



**REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON  
22 NOVEMBER 2007 AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA**

**by Prof. Anthony Minnaar (President)**

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**1. Introduction**

This is my third president's report to CRIMSA and one has to wonder where the time has gone. Again this AGM is being held late in November and I do feel it is not quite the opportune time of the academic year for an AGM when most academics are struggling to meet marking deadlines. Accordingly, from the chair so to say I would advise the incoming Council to consider a much earlier date and shift the AGM to possibly mid-October. However, the AGM remains our annual opportunity for reporting on the year's activities.

CRIMSA has not been as active this year as in 2007. It would appear that many council members are increasingly being caught up in extra academic and administrative work as universities try to extract maximum outputs from a seemingly diminishing academic staff base.

**2. Council**

This year we had only one withdrawal from Council, namely the Society's student representative, Mr Christiaan Steyn who took up a post as a risk analyst at ABSA. Exco co-opted Ms Anjeele De Jager, a postgraduate research assistant and masters student in the Department of Security Risk Management at UNISA. Also towards the end of the year Pearl Dastile tendered her resignation from Council, but since it was so late in the year a decision was made to only fill the vacancy at this AGM.

### **3. EXCO**

Since the last AGM the EXCO were able to hold only four meetings during the year, with many Council members simply not able to make meetings due to other commitments. I was also overseas twice during the year and struggled to co-ordinate and make time for meetings. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of EXCO and those Council members who often travelled from far to attend the Society's meetings. It is also a standing invitation for all those non-EXCO Council members and our honorary members, Prof. Beaty Naude, Prof. Johan Prinsloo and Prof. Jan Nesor to attend EXCO meetings.

### **4. SGB**

Towards the end of 2007 CRIMSA requested SAQA to extend the Standards Generating Body (SGB) for Criminology and Criminal Justice (established on 24 March 2002 and re-registered for a further three year period in mid-2006) three-year review period to five years, i.e. all registered qualifications only to be reviewed every five years. The SGB has reported that that all qualifications developed by the SGB have now been reviewed and/or registered.

### **5. Application for professional body status**

Our application for the establishment of a regulatory board for criminologists to the SA Council of Social Service Professions (SACSSP) (submitted on 14 March 2006) came before the Council in July this year. I can only report here that SACSSP are wanting to open a register for criminologists and then to review the establishment of a board when there are sufficient numbers to warrant such a separate board for the profession. But this will be a point for discussion on the Agenda later at this AGM meeting.

### **6. Acta Criminologica**

The journal remains the only accredited journal (SAPSE & DoE listing) for the field of criminology in South Africa and has had a very full publishing year with three regular issues (vol. 21(1-3)) and three CRIMSA Conference Special Editions (Nos 1-3) appearing this year – both No 3s went to the printers this week (more detail will no doubt be in the editor's report to be tabled later).

As from 1 August 2008 Dr Robert Peacock of Monash-SA University, after a 12-month mentoring period as a sub-editor was appointed by EXCO to take over as editor. In addition, Prof. Michele Ovens (UNISA) was re-appointed as sub-editor, while two new sub-editors, Dr Jean Steyn (Tshwane University of Technology, Dbn) and Dr Cherita Morrison (Vaal University of Technology) were also appointed as new sub-editors.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing editor, Prof. Jan Nesar (UNISA) for his many years of hard work in editing the Society's journal.

Article analysis: Acta Criminologica 2008

Volume	Unisa author	Unisa + outside	Other univ/Orgs	Internat authors	Total no. articles/issue	No. Pages
20(1)	1	1	7	-	10	143
20(2)	6	1	7	-	14	195
20(3)	3	2	4	-	9	156
Crimsa Conference Special Edition	Unisa author	Unisa + outside	Other univ/Orgs	Internat authors	Total no. articles/issue	No. Pages
1	3	-	5	1	9	149
2	4	1	8	2	13	226
3	5	-	5	5	13	200

While I undertook to be special editor for the three CRIMSA Conference Special Editions this turned out to be a mammoth work (a total of 35 articles edited and formatted) and there were times during the year I often wondered whether I had bitten off more than I could chew. Needless to say we managed to get all three editions to the printers by mid-November and you should all be getting your copies by the end of the year. I am still of the opinion that the special editions served a specific purpose in often providing a first opportunity for young academics and students to publish in an accredited journal, and was therefore not a wasted exercise in encouraging them to publish again in the future. I would also here recommend that next year's bi-ennial conference make the same decision to review all papers and make a selection to be published in a conference special edition.

The editors and EXCO have made a decision that as from 2009, to further professionalise the journal and the articles published in it, the journal will follow more closely the American Psychology Association (APA) referencing system. The required referencing system will be sent to all members and loaded on the CRIMSA website for authors to peruse. An editorial decision has also been made that if submitted articles do not follow this system – to the last comma and fullstop correctly – such article will not be sent out for review but first returned to author/s for immediate correction and revision before it can be submitted again. Here I also make a call on all aspiring authors that they get their articles language edited before submitting to the journal. Far too much time is being spent not only by the editors but also by reviewers in making simple corrections to language, spelling and sentence construction, as well as to the referencing techniques being or not being used.

In 2007 the Editor made a decision to limit the size of each issue to approximately 150 pages (in essence about eight articles) and to reduce line spacing to single (1) spacing, for practical and cost purposes. This has cut our costs. The journal is also still following the policy of trying not to have more than 50% of the articles in any one issue emanating from a single institution or organisation. I would again like to re-iterate the policy that articles received are sent out by the editor to two external reviewers for a blind review, i.e. they do not know the author/s' name/s. Accordingly the decision whether to publish or not communicated to the author/s is not the editor's decision but based on the reviewer's reports and recommendations of whether to accept without revision, minor revisions, major revisions or it does not fit into the focus of the journal or is simply not up to academic and scientific publishable standards. Reviewer's are also selected on the basis of their specialist expertise on specific focus areas and are provided with a checklist of criteria on which to review an article. If an author/s is/are not happy with such decision they may request that the specific article be sent to a third external reviewer but I appeal to all that for the sake of academic professionalism that the editor will not engage in any debate with any author on the merits of an article. The editor acts as the final arbiter and quality controller and should not be held personally responsible for joint publishing decisions.

## **7. CRIMSA website**

The CRIMSA Website became fully operational in May 2007 but for the last few months of this year all SABINET administered websites have been going through a change-over to a different server and been under re-construction. However, I have been assured that they will attend to the loading of updated CRIMSA information sent to them after attending to all the journal's work regarding the pdf loading of the archived articles at the end of this month. Those not aware of the website address it is [www.crimsa.ac.za](http://www.crimsa.ac.za), and in 2009 there will be a number of new features – like forthcoming international conferences, and other website links.

## **8. CRIMSA Newsletter**

Since the beginning of the year Dr Brenda Beukman of Walter Sisulu University, Mthatha, has been editor and three newsletters have been produced for insertion with the three issues published this year. I again make a request for all members to send material, in particular news of their department's/university's activities relevant to the Association (such as attendance at international conferences, papers delivered, promotions, new research projects, and post-graduate students graduating, i.e. details of dissertation/thesis topics etc.) to Dr Beukman at her e-mail address: [bbeukman@wsu.ac.za](mailto:bbeukman@wsu.ac.za). Post-graduate students are also welcome to send in

short (work-in-progress) articles on their current research studies of not more than 5 pages for publication in the newsletter.

## **9. Finances**

The treasurer, Prof. Michelle Ovens, did sterling work in managing the finances of the Society this year. The financial statements will be presented to the meeting for perusal but I can report with confidence that our funds show a healthy balance especially in the light of the increase in membership numbers for the year.

## **10. CRIMSA membership**

Although we have had a slow if steady growth in numbers this was partly due to the fact that we neglected to renew our annual postbox fee. As a consequence it was 'frozen' in April (unknown to us) and all post in it was sent back to senders. In May EXCO made the decision to close it and rent, as from 1 June, a new postbox from Postnet in Hatfield as from 1 June, which was more convenient for regular collection: Those of you still unaware of the new postal address it is:

CRIMSA  
Postnet Suite #468  
P/Bag X15  
MenloPark  
0102

Currently our member numbers are as follows (2007 & 2006 figures in brackets):

Active	90	(79)	(28)
Students	13	(15)	(21)
Institutional	76	(31)	(17)
Honorary	3	(3)	(1)

While institutional membership has had a growth spurt this year, it is again a concern that our student member numbers have again fallen this year. I again make a call on all academics to publicise membership with their students, in particular at postgraduate level.

Furthermore, we suspect there are some dormant (unpaid) members and we are currently busy updating the membership database. To that end a letter will be sent to all addressees on the database with the request to renew early in 2009 and that if no membership fee has been received by March they will be removed from the database.

The membership form is available on the CRIMSA website so renew your 2009 membership early – there are also forms available at the AGM. I would like to repeat here, the information regarding ‘Institutional’ Membership. This is designed for entities such as libraries, government departments, institutes, research centres, and academic departments to become members of CRIMSA in their own right. The membership form makes provision only for the details of such entities’ contact person to be entered and not a block ‘institutional’ membership of all the academic staff of a specific department or institute. In any case such an institutional member will receive only one copy of Acta and not multiple copies for each listed staff member! So individuals are please to fill in the membership form as individuals and not as ‘institutional members’.

## **11. Regional Colloquiums**

I was unfortunately remiss in sending out invitations to institutions in the regions rather late in the year. Suffice to say that the EXCO made a decision to provide support funding of R5 000 to any institution to host and hold a regional one or two day colloquium. CRIMSA had three responses to host such regional colloquiums (UCT, Monash-SA/UNISA and TUT (Dbn)/UKZN). However, due to the lateness of the invitation going out and other academic pressures all three have requested that they be allowed to organise such regional discipline focus colloquiums early in 2009.

## **12. Conclusion**

In conclusion I would like to once again thank all my fellow Exco members for their support and hard work during 2008.

2009 is shaping up to be a full and exciting one with a bi-ennail conference coming up; an application to host the ISC world congress of 2014; the possible launching of a register for criminologists and allied partner disciplines (to be discussed at this AGM); further co-operative projects and sharing and consolidating the SAQA registered qualifications; greater recognition of our knowledge contribution to society. But I temper this progress with a call for greater sharing, mixing, multi-disciplinarity in our activities among all our partner disciplines. We desperately need to acknowledge our shared responsibilities in looking for solutions to the crime, criminal justice and policing problems facing this country. We simply cannot afford to continue in our silos and do our teaching and research in isolation or in antagonistic disagreement with each other.

While we still have many challenges facing us, I have grown more optimistic that we have a vibrant future ahead of our linked disciplines – but only so long as we do not spare our efforts in actively fighting for, protecting and nurturing the growth that has occurred this year.

Thank you.