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Annual General Meeting 15 April 2009

Chairperson's report for the year ended 28 February 2009

At last year's Annual General Meeting I accepted the position of chairperson on the understanding that mine was an interim position, to be held until such time as a new truly independent chairperson was elected. Nothing has changed, and it is unfortunate that it has taken a whole year to reach the stage where three promising candidates were found, only to drop out for various reasons when we were so close to the voting stage, in fact within the last two weeks.

With the permission of members here present, I am prepared to remain as interim chairperson until we have re-advertised and selected a shortlist of the most promising candidates. We will then hold a Special General Meeting so that members can vote for the candidate of their choice.

In the meantime, I thank you all for your support and your patience over the last year.

Now for a brief overview of events and issues during the year.

Our association, ADESSA, was founded seven years ago by five Cape Town based software companies. Currently we have thirty eight members, with a much broader range of products and services, all within the educational sphere. This growth has of course only been possible through this expansion of our product base - ADESSA originally stood for Software Suppliers, but now as you all know, it refers to Associated Distributors of Educational Supplies in Southern Africa.

This increased membership has led to quite a noticeable demographic shift - for instance, there are now more companies with their Headquarters in Gauteng (50%) than in the Western Cape (32%) although it must be stressed that several of these companies operate nationally or even internationally. My point is that ADESSA can in no way be viewed as a Western Cape dominated association, a fact which future Executive Committee (Exco) membership will have to reflect.

As your treasurer will explain shortly, the larger membership has also enabled the Association to build up a reasonably large pool of reserve capital, and we want to ensure that it is used for the benefit of all our members in future.

I think you will agree that the ADESSA File, our ADESSA newsletter produced by Russell Pengelly, has been a strategic development this year. If you read it, you will see we continue with our efforts to negotiate better prices for ADESSA members attending conferences.

Not being a sales or marketing person myself, I have not focused on building up our membership this year, rather I have focused on enhancing the image of ADESSA with our contacts, and with building a working team within EXCO. Anyone who has chaired ADESSA will know that there will always be hiccups, but that we cannot let differences and divisions sink the ship. Therefore I am appealing to all Exco members to pull together and help guide us to find a truly independent chairperson who will lead ADESSA into the next decade.

Thank you.

Dave Pollock

Chairperson of ADESSA

