

Chrome Dinner Awards 2026

Nomination: Best Contribution

First Name: Desmond & Steph

Last Name: McManus & Van Sittert

Company: Samancor Chrome Limited

E-mail: joanie.nel@samancorcr.com

Phone: (011) 245 1000 | 082 808 9640

Select Award: Best Contribution

Nominee Name: Stefan Swanepoel and Willem den Heijer

Nominee Company: Samancor Chrome

Motivation

It is with great pride and full conviction that we nominate Stefan Swanepoel and Willem den Heijer for special recognition in the Best Contribution category at the Chrome Dinner Awards 2026. Their exceptional and sustained contribution to the Eskom tariff relief negotiations on behalf of Samancor Chrome reflects remarkable dedication, technical expertise and steadfast negotiating resolve. Together, they helped secure an outcome that sets a new benchmark for the ferrochrome industry.

Electricity is one of the most significant and unpredictable cost drivers in Samancor Chrome's cost base. Securing meaningful tariff relief was therefore far more than a financial achievement; it was a critical contribution to operational sustainability, industry competitiveness and the long-term wellbeing of the communities that depend on our success.

In these circumstances, Stefan and Willem demonstrated outstanding leadership, resilience and commitment. They carried the tariff relief mandate through a lengthy and demanding engagement process with Eskom, consistently applying sound technical judgement, strategic thinking and determination to achieve an outcome that delivered substantial value to the business.

Total Dedication to the Process

Throughout the negotiations, Stefan and Willem consistently demonstrated exceptional commitment, professionalism and perseverance. They invested considerable time and effort in preparing for engagements, anticipating challenges and ensuring that Samancor Chrome's interests were represented with authority and credibility at every stage. Their willingness to remain available at short notice, often beyond standard working hours and during pivotal moments in the negotiations, reflected an exceptional level of ownership and dedication.

- Sustained personal commitment over many months of negotiation cycles, without any loss of focus, energy or attention to detail.
- Rigorous preparation of data, cost models and supporting evidence to strengthen Samancor Chrome's negotiating position at every stage.
- Close and constructive collaboration with Eskom, regulatory stakeholders and industry peers, building the credibility needed to influence the outcome.
- Resilience and composure under pressure, keeping the negotiation on track through setbacks, revised proposals and shifting timelines.

- Clear, consistent internal communication that kept Samancor Chrome leadership informed and aligned throughout the process.

Impact and Industry Benchmark Status

The outcome of these negotiations delivered significant and measurable value to Samancor Chrome. By securing a 54% tariff reduction, Stefan and Willem substantially reduced the Company's exposure to escalating electricity costs, strengthening the competitiveness and long-term sustainability of our smelting operations.

The significance of this achievement is reflected in its far-reaching impact:

- 54% tariff reduction secured for Samancor Chrome.
- Approximately 2,400 direct jobs safeguarded through the improved cost position.
- Five-year duration of benefit, providing sustained relief rather than a short-term reprieve.
- All six of Samancor Chrome's smelter complexes benefited from the negotiated outcome.

This was not simply a technical or commercial achievement; it was the direct result of two individuals who refused to settle for an ordinary outcome, represented Samancor Chrome with distinction, and turned a complex, high-stakes negotiation into a result that benefits the entire business.

Why This Nomination Is Deserved

Stefan Swanepoel and Willem den Heijer exemplify the values the Chrome Dinner Awards seek to celebrate: excellence, perseverance and a genuine commitment to the long-term success of the ferrochrome industry. Their tireless work on the Eskom tariff relief negotiations reflects what can be achieved when technical expertise is matched by unwavering commitment to Samancor Chrome and industry they serve.

We respectfully and enthusiastically recommend that this outstanding contribution be formally recognised at the Chrome Dinner Awards 2026.