



Putting fuel retailers first

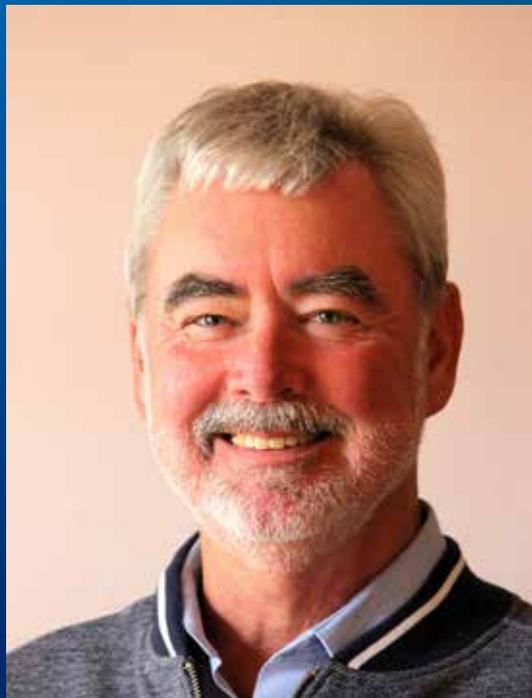
The South African Petroleum Retailers' Association (SAPRA) is a well-known and respected petroleum industry organisation. Viv Corinaldi, the association's acting director, outlines some of the key objectives and activities of the RMI-affiliated body



The South African Petroleum Retailers' Association (SAPRA), which was founded in 1990, represents and promotes the interests of almost 800 petroleum retailers in South Africa.

The SAPRA operational structure consists of a National Executive Council (NEC), a National Director and a Communications and Member Liaison Officer.

Serving NEC members are: Vikash Makhan, Eastern Cape and Acting National Chairman; Pumza Gcanga, Border-Kei Region; Gerrie



Viv Corinaldi, acting director of SAPRA



Lewies, NEC Adviser; Henry van der Merwe, NEC Adviser; Nico Grobler, Pretoria and Northern Region; Vicki Botha, NEC Adviser and MIBCO board member and Godfrey Mogoe, Western Cape Region. Viv Corinaldi, in his position as Acting Director, is admirably assisted by Henriette Coetzee.

The retail petroleum business in South Africa is a dynamic and complex industry. Since the industry is constantly evolving, there are many challenges facing petroleum retailers. Most petroleum retail

sites are one man shows and members are very dependent on SAPRA's assistance in a number of areas.

The SAPRA vision is to contribute to the growth and profitability of petroleum retailers by helping to create a sustainable environment and to make fuel retailing a business of choice for current retailers and potential investors.

SAPRA's mission is to grow the brand to become the leading voice of petroleum retailers through positive

relationships and ongoing liaison with all stakeholders.

Some of the key SAPRA activities and successes over the past few months include:

- **Stakeholder relationship management:** SAPRA has established relationships with key industry stakeholders in business, labour and government. It has actively influenced crucial decisions affecting retailer margins, regulatory issues, trading



Viv Corinaldi addressing delegates at a Regional AGM and Workshop

conditions and security of supply. Further, it has interacted positively with banking associations and with trade unions.

Further, SAPRA specifically engages with the Department of Energy (DoE) on an ongoing basis regarding matters of transformation and legal and regulatory issues which affect the sustainability of fuel retailers.

Current matters under discussion with the DoE include the alignment of transformation and B-BBEE codes to include sector codes, and the very key Regulatory Accounting System (RAS), which determines retailer margins.

Both these matters are very high on the SAPRA agenda and we will continue to meet with the DoE and other stakeholders to find acceptable and workable outcomes for our members.

The cultivation of relationships with oil companies and oil company dealer councils is another key area of focus for SAPRA.

- **Communication:** SAPRA has continued to keep its finger on the pulse of the local and international petroleum industry and has ensured

that its members are kept informed of important developments that may affect their businesses.

The monthly update to members on fuel price changes remains an important value-add. Our website is actively maintained and the informative *Automobil* magazine, weekly webletters and newsletters all facilitate communication and create awareness regarding the association and its activities.

A series of well-attended Regional AGMs and Workshops were held across the country in September last year. The theme of the workshops – An Informed Retailer is an Empowered Businessman – is at the core of SAPRA’s communications strategy.

- **Industrial relations:** SAPRA, through its link with the RMI, is a member of MIBCO, where it plays a crucial role in negotiations with organised labour. The latest and very successful round of wage negotiations bear witness to the excellent work done by the RMI/SAPRA negotiating team.
- **Human Capital Development:** In collaboration with the training and

skills development team at the RMI, SAPRA plays a crucial role in training needs analysis and representation at the Wholesale & Retail Setra. The organisation also assists members to implement skills development plans.

- **Membership growth and member support:** Membership numbers have increased by 9,8% over the past six months. The rise is encouraging as it gives SAPRA more opportunity to assist individual retailers regarding the issues they face.

From this perspective the association has interacted with many members on a regular basis, helping them to resolve a variety of issues and challenges. Going forward, this remains a key objective for the association.

Looking ahead

SAPRA will, through its ongoing activities and achievements, continue to pursue its aim of contributing to the growth and profitability of fuel retailers. The association’s defining objective for 2017 – and for the future – remains to influence all role-players in the fuel industry value-chain in such a way that it contributes to a viable and sustainable downstream fuel industry for all fuel retailers. 