

1. NAME

The Association is an official group of the South African Medical Association and its name shall be: The Association of Surgeons of South Africa (abbreviated as ASSA) hereinafter called 'The Association'.

2. AIMS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The objects for which the Association is established are:

- 2.1. To promote the science, practice, quality and image of surgery.
- 2.2. To represent and further the interests of surgeons in South Africa.
- 2.3. To sponsor and promote scientific publication in the field of surgery.
- 2.4. To encourage and support surgical research in South Africa.

3. MEMBERSHIP OF THE ASSOCIATION

3.1. Full members

Any person who is registered as a specialist in surgery and/or paediatric surgery, with the Health Professions Council of South Africa, and who is a member of the South African Medical Association is eligible for membership. An applicant's membership shall be confirmed by a majority vote of the Executive Committee of the Association after being duly proposed and seconded by two full members of the Association.

3.2. Honorary life members

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP may be granted at the discretion of the Executive Committee to members who have retired from active practice or academic appointments and who have been members of the Association for a minimum of 10 years. Honorary Life Members are no longer liable for annual subscriptions, but can voluntarily subscribe to receive the official scientific publication of the Association at the cost thereof.

3.3. Honorary members

HONORARY MEMBERSHIP may be bestowed on distinguished guests or visitors from outside the borders of the Republic of South Africa after being duly proposed and seconded and elected by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

3.4. Honorary Vice-presidencies

HONORARY LIFE VICE-PRESIDENCIES may be bestowed on members in recognition of outstanding service to surgery in South Africa. Nomination for the office of Honorary Vice-President will be at the discretion of the Executive Committee of the Association and must be confirmed by a two thirds majority at an Annual General Meeting. The number of Honorary Life Vice-Presidents, at any one time, will be limited to six (6).

3.5. Associate members

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP may be bestowed on registrars in surgical training or other medical practitioners with a significant input to surgical practice after duly completing the prescribed application form and membership being confirmed by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. Associate members will not have voting rights.

3.6. Termination

Members shall retain membership until such is terminated either by resignation in writing, addressed to the Secretary, or by a decision of the Executive Committee of the Association. Membership may be suspended, if, after two years, the annual subscription remains unpaid. Membership may be re-instated after payment of outstanding and due subscriptions. A suspended member will have no voting rights.

4. CONTROL OF THE ASSOCIATION

4.1. The general control and direction of the policy and affairs of the Association shall be vested in the Executive Committee of the Association.

4.2. In exercising control over the Association, the Executive Committee shall, at all times, have regard for the wishes of members and abide by the Articles and by-laws of the South African Medical Association.

4.3. Composition of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall hold office for two years and shall consist of the President, the Immediate Past President, a Chairperson, a vice-Chairperson, a Secretary, a Treasurer and four members. An additional four members, with full voting rights, may be co-opted at the discretion of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee may, additionally, co-opt the national representative of surgical registrars to the Executive. This representative will have full voting rights at meetings of the Executive Committee, notwithstanding his/her status as an Associate Member of the Association.

4.4. Election of Office Bearers

4.4.1. Office bearers and members of the Executive Committee, with the exception of the President and the Immediate Past President, shall be nominated and elected biennially at the annual general meeting (AGM) of the Association coinciding with the Biennial Congress of the Association. If such Congress for any reason is not held, a suitable alternative meeting will be identified by the outgoing Executive Committee for this purpose.

4.4.2. President

The President shall hold office for two years and shall be elected by a national postal or electronic ballot. Nominations for the position of President, signed by two members and by the nominee, must be received by the Secretary at least 90 days before the AGM coinciding with the Biennial Congress of the Association. Ballot papers must reach members 45 days before the AGM and must be returned to reach the Secretary 1 day before the AGM.

4.4.3. A list of office bearers, together with a complete list of members of the Association shall be furnished biennially to the Secretary General of the South African Medical Association within thirty 30 days of the election of such office bearers.

4.5. Meetings of the Executive Committee

4.5.1. The Executive Committee presided over by the Chairperson, or in the absence of the Chairperson by the vice-Chairperson or an Executive Committee member, duly elected by the members present, should meet at least twice a year.

4.5.2. The Secretary shall keep records of all meetings of the Association and of its Executive Committee and shall conduct all correspondence in connection with the affairs of the Association.

4.5.3. The Treasurer shall receive all monies due to the Association and shall make all disbursements authorised by the Executive Committee.

4.5.4. The Executive Committee may, from time to time, issue policy documents, guidelines, and position statements on behalf of the Association, which serve as annexure to, but not an integral part of, this Constitution.

4.6. Augmented Executive Committee

4.6.1. Representatives of the Departments of Surgery at each of the South African Medical Faculties, the President of the College of Surgeons of South Africa, the Chairperson of Surgicom and the Editor(s) of the official scientific publication of the Association will, together with elected and co-opted members of the Executive Committee, form the Augmented Executive Committee of the Association.

4.6.2. These additional members of the Augmented Executive Committee will normally be invited to attend all scheduled meetings of the Executive Committee, but serve in an advisory capacity and have no voting rights at such meetings.

5. MEETINGS OF THE ASSOCIATION

5.1. The annual general meeting (AGM) of the Association shall, as far as is possible, take place during the Biennial Congress of the Association of Surgeons in the years in which this is arranged. In alternate years the annual general meeting will be arranged to coincide with a suitable academic meeting as designated by the Executive Committee. The quorum at the AGM shall be thirty (30) members.

5.2. The AGM shall be conducted by the President, or in his absence by the Chairperson or failing him by a person specially elected for the purpose.

5.3. Extraordinary general meetings of the Association may be held from time to time and shall be called by the Executive Committee on the written request of thirty (30) members of the Association.

5.4. Voting by proxy according to the Articles of the South African Medical Association shall be allowed at all annual and extraordinary general meetings.

6. ACTION OF THE ASSOCIATION

6.1. The Association may take such action as may be deemed necessary in all matters affecting the legitimate interests of its members, provided that the South African Medical Association as a whole be not involved or pledged to any action and that any such action contemplated by the Association not be in conflict with the policies of the South African Medical Association in force at the time.

7. ORGANISATION OF THE ASSOCIATION

7.1. The Association shall be empowered to allow the formation of branches of the Association within the framework of the divisions or branches of the South African Medical Association or in such other manner as may be desirable. Such branches may be allowed powers of independent action in local matters provided that such action is not in conflict with the general policy and rules of the Association and of the South African Medical Association in general.

7.2. Such branches shall elect a Branch Committee comprising a Chairperson, a Secretary and a Treasurer, and up to three members annually at the Annual General Meeting of the branch.

7.3. Each branch shall have a minimum membership of six (6) full members.

7.4. Reports of local action taken shall be submitted by the Secretary of the branch to the Secretary of the Association.

7.5. Reasonable costs incurred by a branch in the conduct of its activities may be re-imbursed by the Association.

8. SUBSCRIPTIONS OF THE ASSOCIATION

An annual subscription shall be payable by members and associate members of the Association to provide funds for carrying out of the work of the Association. The Executive Committee shall determine the annual subscription payable, per category of membership, from time to time

9. ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Chairperson shall submit an annual report and the Treasurer a Financial Statement at the Annual General Meeting of the Association

10. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Any proposal to amend the constitution must be received by the Secretary at least ninety (90) days before an AGM, and circulated to members of the Association forty-five (45) days before the same AGM. Amendments to the constitution can only be affected if passed by a two-thirds majority of those voting at an AGM of the Association. Any such change in the constitution shall only become effective after approval by the Board of Directors of the South African Medical Association.

11. DISSOLUTION

In the event of the dissolution of the Association, the assets of the Association shall be given or transferred to some other organisation engaged in activities similar to those for which the Association was established. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for selecting the

organisation stipulated by this clause, failing which the assets will be transferred or given to the South African Medical Association.

Dissolution will occur if the membership of the Association decreases to less than thirty (30) members. Any other mechanism of dissolution can only occur if handled in the same manner as amendments to the constitution.