

Article from **STAR Tester** (http://newsweaver.ie/qualtech/e_article000847211.cfm?x=bcVhM0T,b4V6Phvj,w)

June 26, 2007

Swedish Association For Software Testing

by *Anna Docherty and Torbjörn Ryber*

My name is Anna Docherty and I am one of the founders of SAST. The idea came about from a personal need to meet others doing the same as myself, as the opportunities for training was limited in Sweden at the time. As I had struggled with a non-understanding project management and software supplier in a huge project I needed some support in various issues of testing. This was in 1994.

I sent an appeal to members of the Swedish Association for Quality to start a forum for testers and received enough answers to go ahead. SAST was founded in February 1995 and approximately 20 people visited our first meeting. It was set up to be a non-profit and independent organisation, open for all persons interested in software testing in Sweden. SAST members companies hosted the meetings, as we only had enough attendees for a conference room.

There were several goals for SAST:

- 1.** Create a way for members to exchange experiences and knowledge related to testing.
- 2.** Increase the status of testing by spreading information and knowledge about software testing.
- 3.** Provide an opportunity for all members to create their own network of fellow testers.

For the first year Sigrid Eldh and myself ran SAST. We arranged all the meetings, decided on a theme for each meeting, rounded up speakers, sent out invitations (we did lick a great number of envelopes as this was pre-email...) and set up discussion points on the current theme as part of the day was used for experience exchange. Since 1996 SAST has been run by a group of enthusiastic people, all sharing the tasks which surround a meeting.

On the second ever meeting in the history of SAST we invited an international speaker, Marnie Hutcheson from the USA, and were introduced to her methods on using S-curves and "Most Important Tests". Marnie was the first international speaker. Although funds were non-existent we were able to attract and invite professional speakers at least once a year through co-operation with different companies. Since the start SAST has had fantastic support from testing companies in Sweden, these companies have done our marketing!

For many years the number of members stayed around 50, until the (first) big boom of testing in 1998/1999 when we all headed for the Y2K. All of a sudden we were 200 hundred members and from then SAST has been growing. On our 5th anniversary in 2000 we were 600 members and on our 10th we were 1200!

As the numbers of members were growing, in 2000 the SAST meetings had to be sponsored financially by various testing companies. This also gave SAST an opportunity to engage more professional speakers and with that came higher demands on the content of our meeting. This required a more professional and formal approach from SAST.

In 2005, after 10 years of active service, I decided it was time to cut the cord with my baby and leave it to grow continuously in safe hands. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who helped SAST grow and supported me throughout the years.

Now, over to Torbjörn:

Today's SAST is an active and rapidly growing organisation. The total number of members (1754) as well as the number of attendees on our quarterly conferences (260 at Q2), have more than doubled the last four years. We have recently started a branch in Gothenburg and have one just starting in Malmo. The branches are fairly independent but we support them

with information and help them reach all our members with their own messages via our web site using our common membership list.

The Stockholm SAST board has thirteen very engaged members which is really the key to our success. We still have our quarterly meetings and each board member is responsible for arranging at least one meeting each year. The people responsible for each meeting receive input from the rest of us but have the final call when the agenda is decided. As we all have different contacts and opinions this help us create a lot of variation in our meetings. Since all work is unpaid and outside regular office hours we have tried hard to make every board meeting a little more than just work. We always start with some light food like pizza, spicy Indian or whatever our vice chair Pablo decides to surprise us with. We then spend two intense hours planning and deciding. Fairly often we end up having a drink, talking about testing or other important issues that happen to be on our minds. We have so much fun together that we decided to have an overnight meeting in the Stockholm archipelago to start the new working year in August!

There is a growing interest from our sponsors whose donations have enabled us to both update our website and paying for professional speakers. The first meeting every year is a "Sweden STAR" special. We invite all Swedish speakers at last year's EuroSTAR and try to add the winner of the Testing Excellence Award as well. International testing giants such as James Bach, Andy Redwood, Paul Gerrard, Stuart Reed, Martin Pol, Tim Koomen, Thorkil Sonne, Lloyd Roden etc. have all spoken at SAST.

We try to have at least one non-testing talk at each conference which has been much appreciated. Recent speakers include an ultra-distance runner, a 'mingle teacher' and an opera singer. Another goal is to book speakers from other parts in the SW process like requirements, project management and programming. We all believe that closer cooperation with other disciplines is necessary to enhance our performances.

The testing community is growing rapidly and we believe SAST will become even more successful in the future. Additional organisations, like peer conferences are also needed but there is currently no plan to extend our current engagement. Instead we hope that our conference delegates will actively network with each other and start their own group to further enhance their knowledge. We are hoping to see a record number of SAST members at EuroSTAR in December.

Your Sincerely

Anna Docherty; AddQ Consulting AB
SAST Chairperson 1995-2005

Torbjörn Ryber, Keep IT Simple AB
SAST Chairman 2005- present

Biography

Anna Docherty; AddQ Consulting AB
Anna Docherty (formerly Eriksson) is well known in the Swedish testing community and internationally through her work in the Swedish Association for Software Testing (SAST) and the EuroSTAR conference where she has been a speaker, country coordinator, track chair and part of the programme committee 2001 and 2002.

Annas testing career started in the early 90's, for the Swedish Post Office, then on to Ericsson-Hewlett Packard as a Test methods and Tools



specialist, this led on to a career in test consultancy, for among others, TietoEnator one of Scandinavias largest IT-consultancies. Currently Anna is working as a Senior Software testing consultant for a small consultancy, AddQ Consulting AB, which has specific focus on Software Testing and Quality.



Torbjörn Ryber, Keep it Simple AB, Sweden

MSc degree in Computer Science and engineering. Consultant, mentor, teacher and test enthusiast. He has given classes for some 500 people in test design, test management, ISTQB and Tools. Author of a book on test design techniques (in Swedish) "Testdesign för programvara". Published 2006, more than 1000 copies sold first year. Member of the SAST board since 2002, chairman since 2005. Founder of START - Swedish Testing Advanced Round Table started in 2006.

Published by [EuroSTAR](#)

Copyright © 2008 QualTech Conferences. All rights reserved.

QualTech Conferences Limited, Galway Business Park, Dangan, Galway, Ireland. Company reg: 241910

Created with [Newsweaver](#)