



SAIW and SAIW Certification

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In spite of a very difficult year for the welding, fabrication and steel industries, we had an excellent response to our annual dinner this year and were again able to fill Golf Reef City to capacity. I was astounded by the response we received from our sponsors and I am very grateful for their contributions. So a big thank you to all our sponsors, without your support this event would not have been possible.

To all of the award winners, well done. Your achievements represent excellence in welding, which is what SAIW stands for and strives to promote.

Particular congratulation to Jim Guild, our Gold medal award winner, who is, perhaps, due to his exceptional service to the Institute over the years, one of the most deserving winners we have ever had. I would also like to make mention of SAIW's new Honorary Life Members, Jim Guild, John McLeish and Louis Breckenridge. Honorary life membership is awarded to acknowledge extraordinary service to the industry and activities of SAIW.

Jim Guild was part of SAIW long before he joined the Institute as a full time employee and we can honestly say he has given the Institute a significant percentage of his career. John McLeish was also an SAIW employee and he was largely responsible for establishing SAIW Certification as an independent company in the SAIW Group. John, who is working in industry again, still makes a valuable contribution. And Louis Breckenridge is certainly another SAIW stalwart, he has been part of the Institute for as long as I can remember and he continues to be a faithful promoter of SAIW and its activities to the industry at large.

Looking to next year, I am pleased to be able to announce that SAIW will be fully adopting the IIW International Welding Inspection Personnel (IWIP) training programme. As the starting point, we will be converting our SAIW Level 1 Inspectors course over to the new IWIP – Basic curriculum from next year. And as soon as we have a cohort of students qualified to this level, we will be introducing the IWIP-Standard diploma, the International equivalent of the Level 2 Inspectors Certificate.

While the standard is not significantly different to the one currently on offer, the changes are fundamental. These new qualifications are much better aligned to International requirements such as ISO 3834, Quality Requirement for Welding; ISO 14731, Welding Co-ordination Tasks and Responsibilities; and will complement our ISO 9712 compliant NDT programmes – all of which are particularly relevant for export-oriented industries.

We are currently preparing for the arrival of our SAIW Welding Challenge finalists, who will be put through their paces from 21 to 25 November. As well as the Youth Challenge, we have added a Senior Welding Challenge this year, with the winner to compete in the IIW Arc Cup in China later this year. We look forward to seeing how well our welders compete against the world's best.

As we all know, 2016 has been a challenging year, full of uncertainty. I am more optimistic about 2017, however. We are seeing a little more movement with respect to refinery maintenance and upgrades; we expect some news about the replacement of our ageing fleet of power stations; and we hope to get a definite decision about the nuclear build programme.

SAIW wishes all its members and *African Fusion* readers a restful, happy and safe Christmas and New year and we look forward to working with you all again in 2017.

Sean Blake