

The South African National Committee on Tunneling (SANCOT) remains active in promoting tunneling and the use of underground space as a committee within the Southern African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy (SAIMM).

On 3rd December 2012 SANCOT held a one day seminar entitled "South African Tunneling 2012 – Lessons Learnt on Major Projects" followed by a half day visit to the **Ingula Pumped Storage Project** the following day.

This is the largest tunneling project under construction in South Africa hence the decision to have a seminar focused on the design and construction experience gained. The presentations covered the purpose and overview of the scheme, some of the construction challenges, the design of the underground works and concrete liners, and a comparison of the anticipated and actual rock behavior as measured by the instrumentation.

In addition presentations on **the Kabompo Gorge Hydroelectric Project in Zambia**, the eThekweni Micro tunnel Sewer Extension and planning for the Lesotho Highlands Water Project Phase 2 were made.

A report on the World Tunnel Congress in Bangkok and the South African delegates' activities there was also given. The site visit on St. Barbara's day with site work stopped for the day was well received by the delegates.

The excavation of the Ingula scheme is substantially complete with only the last third of the Surge Chambers remaining to be excavated and two shafts that were raise bored still requiring support.

The first Spiral Case has been installed in the Machine Hall and is being prepared for pressure testing and concrete embedment.

SANCOT's proposed initiative to improve safety in shaft sinking practices has been endorsed by the ITA, and SANCOT have created a Steering Committee with Working Sub-Group for this purpose. Liaison has been established with ITA WG 5 'Health & Safety in Works' who are keen to see the principles applied internationally.

The expected outcome of this initiative will be a "Handbook of Shaft Sinking Best Practice".

It is expected that the Sub-Groups will continue as subject matter experts investigating new solutions to issues relating to safety and performance.

It is particularly pleasing that the Steering Committee has support and representation from the major mining companies, engineering consultancies, equipment manufacturers and the entire principal shaft sinking and construction companies.

Phase 2 of the **Lesotho Highlands Water** Project is expected to get under way in

the near future with bids having been called in 2012 for the Project Management Unit of the scheme. It is anticipated that the Project Management Unit will be appointed within 2013 and bids for the engineering design will be sought later this year.

There are a number of other tunneling projects in the offing including the fitting out of the second bore of the Huguenot Road tunnel in the Western Cape.

South Africa (SANCOT) continues to be represented in the ITA WGs 2 (Research), 3 (Contractual Practice) and 12 (Use of Sprayed Concrete).