

Feedback from the Forum for Community Journalists' annual Bosberaad

The annual Bosberaad of the Forum for Community Journalists held near Lanseria on February 12 and 13 ended with the adoption of a wide-ranging programme of action designed to take the organisation through its next growth phase.

Issued by [Forum of Community Journalists](#) 15 Feb 2004

The meeting was attended by Management Board members representing the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, North West and Kwazulu-Natal.

The meeting reaffirmed the organisation's theme adopted at last year's Bosberaad - Growth, Development and Diversity - as well as the Mission Statement, which reads: "To promote the interests of and nurture excellence in community journalism through a national programme of diversity, development and growth. We will strive to deepen our credibility among all sectors of South African society."

In this context, the meeting made the following decisions, among others:

- to improve communications with journalists and others in the community press sector through the further expansion of the FCJ's newsletter, DEADLINE and the regular distribution of press releases highlighting the work of the organisation and the daily issues affecting community journalists;
- to proceed with a plan to set up a website where community news, information about the Forum and details of community newspapers can be accessed;
- to further the fundraising efforts that have already seen R50 000 in new funds being raised in the last six months;
- to begin preparation for four training seminars in the Western Cape, Mpumalanga/Gauteng, Free State/North West Province and Kwazulu Natal. The various seminars were attended by a total of 300 community journalists and advertising sales staff last year.
- to approach the Media Diversity and Development Trust with a partnership plan aimed at attracting developing community newspapers into the ranks of the Forum with the aim of offering them support in the growth efforts;
- to highlight threats against journalists where they occur as well as to look at issues of ethics more seriously, in the light of some of the serious lapses during the course of last year.
- to facilitate the training of journalists as part of an overall effort to improve the quality of journalism;
- to put in place plans for the significant transformation of the Sanlam awards so that it attracts a broader cross-section of the South African media fraternity;
- to expand to the Eastern Cape, through the setting up of structures before this year's AGM in September.

A decision was made to call for a meeting with the Newspaper Association of South Africa and representatives of print media South Africa to discuss the Forum's structural relationship with the PMSA and NASA in the light of the restructuring that is taking place within the Community Press Association following the withdrawal of Caxton, Independent Newspapers and Media 24. The Forum is keen to clarify issues of structure, funding, membership and constitutional parameters, among other things.

The meeting was attended by Mansoor Jaffer, chairperson and Western Cape representative, Tobie van

den Bergh, vice-chair and Mpumalanga representative, Karen Espag (Gauteng), Diane Proctor (Kwazulu-Natal), Fahdiel Manuel, who is temporarily representing the Eastern Cape until structures can be set up there, Hennie Stander (North West), Nontyantambo Petros (Grocott's Mail editor and Eastern Cape observer at the meeting), Andries Botha (former PRO) and Hugo Redelinghuys (Sanlam).

* Journalists from more than 150 community newspapers with a combined circulation of close to 3 million copies per week, are members of the Forum for Community Journalists.

Editorial contact

Cathy Pestana

Tel: (011) 721-3200/1/2

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>