



ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

DATE	23 October 2023	TME	17:00 – 18:00	VENUE	Via Jitsi Meet
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ATTENDANCE

Council	Role
Dr Daniel Cunnama	President (Chair)
Chris Stewart	Vice President
Derek Duckitt	Vice President, Chair – Hermanus Centre, Cosmology Director
Dr Ian Glass	Council Member
Andre Bruton	Membership Secretary
Lerika Cross	Secretary
Alison Coulter	Proxy for Johannesburg Centre
Case Rijdsdijk	Council Member, Chair – Garden Route Centre
Dr Christian Hettlage	Chair – Cape Centre, Web Master

Appointees

Auke Slotegraaf	SGAS Editor
Dave Blane	Double & Variable Star & Photometry & Spectroscopy Director (Acting)
Dr Pierre de Villiers	Outreach Director
Jacques van Delft	Solar Director
Tim Cooper	Comet, Asteroid, Meteor (CAM) Director

Apologies (a) and Absentees

Adv AJ Nel (a)	Treasurer
Dr Claire Flanagan	Convenor of Scholarships
John Gill	Web Manager
Chris de Coning (a)	ASSA Archiving, Historical Director
Martin Heigan	Imaging Director, Communications Coordinator
Carmel Ives (a)	Chair - Johannesburg Centre
Debbie Abel	Chair – Durban Centre
Johan Smit	Chair - Pretoria Centre
Prof Matie Hoffman	Chair - Bloemfontein Centre

Jitsi meeting link: <https://meet.jit.si/ASSAMeet>

Recording: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1G5-h-OHq0b6RYp0ahNxnwVFqVXp-g-HG/view?usp=drive_link

	Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
1	Welcome Apologies	Daniel Cunnama opened the 1 st ASSA Council meeting for 2023/24, welcoming Council members. Apologies received before & after meeting are noted in Attendance list. It was asked that <u>Centre Chairs</u> who cannot attend a meeting, kindly nominate a proxy. Thank you Alison for attending on behalf of Johannesburg Centre.
2	Previous Minutes & Matters arising	Minutes of Council meeting on 3 July '23 were accepted (attached). (Proposed by Chris Stewart, Seconded by Derek Duckitt) Note: Actions arising from previous minutes are in italics. Current actions are underlined.
3	ASSA Comms	3. Communication 3.1 Communications document (<i>Permanent item</i>) Latest draft as of 4 Nov '23 (attached to minutes), It includes ASSA Cloud Archive (slide 28) and PRH process for on-selling Sky Guide booklets (slide 29). Send queries, updates to Lerika (<u>Council</u>) 3.2 Improve Communication Channels Council considered the items detailed in the agenda taken from the meeting held 28 Aug '23 attended by Daniel, Chris S, Derek, Lerika. Daniel explained that the meeting focused on options for recruiting new members and growing

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	<p>ASSA. Summary of decisions reached and actions arising:</p> <p>3.2.1 Sending email to all Members Daniel noted he would like a coherent structure to enable high-level communication to all ASSA members. This to be achieved by setting up and maintaining a master membership list of Country members and Centre members. Recipients of emails will be able to unsubscribe if they choose. It was confirmed that the intent is not to usurp Centres' communication with its members but rather facilitate engagement across all ASSA Members. Actions arising:</p> <p><u>Centres</u> to maintain their member list on the ASSA Cloud space as allocated by Chris de C. Centres to please send their current list to Lerika if their list is not yet in the Cloud space. Centres are still encouraged to forward information received from ASSAVIP to their members.</p> <p><u>ASSA Secretary</u> to maintain a central, consolidated list of all ASSA members, who have not opt-out, on ASSA Cloud space allocated for Council data. The central list to be refreshed from time to time.</p> <p>All Country and Centre Membership Applications forms / screens to have a standard disclaimer. <u>AJ Nel</u> has offered to provide wording for consideration.</p> <p>3.2.2 Whatsapp groups Whatsapp groups, as and when they are created by willing admins, to be listed on the website, and notified to all Members who can decide if they wish to opt-in. It was decided to focus on current groups and obtain information for sharing with members and on the website such as what scope the group covers, rules, how to join. <u>Group Admins</u> to provide this information to <u>Lerika</u> to share with Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Chris S runs a group for ATMers attending the Johannesburg ATM Class, thus not open to all; · <u>Jacques van Delft</u> runs a group for Solar observing; · Cape Centre has an Imaging group. <u>Christian</u> offered to ask if the group can be opened up. · Martin to be asked if he would be willing to start a Whatsapp group for Imaging (Lerika) <p>3.2.3 Pamphlet/Flyer The content on the proposed Flyer to be finalised (<u>Daniel, Chris S, Lerika</u>)</p> <p><u>Centres</u> to send their method for onboarding new members to Lerika, e.g. Application Form, online link to a website, email. This info to be considered to create an easy method for visitors to the ASSA website to join as a Centre or as a Country member (refer to notes under Website Review).</p> <p>How the Flyer could be used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Downloadable from the website to print in preferred format (A4, back-to-back A5) for handouts at Centre events, "Open Nights at the SAAO", the IAU GA, etc. · Placed in a suitable place on the website to enable a simple way to join ASSA, either as a Country Member or a Centre member or explore other areas of interest available on the site. Hyperlinks could route clicks to the destination of choice, e.g., Centres' preferred method of engaging with new member applications, Big 5 of the African Sky, Telescope Making, Whatsapp groups, etc. <p>3.3 Website review Further to the discussion on providing a simple interface to make it easy for people to join ASSA via the website, and Tim's recommendation to refresh the ASSA website as some pages are outdated and thus reflects poorly on ASSA, it was agreed:</p> <p><u>Daniel</u> will obtain a quote for a web designer assistance.</p> <p>The quote will be considered by the <u>FSC</u>, and a <u>sub-committee</u> led by Auke and include Daniel, Chris S, Chris de C, John Gill. The group will decide the way forward.</p> <p>3.4 2018 ASSA Symposium Presentation</p>

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	<p>(4 Oct '22) 26 videos recorded at 2018 ASSA Symposium were required to be edited into YouTube and placed on ASSA YouTube Channel. Alison reported she completed the task and will shortly send videos to Auke. She received many “thank you so much”!</p> <p>3.5 ASSA Cloud repository (sub to be renewed every June) (3 July) Chris de C asks “all <u>Centre Chairs and Section Directors</u> to activate their access to the cloud space and to please upload current and historical documents to their cloud space” <u>Centres</u> to inform Chris de C of their progress and if there are any queries.</p> <p>3.6 Mutual beneficial relationships</p> <p>3.6.1 External Entities: on-selling SGAS booklets <u>Council</u> was asked to note the PRH on-selling process is included in the Comms document, page 28. Item now closed.</p> <p>3.6.2 ASSA free Country Membership Scholarship Committee (3 July) Claire approached Sivuyile Manxoyi and Dr Vanessa McBride; Sivuyile accepted invite but still has to send his details to Claire. Such members are to be designated “G”, for Gratis Awaiting Sivuyile’s details. (<u>Claire</u>)</p> <p>Editorial Committee Committee comprises Case and Ian – who are ASSA Hon Members – Dr Vanessa McBride, who Claire already contacted - and Willie Koorts. (3 July) Daniel offered to approach Willie given required input. Council noted that Willie was delighted to accept the offer from Daniel. As he already paid fees for this year as Country Member, the FSC agreed to refund Willie, and AJ did. Andre updated Willie’s detail on the Membership database to “G” for Gratis. The item is now closed.</p> <p>CTFS – free membership Council agreed to offer Rudolf Strydom Gratis Country Membership. Rudolf is the main contact at ASSA’s accounting company, CTFS, and has been dealing with ASSA financials since 2014. <u>Daniel</u> to inform Rudolf given the required input. (<u>Lerika</u>)</p> <p>3.6.3 Engaging with Night sky/ stargazing tours service providers (3 Jul) Proposal agreed for adverts in the 2024 Sky Guide: New advertisers are included in 2024 version. Item is now closed.</p> <p>3.7 Dark Sky</p> <p>3.7.1 Astro Tourism (4 Oct) DSI Astro Tourism Strategy Plan: final plan to be presented following which funding will be known. Funding is likely to be dependent on ASSA being registered as a PBO. (3 July) No funding yet. Awaiting an official call . Daniel informed the process is slowly progressing.</p> <p>3.7.2 Light pollution measuring (7 Feb) <u>Wim</u> Filmalter’s application to IDA Light Monitor Grant Program was successful. (8 May) Wim awaits feedback from Cape Nature/Anysberg when he could use it. Wim informed he doesn’t know when he will get access to Anysberg as recent floodings damaged roads all over the Klein Karoo and Anysberg is extremely vulnerable.</p> <p>3.8 ASSA Special Project – Global Meteor Network Project (7 Feb) Tim informed funding approval has been received. (8 May) 4 cameras have been built with Raspberry Pi, awaiting shipment to RSA (3 Jul) Tim reported 4 cameras where shipped. Tim received the 4 cameras, and these are ready to go to 4 schools. He thanked Pierre for championing and engaging a primary and secondary school in the Western Cape. Tim has identified 2 schools close to him.</p>

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		<p>Tim informed that the website (https://globalmeteornetwork.org/outreach/) of the Global Meteor Network Outreach Project is the main information resource, e.g., explains aims of the project, lists participants, partners, schools. As one of the partners, it displays the ASSA logo with link to ASSA website which will in due course be linked to a Project Page on the ASSA site. A Basic Astronomy online course will be downloadable from GMN website and Tim is currently developing the module on Meteor Astronomy. He will soon arrange a kick-off meeting with all those involved and interested.</p> <p>3.9 IAU General Assembly: 6 – 15 August 2024 Communication will soon be sent for volunteers across country. Suggestions offered during the meeting: possible ‘goody’ bag with 2024 Sky Guide and ASSA Flyer, an ASSA stand.</p>
4	Publications	<p>4. ASSA Publications</p> <p>4.1. SGAS</p> <p>4.1.1 SGAS 2024: Availability and Distribution Auke announced he has just received the 2024 Sky Guide booklet. The official book launch will be held at Exclusive Books in Cape Town area, mid-November when Ian will present the booklet and show-off how it can be used.</p> <p><u>Centres and Andre</u> to inform AJ of the number of booklets AJ should order.</p> <p>4.1.2 Sky Guide Digital version Enquiry was sent to Tenita Kidelo at PRH regarding options for the digital version and reply is awaited to share with Council. (<u>Lerika</u>)</p> <p>4.2 MNASSA Case confirmed the next edition will be in December and reminded all to submit content.</p> <p>4.3 Southern Skies As Angus notified he would like to step down as Observing Director, this item is closed for now.</p> <p>4.4 CAM Notes It was agreed this item may be removed from the agenda. Tim’s process for CAM Notes is known by all: it is published every quarter and the 1st edition for 2024 will be out in December.</p>
5	Scholarships	<p>5. Scholarships</p> <p>5.1 2024 Bursaries <i>(8 May) AJ indicated that it will be a min of R25 000 ea.</i> 1 Feb is Scholarship application dead line and amount is needed for advertising (<u>AJ and FSC</u>)</p> <p>5.2 Communication with Bursars Previous Bursars: <i>(3 Jul) Council agreed previous Bursars who are still to graduate could also be offered the same as current bursars, ie category “B” and thus encourage them to stay in touch and contribute. Daniel offered to draft a note to previous bursars, encouraging them to join as Country or Centre members, offering them the opportunity to contribute to the ASSA (such as content for publication, be it of academic or personal nature) and to stay in touch, if they wish. Email list of previous Bursars required if available (<u>Claire</u>)</i></p> <p>5.3 Increasing contact with Students Daniel proposed that ASSA first complete actions to improve Membership and website before he undertakes engaging students as discussed in the meeting of 3 July.</p>
6	Membership	<p>6. Membership</p> <p>6.1 Country and Honorary Membership <i>(13 Honorary Membership (max 15))</i> Country Membership on 24 October is 86 (excl Hon Members) comprising:</p>

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		Normal 69, Associate 1, Bursar 2, Gratis 1 Not renewed from last year: 20
7	Governance	<p>7. Governance</p> <p>7.1 Register ASSA for tax under a VDP (Voluntary Disclosure Program) Application (7 Jul) CTFS to be asked on process PBO registration and to provide a quotation (7 Feb) CTFS kindly offered to not charge ASSA unless cost involved becomes substantial. (8 May) The 3 willing unconnected persons (Daniel, Chris S, Pierre with Pierre the SARS rep.) have completed forms required by CTFS. <u>CTFS</u> will now start the application process. <u>CTFS</u> application still in progress.</p> <p>7.2 Call for new Directors A call for Directors for each, or combination, of these sections: Observing, Shallow Sky, Deep Sky, Photometry & Spectroscopy will be considered by <u>Daniel</u> in his first communication to all Members.</p> <p>7.3 Resurrect Natal Midlands Centre Volunteer required to assess feasibility. Retain on agenda until after the first ASSA membership email from <u>Daniel</u>.</p> <p>7.4 Checklist review Next up: 1 Feb Scholarship deadline</p>
8	Financial	<p>8. Financial Matters</p> <p>8.1 2023/4 Financial Budget Items which could be motivated for consideration by the FSC once motivated/submitted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Bursar amount for 2024 (<u>AJ</u>) · Website modernisation (<u>Daniel</u>) · Cost associated with the Global Meteor Network Outreach Project (<u>Tim</u>) · Budget for the GA (<u>Daniel</u>) <p>8.2 Financials 2022 23 year Financials for sign off by President and Treasurer awaited (<u>AJ</u>)</p>
9	General	<p>9. General items No general item raised.</p>
10	Closure	<p>Daniel thanked attendees for their contribution and closed the meeting 18:00.</p> <p>Council agreed to progress actions arising before year-end and depending on progress will schedule the next Council meetings.</p> <p>Centre monthly meetings: Hermanus Centre: 3rd Monday. Cape Centre and Jhb Centres: 2nd Wednesday. Durban Centre: 2nd Wednesday. Pretoria Centre: 4th Wednesday.</p>

Minutes Approved: _____ Date: _____

Attachments in support of minutes:

In support of Item 2: ASSA Minutes 230703 v3
 In support of Item 3.1: ASSA Communication 231104
 In support of Item 3.2.3 : ASSA AD Flyer 7

In support of item 7.1:
APPROVAL OF PBO

Section 30 of the Income Tax Act No. 58 of 1962 which gives the Commissioner the right to approve a public benefit organisation for the purposes of the Act provides that the Commissioner will approve such an organisation if

- it complies with such conditions as the Minister may prescribe
- it has submitted to the Commissioner a copy of its constitution, will or other written instrument under which it has been established in terms of which it is:

- required to have at least *three unconnected persons to accept fiduciary responsibility*
 - prohibited from directly or indirectly distributing any funds to any person (otherwise than in the course of any public benefit activity) and is required to utilise its funds solely for the objects for which it has been established
 - required on dissolution to transfer its assets to a section 30(3)(b)(iii) organisation (see below). In the case of a branch or agency of an association incorporated and tax exempt in another country, it can also distribute the assets of the organisation to any other person provided that those assets were acquired from a source outside the Republic
 - is prohibited from receiving any donation which is revocable at the instance of the donor
 - required to submit to the Commissioner any amendments to its constitution
 - the Commissioner is satisfied that it is not knowingly party to a tax-avoidance scheme
 - it has not paid remuneration to any employee, office bearer, or member which is excessive
 - it complies with reporting requirements determined by the Commissioner
- Note that a PBO no longer has to be registered in terms of the Non-Profit Organisations Act (Act 71 of 1997) to qualify for tax exemption, but, the Director of Non-Profit Organisations as defined in that Act can request the Commissioner to withdraw the approval of any PBO if it has been convicted of any offence under the Act.

Checklist (covered under Governance item 7)

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| 1 Feb | Scholarship application dead line |
| 31 Mar | Closing date for nominations for: Honorary Members and Awards |
| 15 April | Deadline for Secretary to send to President and Vice President list of nominations |
| 1 June | Call for nominations for Council; Annual review of website |
| 1 June | New Country Membership fees to be agreed by Council |
| 30 Jun | Closing date for nominations for Council, receipt of Section reports, receipt of report from Scholarships Convenor, submission of items for placing on the Agenda of the AGM, Financial year end; Council to review appointment and roles of all Council Appointees including the Section Directors; |
| 1 Jul | Submission of annual updated ASSA membership form, Country Members: Subs renewal |
| 31 Jul | Closing date for ballot for Council nominations: Centre AGMs to be concluded before AGM |
| AGM | 1 st Wed Aug. 21 business days before 1 st Wed in Aug: Deadline for members to receive notice |
| 1 Oct | Appointment/Negotiations with SGAS Editor for next edition. Open negotiations with Struik
Annual refresh of the Communications document after the AGM |

END