

SAEF Treasurer – Annual Report for the 2019 Year

Sept 2020

Our 2019 financial year seems like a long time ago – quite difficult to report on after so much time has passed. In any event, the financials were completed and disseminated, questions were submitted and answered – a combined effort by the office, the auditors and myself – corrections made where required, presumably to the satisfaction of all concerned. It is important to note that we have achieved financial stability and our intention is to maintain this! It is our fiduciary duty at the very least. It seems rather strange dealing with the “official” acceptance of these financials so late in the year and it also results in some changes in relation to the approach taken regarding the 2021 budget which is dealt with later in this report.

As per the 2020 budget presented and voted for in 2019, surpluses were allocated to some fairly important projects as a re-investment into the sport, but, as is fairly obvious, 2020 came undone at the seams! The frustration endured by our equestrian community through this period due to the voracity of the lock-down regulations was not lost on any of us and, for this reason, we are duty-bound to find other avenues as far as application of these funds, the most obvious being back into the pockets of our loyal members. The devastation around us, while not war-like, certainly has had a traumatic economic effect which extends into every aspect of our daily lives. With equestrian activity having resumed in various formats - ranging from just being permitted to exercise to eventually re-opening events - albeit on a surrealistic highly controlled basis, the adaptability and resolute nature of our community is both impressive and appreciated. In this regard, even though activity levels were low, the SAEF team was fully available and functional throughout.

While it would be fantastic to have a Federation that remains functional with minimal fees, it must be borne in mind that, as has been demonstrated in the past, having inadequate funding of our organization is not a sensible approach. If we are to enjoy the expected level of professionalism from an experienced team employed by the SAEF, we have to cover the requisite expenses by way of annual membership fees. We have explored various suggested options such as activity-driven levies (a pay-to-play principle), collection of funds on behalf of SAEF by Constituent member bodies, etc., but have, as things currently stand, concluded that, until we have a proven single point of payment system linked to the databases that are already in place in the bodies that make up the whole, we will have to follow our constitutional requirement of members registering with and paying the SAEF as their primary entry point which, by way of cooperative compliance on the part of DA's and Clubs, will be their pre-

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Vice President: Hannes van Aswegen
Secretary General: Wessel Strauss
Treasurer: Neil Smith
Athletes' Rep: Vacant
Associates Rep: Sandra Copeland

Legal: Adv Johann Raubenheimer
Discipline Associations Rep: Robert Lord
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requisite for their members to be in good standing. The sharing of information on an open basis between the SAEF and DA's is essential for the successful implementation of our current system and can form the basis for the design and creation of a composite equestrian database system for the future.

There is certainly a case for differentiation of member types in the SAEF and, with this in mind, we have designed the 2021 budget to provide a mechanism to assist the DA's to encourage full compliance on the part of all athletes and officials active in equestrian sport. Even though the affordability of equestrian sport is not brought to the brink by the level at which the SAEF, DA and Club membership fees are set, it is also clear that, especially in challenging economic times such as these, any saving is not to be deemed frivolous. In line with this, we should very carefully analyse the role the SAEF should play in funding allocation to specific events and collectively decide whether this role is better fulfilled by the combined efforts of the event organizers and the DA's linked to the events themselves. The real remit should include the likes of Transformation and Development in general areas, for example general Coach Education, inclusion of as broad a spectrum of our population as possible, etc.

With all this to consider, the budget proposed for 2021 takes a portion of the allocation of the 2019 surplus that had been allocated to 2020 and alleviates to some extent the burden on members for the 2021 membership fee. This should be seen as a blip rather than a forward trend as it is essential to remember that the expenses going into subsequent years will trend upwards. If this has the added benefit of achieving membership compliance closer to 100%, we will find that this too will have the future effect of reducing membership fees due to a higher total number of members providing for the strictly controlled expense regimens.

I wish to convey my thanks to the Office Team, our Bookkeeper and Auditors for their input, diligence, and support through a very challenging period for us all. They have kept abreast of all the extraneous requirements and overcome obstacles thrown from all sides with a business-like calm approach. Their input in putting together a creative budget is also greatly appreciated.

Looking forward to a better version of 2020.1 - better known as 2021.

Neil Smith

Dept of Extortion

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