

## **WEST-RAND ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION**

### **Chairman's report for the year 2019**

**22 November 2019**

#### **1. Introduction**

As we come to the end of the 2019 calendar year the time has come to report back on the activities of the Westrand Attorneys Association (WAA) during the course of 2019.

#### **2. Committee members**

The WAA has a committee currently consisting of the following members who represent the various areas of WAA attorneys namely Roodepoort, Krugersdorp, Randfontein, Westonaria and Carltonville:

The current committee members are the following:

- Roodepoort: Marianne Pretorius, Magdel Vos, Riekie Erasmus and Janus De Jager;
- Krugersdorp: Leon Loock, Lee-Ann du Toit, Hilde Eksteen and Carol van Molendorff;
- Randfontein: Danie de Beer, Jolandie Pieterse.
- Carltonville/Westonaria: Rufus von Abo.

#### **3. Activities of the committee members:**

The committee members attended to the following matters on a regular basis:

- Attendance at the various courts' Criminal Court and Case Flow meetings;
- Interaction with the magistrates and court managers of the various courts in order to arrange meetings with attorneys, to discuss matters of mutual concern and to resolve problems;



- Interaction with the various sheriffs to discuss matters of mutual concern and resolve problems;
- There is also a general invitation to Westrand attorneys to contact the WAA and to report to the committee member of the particular area any problems at a specific court or with a Sheriff.

#### **4. Pro bono office: Roodepoort**

During the course of this year the Roodepoort court allocated an office in the court building for use by the WAA to run a pro bono office, which would double as an office where attorneys are able to make copies. A photocopier machine was made available for this office with the kind assistance of the Johannesburg attorneys Association. However it soon transpired that as an association we did not have sufficient manpower to permanently staff the office. It is with gratitude that I acknowledge the concerted efforts of our Roodepoort committee members, Marianne Pretorius, Magdel Vos and Riekie Erasmus to man the office by making their candidate attorneys available. However, despite their efforts, it was not possible to have somebody in the office at all times during business hours. As an association we do not have the finances to employ somebody on a permanent basis to attend to the office. The end result was that the office was vacated and the photocopier machine made available for use by the JAA.

#### **5. Gauteng Attorneys Association (GAA)**

The WAA is one of the members of the GAA. Lee-Ann du Toit, Hilde Eksteen and I attended the meetings of the GAA on behalf of our association until a new GAA committee was elected during the course of 2019. Currently our committee member Marianne Pretorius represents the interests of our association at the GAA meetings.

#### **6. Finances**

The advent of the Legal Practice Act (LPA) and the Legal Practice Council (LPC) heralded the end of the Gauteng Law Council (GLC) who used to make a contribution towards the WAA of a sum of approximately R10,000.00 per



annum. These contributions have now terminated and the WAA's main source of income is member's contributions. We will have to follow up the LPC to establish whether they will continue making contributions to associations such as the WAA. The WAA bank account is currently in credit in the sum of R 57,000.00.

As an association we are investigating additional ways and means of generating income for the Association, other than by way of members contributions, for example by presenting seminars to local attorneys.

## **7. Reports by committee members**

### 7.1. Running of the Courts

During this year there were no major problems or upheavals experienced at any of the local magistrates courts. There are obviously certain general problems which occur at all courts, for example lost files and waiting for default judgements to be granted. Mr Danie de Beer reported from time to time that all was well in Randfontein court, as did Mr Rufus von Abo in respect of the Westonaria and Carltonville courts. Hilde Eksteen and I can report that all is more or less well in the Krugersdorp Magistrate's Court. However it is to be noted that the long serving civil magistrate in the Krugersdorp Magistrate's Court, Mrs Riette de Beer retired this year. She has been replaced by the very capable Mrs Sure Hawkins.

### 7.2. Master and Deeds Office

Jolandie Pieterse reported that she had not received any complaints from WAA members but experienced certain difficulties at the Deeds and Masters offices as set out in her report which is annexed hereto as Annexure "A".



### 7.3. Roodepoort court

Magdel Vos reported that she is in the process of arranging for a seminar on cost orders with the chief and regional court magistrates at Roodepoort. A date is still to be arranged with the court personnel. She also reported that she was aware of a matter where an advocate made misrepresentations in chambers to the presiding magistrate. When these misrepresentations were reported, the advocate was subjected to a disciplinary hearing but was found not guilty. She reports that the moral of the story is that magistrates must be cautious when addressing legal representatives in chambers. Our Roodepoort committee members also reported from time to time that all was more or less well in the Roodepoort Magistrate's Court.

### 7.4. Children's Court Witness Room

In conjunction with Matla a Bane the WAA is assisting with creation of a suitable environment and atmosphere in the children's witness room at the Roodepoort Magistrate's Court. This initiative is spearheaded by Marianne Pretorius assisted by Hilde Eksteen.

## 8. Candidate attorneys

On 27 March 2019, in order to assist with training and preparation of candidate attorneys to enter into the profession, the WAA through the efforts of Hilde Eksteen and Marianne Pretorius, jointly with the Johannesburg attorneys Association (JAA) arranged for a High Court tour to show candidate attorneys how and where to file documents in the Johannesburg High Court building. The candidate attorneys were also introduced to the Chief Registrar, other relevant registrars and provided with a map indicating all relevant/important offices in the High Court building.



Thereafter on 7 May 2019 the WAA through the efforts of Marianne Pretorius and Hilde Eksteen successfully hosted a court appearance workshop for candidate attorneys at the Roodepoort Magistrate's Court.

Both of the High Court tour and the workshop were much appreciated by the candidate attorneys and their principals, many of whom have requested the WAA to advise when the next tours and workshops will be undertaken.

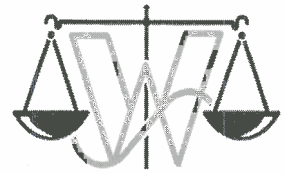
## **9. Workshops**

In addition to the tour and workshop mentioned above, the WAA committee members Hilde Eksteen and Lee-Ann extensively assisted the GAA in hosting a number of workshops and seminars which were open for attendance by all legal practitioners. These workshops entailed a conveyancing workshop by Alan West, a CIPC workshop by Michael Katz and a 2019 Boot Camp for small and medium firms with various speakers. The Boot Camp was hosted jointly by GAA and Lexis Nexis.

These workshops were well received by all attendees and our members are also urged to avail themselves of the opportunity of attending these workshops. The next seminar will once again be a conveyancing seminar by Alan West which will be held on 20 January 2020 in Pretoria and in Johannesburg on 29 January 2020. Our committee members will gladly provide information for members who may be interested.

## **10. Marketing**

As far as marketing is concerned the WAA through the efforts of Hilde Eksteen has opened a WAA Facebook page as well as a bulk email list, both of which run in conjunction with our new email address [westrandattorneys@gmail.com](mailto:westrandattorneys@gmail.com). Having identified the need, the WAA is also in the process of creating a website and obtaining our own domain. Once this is in place it will entail a change of our email address. Members will be updated in respect of developments in this regard.



### **11. Events/socials**

During the course of this year it was envisaged that the WAA will in future become more involved with hosting events such as golf days for attorneys and their clients, business breakfasts and the like. Members will be kept up-to-date with developments in this regard.

### **12. Election of new committee members**

New committee members will be elected at the 2019 WAA annual general meeting. The committee members who served during the course of this year are thanked for their invaluable contributions towards the running of the WAA. All of them voluntarily give up their time, free of charge, to attend to the interests of the WAA and our profession.

### **13. Conclusion**

It has been an honour to serve the profession and the WAA in my capacity as committee member and chairman during 2019. I wish to thank each and every committee member for their contributions during the course of this year and I wish the new **committee** members and all our colleagues all the best for the 2020 year.

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Leon Loock

Chairman: WAA

22 November 2019.