

2020 Festive Message

Who could have foreseen a year ago what 2020 would bring? It has been a truly remarkable year for all the wrong reasons although the resilience shown by many really has been remarkable. It has been a challenging time for all of us, professionally and personally, with the impact of COVID-19 felt around the world. Whilst the mining industry on the whole responded swiftly and collaboratively, there has been a significant impact on operations, and fundamental changes to the way in which companies operate can be expected.

Similarly, the insurance industry has had to rapidly adapt to a new way of working although perhaps events have simply hastened the advent of the electronic revolution in the insurance world. Nevertheless, it is a brave new world of videoconferencing (offering an insight into people's bedrooms, living rooms, kitchens, basements...), remote surveying, drone piloting, etc.

MIRA has similarly adapted and embraced the use of on-line meetings. Our AGM and virtual sessions in June (Dr. Franco Oboni on Tailings, and a COVID-19 panel discussion) were very well attended and probably more so because the on-line sessions were more readily accessible. Given the ease and accessibility of such sessions we will be planning on further events in the future.



As promised at the AGM, the MIRA Technical Advisory Group has been re-established with a remit to identify and tackle a range of issues. To give a flavour of what these working sub-groups will be looking at, topics will include emerging risks and technology, risk management systems, and insurance related issues such as loss lessons, data analytics, and risk reporting. The intention is that these groups will ultimately prepare feedback to the MIRA membership in an appropriate format be it on-line presentations, technical papers, list of further resources and reading, etc. Paolo De Rosa (Marsh in Toronto) and Robert Steinebach (Munich Re in Munich) are managing this group.

Similarly, the MIRA Wordings Group has been re-established with a remit to review specific mining clauses to provide greater clarity and confidence in cover. Ultimately, we aim to produce a range of MIRA branded clauses offering varying degrees of cover for mining related risks. Initially the group is looking at tailings dams, underground flood, SRCC, and re-commissioning clauses. Rebecca Hopkirk (DLA Piper in London) and Gavin Rowatt (Gen Re in Toronto) are managing this group.

MIRA has also been involved, at least peripherally, with the new Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management. In order that we can understand the potential issues and challenges involved in the implementation of this standard, we are consulting with the diverse stakeholders within the MIRA membership. To date we have held peer group discussion meetings with underwriters and insurance brokers and plan to consult with our mining company members in the New Year. This will culminate in a discussion at the MIRA 2021 conference.

Speaking of which, plans are afoot for MIRACON 21 which we're looking to arrange for Q2 2021. Understandably this will largely be an on-line event but spread over a few days with sessions designed to accommodate audiences from different time zones. Watch this space for further updates.

Finally, it is just left for me and the board of MIRA to wish you and your families well over the Festive period and for a significantly better 2021 to the year we have just endured!

James Fryer
MIRA Chairman