

## CURRICULUM VITAE : MICHAEL SASS

### PROFILE

<b>Nationality</b>	South African
<b>Languages</b>	English, Afrikaans
<b>Expertise</b>	Government entities, General Management, Budgeting, Standard setting, Auditing (External, Internal, Forensic and Performance), Risk Management, Accounting and Financial Management, Strategy, Policy Setting, General consulting on government systems and procedures, Turnaround strategies. System Implementation.

**Email**

**Cell phone**

### OVERVIEW

Michael Sass is an Independent Contractor and Board Member. Michael was previously the Accountant - General of South Africa. He holds various qualifications, including a Master's degree in Commerce as well as being a Chartered Accountant and Certified Internal Auditor. Michael has over 28 years' experience in both the private and public sector. He previously held senior positions with Morvest, Business Innovations Group, Grant Thornton, Verimark, The Automobile Association, Gauteng Provincial Government, Johannesburg Consolidated Investments (JCI) and the South African Revenue Services (SARS). He served as the National Treasury representatives on various boards, including the Independent Regulatory Board for Auditors (IRBA) and the Accounting Standards Board (ASB). He is the past Chairperson of ESAAG (Eastern and Southern African Association of Accountants-General) and has served on various Independent Boards and Audit Committees.

These senior positions include:

- CFO of Verimark
- Director at Morvest, BIG and Grant Thornton
- DDG at GPG and NT (acted as HOD at certain times)
- General Manager of Value Added Services at AA

In his role as Accountant General, Michael was responsible for

- The governments transversal financial systems, including the development of a new Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS);
- Accounting support and banking services;
- Technical support (accounting opinions);
- Internal Audit support;
- Risk Management support;

- Special Audit Services (forensic investigations);
- MFMA implementation;
- Capacity Building; and
- Governance Monitoring and Compliance

Michael has assisted in various consulting projects and has a close working relationship with most senior government officials. He has excellent knowledge of government systems and processes and considers himself a seasoned manager.

Michael has published various articles in technical publications and is an accomplished speaker at conferences.

## **E D U C A T I O N**

<b>University of North West (2009)</b>	M Com
<b>IIA Inc. (2007)</b>	Certified Internal Auditor (CIA)
<b>SAICA (1993)</b>	Chartered Accountant (SA)
<b>Unisa (1991)</b>	B Compt Hons & CTA
<b>Unisa (1989)</b>	B Com (Hons)
<b>University of Pretoria (1985):</b>	B Com (Acc)

## **P A S T A N D P R E S E N T B O A R D P O S I T I O N S**

Board Member (2016 - present)	South African Institute of Business Accountants (SAIBA)
Chair: Audit Committee (2016 - present)	GPG Cluster Audit Committee (Health, Sport, Social Development)
Member: Audit Committee (2016 - present)	CIPC
Member (2016 – present) (2007 – 2013)	University of Pretoria (UP) Internal Audit Endorsed Programme (IAEP)

Ex Officio Board Member (2013 – 2015)	Independent Regulatory Board for Auditors (IRBA)
Ex Officio Board Member (2013 – 2015)	Accounting Standards Board (ASB)
Chair (2014) and Member (2015)	East and Southern African Association of Accounts General (ESAAG)
Chair: Audit Committee (2007- 2008)	Department of Public Service Administration (DPSA)
Member: Audit Committee (2012 – 2013)	Ekurhuleni Metro Council

## CAREER HISTORY

September 2016 – Present	Independent consultant and Board member
October 2015 – August 2016	Business Innovations Group (BIG): Director and Head of Public Sector
March 2013 – September 2015	National Treasury: Deputy Director General – Accountant General
September 2009 – February 2013	Business Innovations Group (BIG): Director (Head of Consulting, Public Sector)
April 2007 – August 2009	Grant Thornton: Director (Head Public Sector)
October 2001 – March 2007	Gauteng Provincial Government: Deputy Director General - Gauteng Audit Services
August 2001 – September 2001	Verimark: Chief Financial Officer
April 1997 – July 2001	Automobile Association of South Africa: General Manager – Value Added Services and General Manager Internal Audit

February 1994 – March 1997	Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Company (JCI): Internal Audit Manager
January 1991 – December 1994	Grant Thornton: Article Clerk
October 1986 – December 1990	South African Revenue Services (SARS): Tax Assessor and Trainer

## **S E L E C T E D E X P E R I E N C E**

### **Business Innovations Group (2015 – 2016), (2009 – 2013)**

#### **Turnaround Strategy Phumelela Local Municipality**

Michael was the Project Manager on the team responsible for drafting the Turnaround strategy for Phumelela Local Municipality. This was part of the NT Municipal Finance Improvement Programme done on behalf of the Municipal Intervention unit. The project consisted of Financial, Legal, Engineering, HR and Labour Relations specialists that drafted a strategy for the municipality to return to a financial viable state and improve services to citizens.

#### **Gert Sibande District Municipality – Clean audit and municipal improvement programme**

BIG in a joint venture with Grant Thornton was appointed to ensure that the 7 municipalities that form part of the district as well as the district itself improved on its audit outcomes and generally improve on the systems and processes in place at each municipality. Michael led the BIG team. This included taking over the complete procurement process at district level and performing several interventions at municipal level, such as asset verifications, financial statement drafting and identification of Unauthorised, Irregular, Fruitless and Wasteful expenditure.

#### **Department of Education**

BIG assisted the DoE with the identification and evaluation of functional school financial management systems utilised in all nine provinces. Through this project we obtained extensive exposure to the broad structures of the provincial education departments as we dealt with schools, regional/EMDC offices as well as the provincial offices. This project has also provided us with invaluable exposure to the shortcomings of capacity, skills and lack of alignment of functions at National, Provincial and other education areas such as schools etc. The project has provided us with first hand experiences of the provisions of the SA Schools Act and the Norms and Standards.

### **Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) – Verification of Fishing Quotas**

BIG was appointed by Marine and Coastal Management a division of Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism that is responsible for the monitoring of commercial fish landings on the East Coast. This included the following ports:

- Mossel Bay
- Port St Francis
- Port Elizabeth
- East London

We employed about 35 staff on the project all of which have been sourced from the local fishing communities. The project was a 3-year contract and project offices had been set up in the Ports that we monitored. Ongoing training on Word/Excel was provided. Fraud Awareness and Specialised Marine Training was also provided. We managed all the data of landings, collated it and presented it to the Department on a monthly basis. Our monitors also referred Right-holders who had contravened the Marine Resources Act to the relevant authorities.

### **Electricity Distribution Industry Holdings (EDIH)**

BIG was closely involved in the establishment of the EDIH (in partnership with Deloitte). Our work with the EDIH included:

- Conducted change readiness assessments;
- Conducted change impact assessments;
- Developed stakeholder relations plan;
- Conducted leadership alignment assessments; and
- Conducted training for change agents.

### **National Treasury of South Africa (2013 – 2015)**

#### **Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS)**

As Accountant General, Michael had the overall responsibility for the project. By replacing governments ageing financial, HR, supply-chain and financial management systems, the IFMS plays an essential role in the modernization of resource management for national and provincial government.

Michael presided over a “direction change” where a cabinet decision led to the selection of one Tier 1 ERP solution rather than numerous separate systems as required previously.

Michael was also responsible for the management and maintenance of the legacy systems (BAS, Persal, Logis and Vulindlela) during this period

#### **Implementation of ROSC report**

During 2013 the World Bank issued its Report on Standards and Codes (ROSC) for the Accounting and Auditing profession in South Africa. As Accountant General, Michael was tasked to start the implementation of these recommendations, including discussions with the various professional bodies in South Africa on the creation of a “super – regulator” to regulate them.

### **Financial Management Reform Steering Committee**

This steering committee was created to enhance co-ordination – and internal communication within the National Treasury – of reforms related to improving financial management in the South African public sector. Chaired by the Accountant-General and represented by other divisional heads, the committee serves as the forum for deliberation of matters relevant to financial management reform. Significant issues deliberated:

- Introduction of accruals-based accounting
- Introduction of a standardised chart of accounts
- Options for consolidated budgeting
- Introduction of an Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS)
- Legislative adjustments (mostly PFM legislation)

### **National Consolidation and Revenue Fund**

Along with his team from Accounting Support and Banking services, Michael was responsible for two sets of National Consolidated Financial Statements: National Departments and National Entities. During his tenure, a new software system was introduced that alleviated the roll up process of entity balances.

The National Revenue Fund was also managed by this unit with transactions totaling more than R3 trillion being passed annually.

### **Trilateral with AGSA and ASB**

Michael chaired (by rotation) regular trilateral meetings between the Office of the Accountant General (OAG), Auditor General of South Africa (AGSA) and the Accounting Standards Board (ASB). These meetings were used to discuss issues of mutual concern and to resolve disputes and queries. This included:

- ④ Implementation of new GRAP standards, as well as the applicability thereof and the timing of the implementation;
- ④ Requests for exemption from departments and entities and how these should be treated;
- ④ Improving governance and compliance in government and processes to assist in this; and
- ④ Marketing the work of the three organisations in order for the public to become more aware of their functions and better understand their operations.

### **Participation in decision making processes**

As Accountant general, Michael participated, chaired or gave input into the following structures:

- ④ Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA);
- ④ Portfolio Committees (Mostly Finance but others as well by invitation from the relevant department);
- ④ Budget Council;
- ④ Various MinMEC (Minister and provincial MECs) meetings;

- Technical Committee for Finance (TCF);
- Forum of South African Directors General (FOSAD);
- Provincial Accountants General (PAG) forum;
- CFO forum;
- Risk management forum; and
- Internal Audit forum

Issues relating to budgets, strategy, finance, management, standards, systems, procurement and processes were discussed and agreed on at these meetings.

### **Special Audit Services Investigations**

Within the Office of the Accountant General, the Special Audit Services unit performed various high level, political sensitive and material value forensic investigations. This, by its nature necessitated close working relations with other law enforcement agencies such as SAPS, Hawks, NPA, FIC and others.

### **Grant Thornton (2007 – 2009)**

#### **Western Cape Department of Health – NGO verification**

BIG conducted surveys of approximately 183 NGO's. We verified that the NGO's has utilised the funding for the purpose intended as well as that they have sound and adequate internal controls in place. A questionnaire was developed (based on the set deliverables provided by the department) for which the NGO were assessed against. The assessment also includes visiting the NGO's which were based all around the WC.

#### **Universal Services and Access Agency of South Africa (USAASA)**

When USAASA was established, GT was retained to develop all in-house policies for the organization. This included Delegations, HR, Labour Relations, Bursaries, Supply Chain, Petty Cash, certain types of leave, etc. Michael was Director in charge of the project.

#### **Gauteng Department of Public Works and Transport**

The Department realized that its fleet cards were being abused and used on vehicles other than those that it was issued for. This included being used to buy groceries and furniture. GT was retained to investigate these issues and design controls to prevent it from happening. We placed an undercover agent that became part of the syndicate and thus was able to apprehend all the criminals

#### **Gauteng Department of Education**

GT was retained to perform a detailed asset verification of all the Department's assets, including assets in the districts and regions. More than 6,5 million assets had to be verified. GT used a system where students were used to assist us in the process, thus enabling them to earn a stipend as well as gain valuable experience.

## **Gauteng Department of Housing**

As with most provincial Housing Departments, the Department required assistance with their Housing List as well as monitoring the quality of work done by the various suppliers. We physically inspected and verified the quality of work done before houses were handed over to new owners. We also verified the housing list to ensure accuracy and completeness.

## **Automobile Association (2000 – 2001)**

### **Developing and Managing Value Added Services (2000 - 2001)**

As General Manager, Michael was responsible for all Value Added Services (i.e. non-core services) in the AA. This included product identification, management, marketing, budgeting and selling. These products included the following:

- o Legal Division (providing legal advice to motorists)
- o Travel Department
- o Foreign Travel Division
- o AA Quality Assured (accreditation of business that performed roadworthy and other tests)
- o Running cost advisory service
- o Technical advice
- o Printing and publications
- o Road information service
- o The Motorist Magazine
- o AA Trax (an early vehicle recovery system)
- o Mayday (Emergency assistance)
- o AA Impact
- o AA Car Care Warranty

During this period Michael increased turnover of the division by 200% and profitability by 120%.

### **Y2K project (2000)**

Michael was responsible for the organisation's Y2K programme. This included documenting all systems, performing system readiness assessments, ensuring proper back-ups, BCP and DRC set ups, as well as performing penetration tests.

### **ICI - Due Diligence exercise (1996)**

Michael participated as part of the JCI due diligence team that evaluated two coal mines targeted for acquisition. In the main he focused on governance as well as verification of the accuracy of various reconciliations and recoverability of debtors.



### **Gauteng Provincial Government (2001 – 2007)**

#### **Establishing of the Gauteng Shared Services Centre (GSSC)**

Michael was part of the management team that established the GSSC. The GSSC centralized all Financial, Procurement, Human Resources, IT and Internal Audit functions in the Province. In particular, Michael was responsible for establishing the Gauteng Audit Services (GAS). This included establishing the required manpower and budget, strategic planning, policy development and implementation, training requirement identification and recruiting.

#### **Implementation SAP**

The Gauteng Province took a decision to implement SAP as an ERP system throughout the Province. Michael was involved in the management team of the project as well as from a user requirement and - implementation side.

#### **Unqualified Audits**

Michael, together with Departmental CFO's, the GM: Finance at GSSC and the Provincial Accountant General was instrumental in the province achieving unqualified audits in all its departments for the first time in 2007. Michael was responsible for implementing Operation GAUCAR (Gauteng Clean Audit Report) which assisted in this achievement.

#### **Verimark – Franchising (2001)**

During his short stint as Chief Financial Officer, Michael was tasked with the responsibility to commercialise the business owned shops and to sell them off as franchises.