



Africa Association of Quantity Surveyors

AFRICA QS VOICE

Newsletter Date

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The Council of the AAQS recently met in Lagos, Nigeria on 20th November, 2015. The meeting was attended by 15 Council members and a further 7 representatives, with the largest contingent being from Kenya.

This event took place in conjunction with the Biennial General Meeting of the Nigerian Institute of Quantity Surveyors (NIQS) on 17th to 21st November. The theme of the NIQS programme was “Politics, Policies – Role of Professionals”.

The main event was well attended by government officials including Governors, Senators and business leaders, in addition to the large audience of quantity surveyors. At the concluding event of the week, Mrs. Mercy Iyortyer was invested as the 23rd President of the Nigerian Institute of Quantity Surveyors – the first female to hold this office. In the photo below, she is shown with the outgoing president, Mr. Murtala Aliyu.



Important Forthcoming Events

The first 2016 Exco Meeting will be held in Gaborone, Botswana on Thursday, 17th March, 2016. It is planned to have a seminar on the following day (Friday, 18th March).

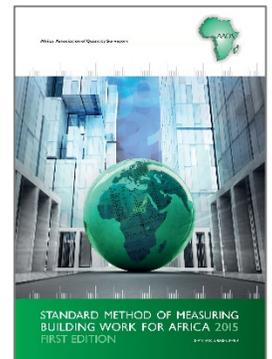
In future, these newsletters will be published three times a year – please do visit the AAQS webpage regularly and keep in touch with our ongoing development and activities.



To all our members – wishing you a pleasant Christmas period, and a prosperous New Year.

Board / Committee Work

1. The Services and model documentation board has once again broken new ground in extending the capacity of quantity surveyors to work in Africa. The first edition of the newly developed Standard Method of Measuring Building Work for Africa was launched at the Lagos meeting. This exciting product provides all quantity surveyors with a standardized document that can be used in any country on the continent. Many of the Methods of Measurement used in African countries to date are either very old and potentially outdated, or are 'copies' of documents produced by colonial powers and do not always reflect modern-day practices on the continent. The new document has been developed by a committee drawn from across the continent, working together with representatives of all AAQS member countries. You are encouraged to adopt the new Standard Method, particularly if you are providing consultancy services beyond your 'home' borders. It is intended that a number of 'workshops' will be arranged in the near future to support the adoption of this valuable new tool, as well as a Model Bill of Quantities document which is based on this package.
2. The Membership board is actively seeking to broaden the AAQS membership base and a delegation recently visited the Gambia in this regard. The visitors were well received by local quantity surveyors and we look forward to formal ratification of a membership agreement in the near future. It is planned to visit Rwanda in late 2016, with a similar objective. A number of other countries have been identified as potential new members, including Ethiopia, Egypt and Togo. In addition, AAQS member countries are intending to significantly increase Practice Membership numbers in their regions – significant extended membership benefits are being considered to support this process.
3. From its formation in 1999, the AAQS has made several awards to individuals, largely without any structured policy determining the framework within which awards are made, or the criteria upon which awards and prizes are considered. The provision of awards and prizes can make a valuable contribution to the organization through:
 - a. Recognising the achievements of QS graduates, practitioners and firms – we are invariably the 'forgotten' professional in successful projects
 - b. Providing incentives for both individual quantity surveyors and our practicing members, which can reflect exceptional achievements and provide them with 'bragging rights' in their self-promotion / marketing activities
 - c. Promotion of our organization as the continental representative of the quantity surveying fraternity
 - d. Providing opportunities for the AAQS to achieve continued growth through optimization of the awards process in attracting larger numbers of practicing members, and through enhanced marketing opportunities utilizing a broader community of sponsors and advertisers



A proposal was tabled in the Prizes and Awards committee session that the AAQS develops a framework policy that is practical and achievable, within its own logistical and financial constraints. It is anticipated that, in time, the current proposed structures will be enhanced and grow in stature and breadth / depth of coverage. For example, this initial stage does not have a great deal of 'differentiation' such as separating various types of construction activity (retail / commercial / industrial etc.), nor in recognizing 'specializations' such as Green Buildings, Facilities Management, Project Management etc. The current approach concentrates on 'basic' QS professionalism and performance skills within any type of construction project, no matter the size of the project, or the size of the professional firm undertaking the service.

The recipients of awards in the initial stage of development will be limited to:

1. Africa Graduate Gold Medalist
2. Africa Young Achiever Award (those QS's under 35 years of age)
3. Africa Project Excellence (a project where the quantity surveying activities are of the highest standards)
4. African Quantity Surveying Practice Award (AAQS Practice Members only – for the best overall firm demonstrating commercial strength and development, and quality of work the consultancy does for clients)

Criteria for assessment of competitors within each group will be provided to each member institution in the New Year as it is the intention of the AAQS to promote this system for adoption by each of its member countries. This will provide national associations with an opportunity to recognize their own 'winners'. Each national 'winner' will then be submitted to the AAQS, at least 1 month prior to the scheduled annual AAQS Council Meeting – the continental winners to be selected by a neutral group of assessors (such as from organisations with which we have Memorandums of Understanding, such as ICEC and PAQS) - other than for the graduate gold medalist which will be adjudicated by the AAQS itself. Hopefully, it will be possible to attract sponsorship which will enable us to both recognize and reward the winners of the various awards. It is intended that the first set of awards will be made at the 2016 Council Meeting in Tanzania.

4. A new leader / chair of the Education, research and training board was appointed in Lagos. The new chair is Dr. Njeri Wachira-Towey who has been a member of the board since 2011 and is resident in Nairobi. Congratulations to Njeri (photo below) on this appointment. Prof. Rob Pearl remains on the board as an ordinary member. An announcement will be made in the New Year as to possible additions / changes to the composition of this important board, as well as identifying their new priorities.



5. An extensive draft proposal dealing with the future direction of the AAQS was presented by the Strategic Planning Committee. A final draft is scheduled to be compiled by the New Year. This draft will then be forwarded to all national institutions for discussion and feedback, prior to suggested adoption of an agreed document in March 2016 at the next schedule Exco meeting.

Steering Committee/ Liaison Office

Improvements in our internal administrative procedures have had an immediate effect. Membership payments are now being received more regularly, and contact with members has improved significantly since our database of contact details has recently been updated.

The AAQS is committed to significantly increasing its practice membership numbers during 2016. Each country has been given a reasonable 'target' and we hope to have a total membership of at least 130 firms by end-2016.

A further initiative being adopted at present, is to attract sponsorship / advertising finance to enable us to increase our ability to deliver an enhanced service to the QS fraternity on the continent. The AAQS holds a prominent position within the African built environment and can provide advertisers with a very attractive vehicle to market their products and services.

News - "hot off the press"

As mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, we are proud to announce the launch of the first edition of the Standard Method of Measuring Building Work in Africa. This document, together with a linked Model Bills of Quantities document in both Pdf and Excel formats will be made freely available for use in early 2016. These documents are currently being developed by major specialized QS software companies and we anticipate that the completed packages will be available during the second half of 2016.

One of the activities that took place during the recent biennial conference of the Nigerian Institute of Quantity Surveyors (NIQS), was the election of a new NIQS National Executive Council. One of the nominees for a position in this important forum was Mr. Obafemi Onashile, the Western Region Vice President of the AAQS. His election poster / banner is shown here. We were all delighted that he was elected as the incoming Deputy President of the NIQS, with a 'landslide' majority. Congratulations!

The AAQS Exco has provisionally identified the countries and approximate dates of the 2016 meetings. The proposals are:

March (17 / 18 March) – Gaborone Sun Hotel, Gaborone, Botswana (Exco Meeting)
August (in the first two weeks) – Tanzania: Dar es Salaam / Arusha (Council)
November (first half) – Rwanda (Exco Meeting)

Of special noting is the Council Meeting in Dar es Salaam. Preliminary plans indicate that this will be an event of great significance / interest to all quantity surveyors, whether you are a consultant, contractor, government official, academic, or office bearer of a national professional organisation. Diarise this event now!



Contact Us

Unit G6, Building 27
Thornhill Office Park
Bekker Road
Vorna Valley, Ext 21
Midrand 1681, South Africa

Tel +27 (11) 315 4140
Fax +27 (11) 315 3785
www.aaqs.org



www.listudio.co.za