**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF**

**THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN MARKETING RESEARCH ASSOCIATION**

**Held on 31 August 2020 at 15h00 Online**

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

The SAMRA Chairman welcomed those present, and recorded the apologies and proxies as follows:

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| **Name** | **Surname** | **Membership** | **Attendance** |
| Shirley | Benney | Honorary | Online |
| Dr Billy | Coop | Independent  | Online |
| Frances | Macmahon | Independent  | Online |
| Monica | Waisman | Independent  | Online |
| Promise | Gumbo | Independent  | Online |
| Rufus | Adebayo | Independent  | Online |
| Andries | Noeth | Organisation | Online |
| Annemarie | de Raay | Organisation | Online |
| Duncan | Brett | Organisation | Online |
| Edzani | Dongola | Organisation | Online |
| Elsa  | Thirion-Venter | Organisation | Online |
| Marylou | Kneale | Organisation | Online |
| Nadia | van Rensburg | Organisation | Online |
| Nanzala | Mwaura | Organisation | Online |
| Nick | Coates | Organisation | Online |
| Schalk | van Vuuren | Organisation | Online |
| Sheila | Akinnusi | Organisation | Online |
| Sipho | Mkhonza | Organisation | Online |
| Tracy | Gurnell | Organisation | Online |
| Vivienne | Steenkamp | Organisation | Online |
| Arnold | Samuels | SAMRA Board Member | Online |
| Jill | Solomon | SAMRA Board Member | Online |
| Kanyisa  | Ngqukuvana | SAMRA Board Member | Online |
| Lebo  | Motshegoa | SAMRA Board Member | Online |
| Mark | Drummond | SAMRA Board Member | Online |
| Paul  | Kibuuka | SAMRA Board Member | Online |
| Shaun | Naidoo | SAMRA Board Member | Online |
| Yolanda | Jordaan | SAMRA Board Member | Online |
| Catherine  | Chiweshe | SAMRA Office | Online |

The SAMRA members present constituted a quorum and the meeting commenced. The SAMRA Chairman, Shaun Naidoo, welcomed those present.

The agenda was confirmed without additions or changes.

1. **Minutes of the SAMRA Annual General Meeting held on 30 August 2019**

**Resolution 1** The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 30 August 2019 were approved

Approved: Jill Solomon

Seconded: Schalk Van Vuuren

1. **SAMRA Chairman’s Report**

**SAMRA Chairman’s report presented to the Annual General Meeting on 31 August 2020 - by Shaun Naidoo**

Thank you for joining us at the annual SAMRA AGM. A first of its kind, the first ONLINE SAMRA AGM where all attendees are logged onto an online ZOOM session. Yes, these are interesting times.

COVID-19 has turned the global world upside down – at all levels, society, economic, national psyche, etc, and its impact will be felt long after the vaccine is discovered. As businesses fight for survival, they have had to revise their projected

 Shaun Naidoo performance; some have had to relook their business models in order to remain

 SAMRA Chairman competitive. It is “business unusual”.

It is time to challenge previously held beliefs and dogma TOWARDS unchartered waters and an uncertain future. The more important issue surrounds survey responses and if they will be different because of the current situation – will respondents have different attitudes and stated behaviors? Will the data be different?

However, the current situation is impacting all other industries, particularly service-based industries. People are likely to eat out less, which can impact incidence rates. With a near inability for consumers to eat out, shop as normal, or do most entertainment-related activities, obviously attitudes and behaviors are going to change and it should be acknowledged and flagged in the data. This does not mean that the research should not occur.

Additionally, there could be increased anxiety (for both health and financial reasons, and perhaps even safety reasons), which could come across in any survey asking for opinions on nearly any topic. Many brands and researchers should use this as an opportunity to learn more about situations like this and the impact on survey research on a brand’s KPI.

An interesting question to add at the end of surveys could ask about awareness/concern of COVID-19 and then segment the respondents. As clients start to question the data, it will be better to get ahead of any possible data differences.

Our economy is currently undergoing a shift as more people work from home and adjust their behaviors, which may become long-term habits.  Our industry is uniquely positioned to measure and leverage this.  We hope this is only a short-term impact, but we will continue to monitor the situation from a best practices standpoint.

Like every business sector in the world, the data, research and insights sector is being impacted severely by the necessary and essential government measures to manage and slow the spread of the Coronavirus to levels that can be managed by the world’s health systems.

As a sector that depends on the voluntary participation of individuals, the social distancing measures that are being rolled out by an increasing number of countries have a serious impact on the advisability of conducting types of research that require people to be in close physical proximity with each other.

Essential research should be encouraged to continue, and where possible shifting to digital methodologies should be employed.

There are 3 key rules that should be followed:
1. Is the research essential?
2. Can it be done online?
3. If it is essential and it can’t be done digitally, follow all local authority guidance in conjunction

 with SAMRA and ESOMAR guidelines.

**Introduction of the SAMRA board**.
Our Board of Director positions are currently filled by 4 individuals from the market research industry, who voluntarily render their time and knowledge without compensation.

Shaun Naidoo, Medium Business representative, from African Response
Kanyisa Ngqukuvana, Large Research User representative, from Standard Bank
Yolanda Jordaan, Academia, from the University of Pretoria

Prof Paul Kibuuka, Large Research Supplier representative, from Standard Bank

**Membership**
Turning to membership, at the end of February **2020**, SAMRA had 96 Organisation Members that
supply or use research.

There were also more than **1200** Associate Members that work for our Organisation Members, and **117** Independent Members who work with research in various contexts. The SAMRA members reside in **7** African countries, namely, South Africa, Kenya, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Namibia and Swaziland. Other countries where our members reside include Canada, Portugal, Switzerland, Austria and United Kingdom. At the end of the reporting period from March 2019 to February 2020 there were **28** Organisation Membership applications and **39** Independent Membership applications.

Membership has a continued growth trajectory, albeit that it slowed down significantly. It is important to note the following:
▪ No withdrawals were done during this period
▪ **0** Independent Membership and **0** Organisation Membership resignations were received.
▪**0** Independent Member transferred to Organisation Membership and **0** Organisation Membership
was transferred to Independent Membership.
▪New applications were approved for **14** Independent Memberships and **17** Organisation
Memberships

In terms of communications, forty-three (43) newsletters and updates were sent to members via the
SAMRA website. – this is a total of anything that is posted on to the website including Services Seta listings and newsletters,
Two requests for proposals were also sent to members. 0 industry job
advertisement was placed in the Career section of the SAMRA website in the last year

▪ **0** complaints were received against non-members, who have been informed of and engaged
regarding their unethical conduct (compared to 2 last year)
▪ No complaints were resolved against members without any disciplinary process
▪ no adjudication by the Ethics Committee done during the period
▪ 0 complaints were referred to the Direct Marketing Association of South Africa

In conclusion, the seminal question is: How can SAMRA enable **its membership and the research industry** to create an advantage for **SAMRA Members and the South African Research industry** in the current SA economy as well as in the post Covid-19 world.

**The Chairman handed the floor to Prof Paul Kibuuka, the SAMRA Treasurer, to present the annual financial statements.**

1. **SAMRA Treasurer’s Report and Annual Financial Statement as at 28 February 2020**

Prof Paul Kibuuka, the SAMRA Treasurer, presented the annual financial statements:

During the 2018/2019 reporting period DECO Accounting Services acted as the auditor, and Hendrik Venter was the bookkeeper. Both parties also acted in these capacities in the previous term. The reporting period was 1 March 2019 to 29 February 2020.

For the fiscal year under review, revenue decreased to R1,564,064 (-9% year-on-year), likewise operating costs declined to R962,405 (40%) resulting in a net profit of R206,270 for the year

 Paul Kibuuka

 SAMRA Treasure

Revenues resulted from the following areas:

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|  | **2017/2018** | **2018/2019** | **2019/2020** | **Change**  |
| **Membership**  | R1 069 655  | R974 477  | R988 973  | 2%  |
| **Annual Conference**  | R715 500  | R559 020  | R465 778  | -17%  |
| **Publications**  | R78 139  | R62 200  | R3 500  | -94%  |
| **Professional Recognition**  | R59 996  | R49 770  | R96 213 | 93%  |
| **Professional Development Event/s**  | R41 400  | R32 960  | R0 | -100% |
| **Advertising through SAMRA**  | R3 200  | R9 800  | R9 600  | -2%  |
| **Database Subscription**  | R0  | R1 500  | R0  | -100% |
| **Code of Conduct Introduction**  | R0  | R24 000  | R0  | -100% |
| **TOTAL**  | R1 967 890  | R1 713 727  | R1 564 064  | -9%  |

The major contributors to the decline in revenue were the annual conference and publications. New or returning sources of revenue, such as the code of conduct introduction and professional recognition, did not make up for this deficit.

The cost of sale (COS) associated with the revenue generated decreased by 19% to R420,536. The largest part of this cost can be attributed to the annual conference expenses, which at R318,791 declined by 25% compared to costs for the conference in the previous period. The resultant gross profit ends 5% lower than for 2018/2019.

Operating expenses shrunk by 40% as a result of conservative spending and active cost management. Specifically, large expense areas were either maintained at the previous year’s level or decreased. The largest expense being salary costs that decreased by -44% and the provision for bad debts by -83%.

Current assets increased from R554,238 in 2018/2019 to R680 550, a 23% increase. At the same time current liabilities decreased from R75,851 to R1,514. Consistent with previous years cash and cash equivalents make up the largest share of assets at R560,169 for this period, while trade and other payables remains the only current liability. The retained earnings increased by 43% to reach R686 999.

The result of the foregoing is a situation where SAMRA made a profit after incurring a deficit for three fiscal years in a row. Nevertheless, revenue has not grown over the last three years, though expenses have started to decline resulting in a profitable period. The new strategic plan that includes a focus on lowering employee costs by having no permanent senior management at SAMRA is an attempt to turn this situation around. This, coupled with a strong revenue focus, remain the key financial objectives of the organisation.

**Resolution 2** The Annual Financial Statements as at 28 February 2020 were adopted.

Proposed: Prof Paul Kibuuka

Approved - No objections

1. **Election and Appointment of the SAMRA Auditors**

**Resolution 3** Deco Accounting was reappointed as the Auditors for the forthcoming year.

*Approved – No objections*

1. **Election and Appointment of the SAMRA Board of Directors**

**Resolution 4** The following Directors resigned,

Representing Small Research Suppliers and Freelancers, **Shaun Naidoo**

Representing Academia, **Prof Yolanda Jordaan**

**Resolution 5** The following Directors remained on the SAMRA Board for 2020/2021:

* Representing Large Research Users: **Kanyisa Ngqukuvana**
* Representing Large Research Suppliers: **Prof Paul Kibuuka**

**Resolution 6** The following Directors were elected to the SAMRA Board for 2020 to 2023:

* Representing Small Research Users: **Lebo Motshegoa**
* Representing Small Research Suppliers and Freelancers: **Arnold Samuels**
* Representing Medium Research Suppliers: **Mark Drummond**

**7. Proposals to the SAMRA Annual General Meeting**

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| **A. Proposed changes to the SAMRA Company Rules: SAMRA Complaints Procedure** (must be  carried by more than 50% of the member votes at the AGM)**COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE:** Three proposals for changes to the Company Rules that must each be carried by more than 50% of the member votes at the AGM**Proposal 1 Appeal Process Cost Recovery (Withdrawn until further notice)****Proposal 2** The complaints procedure should state explicitly that **complainants and respondents treat all information related to the case as confidential**, and they should not be allowed to compromise either party’s anonymity with the Board or any external party, until a case is finalised. * **Resolution 7**

Proposal 2 was approved with majority vote of 85%**Proposal 3** The complaints procedure should state explicitly that **legal remedies against criminal action** take precedent over SAMRA complaints processes. Therefore, where a legal remedy is available and/or being pursued against criminal action, the legal finding must precede and inform the SAMRA process.* **Resolution 8**

Proposal 3 was approved with majority vote of 96%**Proposal 4** Where an Organisation Member is sanctioned, **sanctions apply to all related Associate Memberships** under the Organisation Membership* **Resolution 9**

Proposal 4 was approved with majority vote of 61%**B. Proposed changes to the SAMRA Memorandum of Incorporation: Membership** (must be  carried by more than 75% of the member votes at the AGM)**FOR DISCUSSION****MEMBERSHIP:** Two proposals for changes to the MOI**Proposal 5** A natural person who works for an Organisation Member can choose to have Independent Membership, instead of Associate Membership, but can have only one SAMRA membership, for example, either an Independent Membership or one Associate Membership.**Proposal 6** Where a natural person who works for an Organisation Member chooses to have Independent Membership, instead of Associate Membership, the member’s vote will count as an Independent Member, and not towards the Organisation Member’s vote. |

**7.1 Proposal B. - Proposed changes to the SAMRA Memorandum of Incorporation: Membership**

Proposal 5 and Proposal 6 were presented to the members for discussion, voting will then be conducted at the next AGM.

Prof Yolanda Jordaan provided more information on proposal 5, stating that the proposal gives an employee who works for an organisation, a chance to choose between independent membership and associate membership. Currently the company rules state that an independent member is a person that does not work for an organisation.

**Questions, answers and comments to Proposal B**

* Q: What are the disadvantages of an associate member voting independently from the organisation?

A: If an associate member’s vote does not align with the company’s vote it may affect their relationship negatively as a company would expect all its employees to have one voice or opinion as that of the organisation.

* Q: How do we define independent, depending on the definition, how can an independent member work for an organisation?

A: Independent Membership is for individuals (natural persons) who work in market research,

social research, opinion polling, data analytics and/or research-based consulting as users or

suppliers of market research, social research, opinion polling, data analytics and/or advisory

products and services. Proposal 5 was brought about as a result of associate members seeking

to be disassociated with their organisations in the event of an organisation transgressing or

conducting unethical conduct and being found guilty.

* Q: Is the membership fee for associate members the same as that of independent members?

A: SAMRA has different fees structure for each membership category, associate membership fee, cost to the organisation is R440,00 and an independent member pays R1700,00.

* Q: In the event that an organisation cannot afford to pay membership fees for all its members, can the associate members who want to join SAMRA pay their own membership fees?

A: All organisations are mandated by SAMRA to pay for all their employees’ membership fees.

* Comment: If an employee is part of an organisation, they become part of the rules and procedures of that company, how do they become independent of the organisation they work for. Contractors and part-time workers of an organisation can be permitted to acquire independent membership.

A: There seems to be a contradiction were a person who works for an organisation then applies for independent membership. There should be a clear distinction between the types of employment relationship to correctly apply proposal 5.

* Comment: Proposal 5 solves the predicament associated with proposal 4

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| **Resolution 10*** Proposal 5 should be rephrased to clarify that all permanent employees of an organisation who are in research related roles should be associate members, all part-time and contract workers can choose to have independent membership.
* The revised proposal will be emailed to members who are present in the meeting towards the next AGM, members will vote, and the results will be shared at the next AGM.
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**8. Other SAMRA business**

* Q: When will the SAMRA Annual Conference be hosted?

A: The conference was postponed due to the COVID 19 pandemic, SAMRA is now considering an online conference. Members will be notified of the conference date if the online conference is successful.

* Q: Is SAMRA now working with ESOMAR?

A: Shaun, the current Chairman of SAMRA is also the ESOMAR representative for South Africa,

this relationship is important for information sharing, SAMRA then shares global good practices with the South African research industry.

* Q: Are there any online events or networking sessions to be expected from SAMRA?

A: Yes, SAMRA is looking forward to hosting online webinars in the coming months.

* Q: What is the situation with the new yearbook and journal?

A: The yearbook and journal have gone digital and there should be updated online copies by end of September 2020.

* Q: Is there a possibility that all SAMRA members will have a shared database for do not

contact list?

A: SAMRA will provide feedback on this at a later stage after conducting research to establish the possibility of a centralised do not contact list.

* Q: Is SAMRA still fulfilling all its roles to the research industry? it would be beneficial if SAMRA

constantly reminds members of the benefits of having SAMRA membership.

A: SAMRA will host a webinar to update members on SAMRA’s current position, this will ensure members are up to date with SAMRA activities and its role in the research industry.

* Q: Is SAMRA communicating with members regarding the POPI Act?

A: SAMRA will host a webinar to provide more information on POPI Act and how it affects the research industry. It is also very important to get a specialist or lawyer who can give more advice to the members on POPIA.

**9. Adjournment**

The SAMRA Chairman thanked the members and the SAMRA Board for their support and attending the AGM. The meeting was adjourned at 16h55

Signed:

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**Arnold Samuels Paul Kibuuka**

SAMRA Board Member 2019/2020 SAMRA Treasurer 2019/2020