

## Radar and electronic warfare stalwart returns

More than 20 years ago he worked at the CSIR on 'Fynkyk', the first Ka-band monopulse tracking radar developed in South Africa, and today Professor Jan Corne (JC) Olivier, an Exceptional Professor at the University of Pretoria, has rejoined the same employer, bringing with him a vast experience in digital receiver technology, acquired while working in Canada and in the US in subsequent years.



Professor Jan Corne (JC) Olivier

Olivier is rated by the National Research Foundation as a C1 researcher. He joined the radar and electronic warfare (EW) area of CSIR Defence, Peace, Safety and Security on 1 November, and will be doing research, supervise postgraduate students and oversee the collaboration between the CSIR and the University of Pretoria (UP) in his area of specialisation. He also teaches on artificial intelligence at UP for its undergraduate computer engineering programme.

Olivier returned to South Africa in 2003 after living in Canada and the USA for eight years during which he worked for Bell Northern Research and then Nokia Research Centre.

"The idea was for me to come here, combine the resources of both organisations, and try to grow the number of postgraduate students."

This is an era of digital receivers. "And since I have done a whole lot of digital receiver work while I was still in Canada and in the US, I think I can contribute to making it happen here as well," he says, adding that young postgraduates are passionate about digital receiver technology.

Asked to compare South Africa to both Canada and the US, Olivier said it was difficult to compare the three countries because "the two are gigantic economies" but that South Africa does compete in certain niche areas.

"We are getting there," he says, adding that one of the difficulties is that South Africa has only seven engineering faculties awarding the BEng degree and a large number of students graduating from these faculties end up emigrating after completing their studies.