

## **Q&A**

**Ronel Williams, Chairperson of FISA, chatted to Lucy Reyburn, FISA's media liaison.**

Lucy: Congratulations on being voted in as National Chairperson in March, Ronel. Am I right in thinking you were already on the FISA Council for a few years?

Ronel: Yes, I have been a National Councillor since 2013 which was a three-year appointment. Before that was up I was voted as National Chairperson which is a two-year appointment, renewable by another one year. I am looking forward to continuing the good work that Angelique Visser did while she was Chairperson.

Lucy: I see a long list of impressive qualifications on your CV: Advocate of the High Court, a Certified Financial Planner®, a Master Tax Practitioner (SAIT) and a Trust and Estate Practitioner (STEP). BA and LLB from Stellenbosch University, LLM (cum laude) from UNISA, and a postgraduate Diploma in Tax Law from UCT.

Ronel: Thanks! They reflect really what I have done career-wise which has combined academics and civil service, as well as fiduciary practice. I am passionate about the fiduciary industry and I think my qualifications reflect that. My Masters, which I obtained in 2010, was on family and succession law, which is an area I am exposed to quite a bit nowadays.

Lucy: Please tell us a bit about your career.

Ronel: I started off at the University of Stellenbosch lecturing in the law school before joining the Master of the High Court in Cape Town in 1991. They had a fabulous training programme in Pretoria which I attended several times and was ultimately appointed as Assistant Master.

I wasn't planning to leave the civil service but a friend told me about a position that had become available as head of wills and estates at Syfrets Trust. I was offered the job in May 2002, accepted it and subsequently found myself in the middle of the merger with The Board of Executors which led to me becoming head of estates at the merged entity, BoE Trust. In 2005 I became a fiduciary specialist at BoE Trust which was then rebranded to Nedgroup Trust in 2012. Much like Louis van Vuren (FISA CEO), I moved with these various entities as they merged and consolidated. To cut a long story short I am now team leader fiduciary (Cape) for Nedbank Private Wealth and have extended my practice to include trusts as well.

Lucy: Has Council got any particular strategic plans under your leadership?

Ronel: We would like to further build on the good relationships that have been developed with various stakeholders and industry bodies, such as the Chief Master. In particular, we would like to work at developing a strong working relationship with SARS, as all our members are in some way impacted by SARS and a good working relationship with them will be of immeasurable value to our members.

I am also very keen on building and sharing knowledge (I think I am a frustrated teacher at heart) and so I am keen that FISA brings as many knowledge and learning opportunities to its members as possible.

Education extends to the public as well and I think FISA will continue to play an important role in this area, mainly by publishing comment and articles by members in the personal finance and consumer media.

Lucy: Thanks, Ronel, and good luck for the year ahead