



SAIW and SAIW Certification

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I recently had the honour of attending a celebration in Addis Ababa at the Welding Training and Technology Centre (WTTC), which is now an IIW Approved Training Body (ATB) for Ethiopia. This is a great achievement for all those involved and we look forward to when the WTTC replaces the SAIW as the IIW's Authorised Nominated Body (ANB) for Ethiopia.

Developing National Welding Capabilities on our continent is vital to industrial development because welding is an enabling technology. It allows manufacturing, mining and construction to take place, which creates economic growth along with quality jobs that are in-demand and well-paid.

I think we can all agree that welding is a craft that combines skill, art and science. To master welding requires dedication, patience and determination. Most of the International Welders that I talk to are proud to be creating things through welding. Whether they are helping to build power stations, fabricating pressure vessels or manufacturing motor vehicles, this sense of pride, purpose and achievement comes through.

Here in South Africa, I am very pleased with our new approach to scheduling SAIW training courses. We have now streamlined the number of scheduled courses we offer so as to ensure that we never have to cancel a course again. If it is scheduled, it will run. And for courses in areas such as Cape Town, Durban or Secunda where we have not yet scheduled a particular course, we are inviting people to contact us and we will add their names onto a list for the next-available course in their region, which will be scheduled at a convenient time as soon as 5 to 10 candidates have signed up.

An exciting training success for us this year was the customised courses we developed for quality Inspection, welding and NDT personnel at the new-generation Ford Ranger plant in Silverton. We developed a custom NDT course that included ultrasonic testing for the spot welds along with visual testing for GMAW welds on the frames. We also trained inspectors on how to do macros from the frame plant and, for the stamping plant, we trained tool and die makers in weld inspection for repairs.

We are thrilled to be involved in South Africa's automotive industry and the success of this project bodes well for our ability to help other OEMs who wish to raise quality standards to meet international norms, with niche welding or inspection needs.

Turning attention to next year, we are looking forward to the inaugural TWF Congress in Egypt, which is taking place in March 2023. This will be the first time that all of Africa's welding network gets together for an annual congress and seminar. We at SAIW are thinking of presenting a technical paper, possibly on 3CR12 stainless steel, which we feel was born in Africa and is particularly suited for use in Africa, given its competitive price, excellent corrosion resistance, good weldability and its low surface friction and associated wear properties.

Here in South Africa, we are also planning to host a one-day welding seminar in September or October next year, which will be followed by our Annual Awards Dinner. I've spoken to some of our welding suppliers and they are quite keen to bring their technical specialists out from Europe to introduce and demonstrate their latest technologies. We also hope to give our local universities the opportunity to present their current research work.

Details to follow in the New Year. Until then, I hope you all have a happy and safe Christmas break.

John Tarboton