers a wide of range topics relevant to the South African industry.

## 4.3 Civil Engineering

### 4.3.1 Concrete Beton

**Focus and scope:****(Purpose of journal, positioning, focus, scope, readership)**

*Concrete Beton* is the official journal of the Concrete Society of Southern Africa (CSSA) NPC. The vision of the CSSA is "to be the most relevant forum for those who have an interest in concrete" and the mission is "to promote excellence and innovation in the use of concrete and to provide a forum for networking and for sharing knowledge and information on concrete-related matters".

The focus of the journal is on concrete as a material or structure and there is no history of publishing articles with an interdisciplinary focus. However, interdisciplinary papers will be considered if appropriate reviewers can be found.

The target is currently local scholars and members of the local concrete industry. The readership comprised the individual members of the Concrete Society of South Africa and also the main

academic institutions who are also members of the society. There are 1 200 copies of each edition distributed and the current edition is also freely available online.

**Editing functions:**

**(Standing, local institutional spread, international participation)**

**Consensus review:** The Editorial Board members have good national and international standing as well as international ties. The Editor-in-Chief has published widely in this field in both local and international journals and is an esteemed member of the concrete research community.

**Questionnaire:**

**(Editorial process-related criteria)**

The journal has been in production since 1976 and four issues are published annually. The journal went online in 2013. (<http://concretesociety.co.za/publications-60/concretebeton>). There were 1 061 unique visitors during 2014 and 2015. Issues are pre-scheduled to appear on given dates.

During the review period, seven peer-reviewed full articles appeared in the journal. Twenty full articles were received. Four full articles were rejected without peer review and nine were rejected after peer review. None of these articles had authors with a South African address. Two peer reviewers are usually approached for each manuscript. There are five assessors who form part of the Editorial Committee. Each article is assigned to an assessor and the assessor assigns two reviewers based on their knowledge of the field. Peer review is not conducted 'blind' because the reviewers know who the authors are. It is required that the author has to write a full 'response to reviewers' report which is then evaluated together with the review comments and improved manuscript by both the assessor and the reviewers if they requested to see the improved document. The paper is only published if the author addressed the review comments appropriately. Peer reviewers do receive follow-up information. Reviewer performance will be assessed and information will be captured in a database in the future. In 2014, 14 reviewers were used, of which three were not South African. Peer-review reports were accessibly retained in the journal's records. The average period between receipt of a manuscript and its publication is from three to four months.

The Editor-in-Chief (Chair of Editorial Committee) has been in this position since 2010. The Chairman of the Editorial Committee was elected by the then Council (now Board) of the Concrete Society of Southern Africa. The position was not advertised, but the other possible candidates were discussed. The current terms of reference of the Concrete Society states that this position is appointed by the Board. There is no time-limit stated in the terms of reference of the society, but the performance of the Chair of the Editorial Committee can be evaluated and the person replaced at any Board meeting.

The Editorial Committee is the equivalent of an Editorial Board. Specific committee members act as assessors for the each submission, and on occasion will they act as reviewer, but this is not the norm. A meeting was held in 2010 where the editorial policies were outlined and that still forms the basis for the current publication. The current Editorial Committee was formed in 2010. Committee members were selected from a pool of local academics in the field of concrete-related research. The appointment period is indefinite. All Editorial Committee members are employed at South African institutes, however, one member is German and another Dutch. All members act as assessors for new submissions and make decisions on whether specific papers should be considered for review. They also interpret the reviewers' reports. Their specific knowledge of concrete is vital to successfully carry out these duties.

The journal has editorial guidelines. There is no conflict-of-interest policy. The journal is in the process of aligning itself with ASSAf's *Code of Best Practice*. The *errata* policy is that corrections are published in the next edition.

There are no value-adding features but the journal plans to include these in the future. An average of 17% of pages in each issue represents peer-reviewed original material.

**Content:****(Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features)**

**Consensus review:** Although the quality of the published articles is generally good, publications do not always include original research outcomes. Too few technical papers on the latest developments in research at local and international level are published and the journal probably does not attract the best technical papers on concrete research. Only seven original research papers were published over a three-year period (2013 – 2015) and the work of international authors was only published as reprints. The journal published good examples of projects carried out and materials used throughout the country. The scholarly features could be expanded by adding book reviews and correspondence.

**Essential technical features:****(English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation)**

**Consensus review:** All technical papers are provided with well edited abstracts. The issues that were reviewed did not contain any *errata*, however the journal has a suitable *errata* policy. There is good citation practice for peer-reviewed papers. The layout, design and editing of the journal is professionally done.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability:**

**Consensus review:** The journal is of interest to local graduate students and young staff working in the field of concrete engineering, but not as much in the context of science as in a more general context of engineering aspects. The journal is however useful to expose local graduates and young staff to industry news.

In terms of published original technical papers the journal is not comparable with leading international journals and significant changes will be required to reach the status of a leading international journal.

**Business aspects:****(Business-related criteria; Bibliometric assessments)**

The CSSA NPC owns and publishes the journal. The regular print run of the journal is 1 200 copies per issue and the production and distribution is outsourced. The journal carries paid advertising but it is not financially sponsored. Each paying member of the Concrete Society of Southern Africa receives a copy of the journal. There are currently around 700 members.

Companies become members of the Concrete Society of Southern Africa by nominating a number of individual members. All company members are thus represented by individuals. The journal does not charge article-processing charges. Editorial workflow is currently managed by a manual system, but an online system will be considered in the near future.

Only the current issue of *Concrete Beton* is available free online. Archived copies are available to members only. The journal is part of a non-commercial e-publication mechanism powered by 3DIssue. No offers to purchase the journal have been made by multi-national publishers.

All editorial material published in *Concrete Beton* is reserved to the Concrete Society of Southern Africa. There is no licensing agreement with authors. The journal does not have an impact factor and is not currently indexed but this is being further investigated. 'Front details' for papers and English language abstracts are mandatory. The journal has never been independently peer-reviewed.

**Suggested improvements:**

**Consensus review:** Although the publication provides valuable information for the intended audience it is not a scholarly journal, but rather a trade magazine. The DHET Research Outputs policy is clear on what it considers scholarly and to be included in the list of accredited South African journals:

*"the purpose of the journal must be to disseminate research results and the content must support high-level learning, teaching and research in the relevant subject area" (Criterion 5.10a).*

The policy of the journal should be redefined and decisions should be taken on important aspects such as intended target audience, number of articles included and percentage of commercial advertisements.

Only 17% of the pages published in a two-year period contained peer-reviewed original material. For a publication to be seen as a scholarly journal and not a trade magazine the majority of the content of each volume (at least 50%) of the journal should be peer-reviewed original content.

Here follows a list of suggestions to improve the quality, visibility and impact of the journal at the national level, but most importantly at the international level:

- Currently, the journal is not indexed. Accessibility and readability is limited to local members of the society and local academics. This is discouraging for publishing original research articles. Within the current form, the journal is more informative for the local community of engineers and scholars, rather than a point of reference for the international peer community. Indexing of the journal is strongly recommended.
- Generally, the policy of the journal should be redefined and decisions should be taken on important aspects such as: target audience, number of articles included, and percentage of commercial advertisements.
- To increase the interest of authors (after indexing) an online management system for the editorial workflow is necessary.
- Payment for access to a specific issue (or research article) should be an option, instead of giving access only to the members of the Concrete Society of Southern Africa. Free access to students should be also considered.
- Finally, the Editorial Board should consider the option of publishing a pure scientific journal, additionally to the one under review.

**Panel's consensus view:**

- I. **The journal should only continue to be listed on the DHET accredited list if the Editorial Board addresses the focus of the publication as a scholarly journal.**
- II. **The Publisher/Editor should not be invited to join the SciELO SA platform.**
- III. **The Editor should seriously consider strengthening the limited additional scholarly features.**
- IV. **In addition, the Panel believes that the journal may fall somewhat short in terms of original, technical papers.**

### 4.3.2 IMIESA

**Focus and scope:**

**(Purpose of journal, positioning, focus, scope, readership)**

IMIESA is the official magazine of the Institute of Municipal Engineering of Southern Africa (IMESA). IMIESA promotes the knowledge and practice of infrastructure development, maintenance and service delivery in southern Africa. The magazine concentrates on the field of civil infrastructure and engineering, with a focus on municipal projects.

The magazine contains valuable information for municipal engineers, consulting and civil engineers as well as civil engineering contractors, making it an important source of business intelligence for the infrastructure market. It also provides essential content for municipal managers and senior public officials involved in all facets of infrastructure development, facilitating better decisions. The target audience is municipal and consulting engineers, engineers involved in civil engineering and construction, institutes, suppliers and manufacturers.

**Editing functions:**

**(Standing, local institutional spread, international participation)**

**Consensus review:** This journal is a business or sectorial magazine rather than a scholarly journal. The purpose of the publication is not to disseminate research results, but it is an important source of business intelligence for the infrastructure market. The content is largely exclusive and is compiled by journalists.

**Questionnaire:****(Editorial process-related criteria)**

The *IMIESA* magazine was established in 1977. It is a monthly magazine with a combined November/December edition, totalling 11 issues per year. It is available online at: <http://3smags.co.za/imiesa>.

The issues are pre-scheduled to appear monthly. *IMIESA* has its own internal schedules with specific dates. There have been no significant interruptions.

The magazine does not publish peer-reviewed original papers.

There is no Editorial Board and/or Editorial Advisory Board.

**Content:****(Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features)**

**Consensus review:** Although the publication contains high-quality articles, they are of a non-scholarly nature. The content mostly covers infrastructure issues in South Africa and Africa.

**Essential technical features:****(English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation)**

**Consensus review:** The magazine is well presented and the articles well written with citation practices seemingly in line with those of other business magazines. *Errata* from previous publications are published in subsequent publications. Featured articles do not contain a list of references since this is not a scholarly journal. No abstracts are published.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability:**

**Consensus review:** Although the publication is not a scholarly journal, it provides valuable information to a local audience which includes graduate students and young staff working on civil infrastructure development in South Africa.

**Business aspects:****(Business-related criteria; Bibliometric assessments)**

The magazine is owned by 3S Media and its Publisher is Elizabeth Shorten. Its regular print run is 4 218. Production and distribution is not outsourced. The magazine carries paid advertising and is not financially sponsored.

It is part of a commercial e-publication service with paid subscribers.

An Editor and two journalists create the content for the magazine. One of these journalists is also responsible for generating content for and posting it to the magazine's associated website.

The magazine has not had offers to purchase from multi-national publishers. All material in the *IMIESA* magazine is copyright protected and may not be reproduced without the prior permission of the Publisher.

*IMIESA* measures a number of indicators including number of visits, return vs new visitors, time on site, etc. using Google analytics for the publication's associated website and its newsletters. The associated Facebook and Twitter pages are monitored as well as the open rate of the 'digimag'.

The magazine has not been independently peer-reviewed before.

**Suggested improvements:**

**Consensus review:** Although the publication provides valuable information for the intended audience it is not a scholarly journal, but rather a trade magazine. The DHET Research Outputs policy is clear on what it considers scholarly and to be included in the list of accredited South African journals:

"The purpose of the journal must be to disseminate research results and the content must support high-level learning, teaching and research in the relevant subject area". (Criterion 5.10a)

"At least 75% of contributions published in the journal must emanate from multiple institutions." (Criterion 5.10c)

"The journal must have an Editorial Board, with more than two-thirds of the Editorial Board members beyond a single institution." (Criterion 5.10f)

**Panel's consensus view:**

- I. **The journal should not continue to be listed on the DHET accredited list.**
- II. **The Publisher/Editor should not be invited to join the SciELO SA platform.**
- III. **IMIESA is a business/sectoral magazine rather than a scholarly journal.**

### 4.3.3 *Journal of Construction*

**Focus and scope:**

**(Purpose of journal, positioning, focus, scope, readership)**

The *Journal of Construction* (JOC) is the official journal of the Association of Schools of Construction of Southern Africa (ASOCSA). ASOCSA has committed itself to foster excellence in construction communication, scholarship, research, education and practice and the JOC provides the medium to achieve this commitment. The JOC is now published four times per year as a peer-reviewed journal serving all stakeholders and participants in the building construction and civil engineering sectors. The journal publishes quality papers written in a conversational style aiming to advance knowledge of practice and science of construction while providing a forum for the interchange of information and ideas on current issues. The JOC aims to promote the interface between academia and industry, current and topical construction industry research and practical application by disseminating relevant in-depth research papers, reviews of projects and case studies, information on current research projects, comments on previous contributions, research, innovation, technical and practice notes, and developments in construction education policies and strategies.

The journal is focused on building construction and civil engineering. The JOC has, as its target audience, all stakeholders and participants in the building construction and civil engineering sectors which include both academia and industry. It is distributed at no charge to around 5 000 industry stakeholders and decision-makers. All the university libraries receive copies as well as ASOCSA member institutions.

**Editing functions:**

**(Standing, local institutional spread, international participation)**

**Consensus review:** The Editor appears to be well recognised by the industry association, ASOCSA, and is well published. The Editorial Board members have high national and international reputations and comprise a wide range of experts drawn from all over the world. However, there is a concern that the international panel members may not be knowledgeable about the South African issues that are the subject of most of the articles covered in the journal. There are no members from other African countries (in spite of the association's title as 'Southern African'). This is an area requiring improvement.

It is commendable that the new Editor, who qualified in 2014 with about six articles is a budding scholar.

**Questionnaire:**

**(Editorial process-related criteria)**

The JOC was established 11 years ago in 2006. Four issues per year are published. It is an open access journal and is freely accessible at: <http://www.asocsa.org>. It is read in at least six African countries including Ghana, Egypt, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia. It is also read in the countries from which the Editorial Board is drawn (17). It is not pre-scheduled to appear on given dates. There have been significant interruptions due to lack of funds to print and distribute the copies however this problem has since been addressed.

Twenty-eight full articles have been published over the three-year review period. The journal only accepts full articles based on empirical and original research. At least 40% of submissions

were rejected without peer review largely due to the papers not being ideal for the target audience. An estimated 25% were rejected after peer review. Twenty-five per cent of peer-reviewed papers had at least one author who was not South African.

Three peer reviewers are usually approached for each manuscript. Peer reviewers are selected from the Editorial Board and by invitation. The journal conducts peer reviews in a 'blind way'. Implementation of valid reviewer critique and article improvement is extremely rigorous. Peer reviewers usually receive follow-up information and reviewer performance is monitored. Information is not captured formally in a database. Twenty-four peer reviewers were used in one year over the three-year review period. Most of these peer reviewers had non-South African addresses. Peer-review reports were accessibly retained in the journal's records. On average, it takes approximately three months between receipt of a manuscript and its publication in print and online.

The current Editor developed and launched the journal and therefore has been involved since its inception. The Council of ASOCSA makes the appointment which is voluntary. As part of the process of development and empowerment the current Editor is stepping down. The Editorial Board handles peer review and advises on editorial policies/practices. Members also provide specific topical expertise. There is a change of membership on occasion. Appointments are not competitive but the journal puts out a call for expressions of interest when required. The period of appointment is until a member resigns. Members are from both inside and outside the country.

The journal does not have published editorial guidelines. There are no conflict-of-interest or *errata* policies. Guidelines are not aligned with ASSAf's *Code of Best Practice*. The journal does not contain any value-adding features such as critical editorials or book reviews. 100% of pages in each issue represents peer-reviewed original material.

**Content:**

**(Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features)**

**Consensus review:** The content is mostly South African despite the regional (southern African) scope of the association. The articles are generally of a high quality, though this is not considered to be consistent by at least one reviewer. The collaborations across Africa (co-edited with scholars from Egypt as an example) are commendable.

Some articles are of a good standard with propositions well supported by evident research while other articles are relatively weak and marred by poor methodology. The composition of articles also appears to be quite arbitrary with no evidence of thematic grouping. This is possibly a consequence of the fact that insufficient research is being generated in the field and that the Editor feels obliged to publish what is available. There are some instances where some prior papers presented rather too much unprocessed data.

The JOC is a good example of the best work done in the country.

The range of prominent academics featured is quite impressive. Despite this, there seems to be a lack of critical mass and the number of articles, as well as the scope of the content, is not enough to attract a wide range of readers.

Because of the limited number of articles, the sample is relatively small. However, this may be as a consequence of the fact that the field is a highly specialised one or because researchers are choosing to publish elsewhere.

There is a reasonable spread of articles from academics at the various universities throughout South Africa, as well as articles authored by researchers and academics in other parts of Africa.

There are no additional scholarly features; the focus is only on full articles. This is considered a shortcoming that needs to be addressed.

**Essential technical features:**

**(English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation)**

**Consensus review:** Proper English abstracts are used. *Errata* were not observed but the Editor suggests that there has not been cause to issue *errata* to date.

The citation practice is academically acceptable, if somewhat awkward because individual citations interrupt reading.

There is little in the way of layout or design, and the journal would undoubtedly be enhanced by additional illustrations, over and above the graphs and tables that accompany some of the articles. Having said that, the presentation has improved over time. The figures and tables are generally not properly referenced.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability:**

**Consensus review:** It is probably the leading publication in the field in South Africa. The journal is fulfilling an important role in stimulating research, writing and publication, particularly in a field where there are few academic journals. There are a number of regular contributors, often collaborating in different ways. This suggests active discourse amongst academics and researchers.

The leading international journals in the field tend to address similar issues of concern. The *International Journal of Construction Management* appears to cover similar issues.

**Business aspects:**

**(Business-related criteria; Bibliometric assessments)**

The ASOCSA owns and publishes the journal. When it was printed the print run was 5 000. Production and distribution is outsourced to Crown publishing. The journal carries paid advertising but has no financial sponsorship. The journal requests that universities, employing author/s who publish in the journal, pay for an advert to promote their university. There are no paying subscribers. The number of organisations as opposed to individuals is about 50/50. As a general practice, page fees or article-processing fees are not charged.

A manual system is used to manage the editorial workflow. The journal has had an offer to purchase from a multi-national publisher but no details were provided. Submission of a paper to the journal is taken to imply that it represents original, unpublished work, not under consideration for publication elsewhere. Authors are requested to transfer the copyright for their papers to the Publisher when the paper is accepted. There is no licensing agreement with authors.

The journal is not indexed in any major indices and it does not have an impact factor. Altmetric indicators are not used at this stage. 'Front details' for papers and English abstracts are mandatory. The journal has been independently peer-reviewed by Emerald Publishing.

**Suggested improvements:**

**Consensus review:** The *JOC* is on a similar level of quality and value as the leading international journals. While it seems to meet international standards, addressing the following suggestions would add more value.

In order to increase readership, frequency and topicality of articles, it is suggested that the journal explores a partnership with some of the industry magazines. This would require persuading the industry magazines to include refereed articles within their magazines. These articles should be subjected to the same rigorous peer-review processes that currently characterise the journal's articles. The authors of refereed articles would benefit from the expertise of the magazine editors, better layout and illustrations. The articles would also be exposed to a wider audience.

There is a need to strengthen regional representation on the Editorial Board. Diversity and a more open process for journal leadership and membership need to be achieved.

The journal does not seem to be on a regular publication schedule, and there are aspects of its oversight and management that are done informally or manually. These need to be systematised for transparency and in order to meet international journal standards.

While the free and open access of the journal is commendable, the limited circulation and reach is notable. The journal needs to explore ways to expand access and, thus, impact. The journal could become a more significant regional resource.

References need to be properly sourced for all tables and figures.

**Panel's consensus view:**

- I. The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.
- II. The Publisher/Editor should not be invited to join the SciELO SA platform.
- III. The Editor should seriously consider the suggested recommendations.
- IV. In addition, the journal should consider better balance in the Editorial Board.

#### 4.3.4 *Journal of the South African Institution of Civil Engineering*

**Focus and scope:**

**(Purpose of journal, positioning, focus, scope, readership)**

The *Journal of the South African Institution of Civil Engineering (JSAICE)* publishes peer-reviewed research papers relevant to the civil engineering profession. Its focus is mainly on civil engineering, but occasionally also related to or overlapping other engineering fields. The journal is the leading scientific publication on civil engineering research in South Africa.

The primary target audience is predominantly civil engineering practitioners, academics and students. The journal is a membership benefit of the South African Institution of Civil Engineering (SAICE), and hence is distributed to approximately 11 500 members, who include civil engineering student members (approximately 2 600) and members living abroad (approximately 480). The journal is also distributed to a number of subscribers locally and abroad (around 30), and complimentary copies are sent to sister institutions particularly in Africa, and relevant South African government departments and their corresponding portfolio committees.

**Editing functions:**

**(Standing, local institutional spread, international participation)**

**Consensus review:** The journal covers a wide range of aspects of interest to the civil engineering profession. The journal has a high national reputation but limited international content. The Editorial Panel is dominated by members from one institution and thus currently does not meet the DHET requirement that two-thirds of the board must come from other institutions.

**Questionnaire:**

**(Editorial process-related criteria)**

In its current form the JSAICE was established in 1993. It is a quarterly publication. It is available online at: <http://www.saice.org.za/services/journal>; and [http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci\\_serial&pid=1021-2019](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_serial&pid=1021-2019). There were 168 000 articles downloaded from the SciELO SA platform between 2009 and 2015. It is read by approximately 480 members internationally. Subscribers are from 11 African countries. Issues are pre-scheduled to appear in March, June, September, and December. No significant interruptions have occurred.

Over a three-year period (2013 to 2015), between 24 and 30 full articles have been published each year. Discussions on published papers have also been published in previous years. In one year, 80.6% of the manuscripts received were rejected. The journal does not keep statistics on where in the process (pre or post-review) manuscripts are rejected. Approximately 24.3% of peer-reviewed papers had at least one non-South African author.

Two peer reviewers are usually approached for each submitted manuscript. They are selected mainly on the strength of their expertise, but also on the strength of them being fair reviewers. Peer review is not conducted 'blind', but the reviewers' identities remain confidential. Authors must adhere strictly to reviewer critique when amending their papers, otherwise their papers are not accepted for publication. Peer reviewers do not normally receive follow-up information. They do, however, have the choice of re-assessing the amended paper to see whether their required corrections have indeed been made. Reviewer performance is assessed and non-

performers are placed on an unofficial 'black-list'. In 2014, 74 peer reviewers were used. Approximately 10.8% of these reviewers were not South African. Records of peer-review reports are retained. On average, it takes 12 months from receipt of a manuscript to acceptance. The article will then appear in the next available edition of the journal in print and online.

The Managing Editor has held this position for seven years. It was not a competitive appointment. Instead it was a staff promotion within the Institution and it is a permanent position. The Editor-in-Chief, on the other hand, serves in a voluntary capacity, and is the main driver of journal policy and work procedures. The Editorial Panel of the journal serves in both an advisory and working capacity, and all members are volunteers. Occasionally the panel handles peer review when a specific paper is from a specialised field where good reviewers are scarce. Their role is mainly to oversee the adjudication of individual papers, which entails choosing appropriate referees and evaluating referee reports. The panel advises on editorial policies and practices, and provides specific topical expertise. The current Editorial Panel has been in operation since 2001 and remains stable due to a well-balanced composition. Members resign from time-to-time, and are replaced by careful peer-selection depending on the need within the panel at the time. The appointment is usually for a few years, depending on personal circumstances, as membership is voluntary. Panel members are locally based with the exception of one international member.

Members of the journal's Editorial Panel are all professionals who are accustomed to writing technical papers that are subjected to international peer-reviewing. The journal has not needed a formal editorial policy, but may implement a policy like this at some stage. There is no conflict-of-interest policy. Guidelines are not aligned with ASSAf's *Code of Best Practice*. The journal publishes *errata* when necessary. The journal does not publish value-adding features. Instead, editorials, reviews, correspondence and news articles are covered in a companion monthly magazine, *Civil Engineering*. All recipients of the journal also receive the magazine. Due to budget constraints and a waiting list of accepted papers, the contents of the journal are limited to technical papers and discussions only. The entire journal represents peer-reviewed original material.

**Content:**

**(Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features)**

**Consensus review:** The JSAICE publishes an adequate sample of the best local research. An acceptable number of good quality papers is published, mostly focusing on local and regional issues. Articles are predominantly by authors from two South African universities. The number of papers by authors from outside the country is too low. The SAICE journal should increase the number of papers prepared in cooperation with authors from the other institutions across the country as well as with international authors.

**Essential technical features:**

**(English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation)**

**Consensus review:** All articles are in English and are introduced by proper English-language abstracts. Publication of *errata* is standardised although no *errata* were observed in the reviewed issues. The citation practice is sound. The presentation, layout, style and copy-editing are all good.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability:**

**Consensus review:** The JSAICE is useful to graduates and young staff members in indicating the current state of knowledge in the different fields within the civil engineering discipline. Many other countries have separate journals for the different disciplines in civil engineering, which makes it difficult to compare. The journal is indexed in the major indexes and the WoS impact factor is a very good starting point for the improvement of the journal position on the international market.

**Business aspects:**

**(Business-related criteria; Bibliometric assessments)**

The SAICE owns and publishes the journal. The regular print run is around 10 000 copies. Only the final design and printing are outsourced. All other work is done in-house and by the members

of the Editorial Panel. There are no advertisements in the journal. There are approximately 30 paying subscribers most of whom are organisations as opposed to individuals. There are no page charges or article-processing charges to publish in the journal. Currently the editorial workflow is managed manually but the journal is in the process of developing an online submission system. It is an open access journal and is part of the Sabinet e-publications service and also on the SciELO SA platform. The journal has had offers to purchase from multi-national publishers but it is not for sale.

Copyright is transferred to the SAICE, but authors are granted certain rights. The journal is indexed in Web of Science, Google Scholar, Scopus and SciELO SA. The WoS impact factor at the time of the review was 0.315. Periodic reports on altmetric indicators are generated by SciELO SA. 'Front details' for papers and English abstracts are mandatory. The journal has not been independently peer-reviewed before but it is ISI-accredited and on the SciELO SA platform.

#### **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** The JSAICE's Editorial Panel should be strengthened and diversified to include other international members and members from institutions not currently represented on the panel.

New members of the Editorial Panel would attract international researchers to publish in the journal. As a result, the number of citations of papers published in the journal would increase in other journals of a high WoS impact factor allocation. This would eventually elevate the position of the journal of the SAICE in the international market.

Journal copies should be sent to top universities in other African countries to increase international visibility.

It is recommended that the journal looks at aligning itself with ASSAf's *Code of Best Practice*.

#### **Panel's consensus view:**

- I. **The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET accredited list.**
- II. **The journal is already on the SciELO SA platform.**
- III. **The journal should seriously consider the recommendations in this report.**

## **4.4 Energy and Electrical Engineering**

### **4.4.1 *Journal of Energy in Southern Africa***

#### **Focus and scope:**

##### **(Purpose of journal, positioning, focus, scope, readership)**

The *Journal of Energy in Southern Africa (JESA)* offers papers covering the technical, economic, policy, environmental and social aspects of energy research and development carried out in, or relevant to, South Africa. The journal focuses on energy-related matters and fields, so it is an interdisciplinary publication.

The primary target audiences include academics, researchers, postgraduate students, engineers, energy consultants, energy policymakers and practitioners – the audience reach has moved from regional to international.

The journal is sent to libraries, universities, government departments, research centres, etc. with international exposure. It is also sent to e-mail recipients with the list continually increasing.

#### **Editing functions:**

##### **(Standing, local institutional spread, international participation)**

**Consensus review:** There has recently been a major editorial change, with a new Scholarly Managing Editor and Editorial Board being appointed. The current Scholarly Managing Editor has no indicated previous editing experience, but does have a solid academic record. There is no Associate Editor. The Editorial Board is representative of leading researchers in the field in South Africa and comprises a good number of international practitioners and researchers.

**Questionnaire:**

**(Editorial process-related criteria)**

The JESA was launched in November 1990 and is published quarterly. It has been migrated to an open-access journal system at <http://assaf.ojs3-sandbox.knowledgearc.net/jesa>. It is visited by readers from 34 countries including 14 African countries.

It is scheduled to appear on given dates and is published in February, May, August and November. There have been no significant interruptions in the last decade. During the review period, 110 full articles, one book review and ten conference papers were published. In the same period 435 manuscripts were submitted; of these, two papers were rejected without peer review and 35 after review.

Two reviewers are usually approached based on their knowledge and specialisation in the area. Peer review is now conducted in a 'double-blind' way. Peer reviewers receive follow-up information. Verified peer reviewers' details are captured in a database and periodically updated. In 2015, 113 reviewers were used of which nine were from outside South Africa. The average period between receipt of manuscript and the article appearing online is between three and seven months.

The previous Editor was in the position for 16 years until 2015 and was appointed competitively. The Editorial Board's role includes peer review and members also review editorial policies and practices. The previous board members were in office for 15 years.

The journal provides editorial guidelines which appear on <http://assaf.ojs3-sandbox.knowledgearc.net/jesa/about/submissions>. There is no formal conflict-of-interest policy however guidelines and criteria are provided. The guidelines are aligned with ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice*. *Errata* appear in the following edition once a notification is received.

There are no additional scholarly features that add value to the publication. Previously, the proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed material was between 70% and 90%.

[Note: Over the last three years (2015 – 2017), 109 full articles have been published. In the same period 118 manuscripts were submitted and of these, 39 papers were rejected without peer review and five after review. The new Editorial Board was re-constituted in 2016 to serve for three years and was not appointed competitively. The new board provides some topical expertise. In 2017, 64 reviewers were used of which five were from outside southern Africa. Peer-review reports are retained in and can be accessed from the article history.]

**Content:**

**(Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features)**

**Consensus review:** The articles are generally of a high quality, with an adequate number of articles published per annum. There is a significant focus on local and regional issues but there is a growing number of international submissions. The articles reflect the current energy challenges in the South African context. This is an adequate sample of the best work done in the country in the field, with a good spread of authors from different research centres from across the country, and some internationally. There are no additional scholarly features currently published in the journal. A separate broadsheet called *Energy Management News* is issued monthly.

[Note: The previously separate broadsheet called *Energy Management News* has been discontinued, however, all related non peer-reviewed 'special energy news' have been incorporated into the journal.]

**Essential technical features:**

**(English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation)**

**Consensus review:** Abstracts are in proper English and of a reasonable length. There are no regular *errata*, but one example was observed. There is good citation practice which is thorough and precise, and adhering quite strictly to journal guidelines. The appearance of the

JESA journal is professional, with very good presentation, design and layout. However, some images, particularly on the web-based version, were of lower quality. Images are mostly used in an ethical manner, but the acknowledgement of copied material can be improved. An assistant editor could make a real contribution here.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability:**

**Consensus review:** It is most suitable as a general ongoing stimulus for local graduate students and young staff. The number of journals devoted to energy per se is surprisingly small. The top journals devoted directly to energy are probably Elsevier's *Energy* and Wiley's *Journal of Energy Research*. Within this small pond, JESA makes a real contribution. JESA had a Scientific Journal Rating (Scimago and Scopus) value of 0.237 for 2015, which although low for a 25-year old journal, is excellent if seen in the context of a value of 0.212 for the *International Energy Journal*. The citations of the JESA have increased steadily since 2008.

**Business aspects:**

**(Business-related criteria; Bibliometric assessments)**

The owner of the journal is the University of Cape Town. The JESA has been published electronically and open access since 2016 so production and distribution is not outsourced. At the time of the review it did not carry paid advertising. The Department of Science and Technology (DST) has been sponsoring the energy publications since March 2006. There were no page or article-processing charges at the time of the review.

The editorial workflow was managed using manual systems but this is now automated using the Open Journal System. The journal is provided free of charge and openly accessible. The journal has not had offers to purchase from multi-national publishers.

Permission to use/reproduce papers is obtainable from the Editor and author(s) with acknowledgement to the JESA as the source. The licensing agreement with authors is in process with the UCT Contracts Office.

The five-year impact factor is 0.298. Altmetric indicators can be obtained from Clarivate Analytics and SciELO SA. 'Front details' for papers and English abstracts are included.

The journal has been independently peer-reviewed before by ASSAf in 2014 (commissioned by the Department of Science and Technology).

**Suggested improvements:**

**Consensus review:** Content could be improved by the publishing of good reviews and by special issues on specific energy areas.

The new Scholarly Managing Editor's work load can be reduced by appointing an assistant editor. This will be useful in making sure all figures are of good quality, and are correctly acknowledged.

The JESA could approach the university to request assistance with the publication of the journal.

**Panel's consensus view:**

- I. The journal is a Scopus/ISI-listed periodical and hence is on one of the DHET accredited lists. It should retain this status.
- II. The journal is already on the SciELO SA platform.
- III. The Editor should seriously consider the recommended improvements listed in this review.

#### 4.4.2 SAIEE Africa Research Journal

**Focus and scope:**

**(Purpose of journal, positioning, focus, scope, readership)**

This is the research journal of the South African Institute of Electrical Engineers (SAIEE). In 2005, the title *Transactions of the SAIEE* changed to *SAIEE Africa Research Journal*. This journal publishes

research, survey and expository contributions in the field of electrical, electronic, computer, information and communications engineering. Articles may be of a theoretical or applied nature, must be novel and must not have been published elsewhere. Two types of articles are published: Papers – presentations of significant research and development and/or novel applications in electrical, electronic, computer, information or communications; Research and Development notes – brief technical contributions, technical comments on published papers or on electrical engineering topics.

The primary target audience is the academic community, including science councils.

**Editing functions:**

**(Standing, local institutional spread, international participation)**

**Consensus review:** The Editor-in-Chief has an excellent international profile and standing and the Associate Editors and the Editorial Board comprises a good mix of national and international academics of good standing.

**Questionnaire:**

**(Editorial process-related criteria)**

The journal was originally established as the *Transactions* of the SAIEE in 1909 at the same time as the institute. It is published quarterly (four issues per annum). The journal is available online at [www.saiee.org.za/arj](http://www.saiee.org.za/arj). The journal is read in ten African countries and 15 countries worldwide. Online releases are ahead of schedule by three months. The publication was significantly interrupted over the period from 2006 to 2008 but the reason for this was not provided.

The journal receives a number of articles from the international community, a number are however not accepted due to the required level of originality or addition to the body of scholarly knowledge.

Fifty-two full articles have been published over three years (2013 – 2015). A total of 174 full articles were received in the same period. An estimated 116 manuscripts were rejected after peer review (all articles have a review process prior to rejection). An estimated 50% of peer-reviewed papers of all kinds that were published had at least one author with a non-South African address.

Two or more peer reviewers are usually approached for each submitted manuscript. A Specialist Editor also presides over the process and recommendations are made to the Managing Editor. Peer reviewers are selected through a panel of specialist editors. Peer review is conducted in a 'blind' way. There is rigorous implementation of valid reviewer critique and article improvement, and all manuscripts are sent back to the Specialist Editor for verification. Where applicable, peer reviewers receive follow-up information. Reviewer performance is not assessed and information is not captured in a database. Over 60 reviews were used in total in one of the last three years. Peer-review reports are accessibly retained in the journal's records and at times consolidated with feedback from specialist editors. The average period between receipt of a manuscript and its online publication is between three and six months.

The Editor has been in the position since around 2008 and was appointed competitively. The appointment was for three years. The Editorial Board handles peer review and advises on editorial practices. Editorial Board members are appointed as per demand but are typically in office for about three years or longer. They are appointed from both inside and outside the country and they provide topical expertise.

The editorial guidelines are published on the website and have been partially aligned with ASSAf's *Code of Best Practice*. The journal requests a declaration of conflict of interest from specialist editors. It also ensures that different institutions are used. The journal publishes *errata* online if applicable. No additional scholarly features are published in the journal. The percentage of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material is between 70% and 90% depending on the issue.

**Content:****(Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features)**

**Consensus review:** Quality is acceptable and on par with similar South African journals. The journal publishes four issues per year but only four to five papers are published in each issue. The *SAIEE Africa Research Journal* reflects a good sample of the best work done in the country in the field, given that the best work might be channelled to international journals. Most articles are from universities, and local and international problems are addressed, with a strong focus on South African issues. Although authors are predominantly South African, there are also a number of international contributions appearing on a regular basis. There are limited additional scholarly features, such as occasional responses to published papers, editorials, review articles and special issues.

**Essential technical features:****(English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation)**

**Consensus review:** The abstracts are written in good English. There is suitable publication of errata. Citation practice is good and consistent. The design and presentation is of high quality.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** The journal is also a suitable stimulus for local graduate students and emerging scholars in the specific discipline. It is comparable with similar international journals and is in the process of being assessed by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) for collaboration.

**Business aspects:****(Business-related criteria; Bibliometric assessments)**

The journal is owned and published by the SAIEE. It is no longer printed as hard copy. Production is done in-house. No advertising is carried in the journal and financial sponsorship is through the SAIEE. There are no paying subscribers. Page charges or article-processing charges are R200 per page. The management of editorial workflow is through an Online Management System and loading of articles onto the web. The journal is open access and freely accessible online. The journal has never been approached by multi-national publishers with offers to purchase. Copyright remains with the SAIEE. Information on copyright is available on the journal's website: [www.saiee.org.za/arj](http://www.saiee.org.za/arj) (See: <http://goo.gl/8OcZVe>).

The journal is indexed on Scopus and Google Scholar. Scopus Journal Metrics offer the value of context with their citation measuring tools. The metrics below allow for direct comparison of journals, independent of their subject classification. SCImago Journal Rank in 2014 was 0.111, Impact per Publication in 2014 was 0.231. The 'front details' for papers and English abstracts are mandatory. The journal was being reviewed by the IEEE at the time of this peer review. The IEEE has given the go-ahead for indexing via the IEEE/IET Electronic Library (IEL) which is the largest of its kind globally.

**Suggested improvements:**

**Consensus review:** The Panel is of the opinion that the *SAIEE Africa Research Journal* is well focused on electrical, electronics, computer, information and communication engineering. The journal provides an opportunity for researchers to publish quality papers with a South African relevance. Some of the best work done in South Africa is reflected in the journal and there are also international contributions on a regular basis. The quality of the articles published is of a high standard which ensures the journal is internationally accepted.

The journal should consider increasing the number of articles published per issue. International content and reviewers will enhance the impact of the journal.

Currently only a PDF version of the journal is available online. A content list of each issue, with a searchable and downloadable abstract, as well as a PDF version of each individual article, will greatly improve access. The journal is listed in the Scopus database but other listings could be explored for improved visibility.

Article peer review turnaround could be improved from three to six months to at most three months. For each article it could consider including information about dates of first receipt, revisions and final version, etc.

Since it publishes on all areas of electrical and electronic engineering, the journal could consider introducing special issues or categorizing articles into disciplines.

**Panel's consensus view:**

- I. **The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.**
- II. **The Publisher/Editor should be invited to join the SciELO SA platform.**
- III. **The Editor should seriously consider the recommended improvements listed in this review.**
- IV. **The Panel believes that this journal is of high importance for the South African community of electrical, electronics, computer, information and communication engineers and needs support to continue to service the South African community. The Panel recommends that the journal continues to promote international participation and readership.**

## 4.5 Industrial Engineering

### 4.5.1 *South African Journal of Industrial Engineering*

**Focus and scope:**

**(Purpose of journal, positioning, focus, scope, readership, etc.)**

The *South African Journal of Industrial Engineering (SAJIE)* publishes articles with the emphasis on research, development and application within the fields of industrial engineering, engineering and technology management. In this way, it aims to contribute to the further development of these fields of study and to serve as a vehicle for the effective interchange of knowledge, ideas and experience between the research and training-oriented institutions and the application-oriented industry.

Articles on practical applications, original research and meaningful new developments as well as state of the art surveys are encouraged. *SAJIE* is the primary research journal for industrial engineering and related research in southern Africa, and thus serves as a conduit for publishing the research in this domain.

The journal is owned and managed by the Southern African Institute for Industrial Engineering (SAIIE), and the primary focus is thus to advance the interests of industrial engineering and interdisciplinary fields associated with engineering management and technology management in southern Africa.

The journal is an open access journal with 733 registered readers from 49 different countries.

**Editing functions:**

**(Standing, local institutional spread, international participation)**

**Consensus review:** The Editor and members of the Editorial Board are well-established South African scholars from a variety of institutions and are reputable internationally.

**Questionnaire:**

**(Editorial process-related criteria)**

Established in 1987, the *SAJIE* is published tri-annually (three issues per year). It is an open access journal that can be accessed free online: [sajie.journals.ac.za](http://sajie.journals.ac.za). According to Google Analytics (1 August 2015 – 15 October 2015) there were 1 847 sessions, 1 162 users, 10 337 page views. In the same period there were views from users in 82 countries, 17 of which were other African countries. The journal is pre-scheduled to appear on given dates and aims for May, July and November. No significant interruptions have hindered the journal from being published.

Over the review period (2013 – 2015), 130 full articles were published. The journal invites authors to submit pieces from conferences, but they then need to add 50% value to the original paper,

and this is then assumed to be a full article. Approximately 876 manuscripts were submitted. On average, 60% of submissions were rejected based on incorrect scope, submission issues, obvious quality issues, or some submission requirements not being met. On average, approximately 300 manuscripts were rejected after peer review. About 40% of peer-reviewed papers had at least one author who was not based in South Africa.

At least two peer reviewers are usually approached to review each submitted manuscript. In some cases, an additional reviewer is appointed when there is no consensus on the outcome, or if the review is weak. Reviewers are selected based on their areas of interest. The journal attempts to conduct peer reviews in a 'blind way' and authors' identities are removed before they are sent to reviewers. In addition, there is a policy that a reviewer will not review an article where the author is from the same institution. Implementation of reviewer critique and article improvement is quite rigorous. Peer reviewers do not normally receive follow-up information. Reviewer performance is assessed but there is no formal process to capture that information. There are 430 reviewers registered on the journal's system and approximately 120 reviewers are used per year. About 62% of these reviewers are not South African. Peer-review reports are accessibly retained in the journal's records. The average period between receipt of a manuscript and its publication is ten months for the print version and nine months until it appears online.

The Editor has served in this position since September 2013 and was a section editor for a number of years prior to this. The appointment was not competitive and the period of appointment is unspecified. The Editorial Board manages peer review and advises on editorial policies and practices. Board members are appointed for three years. The members of the Editorial Advisory Board have held their positions since the journal's inception in 1987. The appointment was not competitive and the period is unspecified. Members are from South Africa and abroad. The EAB also provides specific topical expertise and gives credibility to the journal.

The editorial guidelines are available online. There is no formal conflict-of-interest policy but the editorial policy does make provision for cases where an editor's own work is published. The journal's guidelines are not aligned with ASSAf's *Code of Best Practice*. There is no *errata* policy as such, but should a serious error occur, a corrected version of the full article is uploaded online.

There are no value-adding features such as editorials or topical reviews published in the journal. Typically 95 to 98% of the pages in each issue represents peer-reviewed material. Occasionally a guest editorial that is not peer-reviewed is published.

#### **Content:**

**(Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features)**

**Consensus review:** The quality of the articles that are published is high, and the journal attracts submissions from international academics. It publishes an impressive three issues per year and an average of 50 articles per year. The journal aims to cover most of the relevant and pertinent topics in the broad field of industrial engineering. The *SAJIE* publishes a good sample of the best research work in the industrial engineering discipline in not only South Africa, but in the developing world. No additional scholarly features are published as yet.

#### **Essential technical features:**

**(English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation)**

**Consensus review:** Abstracts are published in good English and translation into Afrikaans is commendable. Minimal *errata* were published in the issues that were reviewed. The citation practice is of a high standard and is consistently maintained. Presentation and technical care is excellent.

#### **Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability:**

**Consensus review:** The *SAJIE* journal provides not only a general ongoing stimulus for local graduate students, but also good training for international success. It compares well with some of the best international journals in the field of industrial engineering. It is the only journal in Africa that is included in the list of top journals in this field.

### **Business aspects:**

#### **(Business-related criteria; Bibliometric assessments)**

The journal is owned and published by the SAIE. The regular print run was 650 copies until the end of 2013, but since the journal moved online, print copies are only made for authors and library subscriptions (100 per issue). The printing is outsourced and the distribution is handled in-house. Only the printed version carries paid advertising to cover the cost of printing. There is no direct financial sponsorship however, the journal is assisted in the form of 'person hours'. There are less than 20 paying subscribers. Because the journal is open access, this number has declined and the journal does not seek out more subscriptions. All subscribers are currently organisations. There is a submission fee of R1 000 for South African authors or USD150 for international authors per article. When the article has finally been accepted, there is a publication fee of R2 000 or USD250 respectively. The OJS is used to manage editorial workflow. The journal is freely accessible online.

The SAJIE has had offers to purchase from multi-national publishers. Authors retain copyright and grant the journal right of first publication. The work is simultaneously licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution License that allows others to share the work with an acknowledgement of the authorship and initial publication in this journal. Authors are able to enter into separate, additional contractual arrangements for the non-exclusive distribution of the journal's published version of the work (e.g. to post it on an institutional repository or publish it in a book), with an acknowledgement of its initial publication in this journal.

The SAJIE journal is indexed in Web of Science, Scopus, Google Scholar and the SciELO SA platform. The impact factor was 0.134 in 2012. Google Analytics is monitored for altmetric indicators. 'Front details' for papers and English abstracts are mandatory. The journal has not been independently peer-reviewed prior to this review.

### **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** The Southern African Institute for Industrial Engineering could consider increasing the online availability of the journal to improve citations and impact.

The journal could consider publishing work of additional international authors.

The diversity in topics is a great asset, but can also result in a perception of lack of focus and possibly lower impact. Focusing on a few high-impact topics, possibly a limited number of topics within one volume, might improve the resulting impact.

### **Panel's consensus view:**

- I. The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET accredited list.
- II. The journal is already on the SciELO SA platform.
- III. The Editor and the SAIE should seriously consider implementing these recommendations.

## **4.6 Mechanical Engineering**

### **4.6.1 R&D Journal**

#### **Focus and scope:**

##### **(Purpose of journal, positioning, focus, scope, readership)**

The *R&D Journal* covers the full spectrum of South African mechanical engineering research, both academic and industrial. The journal publishes papers highlighting new and important fields of mechanical engineering research previously not undertaken in South Africa.

It continues to serve as an important national platform as a formal information exchange about engineering research activities in South Africa, also partially as a service to the members of the South African Institution of Mechanical Engineering (SAIMechE).

Mechanical engineering is a very broad field, but all accepted papers have a strong mechanical engineering theme.

South African mechanical engineers face many challenges that are not as prevalent in more industrialised nations, e.g. production scales are not as large; quality control of large product varieties in highly labour-intensive assembly plants; electricity generation in a hot and dry climate with little water for cooling, to name but a few. South African researchers therefore often work on problems faced by the local industry that could not be solved by state-of-the-art technologies available on the international market. This journal provides an opportunity for researchers to publish high-quality papers with a South African relevance.

The primary target audience is South African mechanical engineers (industry and academia). However, a high standard for paper acceptance is maintained so that the journal will find acceptance internationally.

**Editing functions:****(Standing, local institutional spread, international participation)**

**Consensus review:** Given the background of the *R&D Journal*, the constitution of the Editorial Board is commendable. Many of the board members have excellent international relations with good networks. The Editor-in-Chief, Associate Editors and members of the Editorial Board are highly respected members of the academic mechanical engineering community in South Africa, with high national and in some cases international standing. As such, the Editorial Board is an excellent representation of the expertise available in mechanical engineering in South Africa.

**Questionnaire:****(Editorial process-related criteria)**

The journal was established in 1985. It is currently a rolling publication, i.e. papers are published online as their production is finalised. Based on the submissions received, the journal is known in at least a few countries outside South Africa including Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Germany, Hungary, and India to name a few. Issues are not scheduled to appear on given dates. There have been no significant interruptions in publication. During the period under review, 19 full articles were published.

Four to five independent reviewers are approached to review each manuscript. Peer review is not conducted 'blind'. In general, all comments from the reviewers (those directed to the authors) are passed on to the authors. Peer reviewers receive follow-up information. Thirty-one reviewers were used in 2014. Just under ten per cent of these reviewers were from outside South Africa.

The Editor was appointed in 2015. The normal period of appointment is three years. The Editorial Board does not handle peer review but offers advice on editorial policies and practices. Most Editorial Board members have been in office for more than ten years. The Editorial Advisory Board members are appointed competitively, exclusively from inside the country. The period of service is indefinite usually until the board member resigns.

The journal's guidelines are aligned with ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice*. There is no formal conflict-of-interest policy but the editorial process tries to achieve an even balance of institutional associations of papers submitted. Any extraordinary event, e.g. such as the unfortunate detection of plagiarism, are deliberated by the Editorial Board.

The *errata* policy is to publish (attach) an addendum to the paper. The journal does not contain any value-adding features.

**Content:****(Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features)**

**Consensus review:** The articles published by the journal are of a high standard and are generally of excellent archival value. Given the size of the local community in this field, the large number of international journals available, and the pressure to publish in highly cited and rated journals, the small number of articles published each year is understandable. However, the number of articles published was less than expected and an improvement in the number of articles that are published each year is recommended.

The articles that are published represent a good mix of universities and authors from across the country (with some international participation), and as such do provide an overview of the current research performed in South Africa. The articles published have both national and international appeal and cover a wide range of topics, as would be expected from the broad field (mechanical engineering in its entirety) that is covered by the journal.

With its role within the SAIMechE community, any additions to the *R&D Journal* in terms of editorials, correspondence, etc. would detract from the added value to that community. Additional information of this kind is readily available on the SAIMechE website that also currently hosts the journal. As such it is recommended that the *R&D Journal* maintains a focus on publishing only peer-reviewed articles.

**Essential technical features:**

**(English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation)**

**Consensus review:** All articles are in English and are introduced by proper English-language abstracts. The quality of the English language used, as well as the general quality of the presentation, is of a high standard.

No *errata* were observed in the copies under review. The citation practice is sound. The presentation, layout, style and copy-editing are all good.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability:**

**Consensus review:** The *R&D Journal* is ideally suited for the role of capacity development. The rigorous approach followed for article publication makes this both a quality journal and an excellent stepping stone for young researchers developing their writing skills.

It is difficult to draw direct comparisons with international journals, since most international journals have a much narrower scope or focus. However, in general, it is felt that the quality of the articles that are published compares well with that found in international journals.

**Business aspects:**

**(Business-related criteria; Bibliometric assessments)**

The journal is owned and published by the SAIMechE. It is available online through the SAIMechE.org.za website and is openly accessible. Production and distribution is not outsourced. The journal does not carry advertising and it does not receive financial sponsorship. There is no cost involved for authors to publish in the journal. The journal manages the workflow manually.

The journal has not had offers to purchase from multi-national publishers. The journal has had several offers from national publishers and archives to take over the journal management, however the decision has been made by the National Council to exclusively host the journal through the SAIMechE website.

Authors sign a copyright form after submitting a manuscript and before the review process starts. All copyright belongs to the SAIMechE. The licensing agreement with authors entails that the freely downloadable PDF file of the paper is used for personal research only and any other duplication and dissemination would require the consent of the SAIMechE, which would be given liberally without any charge, limited only by some concerns regarding the protection of the SAIMechE website, i.e. papers by other authors. However, the policy is not strictly enforced.

The journal is listed on the international Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and at the time of the review it was about to be listed with EBSCOhost. There are mandatory 'front details' and English abstracts. The journal has not been independently peer-reviewed before.

**Suggested improvements:**

**Consensus review:** The *R&D Journal* is well targeted to its audience, its authors and its Publisher. It is thus well positioned and is a real asset for the field of mechanical engineering in South Africa and, to an increasing extent, internationally. Any suggestions are therefore not aimed at the current position, status or value of the journal, they are rather aimed at added value and lasting impact that might be within reach.

The biggest concern is the relatively small number of publications per year and the low visibility of the publications that are published online. The journal should seriously consider increasing the number of publications to increase the visibility of the publication by online search engines. The current online site is easy to use and extremely convenient, but is not well known to the prevalent search engines which limits the visibility of articles that are published. Fixing this would improve citations and potentially attract additional papers.

**Panel's consensus view:**

- I. The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.
- IV. The Publisher/Editor should be invited to join the SciELO SA platform once the SciELO-related criteria have been met. The journal will need to commit to publishing 12 research articles per year.
- II. The Editor should seriously consider the recommended improvements listed in this review.
- III. In addition, the Panel believes that the journal has a clear research focus that covers all areas of mechanical engineering. The journal publishes high-quality research that is valuable to both academia and industry, focusing on the South African context. Although the journal also attracts well-established researchers, it definitely provides a stepping stone for young researchers developing their writing skills.

## 4.7 Mining and Geology

### 4.7.1 *Journal of the Southern African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy*

**Focus and scope:**

**(Purpose of journal, positioning, focus, scope, readership)**

This is the journal of the Southern African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy (SAIMM). The journal focuses on the minerals industry in southern Africa, but it also includes papers from countries outside southern Africa that have an established mining industry.

It publishes papers that contain new contributions to technology that are of economic importance including updates and reviews of current research work, processes and equipment. It presents original material that has not been published elsewhere.

Target audiences are SAIMM members, scholars and academics in the mining and metals industry of southern Africa, as well as globally. The journal reach is 2 662 and the readership is composed of members of the institute (95.5%); international and local subscribers/institutions (1.7%); and complimentary readers (2.8%).

**Editing functions:**

**(Standing, local institutional spread, international participation)**

**Consensus review:** The journal has a very high national reputation. Members of the Editorial Board are well known in South Africa, and several are known internationally. The board includes the head of a large mining engineering school, and the head of a school of chemical and metallurgical engineering. The President of the Southern African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy sits on the Editorial Board and the balance of its membership is made up of academics, senior industry and statutory body personnel and senior members of consultancy firms.

**Questionnaire:**

**(Editorial process-related criteria)**

The SAIMM *Journal* was established in 1894. It is published monthly with 12 issues per annum. It is available online at <http://www.saimm.co.za/journal-papers>. Over the review period there were 930 visitors from 48 countries and 14 African countries. In 2016, there were 3 349 visitors from 137 countries, of which 37 were African countries. It is scheduled to appear on a specific date each month. There have been no significant interruptions other than World Wars I and II.

In the three-year review period (2012–2014), the journal published 363 full articles, 140 letters, 12 review articles, one book review, 209 conference papers and two technical notes. The number

of full article manuscripts received was 536 and 265 conference papers were received. Over the review period, there were 22 manuscripts rejected without peer review and 97 rejected after peer review. Three hundred and fifty-two peer-reviewed papers had at least one author with a South African address.

The Publications Committee assigns two referees with appropriate knowledge to review each paper. Peer review is not conducted in a 'blind way'. There is rigorous implementation of valid reviewer critique and article improvement. The referee comments are returned to the authors for improvement and the referees advise once they are satisfied that the paper has been revised to their satisfaction and it can be published. Peer reviewers do not receive follow-up information and review information is not captured in a database. There were 321 peer reviewers used in one of the three years in the review period and 9% of these had non-South African addresses. Peer-review reports are retained in the publication's archives. The average period between receipt of a manuscript and its publication is between six and nine months.

The Editor has been in the position for six years. It was not a competitive appointment. The Editorial Board (Publications Committee) handles peer review and advises on editorial policies and practices. The average number of years of service on the board is seven years. The international Advisory Board members have been in place for five years. New committee members are nominated by current committee members should the need arise. They are appointed from both inside and outside the country and they provide expertise in specific areas.

The journal has editorial guidelines but these need to be aligned with ASSAf's Code of Best Practice. There is a conflict-of-interest policy that stipulates that individuals from the same institution as the authors may not be reviewers. There is an *errata* policy.

The journal carries value-adding features such as critical editorials; news and views; topical reviews; analytical book reviews; correspondence on published articles and technical notes. The proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material is 83%.

[Note: Over the last three years (2015 to 2017), the journal has published 246 full articles, two paper comments, 41 special articles, one book review, 154 conference papers and one technical note. Approximately 924 full article manuscripts and 247 conference papers were received. During the same period, 147 manuscripts were rejected without peer review, 172 rejected after peer review and there were 372 peer-reviewed papers that had at least one author with a South African address.]

#### **Content:**

**(Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features)**

**Consensus review:** The papers published in the *SAIMM Journal* are of a very high quality and are mainly based on research, with a few based on innovations in the mining and mineral processing or physical metallurgy industries. While it is the premier place to publish mining or metallurgical-related work undertaken in South Africa, the impact factor for the journal is low and many researchers send their work to other international journals. The articles are generally very good, however some of the papers do not give detailed scientific evidence for the conclusions drawn.

A good number of articles are published per annum, with ten to 15 articles per issue, and 12 issues per year. From manuscript receipt to publication is six to ten months, which is more or less in line with international journals that produce a printed copy.

The *SAIMM Journal* is mostly focused on local issues and related research. Most authors are from universities across the country, from the CSIR, Mintek, the Council for Geosciences, etc. There are increasingly more articles by Chinese authors and authors from the Global South, as well as a trend for more international co-authors.

There are some useful but limited additional scholarly features. Each month there is an editorial piece written by a guest commentator resulting in a wide range of topics of relevance being

covered. Book reviews are rare. Very occasionally there will be a letter published in response to a particular paper, with an answer from the original authors. There are advertisements from equipment suppliers.

**Essential technical features:**

**(English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation)**

**Consensus review:** There are proper English-language abstracts for all articles. Although there were no errors reported in the issues that were reviewed, the journal has an *errata* policy of publishing errors in a subsequent copy of the journal. The journal reflects good citation practice. Referees are asked to comment on the accuracy of citations, and papers without the required format are sent back to the authors for correction. The publication appears very professional. Articles are of a good length and are arranged well. The presentation of the journal is of the highest quality.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability:**

**Consensus review:** While many of the papers are aimed at specialists in their fields, other papers are of a more general nature and of interest to young graduates, and all mining and metallurgy students are encouraged to publish in the *SAIMM Journal*. The institute has a strong emphasis on developing young professionals. Each year there is a one-day Student Colloquium and the best papers are published in a special Student Edition of the journal. At least one editorial (Journal Comment) a year deals with the career development of young professionals in the mining industry.

The journal does not match leading international journals in terms of quality of work published and citation records. It had a relatively low impact factor of 0.176 in 2013. However within the field of mining and metallurgy it is one of the premier journals in South Africa, with the same standard of papers and quality of presentation as other international publications (*Australian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy Bulletin*, *The Society of Mining Engineers Transactions* in the United States and the *Canadian Institute of Mining, Metallurgy and Petroleum Journal*).

**Business aspects:**

**(Business-related criteria; Bibliometric assessments)**

The title owner and Publisher is the Southern African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy. The regular print run was 3 675 in the review period but is currently 2 750 as an increasing number of members opt to receive an electronic copy of the journal. Production and distribution is handled in-house. The journal carries paid and unpaid advertising but does not receive financial sponsorship. There are 46 organisations that currently subscribe to the journal. No page or article-processing fees are charged.

The editorial workflow is managed manually. The issues are freely available online. The journal has never had offers to purchase. The work contained in this journal, except where otherwise noted, is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) License. Authors are provided with a copyright permission letter. All information can be reproduced as long as there is an acknowledgement that it was first published in the *SAIMM Journal*. Authors have a licensing agreement with the journal.

The *SAIMM Journal* is indexed in Web of Science, Google Scholar, SciELO SA, OneMine, and Scopus. The journal's impact factor was 0.221 during the review period. The journal uses altmetric indicators to monitor its performance. 'Front details' and English abstracts for each article are mandatory. The journal has never been independently peer-reviewed before.

**Suggested improvements:**

**Consensus review:** The *SAIMM Journal* should strive to increase its impact factor to attract top research papers. Although it is an international journal it does not attract high-quality research articles from countries in the Global North.

Turnaround time to publication should be improved, if possible. There is a need to minimise the time between submission of a manuscript and its publication.

The reviewing process should be more stringent and a proper rejection mechanism should be put in place. While reviewers are thanked for their services they are not informed as to

whether their reviews are accepted or the reasons why their recommendations are sometimes overturned. The Editorial Board should also reject badly written papers before they are sent for peer review so that they do not push the burden of grammar correction onto reviewers.

The reviewer network and Editorial Board could be expanded to a wider international community. The Editorial Board should work closely with other international institutes to market the journal.

The annual report and proceedings of the general meeting are published in a special edition once a year and a large number of conference proceedings are published annually. The journal could consider separating items that are not peer-reviewed from the journal and publishing these in a newsletter or on the SAIMM website.

The editorial group could offer seminars to institute members and universities to sensitise the scholars to the benefits of publishing and the expectations in terms of the quality required for a local international journal. There are currently various awards for excellent papers. Perhaps more categories could be created, for example special awards for best paper by overseas authors, best paper by authors below various ages, etc. There is a need to encourage younger people to publish and this may achieve that objective.

**Panel's consensus view:**

- I. The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.
- II. The journal is already on the SciELO SA platform.
- III. The Editor should seriously consider the recommended improvements listed in this review.

#### 4.7.2 *South African Journal of Geology*

**Focus and scope:**

**(Purpose of journal, positioning, focus, scope, readership)**

The focus of the *South African Journal of Geology (SAJG)* is to publish peer-reviewed scientific papers, notes and discussions in the broadly defined fields of geoscience that are related, directly or indirectly, to the geology of the African plate. Interdisciplinary papers linked to the scope of the SAJG are welcome.

The SAJG is distributed to all individual and institutional members of the Geological Society of South Africa. The membership includes both local and international academics, students and researchers.

**Editing functions:**

**(Standing, local institutional spread, international participation)**

**Consensus review:** The journal has a very good national reputation. The Editor-in-Chief is serving his second term. The members of the Editorial Board have a high standing within South Africa, and are all known internationally.

**Questionnaire:**

**(Editorial process-related criteria)**

The *Transactions of the GSAA* was established in 1895 and the title was changed to *South African Journal of Geology* in 1987. It is published quarterly with four issues per year. It is available online to members at: [www.geoscienceworld.org](http://www.geoscienceworld.org).

The journal is pre-scheduled to appear on given dates. There was a significant interruption in the mid-1980s but following a change of Editor (the current Editor), publication of the SAJG was brought back on track and as a result was included on the ISI citation list from 1990.

Over a period of three years (2013 – 2015), 61 full articles were published. Altogether 136 manuscripts were received between 2013 and 2015. Eleven manuscripts were rejected without peer review and seven were rejected after peer review. Twenty-four peer-reviewed papers that were published since 2013 had at least one author with a non-South African address.

Two peer reviewers are usually approached for each submitted manuscript. Peer reviewers are selected by the scientific editors or members of the Editorial Board. Peer review is not conducted 'blind'. The process of reviewer critique and article improvement is very rigorous. Peer reviewers receive follow-up information only on request. Reviewer performance is assessed but there is no formal score sheet for reviewers. Information relating to the review is logged into the manuscript spreadsheet and is tracked by the senior Scientific Editor who will identify any trends. Approximately 81 reviewers were used in a period of a year. Twenty-four (30%) of the reviewers are based outside the country. The average period between receipt of a manuscript and its publication in print is between six and eight months. For online copies the average period is six months.

The current Editor has held the position since 2015 and was previously the Editor from 1989 to 1998. The Editor was appointed after an interview process. The period of appointment is not specified but the Editor has decided to stay on for a maximum of five years. The Editorial Board assists with peer review and advises on editorial policies and practices on request. The board is appointed for a period of two years with an overlap between boards of one year. Members were not appointed competitively. They are appointed from inside and outside the country and they provide specific topical expertise.

The journal has no formal policy for editorial guidelines but there are 'instructions to authors' on the inside back cover of every issue. There is no conflict-of-interest policy. With regards to *errata*, information is corrected in the original article which is then re-published with an acknowledgement of the error.

There are no value-adding features such as critical editorials or book reviews but the journal encourages discussion of published articles. All pages in each issue represents peer-reviewed original material.

#### **Content:**

**(Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features)**

**Consensus review:** The journal publishes good quality articles, however it is felt that some established researchers tend to publish their best papers in other international journals with a higher impact factor. As such, the journal does not always contain the best research conducted in South Africa. The SAJG has maintained a steady stream of issues with roughly the same number of articles per issue. Articles are of a good length and are arranged well.

There is a strong focus on local issues and geological research. While most authors are local, it does attract researchers from all over the world, and many articles are co-authored by international collaborators. This is a pure scientific geological journal and additional scholarly features are not generally part of its focus. The Geological Society does however produce a newsletter, *Geobulletin*, which tends to cover these aspects.

#### **Essential technical features:**

**(English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation)**

**Consensus review:** Proper English language abstracts of high quality are used for all articles. *Errata* are published if it impacts on the manuscript. Good citation practice is generally used. The copy-editing and production quality is on par with that of international journals, both for the online and print versions of the journal. It appears to be a very professional publication.

#### **Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability:**

**Consensus review:** The journal is a very good resource of South African-based investigations of the type that many graduate students are involved in, and it is also a natural outlet for their results. All geology students are encouraged to publish in the SAJG.

The SAJG's mandate is to publish research of a South African nature, which is different from most leading international journals. However, international authors are happy to publish appropriate papers in the journal, and to cite results published in the SAJG in leading international journals. The journal is on par with any journal that publishes geological information on specific regions of the world and that is supported by local geological associations.

### **Business aspects:**

#### **(Business-related criteria; Bibliometric assessments)**

The GSSA owns and publishes the journal. The regular print run is 2 400 copies. Production and distribution is outsourced. It does not carry advertising and it is not financially sponsored. It is distributed to individual and institutional members of the Geological Society of South Africa within South Africa, Africa and the rest of the world; statistics (2009 –2015) being South Africa 2 043, Africa 40, and internationally 247. There are 31 paying subscribers who receive the journal all of whom are organisations. Authors are not charged page fees or article-processing charges. There is however a charge for the cost of colour illustrations in the print version of the journal. An Online Management System is used to manage the editorial workflow. The SAJG is published on Geoscienceworld.org and access with a password requires membership of the mother society. There have been no offers to purchase from multi-national publishers. Copyright rests with the Geological Society of South Africa. There is no licensing agreement with authors.

The journal is indexed on CAB international, Cambridge Scientific Abstracts, Chemical Abstracts, Geo Abstracts, IBZ, Mineralogical Abstracts, Current Contents, Research Alert and SciSearch. The journal has mandatory 'front details' for papers and English abstracts. This is the journal's first independent peer review.

### **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** The focus of the journal could be sharpened to provide more empirical data on the geology of South Africa, southern Africa and Africa as a whole. Some of the best articles ever published in the long history of the SAJG are those that document basic geological data and this should be maintained even if it does not necessarily lead to immediate high readership or impact but will still be read in decades to come.

The journal could publish more articles on formal stratigraphic subdivisions of South Africa as well as new age data as they become available. This type of data is extremely important for correlation and reconstruction of geological events in southern Africa in the context of global geology through time. It would probably lead to higher readership internationally in areas of research where South African geology is of particular significance such as Archean geology, Paleoproterozoic geology, Karoo geology, etc.

[Note: In 2016, the SAJG became the print outlet for descriptions linked to the South African Committee on Stratigraphy (SACS).]

The journal could strive to publish more articles on the character of some of the many ore deposits of South Africa, southern Africa and Africa. These type of more 'applied' articles could lead to more stimulation and motivation for young geologists starting careers in mining and exploration geology. Similarly articles in modern fields like geometallurgy, geophysical techniques, etc. could lead to more interest and stimulation of young geologists.

### **Panel's consensus view:**

- I. **The journal is an ISI-listed periodical and hence is on one of the recognised lists of the DHET. It should be retained as a DHET recognised journal.**
- II. **The Publisher/Editor should be invited to join the SciELO SA platform once the SciELO-related criteria have been met.**
- III. **The Editor should seriously consider the recommended improvements listed in this review.**
- IV. **Furthermore the Panel believes that this journal is of great importance for the South African geological community, and an essential space for students and young researchers to gain publishing experience.**

## 4.8 Multidisciplinary

### 4.8.1 *Journal of Engineering, Design and Technology*

#### **Focus and scope:**

##### **(Purpose of journal, positioning, focus, scope, readership)**

Exploring the interface between academic research and practical application, the *Journal of Engineering, Design and Technology (JEDT)* serves all practitioners, professionals and clients in the engineering, design and technology sectors. The journal aims to expand the boundaries of knowledge in these fields and provide an international forum for the interchange of information and current issues from around the world. The *JEDT* is a member of the International Council for Research and Innovation in Building and Construction (CIB).

It publishes fully refereed papers on practice and progress in the field; in-depth case research papers, reviews of projects and case studies; and discussion on research, innovation and education policies and strategies.

Key journal audiences are all practitioners, professionals and clients in the engineering, design and technology sectors. The journal has a very wide reach through international authors and the Editorial Advisory Board as well as subscribers at institutions all over the world. *JEDT* is available to over 1 000 institutions in countries all over the world.

#### **Editing functions:**

##### **(Standing, local institutional spread, international participation)**

**Consensus review:** The last three volumes do indeed reflect very high (inter)national disciplinary standing of the Editor-in-Chief, Associate Editors and members of the Editorial Board. The Advisory Board shows arguably one of the best arrays of academics, researchers and publishers among other comparable publications. The 28 members of the Editorial Board are based in 11 countries. The South African members of the Editorial Advisory Board represent the engineering and construction economics professions, a professional communicator and continuing professional development practitioner. The Editor-in-Chief is a full-time academic at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Having said that, the South African members of the Editorial Advisory Board seem somewhat geographically skewed, with four out of five members being employed at the University of Cape Town and the fifth member being based at Stellenbosch University.

#### **Questionnaire:**

##### **(Editorial process-related criteria)**

The *JEDT* was established in 2003. It was published quarterly but as from 2017 it is published six times per year. It is available online at: <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/loi/jedt>. The journal was downloaded over 20 500 times in 2015 and is read in over 500 countries. Subscribers from ten African nations read the journal namely, Botswana, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Seychelles and South Africa.

The journal is pre-scheduled to appear on given dates and appears regularly on these dates. There have been no significant interruptions.

Over the review period, 88 peer-reviewed full articles were published over the three years. The journal received 243 full article manuscripts and two conference papers. The number of manuscripts that were rejected without peer review totalled 18. The number rejected after peer review was 94. The proportion of peer-reviewed papers that had at least one author with a non-South African address was 83%.

Between six and ten peer reviewers are usually approached for each submitted manuscript. Reviewers are selected based on alignment of their expressed areas of expertise and the subject area covered in the submitted manuscript. A list of matching reviewers is generated automatically by ScholarOne.

Peer review is conducted in a 'blind way' with the author and the reviewer/s remaining anonymous. The implementation of valid reviewer critique and article improvement is rigorous.

The quality, completeness and comprehensiveness of the reviews are monitored and scored. Peer reviewers usually receive follow-up information and reviewer performance is assessed.

A total of 327 peer reviewers were used in one of the three years. The proportion of these who had non-South African addresses was 86.5%. Peer-review reports are accessibly retained in the journal's records. The average period between receipt of a manuscript and its publication in print is 36 months and online is 34 months.

The Editor was appointed in 2003 at the journal's inception. The appointment was not competitive. The appointment is renewed annually subject to review and discussion with the Publisher. Where appropriate, board members are invited to participate in peer review. Occasionally board members are invited to give input and comment on editorial policies and practices. There are a few charter members who have been with JEDT since its inception and the journal invites expressions of interest from time to time. The Editorial Advisory Board members are appointed competitively for an indefinite period. Board members are appointed from inside and outside the country to ensure the highest international standards. The EAB occasionally provides specific topical expertise but generally they are specialists to cover the scope of the journal.

Emerald Publishers and the editors are fully committed to ethical publication practice and are members of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). Ethical guidelines can be found online at: [http://www.emeraldgroupublishing.com/authors/writing/best\\_practice\\_guide.htm](http://www.emeraldgroupublishing.com/authors/writing/best_practice_guide.htm)

There is a conflict-of-interest policy that is published online. Emerald may correct the published version of record where an error renders the article and its research factually incorrect. An appropriate correction notice will be published in such instances. For further information, please see Emerald's withdrawal and corrections policy: <http://www.emeraldgroupublishing.com/authors/writing/withdrawal.htm>

Value-adding features such as critical editorials and book reviews are occasionally published. Approximately 90 to 100% of the content is peer-reviewed original material.

#### **Content:**

**(Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features)**

**Consensus review:** All the articles accepted and published range between average and high quality. It is commendable that the JEDT has published 88 full peer-reviewed articles over three years.

The published papers represent an adequate sample of the work done in the specific disciplines and fields (as represented by the respective authors). The discipline-specific mix and representation of articles could be more varied to address the listed journal objectives, intended coverage and the key audience.

There is a good focus on local, as well as regional issues although this could be broadened. The published papers represent an adequate sample of the work done in the specific disciplines and fields (as represented by the respective authors).

There are interesting editorials as well as book reviews and some, albeit limited scholarly correspondence.

#### **Essential technical features:**

**(English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation)**

**Consensus review:** The English abstracts are very detailed and are of good quality. No information was available on the publication of *errata*, although the Editor referred to standard procedures of publishing an appropriate correction notice. Citations follow standard academic norms. The journal is good in terms of presentation, design, layout and style.

#### **Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability:**

**Consensus review:** Apart from providing a platform for publication, the JEDT is limited when acting as an external stimulus for local graduate students and young staff. This observation is in part based in the journals' self-identified focus disciplines.

To a certain extent, the journal is comparable with other international journals in the field.

#### **Business aspects:**

##### **(Business-related criteria; Bibliometric assessments)**

Emerald Group Publishing Ltd is the legal owner and the Publisher of this journal. Production and distribution is handled by the Emerald Group. No advertising of any form is included in this journal. It does not receive any financial sponsorship. The journal cannot share information on the number of paying subscribers. Approximately 95% of subscriptions come from universities and institutions as opposed to individuals.

Authors are not charged page or article-processing charges. The only exception is for open access articles which are paid for by the authors' funding body.

The editorial process is managed through an online management system (ScholarOne). The journal appears online and is part of a commercial pay-to-view and pay-to-subscribe e-publication service. Subscribers can access the journal through Emerald Insights.

Copyright arrangements can be found online: [http://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/authors/writing/author\\_rights.htm](http://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/authors/writing/author_rights.htm). Upon acceptance of articles, authors are presented with Emerald's default Copyright Transfer Agreement on ScholarOne.

The journal is indexed on Construction Management Abstracts, ICONDA, Norwegian Register for Scientific Journals, Scopus, and Westlaw. The journal does not have an impact factor. The *JEDT* makes use of altmetric indicators to monitor the journal's performance.

'Front details' for papers and English abstracts are mandatory. The journal has never been independently peer-reviewed before.

[Note: It was accepted to the Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI) in 2017.]

#### **Suggested improvements:**

**Consensus review:** The discipline-specific representation of the editorial members should ideally reflect the journal's objectives, intended coverage and the key audience of the journal. It should also reflect more diverse geographical regions.

There is limited information on the nature of readership, but it is important that the Editorial Board has a certain dynamism and turnover, permitting 'new blood' to engage and thus also encourage new readership.

The *JEDT* should decide whether the published papers are addressing the journal's objectives. Alternatively, the scope could be revised, after re-evaluating its intended coverage and stated key journal audience.

The journal could consider a wider range of publication features such as reviews, position papers, debates, correspondence, etc.

To encourage less established researchers to publish, shorter more policy or practice-oriented papers could be considered (i.e. less fully analytical). It might also be useful to adopt themes for editions, and this could lead to an opportunity to focus the current very wide scope of content in useful ways.

It perhaps needs to draw more articles in the field of design, whether it is service design or architecture, both of which are not well represented in the samples examined. Content should also draw on the specifics of community-focused design and the use of approaches such as the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) of government which is significant to the industry.

**Panel's consensus view:**

- I. The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.
- II. The Publisher/Editor should be invited to join the SciELO SA platform should the business relationship between the journal and Emerald Group changes.
- III. The Editor should seriously consider the suggested recommendations.
- IV. The journal should consider opening up the editorship and Editorial Board to wider participation.

# Appendix A



## Questionnaire Sent to Each Editor of Journals being Peer-Reviewed

The questionnaire was revised in 2015 before the reviews took place.

### 1. Purpose of journal, positioning, focus, scope, readership, etc.

- 1.1 What is the focus and scope of the journal (i.e. what does it say about this in your masthead)?
- 1.2 Is the journal's aim to focus on a specific discipline or field or does it (also) include an interdisciplinary focus?
- 1.3 How does the journal serve the South African research community in relation to its focus and scope?
- 1.4 Who are your primary target audiences (predominantly local scholars or also further afield)?
- 1.5 What is the journal's reach and how is the readership composed? (i.e. international subscribers, institutions, and/or individuals in terms of numbers and/or percentages)?

### 2. Editorial process-related criteria:

- 2.1 When was the journal established?
- 2.2 What is the publication frequency of your journal, per year?
- 2.3 If online,
  - 2.3.1 What is its URL?
  - 2.3.2 What is the visit and downloaded record?
  - 2.3.3 In how many countries is the journal read?
  - 2.3.4 In how many African countries is the journal read?
- 2.4 Scheduled issues:
  - 2.4.1 Are issues of your journals pre-scheduled to appear on given dates?
  - 2.4.2 If scheduled, do the issues in fact appear regularly on the scheduled dates?
- 2.5 Have there been significant interruptions in publication since the journal's inception? If so, provide details.
- 2.6 Peer-reviewed original papers:
  - 2.6.1 How many peer-reviewed original papers have you published during the last three years:
    - a. Full articles?
    - b. Letters?
    - c. Review articles?
    - d. Book reviews?
    - e. 'Conference papers'?
    - f. Other?
  - 2.6.2 How many manuscripts in each of the above categories were received in the last three years?

- 2.7 Rejection rate:
  - 2.7.1 Approximately how many manuscripts in each category were rejected without peer review (as a pre-peer review decision)?
  - 2.7.2 How many were rejected **after** peer review?
- 2.8 What proportion of peer-reviewed papers of all kinds that you published had at least one author with a non-South African address?
- 2.9 Peer reviewers:
  - 2.9.1 How many peer reviewers are usually approached for EACH submitted manuscript?
  - 2.9.2 How are peer reviewers selected?
- 2.10 Is peer review conducted in a 'blind way', i.e. authors and institutions blanked out?
- 2.11 How rigorous is the implementation of valid reviewer critique and article improvement?
- 2.12 Do peer reviewers receive follow-up information, e.g. outcomes of the reviews?
- 2.13 Is reviewer performance assessed and is such information captured in a database?
- 2.14 Total of peer reviewers
  - 2.14.1 How many peer reviewers were used in total, in any ONE of the last three years?
  - 2.14.2 What proportion of these had non-South African addresses?
- 2.15 Are peer review reports accessibly retained in your records?
- 2.16 What is the average period between receipt of a manuscript and its publication
  - In print?
  - Online?
- 2.17 Editor/Editor-in-Chief
  - 2.17.1 How long have you been Editor/Chief Editor of this journal?
  - 2.17.2 Were you appointed competitively (i.e. following advertisement and a selection process)?
  - 2.17.3 For what period have you been appointed?
- 2.18 Do members of your Editorial Board and/or Editorial Advisory Board:
  - 2.18.1 Handle peer review of individual manuscripts?
  - 2.18.2 Advise on editorial policies/practices?
  - 2.18.3 How long have they been in office?  
Editorial Board:  
Editorial Advisory Board:
  - 2.18.4 Are they appointed competitively (i.e. following advertisement and a selection process)?
  - 2.18.5 For what period?
  - 2.18.6 From inside and outside the country?
  - 2.18.7 To provide specific topical expertise?
- 2.19 Policies
  - 2.19.1 Do you have published editorial/policy guidelines? What is the policy? (Please send us a copy)
  - 2.19.2 Is there a conflict-of-interest policy? If so, please provide details.

2.19.3 Have your editorial/policy guidelines been aligned with the ASSAf *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*?

2.20 Do you publish errata in all cases where errors have become apparent? What is your policy?

2.21 Does your journal contain value-adding features such as:

- Critical Editorials?
- 'News and Views' analyses of articles being published?
- Critical topical reviews?
- Analytical book reviews?
- Correspondence on published articles?
- Others?

2.22 What is the percentage of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material?

### 3. Business-related criteria:

3.1 Who is the actual title owner (legally) of the journal? And the publisher?

3.2 What is the regular print run of your journal, if it is printed?

3.3 Is production and distribution outsourced? If so, provide details.

3.4 Do you carry advertising which is:

- Paid?
- Unpaid?

3.5 Do you receive financial sponsorship(s)? If so, please list the sponsors and provide details.

3.6 What is the number of paying subscribers?

3.7 How many of the subscribers are organisations as opposed to individuals?

3.8 Do you impose page charges or article-processing charges on authors? If so, provide details.

3.9 How is the editorial workflow of the journal managed?

- Online Management System
- Loading of articles onto web
- Manual systems
- Other

3.10 If your journal appears online:

- Is it free online (open access)?
- Is it free online but password protected?
- Is it part of a commercial (pay-to-view and/or pay-to-subscribe) e-publication service?
- Is it part of a non-commercial e-publication mechanism (i.e. Medline)?

3.11 What is the journal's estimated total cost per annum?

3.12 Has the journal had offers to purchase from multi-national publishers?

3.13 What are your copyright arrangements?

3.14 What licensing agreement do you have with authors?

**4. Bibliometric assessments:**

4.1 Could you provide us with a list of the indexes in which the journal is indexed (including Web of Science and/or the IBSS, Google Scholar, Scopus as well as others)?

4.2 Have impact factors (e.g. Google Scholar, WoS or Scopus) ever been determined for your journal? If so, what were they?

4.3 Do you use any altmetric indicators (number of visits to journal website, number of downloads, citations on social media) to monitor the journal's 'performance'?

4.4 Are 'front details' for papers like titles, authors, addresses, affiliations and English abstracts mandatory?

4.5 Has your journal ever been independently peer-reviewed before and by whom?

**5. General:**

5.1 Is there any other information or do you have any comments that may be useful to the Panel?

5.2 What do you regard as the main challenges that the Journal and the Editorial team face?

# Appendix B



## Requests to Independent Peer Reviewers

1. Do the hard copies of the last 2 – 3 years of issues of the journal reflect:
  - 1.1 high national/international disciplinary reputations/standing of the Editor-in-Chief/ Associate Editors/members of the Editorial Board?
  - 1.2 a high/good (general/average) quality of the articles accepted/published?
  - 1.3 a (contextually) adequate/good number of articles per annum?
  - 1.4 an (adequate/good) sample of the best work done in the country in the discipline/ field?
  - 1.5 a focus on local/regional kinds of materials/problems?
  - 1.6 publication of articles by authors from across the country, and internationally?
  - 1.7 useful additional scholarly features like editorials, topical reviews, book reviews, scholarly correspondence, etc.?
  - 1.8 proper (English-language) abstracts for all articles?
  - 1.9 suitable publication of errata?
  - 1.10 good citation practice?
  - 1.11 good presentation, design, layout, style, copy-editing interventions, images are used in an ethical manner?
  - 1.12 suitability as a general ongoing stimulus for local graduate students/young staff in the discipline concerned?
  - 1.13 some kind of comparability with leading international journals in the field?
2. Please list your suggestions for an improvement programme for the journal.







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