



## Trust Manager's Summary Report 2006-2007

### Introduction

Following the AGM in 2006, Mr John Doidge indicated at the subsequent Trustees meeting that he intended to step down as chairperson, Mr Phiroshaw Camay was elected chairperson. With his guidance and leadership we have managed to achieve a number of goals.

### Kgalagadi Relief Trust

The Asbestos Relief Trust (ART) began its financial year by concluding a long awaited agreement with the newly formed Kgalagadi Relief Trust (KRT). In terms of this agreement the ART will administer the KRT.

The KRT was formed following the conclusion of an agreement between South African personal injury attorney Richard Spoor and the Swiss company Becon AG. The KRT provides financial relief to individuals who had exposure from or at qualifying asbestos mines and who have developed compensable asbestos related illnesses.

The conclusion of this agreement enables both trusts to join resources. Together both trusts cover an estimated 85% of asbestos miners who worked at various asbestos mines in South Africa. This is the first step in the ART's aim of ensuring that all victims of asbestos related diseases can access some form of compensation system, over and above the statutory systems, in South Africa.

The conclusion of the service provider's agreement with the KRT saw the appointment of a Senior Office Administrator located at the Head Office, and the opening of an office in the Northern Cape town of Danielskuil to service potential claimants who were exposed to asbestos from asbestos mining carried out by Danielskuil Cape Blue Asbestos.

### Swaziland & Lesotho

Positive steps were also taken during the course of the year towards setting up the claims process in neighbouring states.

An agreement was concluded with ART accredited claims handler Sunil Narian Incorporated (SNI) in December 2006. In terms of this agreement SNI will assist potential claimants in Swaziland to lodge a claim for compensation with the ART. The maximum estimated number of potential claimants from Swaziland, who worked for Havelock Asbestos Mines between 16 January 1985 and 31 December 1988, the qualifying exposure period, is 4000.

The ART has also identified in the region of 250 potentially qualifying claimants from Lesotho and is currently investigating concluding a service level agreement with a local service provider to assist potential claimants to lodge a claim for compensation with the ART.

### Social Projects

The year has seen a strong focus on the ART's social responsibility commitments. The ART has, as part of its social responsibility programme, funded a number of projects aimed at assisting communities affected by asbestos. These projects include:

### *Neil White Bursary*

Professor Neil White was a pulmonologist and an occupational health specialist who was instrumental in raising the profile of occupational health diseases in South Africa. Professor White also participated in the first reading sessions held by the ART's Medical Office as part of the medical evaluation section of the claims process.



Professor White sadly passed away in late 2004. The Board of Trustees of the Asbestos Relief Trust established a bursary in honour of Professor White. The bursary is for study towards a Diploma in Occupational Health (DOH), a two year part time programme.

The bursary covers tuition, books, a computer, travel and accommodation to the total current value of R70,000.

The first recipient of the Neil White Bursary was Dr JT Sekwayo, a service provider to the ART based in the Northern Cape town of Kuruman. Dr Sekwayo is currently busy with his first year of study at the University of Cape Town and will conclude the DOH next year.

Applications for the second bursary will shortly be invited for the two year DOH offered by the University of the Witwatersrand. Whilst run by the ART this bursary will be sponsored by the KRT whose Trustees have recognized the importance of this initiative and who have given it their support.

### ***Asbestos Interest Group***

The long established relationship with the Asbestos Interest Group (AIG), a community based from Kuruman, was renewed with the conclusion of a Service Level Agreement between the AIG and the ART in May 2006.

In terms of this Agreement monthly funding of R13,800 was provided to the AIG to:

- educate communities about the existence of the asbestos trusts, ie. the ART and the KRT and the claims process;
- recruit potential claimants for both trusts;
- continue its work to educate communities about the dangers of asbestos.

The ART recognizes the AIG as an important vehicle through which to keep in contact with the local communities and envisages continuing this relationship.

### ***Kuruman Palliative Care Nurse Project***

The number of mesothelioma and asbestos related lung cancers being diagnosed in the Northern Cape lead to the recognition of the need to hire a nurse in this area to assist these individuals with a care programme.

Interviews were held during the course of December 2006 and Sr Phemelo Magabanyane was appointed in March 2007.

Sr Magabanyane's duties and responsibilities encompass:

- Education of the Home Based Community Care Givers.
- Supervision of Home Based Community Care Givers (CCG's) and/or family members.
- Client visits to provide direct client care.
- Liaison with other health care professionals within Hospice and outside of Hospice, including the Department of Health.

Sr Magabanyane is based in Kuruman, operating out of the local ART office, however we envisage that she will service the areas surrounding Kuruman and Danielskuil.

### ***Socio-Economic Research Project***

The ART commissioned research into the spending patterns of successful claimants which report was released on 20 June 2007. The report highlighted widespread poverty in the regions where the ART operates which has influenced the use of award monies. According to the research monies were spent on housing, basic expenses, furniture and appliances, and servicing debt.

In addition to the above during the course of this financial year medical equipment in the form of a spirometer and computer was donated to Embhuleni Hospital in Mpumalanga Province. Embhuleni Hospital carries out medical examinations for the ART for potential claimants who live in the Elukwatini region. The donation of this equipment will assist Embhuleni Hospital to assist ART claimants.

**Thanks**

It has been an enormously challenging year with many developments taking place within the Trust. Each challenge has though been met with renewed energy and a commitment to deal with the issues at hand by a very dedicated and talented ART staff to which my thanks go. My thanks also go to the many service providers without whom we could not have achieved what we have and, last but not least, to the Board of Trustees for its guidance and leadership. We look forward to another successful and productive year.

**Tina da Cruz, Illovo, August 2007**

