

# Concrete bodies demystified

The roles of three non-profit concrete industry organisations, C&CI, CMA and CSSA, have always been a bit blurred. What they do, who they serve and what their objectives are remains mysterious to some. We hope to shed some light...

## Cement and Concrete Institute (C&CI)

The Cement and Concrete Institute is a marketing organisation committed to growing the market for all forms of concrete for its members.

Members fall into three categories: Producers, Associates, and Built Environmental Professionals, and help ensure that C&CI's activities are focused

on areas of greatest need and potential in strengthening concrete's competitive position in the building materials market.

As the central marketing organisation for the South African concrete industry, C&CI aims to assist anyone involved in design and construction realise the full potential of concrete.

C&CI's Information Centre houses an extremely comprehensive collection of books, journals and technical reports on all aspects of cement and concrete. Access is free and the database is searchable online.

Most of the 40 C&CI publications currently in print are free of charge, including the quarterly journal, *Concrete Trends* which is published to showcase the many and varied applications of concrete.

C&CI offers courses in concrete technology and practice ranging from introductory courses to the internationally recognised Advanced Concrete Technology course. Custom-made courses and continuing professional development programmes for civil engineers are also available.

Training is offered countrywide and, as the School has NQF accreditation, organisations can claim back on their levies for School courses.

The Institute's members sponsor courses for students studying civil engineering, architecture, building science and quantity surveying at universities and technikons throughout South Africa.

Professional technical services are provided for clients and consulting can take the form of advice, verification or investigation. General technical advice is available through the free advisory service.

C&CI coordinates all concrete research activities through its Research Advisory Committee and oversees the review of existing concrete related standards and the introduction of new standards where necessary, with a view to ensuring effective implementation of StanSA standards.

## Concrete Manufacturers Association (CMA)

The Concrete Manufacturers Association is the primary representative of the precast concrete industry. It initiates and also applies standards in close cooperation with StanSA, and in close collaboration with its members, develops new products and services.

It promotes the cost-effective and correct application of precast concrete products, making sure that they are manufactured and installed to either StanSA or CMA standards. Its promotional activities target architects, engineers, developers, contractors and property owners through its six divisions: Concrete Masonry, Concrete Block Paving, Concrete Roof Tiles, Concrete Retaining Block Walls, Precast Suspended Floor Slabs, and Concrete Pipes and Infrastructural Products.

Although the maintenance of minimum product standards is an important CMA function, its prime focus is on ensuring that its members' products are applied correctly. A CMA mark serves as a guarantee of quality and the CMA takes responsibility should a problem arise.

Members are encouraged to hold the SABS mark or to manufacture to specifications laid down by the CMA. Should a problem arise the CMA will carry out an investigation, and, if the product does not conform to the required standard, the member company is obliged to rectify the situation.

Research is another important CMA function. Several new products have been introduced to the local market over the past four years, many of them aimed at previously disadvantaged communities, and all manufactured to standards offering durability and aesthetic appeal.

The CMA also regularly runs refresher courses and holds seminars to introduce new technology and methodology, often featuring overseas experts.

A Gauteng-based representative is marketing concrete block paving (cbp) as a road surface, especially in former township areas as it is labour intensive, generates employment and involves skills training that can be applied to other construction fields.

## Concrete Society of Southern Africa (CSSA)

The Concrete Society of Southern Africa is an independent organisation that promotes excellence and innovation in the use of concrete and related products and services. Membership is open to any individual with an interest in concrete and CSSA provides a forum for networking and technology transfer between its members.

The Society is affiliated to the American Concrete Institute and the Concrete Society UK from whom CSSA members qualify for special benefits.

Each of the Society's four branches has its own annual calendar of events. These include technical meetings and seminars where information is disseminated amongst members. Where projects of interest are in progress, site visits are usually arranged to enable members to see concrete in action.

All events on the Concrete Society's programme of meetings and seminars have been granted CPD approval by SAICE and carry a unique CPD identification number for registered professionals to cite when claiming CPD credits.

The CSSA also arranges a variety of social events. The concrete canoe race, cube competition, action cricket, golf days and year-end functions provide ample time for social interaction and networking.

Every second year the CSSA hosts the prestigious 'Fulton Awards' to honour excellence in concrete construction. The awards have, for over 25 years, recognised southern Africa's major concrete projects. On a branch level there are also the 'Concrete Achiever Award' and 'Concrete Man of the Year Award' which are presented to the individual or team of a particular project worthy of recognition. ■



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