

One Thousand!

WELL, ACTUALLY IT is one thousand and five – all of them participants who have been trained to date during the two-day course *Handling Projects in a Consulting Engineer's Practice*, presented by Wolf Weidemann, Pr Eng, under the auspices of SAICE's Education and Training Panel.

This total was achieved on 24 May 2010 in Port Elizabeth, just short of 15 years after the first two-day course was run in Durban on 20 and 21 June 1995. The course was originally developed at the request of SAACE's then Committee for Continuing Education (SAACE has subsequently changed its name to CESA, i.e. Consulting Engineers South Africa) and has since been verified as serving the objectives of ECSA's CPD policy, attracting two credits. It is regarded as a Core Course, i.e. essential for the younger practitioner.

The course gives a unique overview of the consulting engineer's work, highly condensed yet covering all significant aspects, also addressing those ever important communication and people skills, and giving an introduction to essential financial and legal aspects. Useful procedures and check lists are developed which can be quality-assured. This two-day course is aimed at the core activity of a consulting engineer's practice, namely the way he executes the Client's commission, right from the pre-appointment submission or tender, the appointment itself, through the various stages of pre- and final design, tender documenta-



tion, project administration etc, past hand-over to aftercare. It thus intends to upgrade the knowledge and skills of Project Leaders and those about to become involved in this process. Directors/ Partners who attended the course found that it inspired them to tighten up their own procedures so as to be able to impart their knowledge and experience to their own people in a more structured way. Firms who invited Clients to gain an insight into the world of consulting engineering, reported that this improved understanding and brought about other highly beneficial results.

Wolf has now trained 1 005 consulting engineers of all cadres, ages and positions through 74 courses, thus averaging only about 14 participants per session. This insistence on small numbers

► Wolf Weidemann – still attentive to the needs of his audience after having trained 1 005 participants!

has proven to be ideal for good interaction, allowing questions to be raised and answered, often with some ensuing discussion. All but three of the participants have stated in writing that they would recommend the training to others, some adding “naturally!”, “of course!” and very often “definitely!” They found it a worthwhile expenditure of time and money to gain not only two ECSA CPD credits, but also to add value to their work and careers. It goes without saying that the course is kept current with latest developments and includes many constructive inputs by participants.

Wolf also runs the complementary course *Business Finances for Built-Environment Professionals*, thus including architects, quantity surveyors and even some contractors. (Admittedly, these present a very small minority of participants.) This course has been presented since October 1999, but the numbers since then have accumulated to 766 trained through 61 courses, which averages to around 13 people per course. Nobody to date has expressed any doubts about its suitability and value and – if anything – has experienced the course as a somewhat easier route to two CPD credits!

Civil Engineering wishes Wolf well in his continued efforts to plough back his knowledge and experience into the engineering profession. ■