

Plastics industry to debate issues of concern at conference

The South African plastics industry will be debating various issues that impact on its growth and future prospects with the first industry-specific conference, hosted by Plastics|SA. The one-day conference is entitled "Plastics: The Future for Growth" and takes place on Wednesday, 13 March, 2013, at the Nasrec Exhibition Centre, south of Joburg.

"We are very excited about hosting a conference that will create a platform for open dialogue, the sharing of ideas and soliciting of various opinions on issues that affect our industry", said Plastics|SA's executive director, Anton Hanekom.

"We have deliberately tried to move away from the traditional approach to conferences. Instead of the regular speakers addressing audiences on old topics, we will be having three lively debates during which well-known, investigative journalists will lead a panel of experts in discussions. Thanks to the use of technology, delegates will be able to influence the discussions taking place on the stage by electronically sending their questions and comments to the moderator, or by voting on issues being discussed, in real time," Hanekom explained.

The conference will comprise the following line-up:

- Opening keynote address by Dr Wilfried Haensel, executive director of PlasticsEurope
- Debate 1: "Growing the South African Plastics Industry" - moderated by Freek Robinson
- Lunch
- Debate 2: "What impacts on plastics packaging?" - moderated by Jeremy Maggs
- Debate 3: "Are plastics sustainable?" - moderated by Ruda Landman
- Cocktail function and awards ceremony

According to Hanekom, industry experts representing diverse points of view have been invited to be part of the panel of four who will lead each discussion. "It is important that everyone has the opportunity to share their point of view and discuss pertinent issues and this innovative way of interacting will certainly facilitate that. Part of the excitement is that we have no idea where the discussions may lead. Whilst we may not necessarily resolve all the issues at hand, we will be talking about it and encouraging open dialogue with a mutual respect and passion for issues that form the heartbeat of our industry," he said.

Entrance to the conference will cost R65 per person for members of Plastics|SA and R800 for non-members. The price includes VAT, two tea and coffee breaks, lunch and attendance to the cocktail function and awards ceremony that evening.

Hanekom said that registrations are already in full swing and can be done online at www.plasticsinfo.co.za. "We are expecting close to 300 people and would encourage people to book and pay in advance in order to avoid disappointment," he said.

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