Chairpersons' Report

SACLA 2020 had originally been planned to take place from the 6th to 8th July, at the Mpekweni Beach Resort in Eastern Cape. We were quite far into our preparations with the venue, when the Covid-19 pandemic struck South Africa. By early April it was becoming apparent that holding an in-person conference might not be possible, although at that stage none of us had any idea of the disastrous effect the virus would have on our country and its people.

On the 18th April 2020, before participant registration was opened, the organising committee made the final decision to hold a virtual conference instead. This was both a relief having actually made the decision, but also the start of a fairly stressful period in the sense that we had to restart the planning for a virtual conference, and familiarise ourselves rapidly with technology to support the decision.

We were most grateful to our three Sponsors, the Institute of Information technology Professionals, Rhodes University, and Pearson South Africa, who continued to support our virtual endeavour.

Given the worsening circumstances in our country, going virtual was obviously the right decision. We sincerely hope that all the participants felt that it was a worthwhile alternative, although we realise that the socialising and networking aspects of a face-to-face conference were sorely missed. We are however, confident that the dissemination of some excellent research was achieved through the online sessions.

Having to deal with organising a virtual conference certainly had its challenges. However, there were always solutions on offer, especially related to technical logistics, which was crucial to the success of the conference. We wish to thank the following committee members for their active involvement throughout:

Programme chairs:	George Wells and Monelo Nxolo
Technical logistics:	Billy Morgan
Sponsorship:	Stephen Flowerday
Webmaster:	Greg Foster
Proceedings:	Philip Machanick and Karl van der Schyff
Treasurer:	Caro Watkins
Secretary:	Michelle Coupe
Keynotes:	James Connan and Dane Brown
Springer volume:	Bobby Tait (from UNISA)

Thanks are also due to the keynote speakers, all the participants who joined the various sessions, and of course to the presenters without whom the conference could not have happened. In terms of engagement at the conference, 110 participants registered, with the maximum attendance at any one session being just over 40, and the average attendance being in the mid 30s.

We look forward to meeting in person once again at SACLA 2021, which will be hosted by the University of Johannesburg.

Karen Bradshaw & Ingrid Siebörger (Conference Co-Chairs)