

**Meeting Summary for SADTO AGM 2025**  
**Mar 13, 2025 01:56 PM Harare, Pretoria ID: 944 4624 1702**

**Quick recap**

The Southern African Dental Traders Organization (SADTO) was formed and its executive committee was approved, with a focus on member participation and decision-making. The group discussed various aspects of the organization, including membership, finances, exhibitions, and upcoming events, with a particular emphasis on negotiations with SADA and the importance of transparency in pricing. The meeting also covered regulatory compliance, education issues in the dental industry, and product registration for medical devices, with a focus on improving communication and clarification with relevant authorities.

**Next steps**

- Exco Committee to draft and send a letter to SADA requesting negotiation on exhibition pricing, starting with a 50% discount proposal.
- John to update the SADTO website with a list of approved auditing firms for ISO certification.
- Charl to send a list of certification bodies, consultants, and updated SAHPRA documents to [info@sadto.org.za](mailto:info@sadto.org.za).
- Exco Committee to investigate and report back on improving dental education in South Africa.
- Exco Committee to research and provide information on the upcoming National Health Insurance and its impact on the dental industry.
- Exco Committee to develop a checklist for approving dental congresses and exhibitions.
- SADTO members to begin the ISO 13485 certification process as soon as possible.
- Exco Committee to organize branch meetings in Johannesburg, Cape Town, and Durban for member feedback.
- Nadia to oversee the inspection of future Durban exhibition sites.
- SADTO to market their website featuring members' medical device licenses to dentists.
- Med-Bay to implement social media marketing strategies for SADTO.
- Exco Committee to explore ways to educate the public about dentistry.

**Summary**

**SADTO Executive Committee Approval Meeting**

The meeting begins with technical setup and introductions. Ralf, the main speaker, explains the importance of the Southern African Dental Traders Organization (SADTO) and its recent formation. He introduces the committee members and their roles, including Peter deoubell as vice-chair, John as secretary, and Ian Hollander as treasurer. Ralf emphasizes the need for member participation and unity in decision-making. The group then proceeds to vote on approving the executive committee and accepting the constitution, which was adapted from a previous version. Members are instructed to use their phones to scan a QR code and submit their votes, with both in-person and online participants taking part.



### **SADTO Membership, Finances, Exhibitions Discussed**

The meeting discusses several key points regarding membership, finances, and exhibitions for the dental trade organization SADTO. Ralph reports that SADTO has 59 members and a current balance of about 172,000 Rand. Ian, the treasurer, outlines the budget and expenses, noting that they are breaking even based on the 2,400 Rand annual membership fee. The group discusses the need to develop a system for sharing information about defaulting debtors while complying with legal requirements. They also debate exhibition pricing and propose a standard rate of 1,000 Rand per square meter for trade shows, with conditions on delegate numbers and payment terms. The members agree on the need to create value for all stakeholders and to potentially organize their own conferences in the future.

### **SADA Exhibition Negotiations and Transparency**

The group discusses the upcoming SADA (South African Dental Association) exhibition and the ongoing negotiations with SADA regarding exhibitor fees and conditions. Many members express dissatisfaction with SADA's response to their request for a 50% discount and are considering not attending the exhibition in Durban. The group debates whether to continue negotiations with SADA or to stand firm in their decision not to attend. They also discuss the importance of transparency in pricing and the need for all members to stand together in their decision. Some members have already canceled their bookings, while others are still considering their options. The group also touches on issues related to foreign exhibitors and the proper procedures for their participation.

### **Negotiating Event Pricing With SADA**

Gary suggests that the organization should approach SADA to negotiate the pricing for the upcoming events. He recommends sending a letter and following up with a face-to-face meeting to discuss the issues and find a compromise that works for all parties. Gary emphasizes the importance of being the "bigger" party and initiating the conversation, despite some members' reluctance to make the first move. The group discusses the possibility of negotiating a discount, with some members believing a 50% reduction is reasonable. Gary advises approaching the negotiation with flexibility and not setting a fixed percentage as the only acceptable outcome. The group also considers investigating how SADA uses the funds from these events and potentially proposing a model where excess funds go towards dental development initiatives.

### **Committee Decides on Communication Strategy**

The committee discusses communication with SADA and decides to send a letter, with 75% of members in favor after including proxy votes. Ralph then shares information from a recent meeting with SAHPRA, emphasizing the importance of securing sole agency rights for products as this will become a major issue in the future. He explains how SAHPRA's regulations are improving security and patient safety in the dental industry. Ralph encourages members to report illegal imports through SADTO, which will have a stronger impact with SAHPRA than individual complaints. He introduces Charl, an expert on medical device registration who will provide updates on regulatory compliance, including ISO requirements.



### **Addressing Education Shortages in Dentistry**

The group agrees to address education issues in the dental industry, as there is a significant shortage of qualified technicians and concerns about the quality of graduating dentists. They decide to explore possibilities for improving education, including potentially starting a dental university. The committee will investigate this matter further and report back. Additionally, they plan to look into government tendering systems and the impact of upcoming national health initiatives. The next AGM is tentatively scheduled for March of the following year, with branch meetings to be organized in various cities for feedback.

### **ISO 13485 Certification and Product Registration**

Charl provides an update on ISO registration and product registration for medical devices. He explains that actual product registration will likely start from June next year, as SAHPRA is still running a pilot program. Regarding ISO 13485 certification, Charl clarifies that existing license holders have not been officially notified of a requirement to obtain certification by April 1st for renewals. He estimates the cost for ISO certification to be around 50,000–60,000 Rand over a three-year period, which includes annual audits. Charl also mentions that companies need to develop a quality management system, either internally or with the help of a consultant, before the external audit.

### **License Re-Registration and ISO Certification**

In the meeting, the participants discussed the deadline for re-registering their license and the necessity of having an ISO certification in place. Charl clarified that the deadline was set for January 2025, and it was mandatory for both new and existing license holders. However, there was confusion about the timeline for the ISO certification, with some participants unsure about the exact deadline. Charl suggested that the process could take anywhere from six months to two years. The participants were advised to start the ISO certification process as soon as possible.

### **SAHPRA Product Registration Challenges Discussed**

Charl explains that product registration with SAHPRA requires submitting a technical file for each product family, not for every size or variant. This approach will save companies money on registration fees. SAHPRA has recently updated their device classifications and increased their fees, with the retention fee now at 4,400 Rand. The group discusses challenges with SAHPRA's communication and classification system, noting that some dental products are classified differently in South Africa compared to other countries. They express hope that SADTO can improve communication and clarification with SAHPRA going forward.

### **SADTO AGM and Future Plans**

The meeting concludes with several key points. Ralph thanks Charl for his presentation on medical devices and announces that Charl will send a list of certification bodies, consultants, and updated SAHPRA documents to [info@sadto.org.za](mailto:info@sadto.org.za). Ralph also mentions making Ursula Jenkins an honorary member for offering a full-page ad and a column in her journal for SADTO. The group discusses plans to market their website listing medical device licenses and to educate the public about dentistry through media and social media efforts. The meeting ends with a toast to the new organization, SADTO, and the official close of the 2025 AGM.

