

It's time again...

After the successful 8th World Conference on Sampling and Blending, WCSB8, May 2017, Perth, Australia, a year has rushed by. With a nominal publication frequency of two issues of *TOS Forum* per year, it is indeed time for the next issue.

This issue is a blessed mixture of old and new, small and big items of interest.

The opening feature addresses a very difficult issue: how to sample Municipal Solid Waste (MSW)? MSW is an example of just about the most heterogeneous material imaginable. By its nature *household waste* is extremely variable in overall composition (day-to-day, city-to-city, country-to-country) and will also change its composition temporally, as a function of a yearly cycle. But knowing this is a vital prerequisite for effective implementation of MSW management facilities, which is an issue of societal importance that will only grow. From a Theory of Sampling perspective, this issue adds to the full scope of representative sampling, because it is of paramount importance that the lot material is put through a thorough sorting before TOS has even a first chance to be bias-free. **Philippe Wavrer** (CASPEO) has penned a fascinating account of a large-scale French endeavour.

Next, the chairman of WCSB8 (2017), **Ralph Holmes**, presents his comprehensive report from our previous world conference. Besides the scientific meeting and its achievements, duly published in the proceedings which is in the very experienced hands of the AusIMM, WCSB8 was a *special event* in that a highpoint was the launching of the **International Pierre Gy Sampling Association (IPGSA)**. For the first time since the first WCSB1 (2003), our community now has the form of a scientific organisation which will handle organisational matters for which such a formal entity is necessary. The historic background for the proposal to inaugurate a formal scientific organisation was outlined in the previous *TOS Forum* issue—and the first president

of the IPGSA takes this development further in the present report. The inaugural IPGSA Council, and its advisory committee, is duly announced here as well. In a coming issue we will present the Council further, complete with biographies and declarations-of-intent, all so that we can all fully appreciate the collective we have now elected to run our administrative, organisational and other matters.

This issue focuses on the 2017 recipient of the Pierre Gy Sampling Gold Medal, **Richard Minnitt**. *TOS Forum* brings you his inaugural “**Pierre Gy Oration**”, which could not have been in better hands. In addition, you will also find another of Dick’s contributions to WCSB8, this one on “The costs of Sampling Errors and Bias in the Mining Industry”. We bring both these features in an exciting new format, which we hope will find acceptance.

There follows a feature which at first *may* appear slightly off-Broadway, entitled: “**The 2010 Eyjafjallajökul volcanic ash sampling experiment: factors and conditions affecting field sampling variability**”, but which in essence focusses on a distinctly under-appreciated aspect of primary sampling, particularly within the natural sciences, characterised by the fact that there is absolutely no control over the primary lot and its origin. This is demonstrably different from the common situation within technology and industry, which calls for *some* care before hitting the field. This feature actually depicts the scientific highpoint of a 60-year birthday party!

Finally, last but by no means least, the updated brochure for the next World Conference on Sampling and Blending (WCSB9), 6–9 May 2019, Beijing, China, is presented. The final deadline for abstract submission is 9 November. This is a welcome opportunity to reach out to all of us one last time: **DO NOT MISS SUBMITTING AN ABSTRACT, OR REGISTRERING FOR WCSB9.**

See you all in Beijing in 2019!

A unique field sampling experiment on the volcanic ash from the 2010 Eyjafjallajökull eruption. See [page 22](#) for the full story.



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