

# High praise for SAMCRA standard setting

By Alan Browde

The Southern African Metal Cladding and Roofing Association (SAMCRA) has received high praise for the way it is helping to set industry standards in the metal cladding and roofing industry in the SADC region. This is according to Sally Stromnes, Marketing Planner and Co-ordinator for the Safal Group in Africa.

“SAMCRA - and specifically its director Dennis White - is closely involved in the writing of improved building standards and providing significant guidance on best practise installation methodologies to the metal roofing and cladding industry throughout the region,” Stromnes says. “In order to have a world-class metal cladding and roofing industry it is essential that construction standards and materials are not only appropriate to Southern African conditions, but that they are also commonly understood and adhered to. In this regard Dennis, with his decades of experience in the field, is doing a sterling job to raise awareness and knowledge levels in the industry.”

She adds that correct and appropriate specifications are at the foundation of a successful installation. “Plain ignorance or a lack of compliance can lead to installation failures which have a hugely negative impact on the reputation of the roofing industry throughout the region. Although we still have a long way to go, there is no doubt that Dennis and his SAMCRA team are making a palpable difference to the situation,” Stromnes says.

Stromnes emphasises that the two most critical areas where standards have to be effective, is in the installation detailing, and in tight materials specification.

“Installation detailing and fastidious attention to on-site standards are areas where measures to save time or money will backfire very quickly. Flashings that restrict or can't cope with roof drainage, compromises on material thickness, swarf and debris collection on the roof during installation, and poor sheet alignment

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are just some examples of problems that will lead to the need for expensive and unnecessary remedial work within a short space of time.

“Fasteners are another small but critical component that is vastly under-rated. It is incredibly short sighted economy to save a few cents on a fastener if it cannot offer a life span at least equal to that of the sheeting. Many contractors try to save money on the fastener as it is seemingly such a small part of the total cost of the roof but, in fact, it is the fastener, not the sheeting, that is the most frequent cause of roofing failure” Stromnes says.

Fasteners are also critical to obtaining a fire rating on cladding, and South African standards require that side-laps are stitched together to protect buckling between purlins in the unfortunate event of fire. This needs to be written into specifications by the professionals, and needs to be adhered to by the installer.

“Unfortunately, ‘best practice’ is often not common practice, because profit gets in the way. In the long term, this undermines the perceptions created for the entire industry. We must find ways to promote the

adoption of best practice, to develop a code for the industry as a whole, and to ensure that it is enforced, to the benefit of those who work with metal cladding systems, and those who invest in them.

“SAMCRA is playing a huge part in making building standards mandatory or, at the very least, in ensuring that they are a series of very strong recommendations which investors have a right to insist upon” Stromnes says.

Stromnes continued by saying that this applies equally to any market, and particularly emerging African markets. The Safal Group as a whole, with operations in 12 countries in Southern and Eastern Africa, is committed to being part of the upliftment of standards in all its markets.

“SAMCRA regularly conduct training session for our technical, sales and marketing personnel in order to improve their technical knowledge and their familiarity with building standards. From Safal Group’s point of view, our expertise is critical to enable us to guide our clients in the appropriate and correct specification, installation and maintenance of our products, giving them the investment value they have a right to expect and demand.”

Stromnes maintains that, given the increasing number of projects being undertaken by South African professionals, contractors and roofing installers in African countries, the quality of locally supplied products and the availability of technical

support services is a critical differentiator for the Safal Group. “Every one of our Group Operations is able to support our clients with technical advice and guidance, from design and specification stages through to installation and sign off,” she says.

Stromnes has rolled out SAMCRA training for technical and sales staff in Safal Group operations in SADC (South Africa, Namibia and Botswana) as well as Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Ethiopia. “Dennis White has the professional knowledge and field experience to provide indispensable insights on installation best practice in the field and on the engineering of metal roof and side cladding systems for specific conditions in Eastern and Southern Africa,” she says.

“The Safal Group will continue to partner with SAMCRA in the training of its staff and of practitioners in the Metal Roofing and Cladding industry in all its operating countries. The raising of standards will improve value for all players in the value chain and will improve the reputation of steel roofing and cladding as a material of choice for durability and performance,” she concludes.

The Safal Group is the largest metal sheeting company in Africa and has been a key player in the industry for over 50 years. It is able to provide the key components of a complete metal roofing system, all from one trusted source.

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## CALENDAR OF Courses and Events

### SEPTEMBER

- 15 Steel Awards (JHB, DBN, CT)
- 16 Steel Day
- 26 September – 1 October  
SASFA Builders Course (CT)

### OCTOBER

- 6 Member Breakfast (JHB)

### NOVEMBER

- 3 SAISC AGM (JHB)
- 7 POLASA AGM (JHB)

### ENQUIRIES:

Events: [marle@saisc.co.za](mailto:marle@saisc.co.za)  
 Courses: [tiana@saisc.co.za](mailto:tiana@saisc.co.za)  
 SASFA: [john.barnard@saol.com](mailto:john.barnard@saol.com)  
 POLASA: [kobus@saisc.co.za](mailto:kobus@saisc.co.za)  
 SAMCRA: [dennis@saisc.co.za](mailto:dennis@saisc.co.za)