

Report back on the SAEF Ordinary General Meeting held in Midrand on 13 October 2018

On the issue of setting the 2018 membership fees, the following transpired:

The room was heavily divided between those disciplines and provincial heads who believed the proposed increase was at least in part avoidable and those who were examining the basic functions of the federation and interrogating what the exact costs were of achieving these. The debate was robust and energetic, and the opinions expressed were carefully worded taking the whole audience into account. It was striking how each individual opinion was expressed and rebutted whilst always keeping the conversations respectful. It is indeed encouraging to see the council once again with a great feeling of unity. It was also most encouraging that all council members were mindful of expressing opinions which fully embraced the constituents' positions.

The populist opinion was that a minimum increase, a ramped up multi-year increase or a staggered payment system should be considered as many of the members would prefer these. The outcome-based opinion was more, one of examining the needs of the organisation and then looking at the absolute minimum funding that would be required in order to ensure constitutional compliance and financial stability.

The ultimate vote taken on the subject produced the council's resolution as follows:

2019 Annual Subs		
Non-FEI	Junior	575-00
	Senior	800-00
FEI	Junior	625-00
	Senior	850-00

These fees will be inclusive of VAT and will be subject to an early settlement discount of 10% if paid before the end of December 2018 or a reduces 5% discount if paid before the end of January 2019.

The most pertinent issues raised during the debate in support of this resolution were:

1. The SAEF constitution demands that the council perform their duties in such a way as to give expression to the 29 objects carefully defined in the document. Neglect of any of the objects effectively brings the function of the federation into question. The funds collected from membership are absolutely required in order to resource the federation in order to take care of business under its constitutional obligations.
2. There seems to be a fairly large deficit in contributing members when comparing the discipline association members submitted for insurance purposes and those who are currently paid up members of the SAEF. All discipline associations were urged to ensure better compliance of SAEF membership status as this could potentially contribute to a large reduction of annual fees (up to 25% difference was suggested based on initial research) in the future membership fee requirements.
3. The financial stability of the SAEF was recently and for very many reasons, at times fragile and as a result, there was a great risk that many members presently serving

on the council would be reluctant to continue doing so, if the financial stability and the liquidity of the organisation was in doubt, primarily because of personal reputational considerations.

4. There was great emphasis placed on the fact the personal time that all council members in general and SAEF EXCO, in particular volunteered, this far exceeded the total cost structure of the organisation many times over.
5. The nature of the sport and the complexities of the underlying functionality and events necessitates a general reserve fund so that likely scenario's which could not be commercially insured for, do not risk bankrupting the organisation.
6. The Treasurer went into great detail in explaining which costs had been reduced from previous years and further what specific cost required spending at the proposed levels in order to bring about effective corporate functionality.
7. The Chairman expressed opinions on the legal risks involved for council members who were associated with an underfunded organisation but also the impact on the sport as a whole if the organisation had to fail in its objectives or close or reduce in functionality due to financial considerations. He further complimented the fulltime staff on their dedication as well as their attitude and willingness to work long hours and on weekends when required.
8. The floor spent a lot of time expressing the absolute need to the Federation to be accountable for its actions as well as being able to "market" its value to the members many of whom it would appear were almost completely ignorant about the day to day functionality and work performed by that the organisation.