

D E N T A S A 2005 AGM

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Welcome

The Association President and Chairman of the meeting, Mr. Axel Grabowski, opened the meeting and extended a warm welcome to all members, traders, technicians present and all guests.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from: Ian Robertson, Deon de Lange, Terry Hagemann, Ken Barrett, Dawie Louw, Gareth Coslett, David van Eyk, and as per list.

3. Obituaries

A minute of silence was observed in memory of all colleagues who passed away in the previous year. Hein van Eden was mentioned.

4. Adoption of Agenda

The Agenda was proposed by Mr. Aubrey Du Plessis and seconded by Ms. Mariaan Roets.

5. Minutes of previous meeting

It is a true reflection of what conspired at the 2004 AGM. Proposed by Mr. Du Plessis and seconded by Mr. Ferreira.

6. Matters arising

No matters arose.

7. President's Address – See Annexure "A"

8. New Members – See Annexure "B"

The list of new members was made available for interested members at the DENTASA office.

9. Financial Matters

9.1. Financial Statements – See Annexure "C"

The Treasurer, Mr. R. Pittroff, reported that the great growth in membership numbers reflected directly on the balance sheet.

He took great pleasure in the fact that at the end of the financial year 2005 a profit of R20 000 showed. Reserves stayed constant which is an important factor. The change from SADLA to DENTASA and the efforts of the President had a direct influence on the financial statements as well as the wise investments of the Executive Committee of DENTASA. The shares did so well that there was an increase in assets. Mr. Pittroff proposed we work on increasing membership rather than membership fees. The Treasurer further suggested that the President's Branch visits nationwide continue, because it had a direct influence on the number of paid up members. Mr. Pittroff also proposed that we go back to the old scenario where Executive Committee members are flown up to Gauteng for one meeting per annum. Lastly Mr. Pittroff suggested a "Bosberaad" be held where old and new Executive Committee members get together to ensure a smooth handover of power.

The President thanked Mr. Pittroff for his hard work and informed all members present that it was not the EXCO who invested the money wisely, but Mr. Pittroff.

9.2. Pension Fund Report – Johan Badenhorst – ABSA

See Annexure “D”

The Chairman introduced Mr. Johan Badenhorst from ABSA Actuaries, who then delivered the Pension Fund Report.

Clive Berry inquired whether members are allowed to receive the balance of the pension fund at resignation. Mr. Badenhorst said no, because they have the number of pensions on the fund and pensioners are in future getting their pension purely based on returns. In this Industry they do not have a surplus, but redistribution will go to the remaining members of the pension fund.

The floor raised the question of why non-dental employees cannot belong to this pension fund. Mr. Badenhorst commented that they did try to make non-dental employees part of this fund but it had its advantages and disadvantages. It comes down to what is written in the law, which states that the only eligible members of the Technician’s Pension Fund are registered technicians. With regards to non-dental employees, they had an umbrella for them but from an admin point of view, it became a burden to the admin system. The more members and the higher the earnings the lower the admin cost and vice versa. Higher paid technicians then subsidise the admin of lower income people. ABSA had to close that option in the end because most laboratories defaulted on payment.

10. Branch Reports – See Annexure “E1 – E5”

The Branch reports were delivered by the respective branch chairmen:

WESTERN CAPE - Mr. Ken Barrett not present. The President read the explanatory email sent by Mr. Barrett.

Mr. Grabowski added that this was a very sad matter, because a well-attended meeting was held in the Western Cape when the President attended. Mr. Grabowski requested anybody from the Western Cape present to help revitalise the Western Cape.

NORTHERN GAUTENG - Mr. André Ferreira

EASTERN CAPE – Mr. Roy Laurie

KWAZULU NATAL – Mr. Aubrey Du Plessis

Mr. Du Plessis announced his resignation and thanked the Association, Executive committee and members for their support over many years. Mr. Du Plessis brought in Gareth Coslett as Chairmen of KZN. The President thanked Mr. Du Plessis for his many years of dedicated service to DENTASA and the profession. Mr. Du Plessis will be dearly missed.

FREESTATE: Mr. Teunis Bakker

11. Dental Technicians Act

11.1 Legal implications of administration fee

Mr. Dave Owen reported that the biggest problem DENTASA has is Dr Neil Campbell sending letters to dentists telling them that they are allowed to charge admin fees to dental technicians. Dental technicians may not pay an admin fee. The Contractors can be liable for a fine not exceeding R10 000. It is unfair that dentists and third parties get away with transgressing our law but only dental technician contractors are being prosecuted. Mr. Owen had been sent invoices from dentists to technicians stating how much their admin fee amounts to. The Act

states you may not pay an admin fee or commission: the Contractor will break the Corruptions Act as well as the Dental Technicians Act. Mr Owen urged all technicians not to contravene the act.

The Chairman read a letter from Dr. Neil Campbell addressed to a member of SADA where he stated that it is still SADA's policy to deduct the admin fee. Mr. Grabowski further reported that DENTASA has confronted Dr. Campbell head on numerous times, but to no avail. It has been decided at the Executive Meeting held on 10 June 2005, that legal action will now be taken. The Health Professions Council on its own cannot change our act. It is sad that this is the only way forward. It is a fact however that correspondence published by SADA is not enhancing the relationship between various stakeholders.

Question asked by Andre Retief if Adv. Lekitima is aware of these irregularities. Mr. Owen reported that the problem with Medicross is an example whereby the technicians are being prosecuted and not the third party perpetrator.

Mr. Pittroff has been involved with this matter regarding the admin fees for approximately ten years. Personally Mr. Pittroff and many of his colleagues do not have a problem with an admin fee subject to a) the fee being fixed, b) the fee must be brought into the government gazette as an item and be carried by the patient and/or third party, e. g. medical aids. The admin fee is incorporated into the dentist fee structure and so should ours be. An admin fee can easily be negotiated between the interested parties. If we can implement the admin fee in this way, Mr. Pittroff feels that it would be fair and harmony would prevail.

Mr. Owen vehemently disagreed. As long as technicians have to pay the admin fee directly out of their income the dentists would benefit unfairly. The matter of VAT being involved is another matter to be resolved.

11.2 Dentists buying unmounted teeth

Mr. Ferreira reported that it has come to the attention of the Council that certain Traders are supplying unmounted teeth to dentists. According to the act this is illegal. Mr. Ferreira asked the members present to supply DENTASA with the necessary information to enable DENTASA to inform Adv. Lekitima. Adv. Lekitima views it as illegal too. No names will be mentioned.

Andre Loots asked what could be done about traders supplying these teeth to dentists without a registered laboratory. Brian McKenna said he does supply dentists with teeth and if it is wrong then somebody must tell him to change and he will. The problem doesn't seem clear to the traders, because if they say no to dentists they will go to another supplier.

What is the Council's legal opinion? The President stated that the act is very clear on this matter and the Council should state it is illegal. It is only legal if the dentist has a registered laboratory and the teeth may only go to the laboratory where his work is being processed.

Mr. Ferreira apologised to Confident if they have been offended by what has been said. The only thing he asks is to make sure that only registered dental laboratories receive unmounted teeth.

11.3 Denturism – See Annexure “F”

Mr. Ferreira read a letter from Mr. Duffy Malherbe concerning the Denturism workshop of 7 June 2005. DENTASA was never invited and nobody relating to Denturism was told about this workshop. Mr. Ferreira proposed that Mr. Malherbe represent DENTASA on this forum of Denturism. The motion was passed.

11.4 Employment Contracts

Mr. Owen said DENTASA mentioned last year that the law was going to change concerning employment contracts. The contractor will now be in trouble if all employees do not have a contract. DENTASA has a contract available to members free of charge. This contract has been authorised by Adv. Lekitima. Non-members can buy it for R100 per contract. All contract supplied by DENTASA will be numbered.

The President stressed the point that it is important to know that all employees in your employ need to have a contract.

11.5 Direct Payments

Mr. Owen reported that on 1 December 2004 the State President signed a regulation which made direct payments part of the act and thus law. This was a mistake and should not have been signed by the Minister. It changed the word “shall” to “may”. We must now make a regulation for this act: a regulation stating whom you may claim from and who not. This matter is to be contested in the constitutional court. At this stage we can claim directly from the Medical Aid and dentists do not feel this is fair.

The Chairman read a related article from Die Volksblad – Annexure G

Mr. Ron Heathorn asked what the implication will be if the new act was to be revoked. The President said it will be reverted back to what it was, which is a step backwards.

12. Medicross- Mr. Grabowski “mentioned in the President’s address”

Mr. Grabowski is waiting for Council to recharge the noted technician contractors or to drop the charges. Mr. Laurie stated that the technicians in the Eastern Cape pleaded guilty so dentists would be made aware of the fact that that practise is illegal. The Chairman said that he would never plead guilty to anything he was not guilty of and urged fellow contractors to do the same.

13. Sponsor-A-Student – Fritz Gerber

Mr. Fritz Gerber was not in attendance. The President ruled this matter scrapped from the Agenda.

14. Proposed National Health System for South Africa

Mr. Ferreira spoke to Dr. Brenda and invited her to attend the AGM and she expressed her willingness to do so as soon as she knows more about the related matter. Everything stated in the media are rumours. The Cabinet did not agree and the matter will not be finalised soon. We work according to the Government Gazette.

Mr. Kevin Ehlers added that Medical aid coincides with the admin fee. Medical aids are trying to sell their products to dentists. Dentists and SADA are grasping at straws to get as much money in to compensate for a lack of income from patients. The pricing structure is too low according to the norms of the world. Dentists want to be dictated to what to do but they must do it themselves and take it up with the relevant organisation. The Technicians must fight for their own prices. The President added that dentists must now do their own time and motion study.

Mr. Ferreira mentioned that the main reason why dental technician’s fees are set the way it are, is because of the time and motion study done which cost the SADTC and dental contractors hundreds of thousands of Rands.

15. Bad Debts

15.1 Deadbeat Dentist List

Ms. Mariaan Roets said in the event of getting calls from new dentists the Technicians always wonder whether or not the prospective client would settle the account. It is a fact that non-payment of dentists' accounts occurs. Ms. Roets compiled a list of defaulting payers. Members are urged to add more names to this list as to technician's contractors to become efficient businessmen. But Ms. Roets added that dentists reported must be at least on the ITC list or contractors must have started legal action against them.

15.2 Legal Assistance for members

The President recommended that DENTASA appoint one attorney who is knowledgeable of the dental technicians act.

16. Frequency of meetings

The President noted that the lack of technicians attending meetings is matching other related bodies. Various people mentioned a similar problem in the branches. The matter of distances and costs were mentioned. It was suggested that the use of modern technology be used to spread the interests of DENTASA and thus provide the feeling that all members have an input in all matters. It was stated that our industry is too small to be fragmented.

Mr. Wessel Badenhorst stated it might work better if we can make the meetings a less formal occasion and more informal, enabling members to relax and take more part in discussions.

17. NOMEDS Invitation

Mr. Owen reported that for the first time Nomeds have invited technicians to participate in their annual get together. Mr. Owen and the President of DENTASA, Mr. Grabowski, have been invited to talk to 800 dentists on this occasion. Forty technicians would be invited to attend the next Nomeds meeting. The theme will be "Where do we come from and where we are going".

Mr. Kevin Ehlers added that out of 3 000 registered dentists in South Africa Nomeds have 800 participating members standing together. He suggested that the two professions could get together on a professional basis.

18. Technician Participation in study groups

Mr. Owen further reported that Nomeds are striving for the unification of technicians and dentists within their study groups. Nomeds are striving to form a unifying force between technicians and dentists. The more this line of thinking continues the better the relationship will become between dentists and technicians. All persons interested must please avail themselves to Mr. Owen.

19. S. A. Dental Technician's Council matters

Mr. Owen reported that the Dental Technician's Act would be changed: Our regulations will be rewritten and redrawn by the Department of Health. DENTASA cannot allow the department of health to prescribe to us without our input. It was also noted that SADA is pressing for another dentist to serve on the SADTC without contributing towards the costs of the council. After all, the council is called the Dental Technicians Council. It is ridiculous for SADA to try and enforce a fee structure whereby SADA would dictate the terms of payment to our profession. It is the Minister of Health's wish for us to become part of the Nurses Council due to the costs factor involved. Mr. Owen requested members to give their input regarding this matter. All Dental Technicians must register with the SADTC and are governed by the Dental Technician's Act 19 of 1979.

9.1 Stabilization Fund Report – See Annexure "H"

20. General

Mr. Du Plessis requested anyone present to voice a way of promoting our profession to younger people. Mr. Du Plessis added that some technicians are hosting exhibitions to inform the public about the profession and it appears to be reasonably successful in KZN. Any ideas will be welcomed. Ms. Anso Scrooby mentioned that the students have no representatives in the working committee. The President suggested Ms. Scrooby be the student representative on the working committee. The executive and the delegates agreed and Ms. Scrooby was co-opted onto the executive on an ad-hock basis.

Mr. Brian McKenna thanked all present at the AGM who attended the meeting. He was reminiscent that some years ago only 18 contractors were present at an AGM. It was noted that 217 delegates attended this year. Mr. McKenna suggested the minutes of the meeting be distributed to everybody present and he ensured us that the dental traders would promote the AGM in future.

The question of what an unskilled person may do was voiced: The job description is laid down in the Act.

Mr. Gary Stead said he encountered problems with people saying there are not subsidies for technicians who use better materials and thus they do not get the chance of charging more for these more expensive materials. Mr. Owen explained that the prices in the gazette are the basic minimum prices. Contractors can charge more.

Mr. Boshoff, head of the Department of Dental Sciences at the Tshwane University of Technology, reported that the biggest problem at the university is transformation. The problem that the university faces is that there are very few suitable candidates from previously disadvantaged groups. Mr. Boshoff requested that members suggest suitable candidates with the potential of becoming dental technicians.

The question was also raised whether Adv. Lekitima or his staff has the right to inspect your books. Yes, he is allowed to but with a suitable advance notice re our financial statements.

21. Date of Next Meeting

The Chairman asked if a similar date next year would suit all. All present agreed that the first weekend in June 2006 would be acceptable. All present agreed that the venue is acceptable for the next AGM.

22. Word of Thanks

The President thanked all the members present for their participation in attending the AGM. The President once again expressed his sincere gratitude to the Executive Committee of DENTASA for all their work and the time they put into it. Mr. Grabowski also thanked Mr. Du Plessis for all his years of serving the Association and expressed the hope that the profession appreciated him as much as DENTASA does. The President lastly thanked all the traders for all the prizes and their support.

23. Closure