

SASTT represented at the ISTT international board meeting and *International No-Dig* in Toronto

by Joop van Wamelen, honorary director, SASTT

Introduction

The International Society for Trenchless Technology (ISTT) is managed on a daily basis by the full-time executive director, John Hemphill, working closely with the ISTT's executive subcommittee. The international board of directors generally meets once a year, usually at the venue of the *International No-Dig* conference.

This year's *No-Dig* was held in March/April in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. The international board meeting was held one day before the start of the *No-Dig*. The writer was delegated by the board of SASTT to represent SASTT at both events. This story is a summary of the writer's impressions.

The international board meeting

The meeting was well attended, with several of the affiliated societies having two persons, even though every society has only one vote.

The main matters on the agenda were the following:

- the number of fully affiliated societies is currently 22, of which 18 fully accredited representatives with voting authority were present. Five of the eight executive subcommittee (ESC) members were in attendance. Considering the cost of attending such a one-day meeting, the writer believes that this is an accurate reflection of the importance that is attached to the ISTT board meeting by the affiliated societies world-wide
- as required by the by-laws of the ISTT, the board approved Dr Dec Downey to serve as chairman of the ISTT up to the 2010 meeting of the board of directors. Downey is an impressive and exceedingly capable chairman
- at the start of the meeting an item was added to the agenda, viz reports from the affiliated societies on recent and planned activities. This meant that the representatives had to give these reports off the cuff, without formal preparation. In spite of this, the reports gave interesting perspectives of what is happening on the trenchless scene all over the world. One thing was common; every speaker was passionate about trenchless!
- in addition to the existing programme of *International No-Digs* and the web-based technical resource centre, the ISTT is actively expanding its involvement in education and training programmes. The excellent training programmes that already exist will be supplemented with new course material
- the ISTT recognises the emergence of trenchless markets in regions that do not have affiliated societies. It sees education and training in these regions as opportunities for the formation of affiliated societies by stimulating interest in TT. During 2008 and in the current year, the ISTT held successful and well-attended courses in the United Arab Emirates and India, countries that do not have affiliated societies. In addition to helping

the ISTT fulfil its education and training goals, the courses in Dubai and India between them netted a profit of US\$ 12 500. Successful master classes were held in Dubai in February 2009 in conjunction with *Trenchless Middle East*. Courses on a wide range of subjects were a feature of the *International No-Dig* event in Toronto. In July this year master classes will be offered in HDD and pipe replacement at the *Trenchless Technology Summit* in Abu Dhabi, UAE

- the ISTT now has a formal policy to provide reasonable compensation to instructors who conduct training on behalf of the ISTT. It would like to increase the number of qualified instructors to teach specialised seminars and will welcome suggestions. SASTT members, please note!
- the ISTT has recently established a technical panel (TP) consisting of recognised technical experts. The TP will conduct peer reviews and assess training proposals. Its role is also to respond quickly to technical enquiries from members. The TP promises to become a technical resource not to be sniffed at. It has already been abused by consulting engineers who got free advice and came back for more. Access to the TP has now been limited to ISTT affiliates
- the chairman encouraged affiliated societies to consider co-hosting specialised training at their events or when appropriate occasions may arise
- the chairman of the German Society for Trenchless Technology and the writer addressed the board with proposals to have the *International No-Dig* of 2011 in Berlin and Pretoria respectively. The board meeting then adjourned to allow the ESC to come to a decision. During the adjournment many of the delegates came to speak to the writer to express their keen support for an event in South Africa
- prior to reconvening the board meeting, the ESC reached agreement with both societies:
 - the 2011 *International No-Dig* will be held in Berlin on 20-24 June 2011 in conjunction with *Wasser Berlin*, an extensive specialist event held every two years which typically attracts 30 000 visitors. The GSTT will pay the ISTT a fixed fee of US\$ 60 000
 - however, the ISTT offered to look for an opportunity to hold a TT exhibition in Pretoria in the 2011-2012 timeframe in conjunction with a specialised education and training event to address regional needs. Discussions to get this venture off the ground will be initiated. Obviously, strong commitments from SASTT member companies to come to this party will be needed to get the ball rolling sooner rather than later. The writer is convinced that if SASTT can, firstly, offer municipal professionals enough time to get council approval to attend and, secondly, award high CPD points to course delegates, the training venture will get strong support. It will also promote the case for TT like never before in southern Africa
- following a presentation by the delegates of the Brazilian Association for Trenchless Technology, the board decided to have the 2012 *International No-Dig* in Sao Paulo, subject to reaching an agreement on the details of the event
- in March 2009 the inaugural meeting had been held of ACTNODIS, the Columbian society for trenchless technology. They intend to have their national *No-Dig* show in 2010
- the Italian Society for Trenchless Technology has been working hard on an impressive outreach programme in the Mediterranean region. They have held courses for 600 students, established information desks in Algiers and Amman, developed a two-day

seminar on TT and arranged practical TT demonstrations in Amman and Padua. Through their efforts trenchless societies have been established in the Maghreb (a region in North Africa) and Amman.

The *International No-Dig* conference

This must have been one of the biggest *No-Digs* ever held. Apart from more than a thousand North-American delegates who were expected, it was attended by approx 200 delegates from 40 countries outside North-America. Of the papers on offer 30 were from authors outside North-America. There were 140 papers in five parallel sessions. The attendance at every session was monitored by scanning the barcode on every delegate's name card on entry and exit. This was done in order to award CPD points to professional delegates, but to earn these points, the delegates had to fill in evaluation forms before leaving the auditorium.

Whereas usually, *International No-Digs* are held in attractive localities with lots of sightseeing activities for accompanying partners, this show offered only one tour, viz to Niagara Falls, which takes some beating of course. Although such tours are usually beyond the budget of the writer, he had wondered, however, why there were not more. He found out why. The only thing he discovered to commend Toronto was the unfailing friendliness and helpfulness of its people. As regards attractions of the city that were within walking distance from the conference hotel, there was the shore of Lake Ontario, which consists of an apparently endless concrete quay. The backdrop of the lakeshore consists of the beautiful 500 metre CN Tower and shoulder-to-shoulder high-rise buildings which cut off the view of the city. No wonder there were no tours...



The CN Tower is the highest tree in Toronto's concrete jungle

The writer has never attended a conference where the work of the professional conference organiser was so professional and slick as that of Benjamin Media at this *No-Dig*. Everything happened exactly on time, every service desk had ample and competent staff and everyone concerned with the conference was invariably friendly and helpful. Well done, Bernie Krzys and your team – you were a class act!

An impression of the conference papers

If there are five parallel sessions one person cannot hope to attend every paper and gain an idea of the exhibition as well. The solution is to study the detailed conference programme and pick the papers you attend. This is what the writer did. The papers he attended were all well presented and strictly timed by the session chairmen – what a pleasure! Here are some of the highlights:

- one can read and listen to any number of articles and papers on sewer rehabilitation, but Nashville Metro Water Services in the USA went out and took a further step. Prior to and over a period of twelve years after rehabilitation with cured-in-place pipe (CIPP) of 13 km of 200 to 760 mm sewers as well as the manholes and connections up to the property boundaries, they measured the infiltration. The project eliminated 35 % of infiltration. By the end of the monitoring project the reduction of infiltration was somewhat less, but by a margin smaller than the 95 % confidence range of the initial measurements

- especially in our part of the world there is justified concern about the unconscionable loss of water from water supply pipes. A very topical paper illustrated how this problem was tackled in our region by means of tethered inline leak-location with an acoustic sensor. Some of the work was done in rural areas. Routinely, major leaks were found, many of which showed none of the typical tell-tale signs on the surface. The presenter entertained the audience with a real African story. In one instance, the team got out of their *bakkie* only to look up and discover an elephant between themselves and the pipeline. Somebody did have the presence of mind to take a photograph, though
- due to his attendance of another event, the writer missed a key paper. It concerned the patented Aqualiner. This is a revolutionary CIPP suitable for water and sewerage reticulation. It does not use a liquid resin, which gives it long shelf life. The woven liner delivered to site consists of glass fibres, for stiffness and strength, and thermoplastic polymer fibres, polypropylene, which after processing become the matrix that surrounds the reinforcing fibres. The liner is pulled into the pipe and expanded and heated with compressed air at 200 °C, delivered from a pig. On the evening of the same day Aqualiner was named the recipient of the 2009 ISTT *Innovative Technology Award for Pipe Rehabilitation*
- a paper from Canada which struck the writer as particularly appropriate to the southern African situation started by describing a city that apparently needed to extend its sewage treatment plant. Although the city engineers did not have a detailed knowledge of the condition of the sewer network, they knew which catchments were the most troublesome. They tackled a “problem” basin by performing a thorough condition assessment, using camera inspection, smoke tests and dye tests. This told them which sewers leaked and which sanitary sewers were connected to the stormwater system and vice versa. Flow monitoring determined the dry and wet weather flows and provided input into an hydraulic analysis. A trenchless rehabilitation programme was designed, costed and implemented. The result: a lot of clean water was kept out of the sewers and the extension of the sewage treatment plant could be deferred. The politicians were very proud of savings effected in a “green” manner and the engineers got to rehabilitate their sewers by trenchless means
- the last paper to be mentioned here was presented by Josephine Parker, who is already well known to a number of SASTT members. In her inimitable manner, Jo reported on a project in the United Kingdom, which is intended to lead to a national web-based buried-assets records-system to be available throughout the UK. By the time this newsletter comes out, she will have repeated the presentation in Cape Town under the auspices of SASTT. The rest of us envy the Capetonians!

The writer has the papers in digital form. He has requested permission to copy the papers, upon members’ request. If permission is granted, copies on CD will be available from SASTT (director@sastt.org.za) at R 150,00 per CD *for members only*.

Annual round-table discussion

Annually *Trenchless Technology* magazine arranges a panel discussion. This year’s discussion focused on international perspectives on trenchless technology. It was planned to coincide with the *No-Dig*. The writer was invited to the discussion. The president of SASTT, Johann Wessels, had provided him with relevant notes which added value to the writer’s contribution to the discussion.

The discussion was also attended by
Chris Brahler, chairman of the North American Society for Trenchless Technology, from the USA
Dec Downey, chairman of the ISTT
Bernie Krzys, publisher of *Trenchless Technology*
Taigo Matsui, chairman of the Japan Society for Trenchless Technology, assisted by Kyoko Kondo who translated
Jim Rush, editor of *Trenchless Technology*, discussion leader
Piero Salvo, past chairman of the North American Society for Trenchless Technology, from Canada.

This turned into a fascinating session. The writer does not want to steal *Trenchless Technology's* thunder, but he feels free to tell two snippets because he had already heard them prior to the round-table.

A new way of pipe cleaning is done with ice pigs, described as “a big slush puppy”. If the pig gets stuck, you wait until it has melted.

Increasingly, local authorities are taking a pragmatic approach to curing inflow and infiltration into sewers. Since a major part of this problem originates in private drains or laterals, these are now being “adopted” by local authorities in consultation with the property owners. Next, the drains are inspected and rehabilitated at the expense of the local authority. At last the penny has dropped!

Conclusion

Contrary to the *No-Dig* that the writer attended in 2007 where many papers were about work-in-progress, this conference was dominated by case studies of successful projects and reports on research ventures. This was one fascinating conference!

The membership of SASTT is changing

The members who attended the annual general meeting in February this year will recall the discussion that developed on the subject of the criteria for and definition of individual and corporate members; as well as the amount of the subscriptions. It was resolved that the board of SASTT must review the criteria for individual and corporate members, as well as the amount of the subscription.

At its meeting held on 4 May 2009 this matter was discussed in depth and the board decided on the following course. Henceforth all members of SASTT will be corporate members, on the grounds that (with the exception to be discussed below) all current individual members are directors of, or employed by, companies or organisations that generally pay the subscription on behalf of the person who represents the organisation in the capacity of an individual member of SASTT.

An exception will be made for individual members who receive a pension. Such members can become or remain individual members.

After careful consideration of the impact of this policy on the annual budget of SASTT, the subscription for 2009 will be R 3 000,00 for corporate members and R 600,00 for individual members.

Invoices that reflect the above subscriptions will be sent out soon.