

CREAMER MEDIA'S

# ENGINEERING NEWS & MINING WEEKLY



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REAL ECONOMY NEWS

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## Tier-One Mindset

Valterra Platinum already exploring  
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**ENR**  
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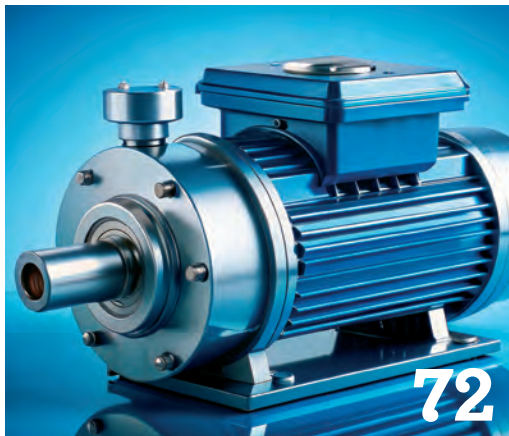
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### PUSH PAUSE ||

*There is no shame in not knowing;  
the shame lies in not finding out.*



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# FIRST WORD



*Martin Creamer* | Publishing Editor

## Time for South Africa to secure new economic opportunities through new partnerships

There are many examples of South Africa having what the world wants and what the world needs and the time is now to secure new economic opportunities through new partnerships. Many South Africans are more certain than ever of the potential for new investment that will have the benefit of creating many new jobs and promising new career paths

across the country. Top of mine must be that a smart public-private approach to enabling these possibilities is the approach that will yield the best results for investors.

Scan to listen to  
Martin Creamer  
on SAFm



**FINALLY COMPLETED:** Unit 6 at Kusile power station officially entered into commercial operation on September 29, marking the end of Eskom's multi-decade build programme – one which experienced well-publicised delays, major cost overruns, and technical problems, alongside allegations of serious corruption. Construction, which started in August 2008, was initially expected to take six years, but took 17 years instead. Likewise, the project's initial budget of less than R80-billion ballooned to above R233-billion.

ELECTRICITY

# Debt and theft

**THE TWIN CRISES** of surging municipal arrear debt owing to Eskom and rising electricity theft have been lurking for years, and with all efforts to combat the problems having failed.

In fact, Eskom's outgoing CFO, **Calib Cassim**, warned last week that municipal debt owing to Eskom could reach an eye-watering R300-billion by 2030.

By the end of March, debt owing to the utility by municipalities had increased by 27% to R94.6-billion and Cassim confirmed that it had since climbed to above R103-billion. Worryingly, Eskom also indicated that the figure could reach R135-billion by the end of the current financial year.

The scale of the problem has been further underlined by an Energy Intensive Users Group calculation showing that in the ten-year period from 2015 to 2025 arrear debt increased by over 1 800%, from R5-billion to R94.6-billion.

This surge has come despite a National Treasury initiative that created an incentive for municipalities, which represent 42% of Eskom's total sales of some 189 TWh, to improve their payments to Eskom.

Under the scheme launched in 2023 alongside the R230-billion debt relief extended to sustain Eskom's position as a going concern, municipalities were offered an opportunity to write off their legacy debt in phases. To do so, they needed to meet 14 conditions, including one stipulating that they kept their current accounts with the utility up to date.

At the time, the municipalities collectively owed less than R60-billion.

While the National Treasury has bravely defended the programme and there have been pockets of success, Eskom has never been a fan. Last week, it reiterated its concerns, stating bluntly that the National Treasury's municipal debt relief programme had not been successful in stemming the escalating levels of arrear debt.

Describing the problem as a systemic challenge, Eskom called for an inter-governmental approach. And despite posting a R16-billion profit and a positive outlook, it warned that the problem posed a serious threat to its sustainability.

For its part, Eskom is punting distribution agency agreements and prepaid supply models. However, it's unclear whether such solutions will find widespread favour across local government.

Sadly, that's not all!

Eskom also reported that 14.9 TWh of electricity was lost to theft in its 2025 financial year, which in monetary terms represents R28-billion in foregone revenue.

The utility did not provide a breakdown of the nature of the theft, but at least part of it relates to large-scale fraud arising from the fact that its online vending system for the generation of prepaid tokens has been breached.

Eskom's remedies include the roll-out of 7.2-million smart meters and a plan to accelerate the implementation of an entirely new online vending system.

As with the municipal debt problem, however, it's unlikely that technocratic and technology interventions alone will be sufficient to arrest what is now a serious culture of nonpayment.

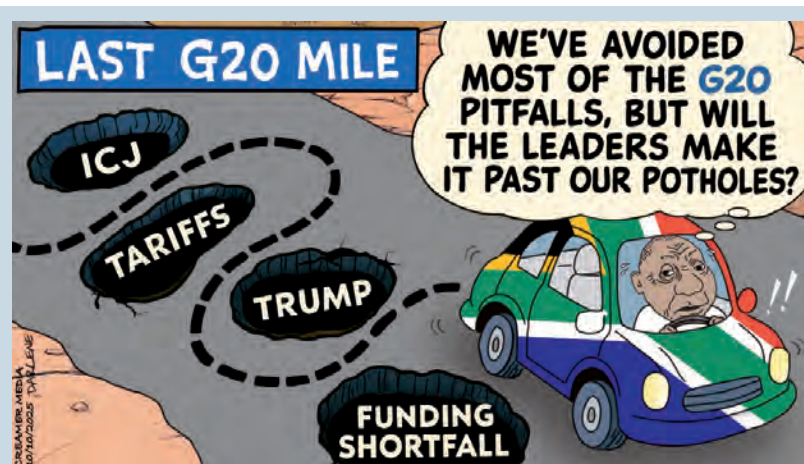
It also does not help that these efforts will have to take place at a time when tariffs have breached affordability levels for many.

*Terence Creamer | Editor*



## PUSH PAUSE ||

*Better be quarrelling than lonesome. Irish Proverb*



**DODGING & WEAVING:** The final countdown to the G20 Leaders' Summit in South Africa is truly under way. What should have been something of a crowning moment for the country – the first African nation to host the event – has instead been a hard slog. Besides having to navigate what are truly hazardous geopolitical roads, Joburg's infrastructure backlogs and general decay have also raised questions about the wisdom of having selected it as host city.

## FACTS IN FIGURES

**4 000**

The amount to which Deutsche Bank raised its gold price forecast on September 17, by \$300 for 2026, owing to strong central bank demand, potential US dollar weakness and a resumed Federal Reserve rate-easing cycle.

**35**

The percentage by which South Africa's online sales grew in 2024, to R96-billion. Growth has continued in 2025 at an annualised rate of 38% and is expected to exceed R130-billion by the end of the year, according to technology market research firm World Wide Worx.

Online retail has moved from being an experiment on the margins to a structural force in the economy. Nearly one in every ten rands spent (in) retail will now be online.

WORLD WIDE WORX CEO **ARTHUR GOLDSTUCK**.

## RARE EARTHS

# Rare Progress

Yet another global rare earths advance amid more smart testwork in Joburg lab

MARTIN CREAMER | CREAMER MEDIA PUBLISHING EDITOR

More smart testwork in the Johannesburg laboratory of Rainbow Rare Earths has enabled yet another forward leap for rare earth elements (REEs), at a time when REEs are in growing demand for use in permanent magnets to help the world go green and clean.

On September 1, the London-listed Rainbow Rare Earths shot the lights out with an exceptionally pure rare earth recovered from waste on a dump in South Africa's Limpopo province.

Now, more than a month later, it has streaked ahead still further through the major cerium depletion advance for light and heavy magnet REEs.

Cerium, a low-value \$1/kg REE, constitutes a large portion of REE material, which makes its early depletion ahead of final separation highly desirable as it reduces the flow and simplifies subsequent hydrometallurgical processes. This lowers the required reagent and water consumption, which in turn results in a smaller separation plant with reduced capital and operating costs.

Cerium being down 65% lifts grade still higher as multiple tests have confirmed.

The workstream that is expected to be finalised in the last quarter of this year will be high-purity neodymium and praseodymium oxide, and a heavy rare earth concentrate that will include the very high value dysprosium and terbium.

The Phalaborwa project is one of the world's most resilient rare earths projects in that it recovers REEs from phosphogypsum stacks, a waste product from phosphoric acid production, which eliminates many of the costs, risks and long timescales associated with traditional mining projects.

The potential to become a very low-cost producer of light and heavy REEs, and one of the highest-margin projects in development globally, is being increasingly recognised against a backdrop of the Western world finally recognising the underpinning by REEs of the functionality of so many of the emerging and advanced technologies that are required by twenty-first-century society.

The latest cerium depletion advance on top of the earlier exceptional purity primary continuous ion exchange (CIX) achievement also reduces the volumetric flow for the mixed feed stream entering the final separation circuit,



GEORGE BENNETT

These results demonstrate the exceptional work being carried out by our team

which lowers capital and operating costs for this portion of the flowsheet.

The incorporation of the cerium depletion step to the flowsheet of the Phalaborwa project has helped to reduce the volumetric flow to the separation circuit to 2% of the original 340 m<sup>3</sup>/h pregnant leach solution coming into the CIX circuit, and has the added benefit of 27% less metal going into the circuit.

Being highlighted is distinctive intellectual property in the recovery of REEs from phosphogypsum through the Phalaborwa project.

The cerium rejection step simplifies the feed entering the final separation circuit, both in terms of volume and in terms of the amount of unwanted metal that must be separated.

"These results demonstrate the exceptional work being carried out by our team at our in-house facility in Johannesburg, which is a world-class laboratory at the cutting-edge of REE recovery techniques," Rainbow Rare Earths CEO **George Bennett** pointed out in a media release to *Engineering News & Mining Weekly*.

Rainbow's large pilot plant was built in collaboration with Mintek, South Africa's Council for Mineral Technology, which derives its mandate from the Minerals Technology Act.

The availability of phosphogypsum is the result of the mining of a hard-rock phosphate deposit, which has been carried out by Foskor

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PLATINUM GROUP METALS

# Medical Momentum

Medical demand for platinum forecast to reach new high this year

MARTIN CREAMER | CREAMER MEDIA PUBLISHING EDITOR

The demand for platinum in medical technology is on its way to reaching a 320 000 oz high point this year amid growth being at a consistent 3% compound annual growth rate since 2013 and 4% more growth forecast for this year.

Last year medical demand for platinum represented 4% of total platinum demand and platinum is singled out in a recent communique of the World Platinum Investment Council as being the only material suitable for the electrodes required in the one-million pacemakers implanted each year.

According to advanced materials business Umicore, platinum is the precious metal of choice when it comes to medical technology, owing to its chemical inertness, corrosion resistance,

biocompatibility, temperature and dimensional stability, and electrical conductivity.

This very distinctive metal, with which South Africa is overwhelmingly endowed, is one that does not cause toxic reactions, even in long-term human implants.

Moreover, *Engineering News & Mining Weekly* can report that the use of platinum is crucial because it is inert, conductive, and radiopaque.

In general, the demands placed on surfaces in medical technology are high – and with good reason – owing to their contribution to the successful outcome of medical procedures.

In this regard, high-quality coatings are essential, as the quality of plated surfaces is decisive for maintaining the properties and the performance



Source: World Platinum Investment Council and Umicore

### HEARTBEAT METAL

Platinum plays a life-saving role in modern medicine, with demand for the precious metal in pacemakers and other critical medical devices reaching record highs

of the end product.

The council reported Umicore as seeing increased interest in its platinum-based coating technology, which has been specially designed for medical applications.

The platinum-based coating technology is based on a strong acidic solution with a comparatively low sulphuric acid content, which makes it less aggressive

towards the substrate to be coated and allows easier application on sensitive materials.

The properties of the platinum-based coating technology enable uniform layer distribution, even with complex geometries, which is found to be advantageous in the manufacture of miniaturised components.

They are also present in sensors for pH, glucose, oxygen, or electrocardiogram measurement, where coated, smooth, and non-porous surfaces improve signal quality.

In addition, high electrical conductivity and chemical inertness ensure reliable measurement results over extended periods.

In addition, platinum markers are used to enable the precise positioning of catheters or clot-retrieval devices under X-ray control, owing to platinum's radiopacity. Its radiopacity is put to good use when performing delicate, life-saving procedures to treat patients with neurovascular disorders such as strokes or aneurysms, or when fitting stents to treat narrow or blocked arteries. Further, electrodes in ablation catheters benefit from the high conductivity and corrosion resistance of platinum coatings. ■

• From page 7

for the last 60 years.

The mined material is concentrated through a flotation process into a phosphate slurry, which over the period has been the feed for a nearby phosphoric acid plant, where two key ingredients were added, namely sulphuric acid and heat to create phosphoric acid.

The rare earths in the phosphate slurry were further upgraded in the phosphoric acid

sludge in the phosphoric acid plant and then that phosphoric acid production created a gypsum waste residue that was transported in a concentrated form to the gypsum stacks. In conjunction with Mintek, Rainbow has developed a one-of-a-kind flowsheet that enables the commercial extraction of key rare earths out of the phosphogypsum.

Displayed on a large screen during a presentation at Mintek were an old opencast

mine that had been mined for many years, an old Sasol phosphoric acid plant that had not been operating for ten years, and two unlined environmentally hazardous gypsum stacks.

Rainbow's project is on its way to clean this up in an environment-friendly manner.

The power-lined site has a high-voltage switchyard, reflecting the advantages of brownfield project development. ■

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## hybrid

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*\*The Hino 300 Hybrid is being trialled in South Africa with selected customers. It will not be available for customers to purchase.*

ALL THE WAY



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## Babcock in Africa: 135 years of steam generation and associated technology

**F**ew companies can claim a legacy in Africa as deep and enduring as Babcock, which is known globally for pioneering boiler and power generation technology since the 19th century.

Babcock established itself in South Africa as the steam generating technology leader in the 1890s through its initial supply of steam to the De Beers group of diamond mines.

This marked the start of the energy story of South Africa becoming inseparably linked with the history of Babcock boilers amid a central ongoing shaping of South Africa's energy infrastructure.

For 135 years, Babcock has been designing, supplying, maintaining and modernising the equipment that keeps South Africa's power plants and industries in operation.

Globally, Babcock & Wilcox (B&W) has led innovations in boiler design and environmental technology, from low-NOx burners to waste-heat recovery and

advanced combustion systems – contributions that have shaped the power sector worldwide.

Since its formal registration in 1946, Babcock Africa has been the custodian and original-equipment manufacturer (OEM) of Babcock-designed boilers across the continent, bridging global innovation with local implementation.

In South Africa, Babcock Africa ensures that these technologies are successfully applied, adapted and sustained.

In the 1940s and 1950s, an integral role was played in Eskom's first centralised power stations at Witbank, Brakpan and Congella.

From 1970 to 1990, major utility boilers were designed and commissioned at Eskom's Grootvlei, Hendrina, Matla and Lethabo power stations and many are still in service today.

The 2000s led to the formation of Babcock Ntuthuko Engineering, the empowered engineering division of Babcock Africa (through partnership with

Sphere Holdings).

Building on Babcock's original operations in South Africa, Babcock Ntuthuko Engineering continues to specialise in life-cycle management, life extension and emissions-reduction retrofits.

As the OEM of all Babcock boilers in the Eskom fleet and all boilers in Africa supplied through B&W, Babcock Ntuthuko Engineering has remained deeply involved in boiler design, maintenance and engineering solutions of Eskom's coal-fired fleet, as well as various industrial projects, while its Babcock International Group Africa Division parent company diversified the business, which by then included heavy fabrication works, plant and welding equipment services, heavy machinery distribution, industrial generators, training services and truck transport solutions.

Project achievements during this time spanned various industries and included a coal/bagasse boiler in Swaziland;

waste heat boilers in Vanderbijlpark; a unique multi-fuel fluidised bed boiler in Durban; fluid-bed conversion for wood waste; refurbishment of a sugar mill in Mozambique; and high energy piping systems (replacement and new build) for Eskom.

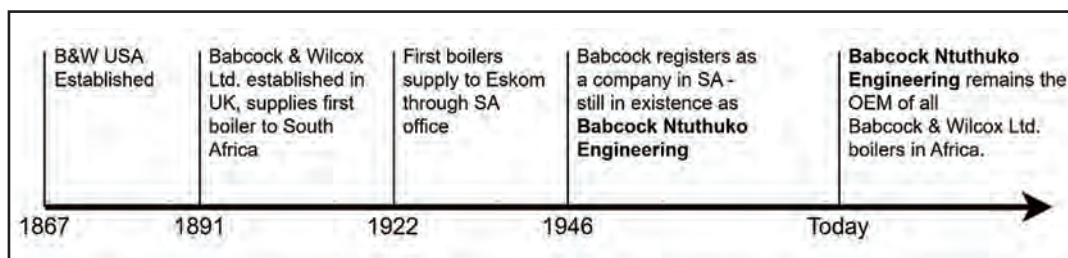
### Technologies for the Future

With the introduction of new emission regulations in the 2020s, Babcock Ntuthuko Engineering further broadened its footprint by being awarded a low-NOx burner project at a large petrochemical site.

This included integration of low-NOx burner technology supplied to Babcock Ntuthuko Engineering by their technology partner. With these, NOx emissions were reduced from 1 100 mg/Nm<sup>3</sup> to just 470 mg/Nm<sup>3</sup>, well below the regulatory threshold of 750 mg/Nm<sup>3</sup> in a project that marked one of the first successful NOx reduction efforts in South Africa.

This project continues to deliver huge success, with eight boilers retrofitted and tested by August 2025 sustainably producing up to 50% NOx emission reduction.

Extending into abatement solutions for particulate emissions, Babcock Ntuthuko Engineering was awarded a



multi-unit electrostatic precipitator (ESP) upgrade and refurbishment contract, also integrating and supported by their technology partners.

With each unit rated at 600 MW, the total fly ash loading exceeds 100 t/h at full load and particulate emissions have been reduced well below the target for each of the completed units, enabling compliance with the latest air quality regulations for what are some of the largest ESPs in the world.

Emissions control technologies on offer include fabric filters, wet and dry flue gas desulphurisation equipment, and dry sorbent injection systems for sulphur dioxide reduction, to help clients meet the new regulatory challenges.

### Capability Beyond Supply of Technology

The capability of Babcock Ntuthuko Engineering to extend well beyond the supply of technology lies in its ability to integrate a wide range of technologies into steam-generating systems, whether for repairs, life-extension maintenance, performance upgrades, or complete new-build projects.

Leveraging the depth of experience of its capable team, Babcock Ntuthuko Engineering can incorporate technology from international suppliers or equivalent alternatives, ensuring that the solution is optimised for the specific operational and client requirements.

This involves performing advanced integration engineering, such as structural modifications, pressure part redesign, thermal performance assessments, and control system harmonisation, to deliver a fully functional and reliable system.

Where the technology owner's scope typically ends at supplying the technology, Babcock Ntuthuko Engineering ensures end-to-end implementation — adapting, integrating and commissioning the technology to achieve guaranteed operational performance and long-term plant reliability.

### Skills Development and Localisation

While global technology providers play a vital role in innovation, Babcock Africa ensures these solutions are embedded locally through investment in people, small, medium-sized and micro enterprises (SMEs) and communities.

Babcock Africa, which strives to ensure that ownership, skills and supply chains remain firmly rooted in South Africa, offers over 200 bursaries and apprenticeships yearly.

In addition, Babcock Africa has a partnership with the Presidential Employment Stimulus to rebuild artisan skills, delivers Enterprise and Supplier Development initiatives in support of black youth- and women-owned SMEs, and integrates local suppliers into critical projects.

This approach ensures not only plant reliability, but also jobs, skills transfer and inclusive growth, which are outcomes that are aligned with the transformation priorities of private and government stakeholders.

By combining global technology leadership with Babcock Africa's local engineering expertise and workforce development, South Africa benefits from solutions that are globally innovative yet locally sustained. This partnership approach ensures safe, efficient and environmentally-compliant boilers across industries.

From the earliest mines to today's megaprojects, Babcock Africa remains the constant partner in South Africa's engineering journey. While working alongside global innovators Babcock ensures that technologies are not only introduced, but successfully integrated, localised and sustained.

This is 'lifetime engineering' in practice — a legacy of innovation, environmental leadership, and skills development that continues to secure South Africa's long-term energy and industrial future.



“*The story of South Africa's boilers is not just about technology – it is about people. For more than a century, Babcock has combined global innovation with local skills, creating jobs, transferring expertise and sustaining industries. Babcock & Wilcox's inventions have shaped the industry worldwide, and here in Africa, it is Babcock's engineers, artisans and partners who keep that legacy alive. Our commitment is to continue powering the nation while building the next generation of South African expertise*”

– Thava Govender

CEO – Babcock Ntuthuko Engineering



# Babcock

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## ENERGY

# Legislative Leverage

## Sanedi says govt may use Expropriation Act to secure land for transmission line rollout

DARREN PARKER | CREAMER MEDIA DEPUTY EDITOR ONLINE

South African National Energy Development Institute (Sanedi) energy secretariat head Professor **Sampson Mamphweli** says government intends to leverage the Expropriation Act to acquire land for servitudes as part of its transmission network expansion programme.

“It is known that much of the land under negotiation is underproductive and some farmers are no longer using it. However, in some cases, the government is pressured during negotiations and ends up paying significantly more for the servitude than the land is actually worth,” he noted at the inaugural Energy Indaba, hosted by the University of South Africa’s (Unisa’s) College of Human Sciences (CHS), in Pretoria, on September 22.

He commented on the government’s plan for ensuring that citizens were not effectively “held hostage” by inflated payments for transmission line servitudes.

“We passed the Expropriation Act, and part of the reason it was passed was specifically to deal with servitudes. The government can approach me regarding my land, which is mine, and try to negotiate with me. If I become unreasonable, they can use that Act to expropriate the land, and then build the transmission lines.

“That is basically how it should work now that we have the Expropriation Act. This was one way for the government to act in the interest of the people, rather than for the individual,” he said.

The 2024 Expropriation Act distinguishes between “public purpose” and “public interest” as grounds for expropriation without compensation. “Public purpose” pertains to specific public uses, such as the development of infrastructure like energy transmission lines, while “public interest” encompasses broader objectives, including land reform and equitable access to resources.

This legislative framework comes as the National Transmission Company South Africa (NTCSA) plans to expand the transmission network by about 14 000 km over the next decade. The NTCSA has previously indicated that it may resort to land expropriation to secure routes for building transmission infrastructure, with Electricity and Energy Minister **Kgosientsho Ramokgopa** telling Parliament in June that the NTCSA had exhausted all other avenues.

### Decarbonised Energy

Mamphweli also addressed the broader challenges that lie ahead in decarbonising South Africa’s power sector, highlighting

the draft Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) 2024, currently before Cabinet, which sets ambitious targets for renewable-energy deployment alongside the decommissioning of coal-fired power stations.

He emphasised the importance of the just energy transition (JET) framework to ensure social and economic equity during this period of transformation.

He outlined several systemic challenges. Grid capacity constraints, particularly in provinces with the best renewable-energy resources, necessitate major investment in new transmission lines and substations.

The financial requirements for grid expansion are significant, estimated at more than R400-billion, and private sector participation is considered essential.

He lamented that the pace of community participation and ownership in independent power producer (IPP) projects remained slow, with ongoing issues around the effectiveness of community trusts and the distribution of benefits.

Additional challenges included navigating regulatory and legal complexities in implementing new market structures and unbundling Eskom, balancing short-term energy stability with long-term decarbonisation, and ensuring inclusivity, skills development, and social ownership throughout the energy transition.

Mamphweli also highlighted the growing role of the carbon credits market in supporting South Africa’s JET. One of the key drivers is the EU’s Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), which imposes tariffs on goods produced with high carbon emissions when entering the EU market.

To remain competitive, Mamphweli said South African producers needed to decarbonise their production processes, and carbon credits could help offset emissions and demonstrate compliance.

He said South Africa was considering strategies such as ring-fencing renewable energy for goods destined for export markets, allowing producers to claim carbon credits and avoid penalties. He noted that these mechanisms could incentivise investment in renewable energy and low-carbon technologies while providing financial returns for projects that reduce emissions.

To fully leverage the carbon credits market, Mamphweli said South Africa was focused on developing robust systems for measuring, reporting and verifying emissions reductions.

He said that encouraging local participation in carbon credit projects would ensure that communities could benefit from the transition, while aligning national policies with international carbon market standards to maximise access and value.



### POWER PLAY

When the grid needs space, your land becomes negotiable – until it isn’t

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## ELECTRICITY

# Watt Horizon

Newly consolidated renewables major, Anthem, sets 6 GW goal for 2030

TERENCE CREAMER | CREAMER MEDIA EDITOR

Two well-established South African renewables companies – African Clean Energy Developments and EIMS Africa – have officially combined to form a new large-scale independent power producer (IPP) known as Anthem.

The consolidation also coincides with the introduction of new shareholders into the entity, which has historical ties to the Old Mutual-linked African Infrastructure Investment Managers' (AIIM's) IDEAS Fund, which remains the majority shareholder in Anthem.

The entity's shareholding now also includes the black economic-empowered Mahlako Energy Fund, and Norfund, which together hold 15%, and with scope to increase that interest to 30%. Norfund, which is the Norwegian government's development investment fund, has confirmed a R1.5-billion equity investment into Anthem.

With 2.7 GW of wind, solar PV and hydro in production, under construction or near to financial close, the combined entity has between 12% and 15% of South Africa's current IPP market.

## Anthem will remain a pure-play independent power producer

Its portfolio of 27 projects includes the 67 MW Umoya Wind Farm, reportedly the first utility scale wind project to reach financial close in 2012 under the South African government's renewables procurement programme.

It also includes projects developed on the back of private power purchase agreements, however, such as the 69 MW Msenge Emoyeni Wind Farm, a pioneering private offtaker facility supplying Sasol, as well as the Castle Wind Farm, which is described as the largest private-offtake wind farm, with 89 MW contracted to supply Sibanye-Stillwater.

Anthem currently generates over 2 400 GWh yearly, with an additional 1 350 GWh to come online in 2026.

### 11 GW Pipeline

CEO **James Cumming** reported at Anthem's launch that the entity

had an immediate goal of growing its capacity to 6 GW by 2030 off the back of an 11 GW project pipeline.

He also indicated that it would pursue hybrid battery energy storage systems (BESS) at some of its power stations and would assess standalone BESS investments, particularly ones that could assist it in being

and solar PV projects it has already developed in Eswatini.

Cumming said that its growth ambitions would require the raising of additional capital and, thus, he did not discount the prospect of a future listing of Anthem, or a further broadening of its shareholder base.

Chairperson **Sean Friend**, who was also AIIM's chief investment officer for SADC, forecast that Anthem would have a material impact on the region's energy landscape, owing to its significant large-scale projects already under way, and its strong growth pipeline.

Anthem currently employs 80 people and aims to expand its employee base incrementally as it adds additional capacity and takes over more of the operations and maintenance functions at its facilities.

COO **Ryan Hammond** highlighted the growth in the scale of the projects being pursued by the company, arguing that while 140 MW wind farms were once viewed as large-scale, Anthem was currently developing and building projects that would be larger by a factor of five.

"As a long-term owner and operator with deep local expertise, we are committed to building a sustainable energy future – delivering progress and prosperity for people across South Africa and the region in years to come," Hammond said, highlighting the employment, social and environmental spin-offs of its investments. ■

• From page 12

Mamphweli said carbon credits also offered opportunities to attract investment and support the financing of renewable energy and just transition initiatives, enabling compliance with international trade requirements and ensuring equitable distribution of the benefits of decarbonisation.

### Private-Sector Participation

Mamphweli emphasised that greater community participation and ownership in renewable-energy projects was critical. He outlined several approaches through which the government and the private sector could collaborate to strengthen engagement and ensure equitable benefits.

Reforming community benefit structures was a priority, he said, as current models often allocated a percentage of project ownership or revenue to community trusts, but these funds frequently failed to reach intended beneficiaries or remained unused owing to misalignment with local needs.

He said that strengthening oversight and accountability through monitoring by the IPP Office was aimed at ensuring community funds were effectively managed.

Facilitating access for emerging and community-owned IPPs was another key focus, Mamphweli said. He noted that workshops for emerging IPPs had been held to identify and address bottlenecks preventing historically disadvantaged communities and individuals

from participating as project owners.

This includes exploring financial instruments and support mechanisms to help new entrants access capital and navigate regulatory requirements.

Private sector partnerships were also encouraged, with development finance institutions and major investors providing technical, financial, and managerial support directly to community groups and emerging IPPs.

Mamphweli said tailoring community development initiatives to align with local stakeholder needs would ensure that investments in training, infrastructure, and social programmes matched actual community priorities. ■



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## EMPLOYMENT REGULATIONS

# Targets Pushback

## Seifsa joins Busa in opposing new Employment Equity Sector Targets

SCHALK BURGER | CREAMER MEDIA SENIOR DEPUTY EDITOR

Industry employer organisation the Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of Southern Africa (Seifsa), which is a member of industry organisation Business Unity South Africa (Busa), has confirmed its support for Busa's legal challenge against the recently promulgated Employment Equity (EE) Sector Targets.

Busa on September 22 announced that it had initiated legal proceedings over the EE Sector Targets, which came into effect on September 1, saying the targets were flawed and unworkable.

"Seifsa has no in principle objection to the provisions of the Employment Equity Act (EEA) in pursuit of meaningful work-place transformation. However, we remain seriously concerned about the numerous irregularities that occurred in formulating the

final sector targets. This is despite ongoing consultations between Seifsa and senior officials in the Department of Employment and Labour, and also between Busa and the Minister of Employment and Labour," says Seifsa CEO **Lucio Trentini**.

"Business concerns [about the regulations] are focused around serious and irrational substantive and procedural irregularities. The nature, tone and content of consultations between business and government fell short of what would be considered good-faith consultations," he explains.

Further, the categorisation of manufacturing in the EEA as an all-encompassing category that includes all forms of manufacturing across the board is patently wrong, Trentini says.

Manufacturing entails vastly different economic subsectors and activities across the economy, all



**LUCIO TRENTINI**

We remain seriously concerned about the numerous irregularities that occurred in formulating the final sector targets

differing very significantly in size, complexity of operations, demographics and input costs, among others.

Even within the metals and engineering sector, there is no uniformity among the 12 subsectors that make up the sector.

"The Minister of Employment and Labour has the power to identify subsectors and has failed to do so," he avers.

Additionally, business is concerned about the apparent lack of empirical and/or statistical data and the methodology used at arriving at the sector targets. Consultations around these matters and others, which will be ven-

tilated in legal papers, need to go beyond being a mere tick-box exercise, Trentini states.

"Genuine engagement marked by transparency, sector-specific insights and meaningful feedback, all of which have been absent in the lead-up to the promulgation of the Act, are key ingredients of any good-faith consultation engagement," he admonishes.

The new EERegulations introduce specific targets for designated groups in South Africa. These targets aim to increase the representation of black people, women and individuals with disabilities in the workforce, particularly in upper occupational levels.

Designated employers will have to align their employment equity plans with these targets or face potential fines, compliance orders and exclusion from doing business with the State.

The regulations will now be the subject of a legal challenge.

Regardless of what the courts may decide in this and other legal challenges, South Africa will not reach its full economic potential if transformation were halted. The slow pace of transformation in the country, including in the metals and engineering sector, is of great concern, says Trentini.

The manufacturing industry in general, and the metals and engineering sector in particular, are in need of transformation, not only in terms of general business ownership, but also in terms of appointments to senior leadership positions and the composition of boards of directors, he says. ■

There is no uniformity among the 12 subsectors that make up the sector

## ZAMBIA COPPERBELT

## Copperbelt primed for Zambia's cassava food and fuel push

ANOTHER big C may soon begin to emerge along Zambia's copper-renowned Copperbelt, this time having nothing to do with the yellow metal but instead highlighting the first letter of a staple food that is also a source of feedstock for biofuel – cassava.

It is envisaged that the Copperbelt cassava project will serve as the pilot for the

eventual widespread upliftment of Zambian agriculture that will provide not only food but also the feedstock for ethanol fuel production under the national ZS 868 and ZS 869 bio-fuel standards. Schweizer Agriculture executive director **Dr Joas Mukanda Chihangu** believes that the Copperbelt's initial 1 000 ha cassava project will show how the lot of Zambia's farmers can be uplifted.

For years, farmers in Zambia's Masaiti, Luanshya, and surrounding districts have, Chihangu says, toiled with hand hoes, poor seed, and little access to finance, resulting in their maize, cassava, and groundnut harvests often barely covering school fees and household needs. Now, through a partner-

ship between Schweizer Agriculture and Ayoun Energy, it is hoped that significant improvement is on the way.

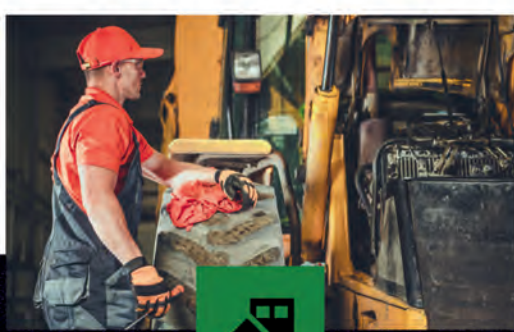
To transform the agricultural situation, Schweizer Agriculture is equipping cooperatives with climate-smart seed varieties, regenerative soil practices, and irrigation technologies.

Farmers are being trained in financial literacy to link them to credit and new climate-resilient maize hybrids are expected to help to increase yields across the country, with seed multiplication programmes ensuring long-term sustainability. ■

MARTIN CREAMER  
PUBLISHING EDITOR

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# Tier-One Mindset

Valterra Platinum already exploring Mogalakwena's underground potential

NATASHA ODENDAAL | CREAMER MEDIA SENIOR DEPUTY EDITOR



## A VAST RESOURCE

While going underground marks an exciting new journey for Mogalakwena, there is no immediate need for underground development to sustain throughput and maintain the company's H1 cost curve position

In the wake of separating its assets from former parent company Anglo American, platinum group metals (PGMs) mining company Valterra Platinum is setting the stage to further develop one of its most significant endowments, the Mogalakwena mine, in South Africa's Limpopo province.

Mogalakwena mine, "a mine within communities", is nestled among 64 villages 30 km north-west of Mokopane. It is home to vast volumes of PGMs, with only 14% of the total reserve extracted over the past 30 years.

With a resource life of 150 years, there is significant opportunity ahead for Mogalakwena, the world's largest openpit PGM mine.

"We are the industry's most exciting endowment," said Mogalakwena mine senior GM **Kobus van den Berg**, noting that the operation has blending and scaling capabilities, depending on market needs, and continues to operate in the lower half of the cost curve.

Featuring a revised mine plan, which examined pit optimisation, dumping optimisation and the ore grade, the mine is now undertaking a feasibility study into the development of Sandslot Underground.

The Sandslot resource, the first openpit at the mine, was selected as the highest-value case for initiating underground mining.

"Through a resource development plan, Sandslot was identified as the first transition into understanding how an underground

operation will potentially look for Mogalakwena mine," Mogalakwena underground exploration project and studies GM **Stephan Nothnagel** explains.

In 2022, Valterra started developing an exploration decline into the tier-one orebody, ultimately deciding on a two-phased approach, aligned with capital preservation and to derisk the development profile.

This approach aims to develop the orebody to its maximum potential.

"It is a tier-one orebody, and it requires a tier-one mindset and a tier-one design with a capital prudence lens."

The prefeasibility study was completed in the first half of 2025, confirming a reef grade of 4g/t to 6g/t, which enhances the mine's blending capabilities.

Valterra Platinum mining operations executive head **Willie Theron** affirms the value-accrative growth opportunity of combining the underground and openpit operations.

"Essentially, the value proposition really is to have a blending strategy between the mine and what goes into the concentrator."

By blending low-grade ore stockpiles with the high-grade ore now coming into the mix, the company can maintain its 3g/t output, which reduces the all-in sustaining cost, and enhances the operation's resilience to price fluctuations.

Should Phase 1 receive capital approval, the mine envisions a trucking operation – hauling the first ore out of the top part of the orebody to the surface, thereby supporting an initial production rate of about two-million to 2.5-million tonnes a year, adds Nothnagel.

As part of the feasibility study, trial mining will be undertaken towards the end of 2026, followed by a ramp-up to Phase 1 steady state towards the end of the decade.

The trial mining will enable the company to deliver firm, properly trialled numbers that will directly inform the feasibility study, Theron adds.

"They are not your typical phases from a study perspective. We bring in real-world data from underground experience in trial mining that feeds into the feasibility [study], which guides us to make those important decisions."

The feasibility study is targeted for completion in the first half of 2027, at which point an investment decision will be made.

"If we continue with the study, and beyond 2030, we envision a ramp-up to a 3.6-million-to 4.5-million-tonne-a-year operation," Nothnagel says.

This would require an ore-handling facility. While several options are available, a conveyor system is currently being considered.

During the first half of the year, Mogalakwena mine completed 12.8 km of

additional exploration drilling, developed 1.6 km of key enabling infrastructure, and delivered the first bulk ore sample.

“Cumulatively, we have [completed] over 43 km [of] exploration drilling, and we have developed just over eight kilometres. All of that goes into the feasibility study.”

## Openpit Value Stands

While this marks an exciting new journey for the company, there is no immediate need for underground development to sustain throughput and maintain the company’s H1 cost curve position, with optimised openpit operations delivering one-million ounces a year.

The openpit mine has a “detailed, capitalised and costed” mine plan, says Van den Berg.

Near-term openpit grades from the four truck-and-shovel operations – Zwartfontein as well as Mogalakwena south, central and north – are expected to average 2.7 g/t to 2.9 g/t, rising to 3 g/t in the mid-term.

“We are the largest ounce contributor in the company . . . and with the underground with the higher grade, it gives us that optionality to blending ability and also the scalability, should the market demand [that].”

The underground ore is expected to average 4 g/t to 6 g/t before blending, and combining this with openpit ore enhances long-term value, further improving all-in sustaining costs and supporting future growth.

He further points out that the operation has been working to improve drilling efficiency and load-and-haul efficiency.

Total drilled metres increased by 5% from 2022 to 2024, resulting in a 13% increase in the amount of tonnes blasted – evidence of efficient and effective drilling, he says.

“We have also seen a reduction in the amount of trucks.”

As part of the pit optimisation strategy in Mogalakwena’s revised mining plan – which targets mining more towards the north to attain lower strip ratios of 4.5 to 6.7 in the outer years and unlock shorter hauling distances – the mine activated the north waste rock dump this year, yielding a 27% reduction in truck cycle times.

The closer dump allows the operation to start looking at “parking” some trucks, ultimately reducing both its carbon footprint and costs even further.

The group’s Komatsu 4800 rope shovel also led to significant improvements between 2022 and 2024. The 100-t-plus-capacity rope shovel dumps three loads within minutes into 300-t-capacity Komatsu 930E trucks on either side of the massive machine.

“The nameplate, more or less, of the 4800 is getting us to about 40-million tonnes a year, and . . . coupled and paired with 950E trucks, it just creates a lot of synergies.”



### OPTIMAL GRADES

Near-term openpit grades are expected to average 2.7 g/t to 2.9 g/t, rising to 3 g/t in the mid-term

Valterra Platinum’s Mogalakwena mine is also home to two concentrators, North and South, providing sufficient capacity.

As part of a footprint reduction project to replace the conventional cleaner bank, the mine commissioned the Jameson cleaner circuit at its Mogalakwena North Concentrator. It was completed and handed over in April this year, with operationalisation from May to June. Ramp-up started in July, with completion expected in December, from when the full benefit will be seen.

With a resource life of 150 years, there is significant opportunity ahead for Mogalakwena

Mogalakwena mine concentrators acting GM **Herman Kemp** says that the North Concentrator, commissioned in 2008, is the world’s largest PGM concentrator. Kitted out with a lot of technology, it delivers throughput of 9.5-million tonnes a year.

The mine also operates the Mogalakwena South Concentrator. Commissioned in 1993, it delivers 4.5-million tonnes of throughput a year.

In parallel, the group is constructing an additional tailings storage facility (TSF).

The Vaalkop TSF has been inactive since 2021, while the Blinkwater 1 TSF remains active until 2028.

To add to this, the mine is constructing Blinkwater 2 to expand the overall TSF. Construction of the rock impound facility started this year.

“We have pulled out all the stops in terms of making sure our dams are fully conformant and safe,” says Kemp, noting that intense monitoring includes drone surveillance and daily satellite displacement monitoring, along with water pressure tracking across the dams.

The mine also has an independent technical review panel comprising external industry experts who visit the dams once a year. In addition, an external dam safety review is conducted once every five years. The most recent review at Mogalakwena was conducted in 2022, with the next planned for 2027.

The mine is also compliant with the Global Industry Standards on Tailings Management, or GISTM, and updated its publicly available compliance disclosure on August 5.

## New Era for Valterra Platinum

Overall, the future looks promising for Valterra Platinum as a newly separated group.

Earlier this year, Valterra Platinum, formerly Anglo American Platinum, separated from its parent company, Anglo American, listing on the JSE and the LSE as a standalone entity.

During a recent site visit to the company’s flagship Mogalakwena mine, the senior leadership and executive team showcased the mine and outlined the company’s progress moving forward. With a continued focus on balancing production with striving for zero-harm operations, Valterra has been simplified and strengthened to ensure it is able to stand on its own.

“We are strengthening our key capabilities, [and while] it is work in progress, we believe that, if we are a simplified, strengthened organisation, we will have that competitive advantage,” says Valterra corporate affairs and sustainability executive head **Yvonne Mfolo**.

“It is important that we are efficient, sweat our assets, manage our cash flows and expand our margins, as well as invest in our portfolio for maximum value and ensure disciplined capital allocation,” she says of the group’s capital allocation framework.

Valterra Platinum has an integrated asset portfolio – from mine to market.

“We have assets that are still going to endure for a lot of years, and we can continue creating value while developing these assets.”

The company continues to review growth opportunities, demand trends, use-case creation, and broader market development opportunities. ■■

## WATER

# Crisis Response

## Wits launches research centre to tackle South Africa's water challenges

NATASHA ODENDAAL | CREAMER MEDIA SENIOR DEPUTY EDITOR

The University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) has launched its flagship water research centre, Wits:H<sub>2</sub>O, in response to South Africa's deepening water woes.

The working research group brings together government, business, academia and civil society to bring real-world solutions to water challenges in South Africa and across the African continent.

South Africa is currently in the midst of a systemic water crisis as a result of the convergence of causal factors such as ageing infrastructure, poor governance and pollution with an increasing population and demand.

Communities across the country face daily water disruptions, with more frequent regional 'Day Zero' type events, prolonged local supply failures in metropolitan and smaller municipalities and collapsing infrastructure, leading to faltering water treatment plants, escalating water losses and mine drainage and untreated wastewater contaminating rivers and aquifers. Climate change compounds these challenges, with longer droughts and more extreme rainfall events threatening food production, rural and urban water security and public health.

While access to water is a natural and basic human right, water crises of the magnitude currently experienced in South Africa are human-made – therefore, human action can solve them, says Wits Claude Leon Foundation

chairperson in water research and Wits:H<sub>2</sub>O director Professor **Craig Sheridan**.

Projections suggest that, by mid-century, water deficits could become the norm unless innovative, integrated solutions are urgently adopted.

"We, as South Africans, located within the African continent, are facing a water crisis. From regional 'Day Zero' type events to ongoing local water supply failures, every person is impacted. Wits:H<sub>2</sub>O represents our approach to thinking about water and engaging meaningfully with this crisis," he says.

Wits:H<sub>2</sub>O, previously known as the Centre in Water Research and Development, is an interdisciplinary research initiative that applies systemic thinking to Africa's water challenges.

Led by Sheridan, Wits:H<sub>2</sub>O is supported by the Wits School of Chemistry's Professor **Heidi Richards** and a large network of interdisciplinary researchers, including more than 60 scholars and researchers from the fields of science, engineering, health sciences, humanities, commerce, law and education, as well as from other research institutes based at Wits.

The centre collaborates with various other organisations locally and globally, including government, business and civil society, to help safeguard the critical resource, with the purpose of combining the best thinking globally



**CRAIG SHERIDAN**

Water deficits could become the norm unless innovative solutions are urgently adopted

to consider the water challenges.

"South Africa is facing a significant skills gap in the water sector. Decades of underinvestment in training and capacity building have left us with too few qualified engineers, hydrologists, water managers and sanitation experts," Sheridan continues.

The centre aims to conduct research and rebuild this essential skills base, while training and mentoring the next generation of professionals who will face the future of the increasing water challenges.

"Wits:H<sub>2</sub>O's vision is to go beyond thinking about solutions, to thinking about how the solutions impact society, and to assist society in responding to our future challenges as they relate to the increasing scarcity of water resources.

"Also, we hope to inform, inspire and partner with stakeholders across the world in providing sustainable solutions for our continent." ■

### DUMP RETREATMENT

## Mogale tailings retreatment facility marks one year

NEARLY a year after commissioning, Pan African's Mogale tailings retreatment (MTR) operation, in Mogale City, looks back on the success of the project, which has been critical to local community development and environmental mitigation.

In 2022, Pan African Resources acquired the asset from the liquidators of Mintails, and immediately embarked on the construction of the MTR, investing R2.5-billion to develop the plant that would ultimately process tailings from dumps.

In October 2024, the MTR was commissioned – two months ahead of schedule and R100-million under budget, and by December 2024, the operations had ramped up to full production of 800 000 t/m.

Speaking to *Engineering News & Mining Weekly* on the sidelines of the relaunch of the MTR last month, which was attended by Mogale City local municipality Mayor **Lucky Godfrey Sele**, MTR GM **Oriel Shikwambana** said that a game-changer for the development of the project was approaching it on an engineering, procurement and construction management basis.

This meant the team was in control of the execution, which enabled it to achieve the full construction ahead of time and below budget.

Further, the decision to leverage bolted

construction of the carbon-in-leach tanks, instead of the standard welded contraction, saved the company about two months on the construction time.

About 1 600 people were employed during the construction phase, with over 1 000 from the local community.

Currently, there are 700 people on site – 200 are permanent employees, with the balance a split between.

In addition to environmental benefits of processing the tailings, the company's social and labour plan and investments into schools and local community development projects, besides others, are having far-reaching local benefits and promoting local enterprise development. ■

NATASHA ODENDAAL  
SENIOR DEPUTY EDITOR

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## WATER

# Loss Recovery

Technology can turn South Africa's water leaks into revenue streams

NATASHA ODENDAAL | CREAMER MEDIA SENIOR DEPUTY EDITOR

Technology and collaboration are key to solving one of South Africa's most pressing water challenges: the loss of nearly half the country's clean, treated water.

South Africa's national nonrevenue water stands at 47%, an increase from 37% in 2012, exacerbated by leaks, bursts, faulty meters or illegal connections, and representing R7.2-billion a year in lost municipal revenue that could be reinvested in the country's infrastructure.

Fundamental transformation powered by technology, anchored in collaboration, can recover these losses, says Siemens sub-Saharan Africa CEO **Sabine Dall'Omo**.

Smart meters, artificial intelligence- (AI-) powered leak detection and partnership models are essential to move municipalities from reacting to outages to preventing them – while also recovering lost revenue.

Solving the nonrevenue water crisis requires an understanding of its complex anatomy.

While physical leaks from ageing infrastructure are the most visible symptom, accounting for the bulk of losses, the challenge runs deeper, and includes financial losses resulting from inaccurate or non-existent meters, as well as issues related to billing and revenue collection.

"These go beyond technical failings – reflecting symptoms of historically underfunded maintenance, a shortage of specialised skills and a lack of granular, real-time data to guide decision-making," she comments.

"South Africa cannot manage what it does not measure accurately," says Dall'Omo, noting that this is where digital innovation directly links to water security, with solutions such as advanced electromagnetic and battery-



**SABINE DALL'OMO**

Technology and collaboration are key to solving one of South Africa's most pressing water challenges

operated flow meters, equipped with 4G and NB-IoT connectivity.

"By providing precise, real-time data from across the distribution network, they replace ambiguity with accuracy, forming the first critical layer of a digital water system."

Once the country can accurately measure water flow, the next step is to manage that data intelligently.

"This is where platforms like Gridscale X Meter Data Management for Water prove their worth. For instance, these systems can create a digital twin of the water network, driving operational improvements that go far beyond simple "meter-to-cash" processes."

Further, AI applications, like Leak Finder and Blockage Predictor, elevate water management from a reactive to a predictive discipline.

By analysing real-time data from smart meters and hydraulic models, these

AI-powered tools can reduce leakages by up to 50%; pinpoint the location of a leak to within 200 m, dramatically reducing the time field crews spend searching; and identify a leak within two hours of its occurrence, driving rapid intervention that saves water and prevents minor issues from escalating into major network failures.

"AI can help identify customer-side leaks as small as one litre an hour, gaining up to eight times more revenue from targeted meter replacements, and reducing the time it takes to complete daily workflows by up to 85%," Dall'Omo continues.

It empowers municipalities to proactively manage their resources, preserve their infrastructure and secure their revenue streams.

However, even the most advanced technology is only half the solution. Implementing these solutions requires capacity, expertise and sustainable funding models.

"Therefore, no single entity – whether a technology provider, a municipality, or a government department – can solve this alone," she warns, highlighting that joint effort among the private sector, development finance institutions and the government is vital for significant investment in upgrading South Africa's water infrastructure.

Dall'Omo points to innovative models, such as South Africa's performance-based contracts, for example, which allow the private sector to invest in nonrevenue water initiatives in exchange for a portion of the savings, holding significant potential.

"While not a silver bullet, they represent a viable mechanism for municipalities to accelerate the pace of change."

South Africa's recently established Water Partnership Office also holds potential to streamline and fast-track critical infrastructure projects.

"The road ahead is challenging, but the vision is clear. This collaborative effort can help build a South Africa where municipalities are empowered with the tools and data to manage their networks proactively, and where every citizen has access to a reliable supply," she concludes. ■

## TRADE

## Trade with US critical for Western Cape, says Winde after trip

WESTERN CAPE Premier **Alan Winde** has returned from a visit to the US, where he held talks with government and private sector stakeholders in Washington DC, Atlanta and New York City.

The US has been the lead source market for foreign direct investment in the Western Cape over the past decade.

Sixty-two projects benefited from a total capital expenditure of more than

R29-billion between 2015 and 2024, covering several sectors, including communications, software and IT services, business services, food and beverages, and pharmaceuticals.

Joining Winde on his American visit were a delegation from the Western Cape government, as well as representatives from the province's tourism, trade and investment promotion agency, Wesgro.

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**Webinar**

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# **Beyond Extraction:** A new era of innovation and responsible sourcing

**October 21, 2025 | 12:00 noon**

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## TRADE ADMINISTRATION

# Tariff Crawl

Tariff investigations now taking 27 months on average to complete, report shows

TERENCE CREAMER | CREAMER MEDIA EDITOR

Import duty investigations in South Africa are currently taking an average of 27 months to complete – more than four times the official target of six months, with the oldest open tariff probe standing at 64 months, or nearly six years.

These findings are contained in the seventh and latest yearly analysis conducted by XA Global Trade Advisors and published in a report ominously titled ‘The Tariff Zombies’ that shows that 80% of open cases are older than six months.

The report also highlights the growing size of the investigation backlog being faced

by the International Trade Administration Commission of South Africa (Itac), with more cases being added yearly than are being finalised.

CEO **Donald MacKay** says that clearing the backlog will require decisions to be made expeditiously to either approve duty changes or reject them, as further delays will result in the “zombie” applications that contain outdated information crowding out current applications.

Delays have material implications for businesses that approach Itac for relief

Such delays have material implications for businesses that approach Itac for relief, including for the enterprise itself, but also for jobs and for consumers.

He warns that there has also been a change in the reason for the delays, with Itac now taking longer (18 months on average) to complete investigations. Previously, a large portion of the delay could be attributed to the lag between the completion of investigations and the receipt of Ministerial approvals.

While acknowledging that such investigations are complex, MacKay argues that even the most complicated tariff investigation should never take 18 months to complete. The report also raises concern over the lack of duty reviews, which is resulting in “evergreen protection”, in some instances for products that are

no longer even produced locally.

“Between July 2024 and June 2025, South Africa imported under 3 607 tariff codes that attracted a duty, meaning South Africans would have paid an eye-watering total of R103-billion in duties. Of these duties, 3 377 tariff codes were last reviewed before 2005 and accounted for duties of R96.8-billion.

“This means that in the last 20 years (2006 to 2025), only 230 tariff codes have been reviewed, which is only 6.4% of the tariff codes that attract a duty,” the reports states.

In addition, instead of making duty reduction applications, MacKay says companies are being encouraged to seek rebates.

“This does not fix the underlying problem, allowing import duties to remain evergreen, and adds complexity and additional administrative actions.

“Itac needs to establish if there are still local manufacturers, and if there are not, remove the duties,” he avers. ■

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## ELECTRICITY &amp; AUTOMOTIVE

## Terra Firma activates 2.9 MW solar project at Maxion facility

WHEELS producer Maxion Wheels and solar solutions company Terra Firma have commissioned a 2.9 MW solar project that is powering Maxion's manufacturing plant in Johannesburg.

The installation encompasses solar panels on a carport roof, as well as ground-mounted solar panels, which are supplying about 20% of the facility's yearly electricity needs.

This reduces Maxion's reliance on the national grid and provides some protection against electricity tariff increases, while reducing greenhouse-gas emissions by about 5 100 t/y.

Terra Firma developed, designed, engineered and installed the project and will be managing and

maintaining it over its lifetime.

A second phase of additional rooftop solar capacity is due for completion in the first quarter of next year, which may incorporate a battery energy storage system for energy arbitrage and backup power.

For manufacturers such as Maxion, like many in the automotive industry, electricity is one of the largest input costs owing to energy-intensive processes such as foundry systems and automated conveyor networks being used; therefore, managing this cost is critical to maintain competitiveness.

Solar power offers an accessible solution that enables manufacturers to reduce and manage costs, improve resilience and reduce climate impact. The company's Johannesburg facility produces high-precision aluminium wheels for automotive original-equipment manufacturers in South Africa. ■

MARLENY ARNOLDI  
SENIOR DEPUTY EDITOR ONLINE

# Transport Webinar

The role of private-sector participation in revitalising South Africa's transport and logistics systems

22<sup>nd</sup> October 2025 at 14:00

- Why is private-sector involvement vital in transport and logistics?
- What global PPP lessons can SA apply?
- What policies will unlock private investment?
- How is investment balanced with affordability and sustainability?
- What growth opportunities lie in rail, ports and logistics?

## Confirmed panel members:



Mark Evans  
Oliver Wyman  
(Facilitator)



Siyabonga  
Mthembu  
BDO



Jacques Taylor  
TATA International  
Africa



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URBAN PLANNING

# Car Culture

New household survey shows Capetonians travel largely by car

IRMA VENTER | CREAMER MEDIA SENIOR DEPUTY EDITOR

Cape Town's new Household Survey shows that private vehicles remain the dominant form of transport in the city, with 48% of households making use of this mode, followed by minibus taxi at 29.8%, buses at 9.3%, and walking at 11.3% of households.

The study was conducted between February and October last year, before passenger rail improved to become a more viable transport option.

The household survey engaged more than 8 000 households, from formal residences to informal settlements and backyard dwellings. The data includes socioeconomic indicators,

including housing conditions, education levels, mobility patterns, access to essential services, household income and expenditure and overall vulnerability.

Across all modes of travel, 17.2% of respondents travel less than 15 minutes to work, 41.1% travel between 15 minutes and 30 minutes, and 33.5% travel between 31 minutes and an hour. The remaining 8.2% travel more than an hour.

When it comes to monthly income, the biggest monthly income bracket – 18.7% – comprises those who earn between R3 201 and R6 400 a month.

The second biggest group –



## OBSTACLE COURSE

Around 31% of households cite food price increases, and 25.6% electricity price increases as their primary budget constraints

16.9% – earns between R6 401 and R12 800.

Households with no income make up 1%, and households which have an income of more than R102 401 a month stand at 1.8%.

Around 31% of households cite food price increases, and 25.6% electricity price increases as their primary budget constraints.

Public facility use is fairly broad, with 14.8% of households using community halls at least once a month, with library

use at 24.6% of households, and sports facilities at 20%.

Around 33.7% of households use public parks at least once a month.

“This survey is a game-changer for Cape Town as it provides the granular, timely data we need to plan better, respond faster and build a more inclusive and resilient city,” says Cape Town deputy mayor **Eddie Andrews**.

The city plans to conduct the survey every two to three years.

- From page 22

“Growing the economy to create more jobs is our apex priority in the Western Cape, and our trade relations with the USA are of critical importance,” said Winde during a visit to the South African Embassy in Washington DC.

“We embarked on this visit to further nurture our long-standing relationships with various USA stakeholders, and to continue to safeguard and promote these relationships in the interests of our residents.

“The USA is a key market

for Western Cape exports and a substantial source of investment into our province, and we will fight to make sure that we keep our mutually beneficial trade ties open and growing.”

The US is the Western Cape's second-largest export market, with exports totalling more than R18.32-billion in 2024 – a 2.66% increase on the previous year.

The province now also accounts for more than 50% of South Africa's total agriculture and agriprocessing goods exports to the US.

Therefore, advocating for the protection of this key job-creating industry was high on the agenda, says Winde's office.

Other important local industries include boat-building and satellite component manufacturing.

The Western Cape also welcomed 163 303 tourists from the US in 2024, marking year-on-year growth of 16.45%.



**ALAN WINDE**

The Western Cape will fight to keep mutually beneficial trade ties open and growing

US airline Delta Air Lines currently has three direct flights to Cape Town every week, and in an engagement with the company, Winde confirmed that this will be increased to five weekly flights from the end of October.

IRMA VENTER  
SENIOR DEPUTY EDITOR

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## EWN&S powers up the welding industry with INE

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TRADE@WORK

# Riaan de Lange



## Palm oil: handle with permit

**O**leum? Any guesses? It's a Latin word, derived from the Ancient Greek word 'elaion', meaning 'olive oil', which evolved to simply 'oil'. 'Wanan' is the Germanic root word meaning "to see". From this, the late fourteenth-century word 'guideline' emerged, meaning "to guide or lead".

By now, you would have deduced that the column is about an 'oil guideline'. But which 'oil'? It is 'palm oil'. But it is not a singular guideline; there are two guidelines.

During September, the International Trade Administration Commission of South Africa (Itac) published its guidelines. The first was published on September 12 and was for refined, bleached and deodorised (RBD) palm oil. The second, published on September 26, was for hydrogenated palm oil.

For context, according to AI Overview, RBD palm oil is a widely used vegetable oil in the food industry, produced by physically refining crude palm oil through three steps to remove impurities and produce a neutral-tasting oil.

While RBD palm oil can be used directly in products such as snacks and baked goods, it is often further processed through fractionation to create RBD palm olein (a liquid used in cooking oil) and RBD palm stearin (a solid fat used in margarine and shortening).

Hydrogenated palm oil is a solid, semi-solid or paste-like oil created by adding hydrogen to liquid palm oil through a process called hydrogenation, which enhances its stability, texture and shelf life.

It is widely used as an ingredient in processed foods, margarines, shortenings and cosmetic products for its emollient, emulsifying and thickening properties. While beneficial for product stability and consistency, it may contain trans fats. For health reasons, health experts recommend consuming it in moderation and prioritising liquid vegetable oil instead.

The September 12 guideline relates to "guidelines, rules and conditions pertaining to permits issued under Rebate Item 460.06/1511.90.90/01.08 for rebate on palm

oil, not fractionated, refined, bleached and deodorised, but not chemically modified, classifiable in tariff subheading 1511.90.90, for use in the manufacture of soap and organic surface-active products and preparations, in the form of bars, cakes, moulded pieces or shapes, classifiable in tariff subheading 3401.1, in such quantities, at such times and subject to such conditions as Itac may allow by specific permit, provided that the goods are not available in the Southern African Customs Union (Sacu)".

Meanwhile, the September 26 guideline relates to "guidelines, rules, and conditions pertaining to permits issued under Rebate Item 460.06/1516.20.90/01.08 for rebate on facility on palm oil, not fractionated, partly or wholly hydrogenated, whether or not refined, but not further prepared, classifiable in tariff subheading 1516.20.90, for use in the manufacture of soaps and organic surface-active products and preparations in the form of bars, cakes, moulded pieces or shapes, classifiable in tariff heading 3401.1, in such quantities, at such times and subject to such conditions as Itac may allow by specific permit, provided that the goods are not available in the Sacu market".

The application procedures, among other

In September, Itac published two guidelines on palm oil importation

things, require that applications must be made well in advance of the shipment of the goods, as rebate permits will not be issued retrospectively.

It is recommended that at least 14 days be allowed for Itac's processing of applications and the issuing of permits.

Further, each rebate permit issued will define the period during which the goods concerned can be cleared with a duty rebate.

The period shall be for a calendar year starting from the date on which the permit was issued, or a shorter period as requested by the applicant, or as decided upon by Itac.

The rebate permit may not be transferred in any manner by the holder to any other person, or be used for the benefit of any person not named on the permit.

Finally, any request for an amendment to a rebate permit must be forwarded to Itac for consideration and will only be considered if the error to be corrected was made by Itac or if the applicant used the incorrect tariff subheading.

The latter will only be processed if the request is accompanied by a confirmation from the South African Revenue Service.

● This economic and trade-focused column is prepared by Riaan de Lange - riaan@tariffandtrade.co.za. The views expressed in this column are the author's personal views

AFRICA BEAT

# Martin Zhuwakinyu



## Militants with a boardroom veto

**M**ozambican officials, desperate to jump-start economic development in the south-eastern African nation, must have breathed a sigh of relief when TotalEnergies chairperson and CEO Patrick Pouyanné reiterated last week that the French energy giant would restart its \$20-billion liquefied natural gas (LNG) project in the northern Cabo Delgado province by the end of this year, after a four-year freeze. But the relief was muted, as Cabo Delgado remains stalked by Islamic State-linked militants, and the LNG hub looks less like a worksite than a fortified enclave guarded by Rwandan troops.

The project is a microcosm of Africa’s development paradox. The continent abounds with massive natural resource endowments, yet in some countries insurgencies – and other crises – act like veto players at the boardroom table, dictating when, where and if projects can proceed.

Mozambique, one of the world’s poorest and most climate-vulnerable countries, holds vast gas reserves. The TotalEnergies LNG project, designed to exploit two deep-water fields and build a 13.1-million-ton-a-year-capacity liquefaction plan, was suspended in April 2021 after militants seized the nearby town of Palma.

Should the project come to fruition – in 2029, according to the current timeline – its economic implications would be enormous. Analysts estimate that tens of thousands of direct and indirect jobs would be created, while export earnings and government revenues would surge. Infrastructure to support the LNG hub would expand dramatically, and Mozambique would get a rare opportunity to diversify its agriculture-, mining- and aid-heavy economy.

But rebooting the project is not just an engineering challenge; it requires military logistics and delicate local alliances, as Cabo Delgado is still bleeding, with media reports from as recently as July noting renewed insurgent attacks that displaced 46 000 people across three districts in the province.

The Cabo Delgado LNG development is not the only African megaproject to be brought to a standstill by Islamist insurgents. In April, *The Wall Street Journal* described how al-Qaeda and al-Shabaab attacks had “punctured” Kenya’s ambitions for the Lamu

Port–South Sudan–Ethiopia Transport (LAPSSET) Corridor project, a \$24-billion integrated infrastructure plan comprising a deep-sea port, a network of highways and railways connecting the port to key economic hubs in Kenya, Ethiopia and South Sudan, and a pipeline transporting crude oil from South Sudan.

Insurgents have shown that they don’t need to destroy projects outright to derail development dreams

Road-manning crews are frequently attacked, and security fears now spook contractors. Only three of the port’s planned 32 berths are operational, with a significant proportion of the corridor’s roads, pipelines and rail still speculative because of insecurity.

Some of the corridor’s signature components remain in limbo, partly because of the security environment – the kind of partial derailment that kills investor confidence.

Also in East Africa, although not thwarted by insurgency, the East African Crude Oil Pipeline, designed to connect Uganda’s oil reserves to international markets, has faced serious financing pullbacks.

By the end of 2024, the \$5-billion project

– part of the broader \$15-billion energy plan by Total Energies, China’s CNOOC and other partners to develop the Kingfisher and Tilenga discoveries close to Lake Albert – had yet to reach financial close. More than 40 banks globally, including 28 from Europe, have ruled out extending financing to the project, citing human rights and environmental concerns.

However, Uganda’s *The Independent* newspaper reported in March that a syndicate of African financial institutions had closed the first tranche of financing for the project.

Megaprojects such as TotalEnergies’ Cabo Delgado LNG project in Mozambique and the LAPSSET Corridor project in East Africa are transformational bets that could alter the trajectories of countries’ economies. Yet insurgents have shown that they don’t need to destroy projects outright to derail development dreams. Simply delaying capital flows – and in the process damaging investor confidence – can have the same effect.

In the case of Mozambique, the \$20-billion LNG investment, the biggest investment by private entities in Africa, was literally shelved for four years because security trumped geology.

Meanwhile, in Kenya, the grand corridor dream is bleeding viability partly because al-Shabaab has decided to make the north of the country a no-go area for many contractors.

And in projects such as EACOP, the wariness in the banking community is less about technical feasibility than environmental concerns.

● Dr Zhuwakinyu, who holds a PhD in communication (media studies) from the University of South Africa, is *Creamer Media* senior deputy editor – [martinz@engineeringnews.co.za](mailto:martinz@engineeringnews.co.za)

LOW-CARBON FUTURE

Saliem Fakir



# Hallucination traps and knowledge gaps in policy

*Policy-wonking can at times be a crude endeavour, and reality is not reached directly but through untested internal beliefs. Without direct personal experience, one worldview tries to grasp the lived experience and worldview of others. In between, hallucinations can creep into the mix.*

Then something is written and presented as some sort of knowing without really knowing. There is always epistemic treachery when you have not done the hard yards of working at something and gained tacit knowledge – prior experience is gold. Even if we recover some modicum of authenticity, policy elites can take leaps of faith: a view exercised is viewed as universally shared because someone with purported influence has said so.

We should not lose sight of a further dimension of the word ‘evidence’, suggesting an objective exercise only to mask political affiliations and belief systems that have percolated, knowingly and unknowingly, through the process of evidence gathering. Belief systems should not be underestimated in their sway over evidence, lending a hand to what are preset and locked-in, immovable political choices.

And let us not fall into the trap of the ‘halo effect’ – someone profound, celebrity-like in the policy world, due to exceptional accomplishments in one domain of knowledge, does not always make them the best equipped to provide solutions in other domains.

Here, listening is the key art, and then wisdom, when placed well, can be exercised.

Policy advocacy can live in its own cave, watching shadows, mistaking them for real knowledge.

What lessons can we draw from the problem of hallucinations from another domain of knowledge? Large language models (LLMs) are known to have the problem of hallucinations – being able to create the illusion of giving you a reasonably sounding string of words but entirely false and inaccurate content. Depending on the weighting and ranking that are part of algorithms of AI machines like ChatGPT, Grok and others, some papers

recently written show that hallucinations cannot be removed – in what one paper described as ‘perplexingness’ – defined as “the degree to which new knowledge conflicts with an LLM’s learned conceptual hierarchies and categorical relationships”.

AI machines can have programmed flaws or develop bias, as highlighted by recent news reports, which later prove hard to correct through editing once the algorithm has been trained on data through reinforcement and learning mechanisms.

The point of AI hallucinations and perplexingness is the problem of bias inherent in the categorisation and hierarchy with which data is evaluated by an algorithm.

In any case, it is still early days with AI and sceptics remain: **Emily Bender** (FT interview, 20 June 2025) referred to LLMs as large plagiarising machines or “stochastic parrots”. Not to dismiss this or confine this to AI machines alone, Bender’s is a serious point – AI machines are changing the human condition and what we may call authentic intellectualism into synthetic laziness.

In order to address the problem of algorithmic bias in shaping public discourse and what information shapes political choices, it is curious that some AI companies have come up with a solution: the “Habermas Machine”, inspired by the philosopher **Jurgen Habermas**’s theory of communicative action, in which a free society is one of reason, tolerance and intellectual maturity where the process of deliberation leads to understanding and consensus.

DeepMind, inventor of this Habermas Machine, is giving its LLM a go at mediating political debates and disputes to help to achieve the Habermasian ideal of communicative action. As far as culture wars and partisan

debates go, it does not seem machines are anywhere near solving the deep fractures and polarisation hammering away at our civilisation.

These concerns should not be reserved for young pupils or university graduates but also for the very business of policy research and knowledge. How much real research, versus consulting the “stochastic machines”, for policy answers is now necessary, is an open question.

While LLMs speed up the process of policy knowledge and answers, they also turn policy-wonking into something inauthentic and in danger of automated plagiarism if no ethical guardrails are applied.

In the allegory of the cave that **Plato** introduces in the Republic, there are people who have lived all their lives in a cave and have become accustomed to seeing only one thing – the shadows of objects that are reflected on the walls of the cave. Until one person takes the brave step of venturing out of the cave and discovers that the shadows are a result of actual objects that exist outside of the cave.

The story goes further: if the said brave person who ventured beyond the cave came back to tell the other cave dwellers that everything they saw was an illusion, they would not believe him.

There is a lot in LLM hallucinations, AI bias and the story of Plato’s cave that has relevance for policy-wonking. We all suffer from one or the other form of hallucination if we do not take corrective measures – hopefully we do not find ourselves in the position some AI programmers discovered: that once a hierarchical bias sets in, no amount of editing can change the weighting of the bias.

● This economic and trade-focused column is prepared by Riaan de Lange – riaan@tariffandtrade.co.za. The views expressed in this column are the author’s personal views

# PEOPLE IN CAMERA

**THE SOUTH AFRICAN** Academy of Engineering (SAAE) entered a video, 'Sustainable Automotive Technologies: a TUT Case Study', for the 2025 CAETS Communication Prize. On September 10, 2025, at the gala dinner of the 2025 Annual Meeting of the Council of Academies of Engineering and Technological Sciences (CAETS) in Brisbane, Australia, the video won. The five-minute video – submitted by Dr Christiaan Oosthuizen (left) of Tshwane University of Technology's (TUT's) Mechanical and Mechatronic Engineering Department and Fellow Professor Barend van Wyk, Deputy Vice Chancellor for Teaching, Learning and Technology at TUT – competed with nine other entries from the UK, the US, Australia, China, India, Mexico, Netherlands, Poland and Uruguay. Oosthuizen attended the conference and received the prize from CAETS Communication Committee chairperson Luca Noldus (centre). The 2026 CAETS Communication Competition launched on October 1, 2025.



## JSE-LISTED CHEMICALS

manufacturing company Omnia last month announced the launch of an Indigenous Tree Planting Initiative at its Sasolburg facility, in partnership with the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment and youth organisation Primestars. The initiative forms part of South Africa's National Arbor Month and the Presidency's Million Trees campaign. The event underscores Omnia's commitment to environmental, social and governance priorities, biodiversity preservation and long-term value creation for stakeholders. A total of 30 trees, including Indigenous African Wild Olive, White Karee and Spekboom, were planted at the facility.



**AT THE** Hortgro Awards held in Paarl last month, the deciduous fruit industry gathered to celebrate and "honour the cream of the crop". Agricultural and lifestyle products provider Agrimark sponsored the Transformation Award. The winners received a R50 000 cash prize sponsored by Agrimark. La Vouere Stone Fruit, a partnership between Mary and Raymond Koopstad (60%) and Verdun Estates' Georgie Hewitt, Peter Wolfaardt and Johan du Plessis (40%), received the Transformation Award in recognition of its impact and commitment to transformation in the industry. Pictured (from left) at the 2025 Hortgro Awards are Du Plessis, Agrimark's Susan Davis, Hewitt, the Koopstads and Wolfaardt.

## PUSH PAUSE II

*My mind's made up,  
don't confuse me with facts.*

## ON THE MOVE



**JANICE JOHNSTON**

The SA Venture Capital and Private Equity Association announced the appointment of **Janice Johnston** to its board of directors. Johnston, the chief executive of Edge Growth Ventures, brings over 25 years of investment and leadership experience across debt, venture capital and private equity, with a career spanning top-tier financial institutions in South Africa and the UK.



**OSEDZA TSHIFHANGO**

KSB Pumps and Valves' **Osedza Tshifhango** recently became the first female field service specialist within the entire global footprint of KSB's operations, which employs more than 16 000 employees. Tshifhango joined KSB as a qualified artisan, working on both standard and engineered pump assemblies and gaining a reputation for handling complex builds and delivering reliable results.



**AGRICULTURAL EVENT NAMPO** Cape 2025 attracted nearly 50 000 visitors to Bredasdorp Park last month, making it the most successful show since Nampo Cape's launch in 2018. Industrial solutions provider BMG's stand – with the theme '360 degree solutions' – was among the highlights at the event, drawing great interest from visitors, with live demonstrations, competitions and a broad showcase of premium agricultural solutions. BMG showcased its extensive range of agricultural products, including hydraulic components, bearings and seals, lubricants, electric motors, packaging conveyor belts and tools.

## Founders Garden housing development



### Name of the Project

Founders Garden housing development.

### Location

Adjacent to the Artscape Theatre Centre, in Cape Town, in the Western Cape, South Africa.

### Project Owner/s

Western Cape Department of Infrastructure.

### Project Description

The project entails the development of an inner-city, mixed-use, affordable housing development. The development is the largest inner-city housing development yet and will comprise an estimated 1 476 social housing residential units and about 1 162 open market units, bringing the total to more than 2 630 units.

The high-rise development will include an early childhood development centre, among other public services and amenities. This site is also within walking distance of the Cape Town Railway Station, the MyCiti Civic Centre Station and health services.

### Potential Job Creation

Not confirmed.

### Capital Expenditure

More than R2-billion.

### Planned Start/End Date

The tender to procure a developer and a social housing institution for the Founders Garden development was advertised on July 25, 2025.

### Latest Developments

None stated.

### Key Contracts, Suppliers and Consultants

None disclosed.

### Contact Details for Project Information

Western Cape Department of Infrastructure acting head of communication **Stephen**

**Heyns**, tel +27 21 483 8067 or

email [stephen.heyns@westerncape.gov.za](mailto:stephen.heyns@westerncape.gov.za).

## Independent Transmission Projects Procurement Programme



### Name of the Project

Independent Transmission Projects (ITP) Procurement Programme.

### Location

South Africa.

### Project Owner/s

South African Department of Electricity and Energy (DEE), and the Independent Power Producer (IPP) Office.

### Project Description

The DEE invited experienced and committed consortia on July 30, 2025, to submit requests for prequalification (RFQ) for new electricity transmission infrastructure capacity under the bid submission phase of the ITP Procurement

Programme. The infrastructure earmarked for this inaugural ITP procurement has been identified by the National Transmission Company South Africa from its Transmission Development Plan, and includes 1 164 km of powerlines and 2 630 MVA of transformation capacity across seven corridors. The purpose of the RFQ is to identify and shortlist prequalified bidders with the necessary technical expertise, financial capacity and proven experience to build transmission capacity at significant scale and within accelerated timeframes to participate in a subsequent request for proposal (RFP). Winning bidders selected following the future RFP, which could be issued before the end of 2025, will be expected to design, finance, build, operate and maintain the infrastructure procured under the programme, which is being managed by the IPP Office.

### Potential Job Creation

Not confirmed.

### Capital Expenditure

To be determined.

### Planned Start/End Date

The RFQ response submission date was scheduled for September 23, 2025.

### Latest Developments

None stated.

### Key Contracts, Suppliers and Consultants

None stated.

### Contact Details for Project Information

Independent Transmission Projects,

email [query@itp-projects.co.za](mailto:query@itp-projects.co.za).

## Orlando openpit cutback project



### Name of the Project

Orlando openpit cutback project.

### Location

About 25 km north-west of Tennant Creek, in the Northern Territory of Australia.

### Project Owner/s

The project is operated by emerging copper company CuFe, on behalf of the Orlando/Gecko Joint Venture partners Cufe Tennant Creek (55%) and Gecko Mining (45%).

### Project Description

The Orlando openpit cutback is part of the wider Orlando/Gecko project, in the Tennant Creek region. A scoping study released in July 2025 has proposed a standalone development of the Orlando openpit, including construction of a new processing plant. Conventional drill-and-blast, as well as load-and-haul methods, will be used to develop the openpit, with ore delivered to the run-of-mine pad ahead of the process plant and waste to the waste dump adjacent to the final pit crest. Estimated payable metal production is estimated at 39 449 t of copper and 167 419 oz of gold over a five-year life-of-mine.

### Potential Job Creation

Not specified.

### Net Present Value/Internal Rate of Return

The scoping study shows a pretax net present value, at a 7% discount rate, of about \$355-million and an internal rate of return of 59%, with a payback of 1.9 years.

### Capital Expenditure

Total preproduction capital expenditure is estimated at \$136-million.

### Planned Start/End Date

Not stated.

### Latest Developments

The project is proceeding to a feasibility study. This study will focus on the Orlando openpit, with the potential to add additional resources from Orlando or Gecko underground and third parties, including the Tennant Creek Alliance partners.

The next phase of study will include further investigation of second-hand plant options, which have the potential to reduce the capital required, and will consider opportunities for value adding beyond the current scoping study assumption of producing concentrate for export through Darwin or sale to Mt Isa. A key focus of the next phase will be progressing the environmental and heritage approvals required to start project development. Funding and offtake discussions will also be progressed as a priority during the next phase of studies to make them available timeously to support a final investment decision once the feasibility study is complete.

### Key Contracts, Suppliers and Consultants

None disclosed.

### Contact Details for Project Information

CuFe, tel +61 8 6181 9793 or

email [ir@CuFe.com.au](mailto:ir@CuFe.com.au).

## Queensway gold project



### Name of the Project

Queensway gold project.

### Location

About 15 km west of the town of Gander, in Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada.

### Project Owner/s

Mineral exploration company New Found Gold Corp.

### Project Description

The preliminary economic assessment (PEA) outlines a 15-year life-of-mine with a total gold production of 1.5-million ounces. The project is planned as a phased development, starting with an openpit mine and off-site toll milling, followed by a larger on-site operation that includes openpit and underground mining. This phased approach is designed to generate early cash flow and fund subsequent phases. Phase 1 will prepare the site and install infrastructure for a small-scale openpit operation aimed at extracting high-grade ore.

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The mined material will be crushed and shipped to a toll milling facility, in Newfoundland, where it will be processed at 700 t/d for the first five years. Lower-grade ore will be stockpiled for future use once an on-site plant is in place. This phase will deliver an average gold output of 69 300 oz/y. Phase 2 will entail a significant expansion with the construction of a 7 000 t/d processing plant on site. Construction is expected to start in Year 3 and be completed by Year 4, with full operations starting in Year 5. The plant will run for nine years, followed by two years of processing low-grade stockpiles. This stage will enhance efficiency by prioritising higher-grade ore from surface and future underground sources. Tailings will be stored in-pit over the life of the project. Average gold production is forecast at 129 000 oz/y, increasing to 172 200 oz/y during the first five years of plant operation.

Phase 3 involves the development of an underground mining operation, with construction starting in Year 5. High-grade ore will be extracted using cut-and-fill methods at a steady rate of 700 t/d from Year 6 until Year 10.

**Potential Job Creation**

Not stated.

**Net Present Value/Internal Rate of Return**

Based on a base case gold price of \$2 500/oz, the project has a pre-tax net present value, at a 5% discount rate, of C\$1.1-billion and a pretax internal rate of return of 79%.

**Capital Expenditure**

The initial capital cost for Phase 1 is estimated at C\$155-million. Phase 2, which includes the construction of the on-site processing plant, will require an additional C\$442-million in growth capital.

**Planned Start/End Date**

Initial gold production is targeted for the first quarter of 2027, subject to regulatory approvals. Phase 1 construction is also planned to start in 2027.

**Latest Developments**

New Found Gold is conducting an aggressive 70 000 m drilling programme to upgrade and expand the initial mineral resource estimate. Environmental baseline studies are also under way. An updated mineral resource estimate is planned for the first quarter of 2026, with an environmental assessment submission expected

in the first half 2026.

**Key Contracts, Suppliers and Consultants**

SLR Consulting (Canada) (PEA).

**Contact Details for Project Information**

New Found Gold,  
email contact@newfoundgold.ca.

**Namibia–South Africa cross-border hydrogen pipeline**

**Name of the Project**

Namibia–South Africa cross-border hydrogen pipeline.

**Location**

The Western Cape and Northern Cape, in South Africa, and southern Namibia.

**Project Owner/s**

Namibia Green Hydrogen Programme, or NGH2P.

**Project Description**

The project forms part of the Namibia Green Hydrogen Programme. A prefeasibility study was completed in December 2024. The study confirms that linking hydrogen hubs in Lüderitz, Boegoebaai and Saldanha Bay, extending to Gauteng through an eastern corridor, presents a significant opportunity for a resilient hydrogen infrastructure in Southern Africa. This system is pivotal for sustainable energy, socioeconomic growth and advancing Namibia and South Africa's net-zero goals while positioning both countries as key players in the global hydrogen market.

**Potential Job Creation**

Not confirmed.

**Capital Expenditure**

A conceptual masterplan for the pipeline, budgeted at N\$30-million, will be largely funded by Climate Funders and Gasunie, with additional support from the EU.

**Planned Start/End Date**

A conceptual master plan for the pipeline infrastructure is scheduled between mid-2025 and mid-2026.

**Latest Developments**

The governments of the Western Cape, and the Erongo region, in Namibia, are finalising a twinning agreement with an implementation plan that prioritises green hydrogen collaboration.

**Key Contracts, Suppliers and Consultants**

None disclosed.

**Contact Details for Project Information**

Namibia Green Hydrogen Programme,  
email JMushoko@gh2.org.na.

**Spring Valley gold project**



**Name of the Project**

Spring Valley gold project.

**Location**

Pershing County, Nevada, in the US.

**Project Owner/s**

Gold development company Solidus Resources.

**Project Description**

The project will be Nevada's next long-life heap-leach gold mine comprising 3.8-million ounces of proven and probable mineral reserves at an average gold grade of 0.016 oz/t. The project will have a life-of-mine (LoM) of 21 years, including two years of construction, 11 years of mining, three additional years of ore processing, and five years of reclamation and closure activities.

The feasibility study proposes a simple heap-leach operation with a large openpit mine design and straightforward layout. The project will average 303 000 oz/y of gold over its LoM, with 348 000 oz/y gold over the first five years.

**Potential Job Creation**

The project will hire about 130 contractors during the two-year construction and 250 full-time staff for operations.

**Net Present Value/Internal Rate of Return**

The feasibility study has estimated an after-tax net present value, at a 5% discount rate, of \$1.5-billion and an after-tax internal rate of return of 36%, with a payback of less than two years.

**Capital Expenditure**

\$822.7-million.

**Planned Start/End Date**

Not stated.

**Latest Developments**

The US Bureau of Land Management approved the project in July 2025.

**Key Contracts, Suppliers and Consultants**

Not disclosed.

**Contact Details for Project Information**

Solidus Resources,  
email info@solidus-resources.com.

**COMING UP**

- Renewable-energy solutions provider Scatec's Kroonstad PV cluster, in South Africa, comprising three large-scale solar PV facilities. The facilities, which have a combined capacity of 846 MW, have been selected as preferred bidders under the seventh round of South Africa's Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme.

- Australian exploration company Meteoric Resources' Caldeira rare earths project, in Brazil, has been awarded priority status by the Minas Gerais state government. The project is the largest ionic clay resource in the world at 1.5-billion tonnes grading 2 359 parts per million total rare-earth oxides.

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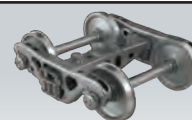
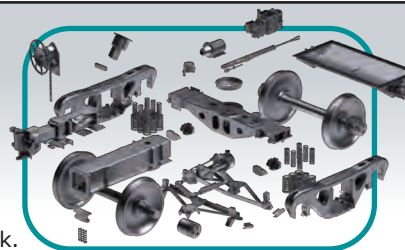
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## CONSISTENT GROWTH

Electra Mining recorded its biggest ever event in 2024 with 950 exhibitors, 40 000 m<sup>2</sup> net exhibition space, six exhibition halls, four outside exhibition areas and just under 40 000 visitors

Less than a year out from Electra Mining Africa 2026 (EMA26), the exhibition is already 90% sold, demonstrating the strong industry support for the show, says event organiser Montgomery Group Africa portfolio director **Charlene Hefer**.

“The mining, manufacturing, engineering and safety companies know the value of planning ahead. They’re already thinking about how to show up, how to stand out and how to make the most of the opportunity at the show.”

She notes that EMA recorded its biggest ever event in 2024 with 950 exhibitors, 40 000 m<sup>2</sup> net exhibition space, six exhibition halls, four outside exhibition areas and

just under 40 000 visitors. “EMA26 is set to be even bigger.”

Hefer points out that an additional outside area, the Orange Zone, has been opened up. Moreover, there is a new Career and Skills Hub, and additional activations are being finalised to enhance visitor experience.

Further, the event will improve upon additions from the EMA24 campaign, including the Inward Buying Programme. EMA works with capital equipment representative organisation South African Capital Equipment Export Council (SACEEC) to bring companies and buyers to EMA26 from African and South American countries, among others.


“We are excited to work with SACEEC

for 2026 to expand and grow the Inward Buying Programme, with a special focus on bringing additional delegates to the show from neighbouring African countries.”

Another initiative developed with SACEEC, the New Products & Innovation Awards, has seen awards entries increase over the last editions. With more categories set to be added for 2026, EMA is expecting an even greater number of entries, enabling it to highlight the latest products and innovations in pre-show coverage, which increases visibility for exhibitors and helps visitors plan their day.


EMA26 will also expand its paid-for visitor campaign, the Diamond Select programme –

• To page 36





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• From page 34 called the Platinum programme in 2024. “The uptake on it was phenomenal. It attracted high-level visitors who had time constraints, enabling them to book in advance, pay a fee, park at the FNB stadium and be transported straight across the bridge to Nasrec and the Expo Centre, into a beautiful marquee where they could plan their visit, and enjoy complimentary refreshments and use of the conference facilities for the duration of their visit. This campaign will be enhanced for 2026 aligned with feedback received from the 2024 visitors, although it is still limited and exclusive.”

Many of the new additions have resulted from exhibitor and visitor feedback.

“These insights help to formulate the event plan, taking into consideration new trends, direction for new initiatives and identifying any gaps across operations, sales and marketing. The team pushes itself to come up with new ideas and to innovate; as industries continue to evolve, so does EMA,” Hefer comments.

This approach has evidently paid off as, in addition to positive feedback from surveys, visitor research by enterprise management platform and consultancy Explori – undertaken during EMA24 – ranked the exhibition

within the top 2% of all trade visitor events benchmarked by Explori globally.

“As the largest show of its kind in Southern Africa and one of the largest mining and industrial shows globally, EMA is the place where buyers and sellers meet to do business, contributing to the stimulation of trade in the industrial, manufacturing and mining industries. Maintaining the event’s ability to offer excellent networking opportunities and showcasing new and innovative exhibitor content is key to EMA’s continuing to be a must-attend, revered event.”

**Building the EMA Community**

Both large organisations and small, medium-sized and microenterprises are represented at EMA, with some companies having exhibited since the first show in 1972. The

An additional outside area, the Orange Zone, has been opened up. Moreover, there is a new Career and Skills Hub, and additional activations are being finalised to enhance visitor experience.

show has become an institution in its 53 years.

While mining is still at its core, the trade show has diversified and broadened its reach across industrial, automation, manufacturing, power, electrical and transport, aligning with industry needs.

“Technology across every sector is probably one of the biggest changes the show has seen. Automation, for example, has grown significantly, filling the Hall 7 to capacity in 2024. To provide extra space, half of Hall 10 will also be focused on Automation in 2026,” says Hefer.

Expanding and strengthening the EMA community creates more opportunities for connections, collaboration and growth.

Consequently, early engagement with exhibitors is key. “Understanding their focus ahead of the show – from new product launches and innovations to live demonstrations and activities – allows us to share these highlights with the wider community. We also want to know whether exhibitors are seeking distributors, resellers or interns, so we can help foster the right connections.”

Hefer notes that informative content will be shared across multiple channels, including webinars, feature articles, social media and other activations, to ensure that participants know what to expect and can plan their days for maximum benefit.

“We are looking forward to sharing details of this brand-new approach during our Exhibitor Briefing. Replacing our standard morning briefing get-together, exhibitors will be able to enjoy a fun, interactive full day that features a briefing segment, an exhibitor training session, and fun activations throughout to make the day memorable,” Hefer concludes.

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**Name Electra Mining Africa’s new mascot**

Event organiser Montgomery Group Africa is “thrilled” to introduce its newest team member and mascot, with portfolio director **Charlene Hefer** noting that he will be extremely conspicuous in the run-up to Electra Mining Africa 2026 and throughout the show itself.

“From sharing key updates across our platforms, to surprise in-person visits with exhibitors, to bringing extra fun and energy onsite – he’s here to make your Electra Mining Africa journey even more exciting,” says Hefer.

However, the stalwart mascot has yet to be named, and Montgomery Group Africa has called on Electra Mining Africa visitors and exhibitors to cast their vote for the name they believe suits him best. Participants could win:

- R1000 Takealot voucher;
- 2 x Diamond Select Visitor Tickets; or
- exclusive *Engineering News & Mining Weekly* subscriptions.

“Vote now and help us give our mascot his name. All you need to do is scan the QR Code and vote on the name of your choice,” explains Hefer.

The names are:

- Digger
- Sprocket
- Zazi
- Dusty





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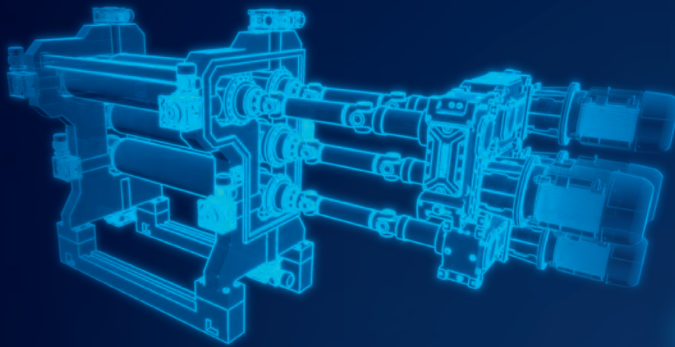
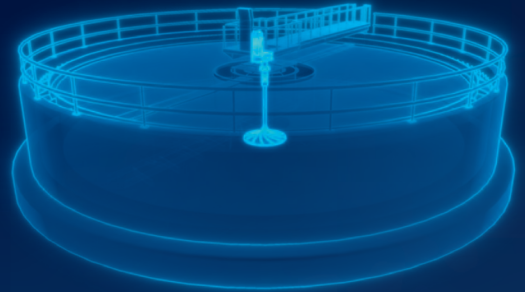


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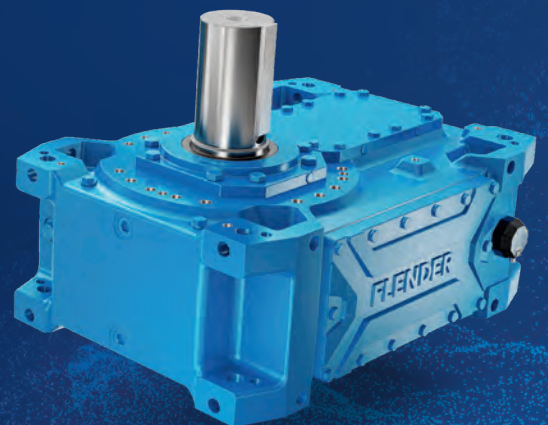
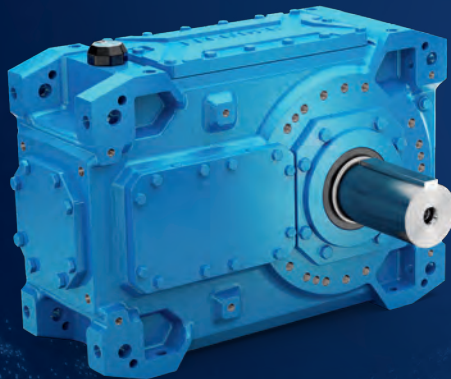
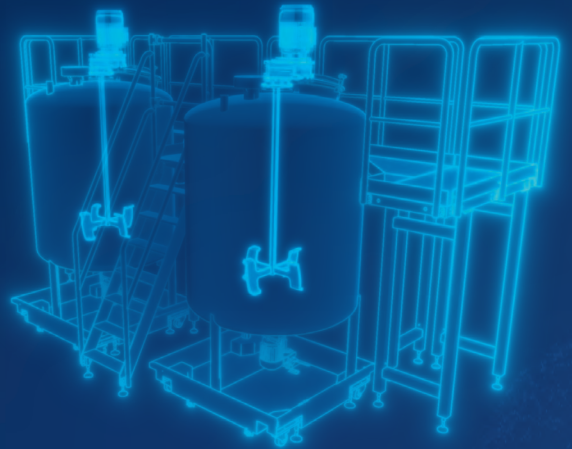
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# Next-generation solutions on show at EMA

NADINE JAMES | CREAMER MEDIA DEPUTY EDITOR FEATURES

Leveraging Electra Mining Africa’s (EMA’s) reach to showcase the next generation of rugged handhelds and tablets is the key objective for rugged technology solutions provider Rugged Mobile.

With mining operations increasingly embracing digital transformation, the company’s latest product launches will “highlight mobility, durability and connectivity”, Rugged Mobile business development head **Arlin Visagie** comments.

One of the key innovations that will be on display is Rugged Mobile’s latest real-time kinematics (RTK) devices, which are engineered for use in harsh environments such as mines. These devices support advanced applications such as geographic information systems (GIS), asset verification programmes and digital maintenance workflows.

Rugged Mobile will also showcase various modular accessories and charging solutions that help streamline shift-based operations. Such solutions include multi-bay charging lockers, vehicle mounts and docking stations, all of which are designed with efficiency in mind, and which help to ensure that operations can keep their devices ready for round-the-clock use.

Additionally, the newer generation models boast longer battery life, glove-friendly touchscreens and can support modern mobile device management platforms, underscoring their role in firms’ evolving digitalisation strategies.

“These launches matter because the mining, utilities and industrial sectors face increasing pressure to improve efficiency without compromising on safety and regulatory compliance.”

Visagie avers that Rugged Mobile’s innovations enable organisations to “close the gap between the field and the office”, providing tools that can withstand the toughest conditions while delivering critical data in real time.

EMA – given its appeal to industrial, manufacturing and mining entities – is an ideal plat-

form for Rugged Mobile’s wares, with Visagie pointing out that, “mining represents an average of 30% of our business. We generally serve field service and manufacturing operations, where rugged devices are imperative to providing reliable support to (maintenance) and manufacturing teams”.

He notes that devices for mining differ from other sectors because mining environments require extreme resistance to dust, vibration and variable temperature. Consequently, stronger wear-and-tear resilience, more aggressive shock protection and extended battery life are essential for the remote and far-flung areas that typically host mining operations.

## Rugged Mobile will also showcase various modular accessories and charging solutions

“We believe the mining sector is where we will see steady growth over the coming years, owing to an increased adoption of technology across operations, as well as the digitalisation of outdated data collection methods.”

Meanwhile, for utilities and municipalities, Rugged Mobile will be introducing new Android-powered handhelds.

“Our utility solutions provide hardware and software for the data collection of water and electricity readings, as well as asset management. These solutions play an important role in local and provincial government revenue collection, providing data integrity and ensuring that municipal or utility teams have reliable technology support to achieve their revenue collection efforts.”

Visagie notes that, when setting up these devices, one of the most challenging aspects is accommodating client-specific software requirements; however, it also helps Rugged Mobile showcase its value proposition.

“The difficulty depends largely on the scope and sophistication of the solution required. For many clients, the integration is relatively straightforward—our rugged devices run on Android or Windows operating systems with full Google Mobile Services certification, so most field-service, GIS, asset management and meter reading applications can be installed and run natively with minimal adjustments. In these cases, configuration, testing and user training are the main steps.”

However, for projects involving mining optimisation, real-time telemetry or bespoke workflow management, integration can require months of collaboration. “These solutions may demand custom application programming interfaces, specialised drivers for peripheral sensors, or optimisation to ensure reliable performance in offline/low-connectivity environments.”

He cites Rugged Mobile’s work with mining consultancy Ramjack as an example – where achieving “seamless functionality” required a sustained joint effort between the software vendor, the original-equipment manufacturer and Rugged Mobile.


Additionally, one of factors that sets the company apart is its willingness to offer proof of concepts (POCs), because it gives clients insight into the type of service they will receive.

“We offer POCs and encourage POCs before entering into any agreements, as this allows our clients to be absolutely sure that what we offer meets their needs.”

### Importance of Attending EMA

Visagie suggests that, with industries continuing their journey toward digital operations, Rugged Mobile’s presence at EMA26 reflects a broader trend: “technology purpose-built for Africa’s toughest environments, ensuring that progress is not just possible, but sustainable”.

Having attended EMA in 2022 and 2024, Rugged Mobile hopes to capitalise on its previous positive experiences.

Visagie concludes that EMA26 attendees can visit Rugged Mobile’s stand in Hall 9. 

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# Software provider to showcase benefits of strategic partnership

NADINE JAMES | CREAMER MEDIA DEPUTY EDITOR FEATURES

Following a successful debut as a first-time exhibitor at Electra Mining Africa 2024 (EMA24) – where the company showcased its Hexagon Partner Solutions – software solutions provider Chempute Software is excited to return to “one of Africa’s leading trade shows” in 2026.

“This time, Chempute will highlight its strategic partnership with Datacor, featuring a unified suite of engineering tools including CHEMCAD, Fathom, Arrow, Impulse and xStream,” says Chempute marketing and business service manager **Lee-Anne Kylander**.

She explains that exhibiting at EMA26 aligns with Chempute’s broader goal of reinforcing its position as a leading provider of advanced engineering software across Southern Africa and the greater Africa region.

Moreover, 2026 marks Chempute’s fortieth anniversary and EMA26 offers the ideal platform to celebrate four decades’ worth of “cutting-edge engineering solutions” while showcasing the solutions that enable the company’s continued relevance and success.

She notes that the Southern African mining sector currently accounts for about 30% of Chempute’s business, as its primary industry focus is the oil and gas sector. EMA26 offers Chempute the opportunity to grow its mining customer base, while increasing general awareness of the company’s offering.

“Our primary goal for the EMA26 is to significantly enhance brand visibility and recognition for our partnership with Datacor,” says Kylander, stressing that the company aims to engage directly with mining and industrial

professionals. She notes that the CHEMCAD, Fathom, Arrow, Impulse and xStream modules help shape “more efficient and reliable” workflows for design engineers.

“CHEMCAD offers an integrated chemical process simulation environment that supports design, optimisation and operational analysis, while the Fathom, Arrow, Impulse and xStream modules provide advanced fluid dynamics and pipe flow modelling for both steady-state and transient conditions.”

Kylander adds that these tools were “brought together” under Datacor through its acquisitions of Chemstations and Applied Flow Technology, and the Datacor suite forms a “more cohesive ecosystem of simulation software”.

She adds that clients can still buy modules individually, but customers tend to prefer the full suite. Further, all solutions are supported locally by Chempute’s expertise, training and technical assistance, with subscription customers receiving upgrades as and when they become available.

“The combined Datacor/Chempute offering reflects trends in the sector, particularly how engineering software is evolving to meet the growing demands for accuracy, efficiency, and informed decision-making,” Kylander concludes. ■

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# Analysers, meters on show at EMA can help remedy water concerns

NADINE JAMES | CREAMER MEDIA DEPUTY EDITOR FEATURES

Environmental, social and governance (ESG) mandates, sustainability worries, and the “very real impacts of climate change and water scarcity in South Africa”, have resulted in a noticeable increase in demand for online metal analysers for liquids, says Royce Water Systems (RWS) director **Jacques Franken**.

Given the realities around climate change and ongoing challenges relating to the provision, stewardship and use of water in South Africa, this increased interest is likely to persist, which is why it is particularly apt that RWS – a division of Action Instruments – will be showcasing SEIBOLD heavy metal analysers, as well as the WESS Global sludge level and density meters at Electra Mining Africa 2026 (EMA26).

“We’re thrilled for RWS to be joining EMA26, following the success of our parent company, Action Instruments, at the show in 2024. This marks an exciting milestone for us, as it will be RWS’s first time exhibiting at Electra on our own. We’re really looking forward to showcasing our innovations and connecting with industry professionals at such a key event.”

Franken notes that water reuse and recycling are no longer just optional but are becoming a necessity. “As industries in water-stressed regions are required to treat and reuse their effluent, the need for real-time, high-quality data on contaminants like heavy metals becomes critical. Our solutions help companies protect both the environment and public health.”

Further, for sectors such as mining and refining, an event involving inefficient or ineffective process water treatment can translate to a loss of product, which can result in costs that exponentially outweigh the costs of RWS’s instrumentation solutions. Additionally, potential fines or legal implications could result from a failure to comply with environmental regulations.

“These instrumentation systems provide the data needed to optimise processes, prevent costly spills and minimise product loss, making them an essential tool for both operational efficiency and environmental management. The increased focus on finances has undoubtedly made these kinds of solutions a high priority for many clients,” says Franken.

He explains that SEIBOLD online analysers continuously measure heavy metals in water in challenging industrial environments. “SEIBOLD Wasser designs products and services for continuous quantitative analysis of heavy metals in water, including aluminium, arsenic, cadmium, chromium, cobalt, copper, iron, manganese and mercury, among others.”

Identifying these heavy metals is key to ensuring that water released into the environment is not toxic, or that drinking water is safe for consumption. Consequently, key applications include industrial wastewater and river water monitoring, as well as analysis of the



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water used in the manufacture of beverages and industrial processes.

SEIBOLD heavy metal analysers are designed with both precision and sustainability in mind. They use colourimetric photometry combined with eco-friendly, non-toxic reagents to measure a range of heavy metals and other ions in water. “What sets these devices apart is their ability to provide real-time, continuous measurements online and, when you consider the performance-to-cost ratio, it’s excellent value for what the technology delivers.”

Meanwhile, in December 2018 RWS became a distributor for South Korean instrumentation solutions provider WESS Global. It was appointed as the sole agent for Southern Africa in January 2019.

“At RWS, we’re very excited about the potential for WESS Ultrasonic Sludge Blanket level meters and clamp-on Sludge Density meters to make a meaningful difference in the African market. As industries across the continent focus more on efficient water treatment, waste management and sustainability, we believe these technologies can provide real, tangible solutions that align with these needs,” states Franken.

The Ultrasonic Sludge Blanket level meter is particularly well-suited for the African market, owing to its proven cost-effectiveness and

reliability. “This meter is capable of delivering highly accurate measurements of sludge interfaces in various applications, from clarifiers to thickeners. By providing both light and heavy sludge layer measurements, the technology helps companies gain a deeper understanding of their operations, leading to improved efficiency and reduced waste.”

One of the key advantages is the continuous flow of real-time data, which is crucial for industries in Africa which often face fluctuating process conditions.

Moreover, the abnormal signal filter minimises the impact of irregular noise caused by moving structures, ensuring stable and reliable readings, and making it ideal for environments where downtime is costly and skilled technicians are rare.

The clamp-on Sludge Density meter, meanwhile, is designed to be a ‘fit-and-forget’ solution. “It’s incredibly easy to install, requires minimal space and is robust enough to handle demanding industrial environments. The fact that it can be mounted externally means there’s no need for process shutdowns or concerns about the corrosiveness of the media, ensuring smooth, uninterrupted operations—a huge benefit for industries like mining,” Franken avers.

Ultimately, RWS sees these products as part of a broader effort to support Africa’s indus-



**HEAVY METAL SOLUTION**

SEIBOLD Wasser researches, designs and develops products and services for continuous quantitative analysis of heavy metals in water

trial growth while promoting environmental sustainability. Franken states that these technologies offer long-term reliability, reduce operational costs and improve overall process efficiency; factors that are becoming increasingly important across the continent.

“I am over the moon about the upcoming EMA event; we are not just bringing products to the industry, we are bringing advanced, reliable and sustainable solutions that can really help companies optimise their operations and meet their environmental goals,” he concludes. 

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# Integrated engineering solutions on display at EMA26

Industrial solutions provider BMG will participate in Electra Mining Africa 2026 (EMA26), once again presenting its “extensive engineering solutions and technical services that have been refined over more than five decades”, says BMG marketing executive **Darryn Wright**.

The exhibition, which runs from September 7 to 11, 2026 at the Johannesburg Expo Centre, is recognised as one of the continent’s most significant platforms for the mining, industrial, electrical and power generation sectors.

BMG has a long history of exhibiting at EMA, allowing the company to reinforce its leading role in Southern Africa’s mining and industrial sectors. “The BMG team understands the importance of this show to demonstrate product innovation, technical solutions and service integration, while strengthening partnerships with global and local suppliers and customers.”

At EMA26, BMG will highlight its position as a “complete process solutions provider”, giving customers access to quality branded engineering components, technical expertise and support through a single point of supply. This approach is designed to reduce production costs, improve efficiencies and ensure reliability across diverse operations.


Wright says BMG plays a critical role in industrial and mining processes across the region. “We provide design and equipment selection services to project houses, supply to original-equipment manufacturers and offer technical support to our broad customer base. Our long-standing partnerships with leading international manufacturers allow us to deliver the latest technology and customised solutions to meet exact requirements.”

He adds that there is a growing emphasis on safety compliance, energy efficiency and sustainable operation in all the industries BMG serves.

Its reliability-centred maintenance approach addresses these priorities directly.

“By supporting longer maintenance intervals, reducing unplanned downtime and extending equipment service life, the BMG team helps customers meet both performance and regulatory requirements. EMA is an important platform for BMG to demonstrate how our integrated solutions deliver measurable improvements in these areas.”

The company’s stand will feature the latest products from its specialist divisions: Bearings, Seals and Gaskets, Power Transmission, Drives and Motors, Materials Handling, Tools and Fasteners, Hydraulics, Filtration, Lubrication and Field Services.

Moreover, BMG’s services extend beyond the mining and quarrying industries. The team also works closely with customers in agriculture, food and beverage plants, water and wastewater treatment, oil and gas, petrochemicals, construction and general engineering. Growth opportunities are also being developed in renewable energy and logistics, where BMG is supporting wind and solar projects, as well as providing drive and materials handling solutions for warehousing and distribution facilities. These expansions reflect wider industry shifts towards diversified energy sources and more efficient supply chains. 

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**PARTNER CONTENT**

# The critical role of OEM service excellence in safeguarding mining power infrastructure

In the demanding world of mining operations, where every minute of downtime translates to substantial financial losses, the reliability of power generation equipment extends far beyond the initial purchase. The true value of a generator investment lies in maintaining optimal performance throughout its operational life, safeguarding warranties and ensuring equipment runs at peak efficiency. This is where original equipment manufacturer (OEM) after-sales service and maintenance contracts prove their worth, says commercial generator and lighting supplier HIMOINSA Southern & East Africa.

Since becoming part of the Yanmar Group in 2015, HIMOINSA Southern & East Africa has established itself as the fastest-growing subsidiary in HIMOINSA's global network. Its partnership with Yanmar Energy Systems brings unprecedented technical expertise and support to Southern and East African mining operations.

The significance of this relationship cannot be overstated. As a vertical manufacturer, HIMOINSA integrates the manufacture of all generator-set components into its production process, ensuring complete quality control from design to delivery. This comprehensive approach extends to after-sales service, where OEM-qualified technicians provide support that goes beyond basic maintenance.

“From our experience at Sibanye Driefontein, it is the ‘teamwork’ we received from HIMOINSA that stands out. The company worked in conjunction with Sibanye personnel as one unit. The enthusiasm shown and observed from the HIMOINSA field technicians is a rare

commodity in South Africa; always on time, providing friendly and quality service, and dedicated to the cause,” shares Sibanye-Stillwater’s chief electrician.

### Benefits of OEM Maintenance

Mining operations invest millions in power generation equipment, yet many underestimate the importance of proper maintenance in protecting these assets. OEM maintenance contracts offer several advantages that third-party services simply cannot match.

“Firstly, warranty protection remains intact only when servicing is performed according to manufacturer specifications using genuine OEM parts. HIMOINSA Southern Africa maintains three regional service centres in South Africa and one in East Africa, along with an extensive distributor network and bonded warehouse facilities. This infrastructure ensures that genuine parts and certified expertise are readily available when needed,” states HIMOINSA Southern & East Africa.

The company’s 24/7 technical support extends from project design to installation, commissioning, operation and ongoing service contracts. This comprehensive approach ensures that generators maintain optimal efficiency throughout their operational life, reducing fuel consumption and minimising unexpected breakdowns.

The value of OEM service excellence becomes apparent in real-world applications.

“From the shortlisting of the tender process, HIMOINSA Southern Africa has worked closely and innovatively to provide Delta Gold with our

optimal power security solution as well as accommodating our stringent timelines leading up to plant commissioning. Operating in an environment where grid power can be unreliable, Delta Gold now has peace of mind that our plant’s production is safeguarded from power availability issues,” adds Delta Gold Zimbabwe MD **James Beare**.

This peace of mind stems from knowing that every service intervention follows factory specifications, using diagnostic equipment and procedures developed specifically for the equipment. OEM technicians undergo continuous training on the latest technologies and updates, ensuring they can identify and address potential issues before they become critical failures, explains HIMOINSA Southern & East Africa.

“While some operations view maintenance contracts as an additional expense, the economics tell a different story. Regular OEM maintenance significantly extends equipment lifespan, maintains fuel efficiency at optimal levels and prevents catastrophic failures that could halt production for days or weeks.”

### Flexibility and Scalability

HIMOINSA Southern & East Africa recognises that different mining operations have varying requirements. The company offers flexible service solutions ranging from fully managed service support

agreements to training programmes for clients’ technical teams. This adaptability ensures that mines can choose the level of support that best suits their operational structure and budget.

### Looking Ahead

As mining operations become increasingly sophisticated, so too must the service support that keeps them running. HIMOINSA Southern & East Africa continues to invest in diagnostic technologies, remote monitoring capabilities and predictive maintenance tools that help prevent failures before they occur.

Professionals interested in learning more about these advanced service solutions can visit HIMOINSA Southern & East Africa’s technical team at Electra Mining Africa 2026, taking place from September 7 to 11 at Expo Centre, Nasrec, Johannesburg.

“In an industry where reliability directly impacts profitability, the choice of service partner is as critical as the choice of equipment. OEM after-sales service and maintenance contracts represent not just warranty protection, but a strategic investment in operational continuity. Through genuine parts and comprehensive support infrastructure, HIMOINSA Southern & East Africa ensures that mining operations maintain the power they need to drive productivity,” advances the company. ↻

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**PARTNER CONTENT**

# Redefining the global cooling solutions landscape

Having supplied cooling solutions to all industries since 1986, specialist thermal solutions provider Industrial Water Cooling (IWC) has been acquired by global leader in air-cooled condensers and cooling towers NEXT Cooling Group to redefine the global cooling solutions landscape.

IWC, which joined the group earlier this year, has a well-established footprint across sub-Saharan Africa and has built a strong reputation by successfully completing several complex online refurbishments of large natural draft cooling towers for State-owned power utility Eskom and chemicals and

The acquisition of IWC enhances NEXT Cooling’s collective strength and reinforces its commitment to delivering cooling solutions across power generation, oil and gas, mining and minerals processing and general industry

energy company Sasol, making it arguably the world’s most experienced contractor in this specialised field. IWC has also completed many large field-erected cooling tower installation and refurbishment projects.

Additionally, IWC is a specialist in mine cooling, having partnered with many top engineering, procurement and construction contractors to successfully deliver mine cooling projects across Africa and as far afield as Brazil.

The acquisition of IWC enhances NEXT Cooling’s collective strength and reinforces its commitment to delivering cooling solutions across power

generation, oil and gas, mining and minerals processing and general industry.

Together, with their combined expertise and global reach, the group can offer clients a powerful competitive edge – leveraging a diverse portfolio of world-class projects, global supply chains and opening new opportunities in key markets for field-erected cooling towers, air-cooled condensers, bulk air coolers and slurry and solution cooling towers.

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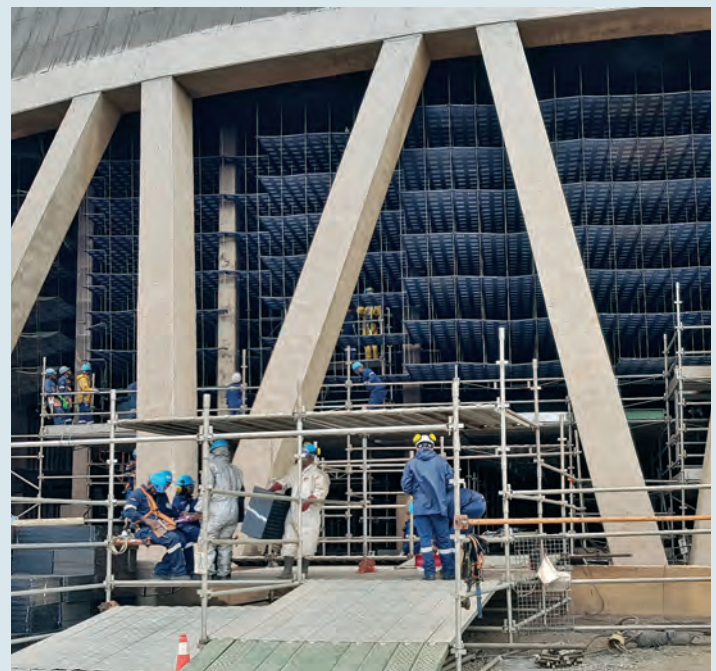
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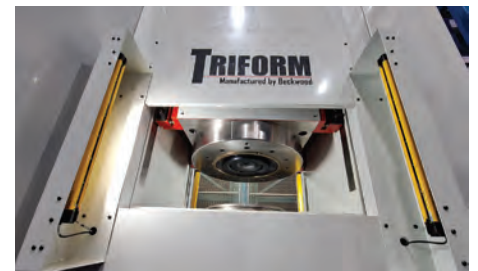
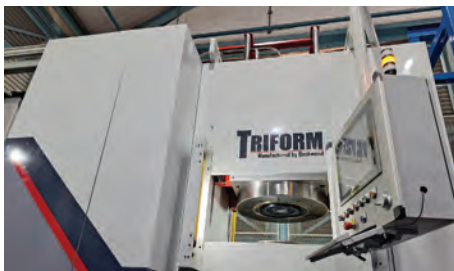
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IWC has built a strong reputation by successfully completing several complex online refurbishments of large natural draft cooling towers for big players such as chemicals and energy company Sasol



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# Western Cape maltings plant returns to rail transport

DEVINA HARIPERSAD | CREAMER MEDIA REPORTER

## SUSTAINABLE RAIL

Having engaged with government and industry stakeholders to establish the basis for long-term, sustainable rail operations, SAB has resumed transporting some of its inputs by rail

The Caledon Maltings plant was originally designed with rail intake in mind, says beer producer South African Breweries (SAB) CEO **Richard Rivett-Carnac**.

The facility is one of the largest malting plants on the continent, at which SAB produces malted barley for its beer production.

Once processed into malt, the barley is sent to SAB's seven breweries across South Africa. Rail was initially the preferred mode of transport, as it was regarded as the most natural fit for the operation.

However, with the decline of the rail sector in South Africa, Rivett-Carnac says the company was forced, over time, to shift to road transport. "From around 2010, increased reliance on trucks became necessary to maintain service levels," he explains.

While trucks enabled SAB to move malt from the plant to breweries, the system soon proved unsustainable and inefficient. "Congestion around our plants has been a growing challenge in recent years," Rivett-Carnac explains.

With rail reforms now under way, SAB decided it was time to reintroduce rail into its supply chain.

After engaging with government and industry stakeholders to establish the basis for long-term, sustainable rail operations, SAB has resumed transporting some of its stock by rail.

"By rebalancing the use of both rail and road, we have been able to achieve a more efficient and sustainable distribution system for barley," Rivett-Carnac says.

He stresses that the transition also brings SAB closer to meeting its 2030 Sustainability Goals, particularly in climate action and smart agriculture.

"Rail transport reduces our carbon footprint while also supporting the broader agricultural value chain. As we mark 130 years of operations in South Africa, initiatives such as this demonstrate our commitment to building a future where logistics and sustainability are in harmony."

Rivett-Carnac adds that SAB's immediate focus is on restoring rail volumes and returning operations to the way the plant was originally intended to function. The key challenge, he explains, is ensuring that the shift does not compromise supply reliability, which requires strong collaboration with partners and alignment on infrastructure readiness.

He emphasises that investment in infrastructure upgrades, adoption of new technology, supportive policy frameworks and community engagement are essential to building resilience into the system. "These measures not only safeguard reliability today but also ensure that rail remains a futureproof solution capable of adapting to climate and economic challenges," he states.

The benefits of the shift are already being realised. "Environmentally, rail is far more energy-efficient and generates fewer greenhouse-gas emissions per ton per kilometre compared with road, while also reducing air pollution," Rivett-Carnac says. From a safety perspective, he highlights that fewer trucks on the road mean fewer accidents and less congestion, which improves safety around SAB's plants and depots.

The economic advantages are also significant. Rivett-Carnac notes that rail is more cost-effective than road when moving bulk volumes over long distances, while also helping to reduce the maintenance burden on roads. "There are also positive social impacts, with rail projects creating jobs in construction, operations and maintenance. Together, these benefits support SAB's goal of shaping a logistics system that is safer, greener and more efficient; a direction we see as a legacy for the next 130 years," he says.

## Traffic Bottlenecks

In the Western Cape, the shift has eased traffic bottlenecks. Rivett-Carnac says relocating a significant portion of freight volumes to rail has reduced heavy vehicle movement and improved safety for surrounding communities. "This shift has strengthened our relationship with local stakeholders, including

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# Lag in testing a risk to safety gains

DEVINA HARIPERSAD | CREAMER MEDIA REPORTER

**S**outh Africa will need to keep pace with international standards of roadside drug testing, such as saliva-based testing, if it is to meaningfully address the growing threat of drugged driving and safeguard the country's investment in safer transport systems, says drug and alcohol testing equipment supplier ALCO-Safe MD **Rhys Evans**.

"Internationally, there are fail limits in place, similar to those for alcohol, but locally, we have no roadside testing whatsoever and no defined limits to work with."

The most widely adopted global standard is saliva-based testing, during which a driver inserts a swab into his/her mouth for about 30 seconds before it is placed in a cartridge and analysed for multiple drug types.

However, implementing such measures in South Africa would require legislative changes to define which drugs should be tested for and at what levels a driver is

considered impaired, followed by the approval of suitable roadside equipment.

The country's failure to modernise enforcement could undermine significant investments in road upgrades, safer infrastructure and new vehicle technologies, as "the safest car or the most modernised road immediately becomes unsafe when operated by a driver under the influence of drugs," Evans warns.

The extent of drugged driving in South Africa is unknown, as law enforcement does not use any roadside drug-testing devices. Evans says this absence of data creates the perception that drugged driving is not a problem, even though workplace drug testing continues to identify employees who would have driven to work before being screened.

He argues that the lack of urgency from authorities in updating enforcement measures is a major reason for South Africa's

lagging behind international practice.

"Police officers are often under-resourced, under-trained and, in some cases, unaware of the dangers posed by drug-impaired driving . . . the police are not equipped or trained to deal with the scale of the problem."

Consistent roadside testing, he adds, could serve as a strong deterrent, similar to the role breathalysers have played in reducing drunk driving: "The current deterrent effect is non-existent because drivers know they will not be tested."

Evans stresses that government must take the lead in developing the legal framework, but should draw on private-sector expertise to fast-track the process. The private sector could provide testing instruments, accreditations and training, while forensic laboratories and prosecutors would need to play a role in securing convictions. He also cites the broader social and economic benefits of addressing drugged driving, including reduced healthcare costs, lower insurance premiums, fewer accident-related deaths and improved productivity.

"Alcohol testing tools should be applied more aggressively through daily roadblocks and consistent checks, given that drunk driving remains the most pressing problem on South Africa's roads," Evans concludes. **EN**

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• From page 46  
municipalities, as we work together to ensure safer and more reliable operations," he explains.

The Western Cape Mobility Department recently recognised the Caledon Maltings rail initiative, which Rivett-Carnac says shows the importance of public-private collaboration. "The recognition affirms the importance of this initiative and lends credibility to the project, making it easier to secure investment, attract public support and unlock additional government partnerships," he says.

Looking more broadly, Rivett-Carnac argues that similar public-private partnerships will

be vital to expanding the use of rail in other industries and provinces.

"Recently, the national rail service provider invited SAB to explore a customer-led solutions framework as part of its Repositioning and Growth Strategy. This kind of collaboration is essential for creating scalable, sustainable logistics solutions that can transform entire sectors, not just the brewing industry," he says.

He believes that shifting more bulk freight to rail could be transformative for mining, agriculture and manufacturing, as these sectors could benefit from cost savings, efficiency gains and improved supply chain resilience.

For companies considering a similar transition, Rivett-Carnac advises careful planning and long-term commitment.

"Some of the key lessons we have learned include the importance of infrastructure readiness, the value of maintaining a hybrid approach that combines road and rail, and the role of data-driven performance monitoring in identifying bottlenecks and continuously improving operations," he says. Above all, he stresses that modal shifts should be viewed as ongoing journeys rather than one-off projects. **EN**

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# The central role of SA's rail network in unlocking a multi-billion-rand opportunity

**A**t a time of heightened demand, South Africa's coal exports have fallen to their lowest levels in decades owing to the collapse of rail corridors. As coal freight spills onto roads, heavy trucks are destroying infrastructure that was never intended for such loads. These failures are not only choking the smooth flow of goods, but are draining billions from the economy each day, leaving mines, exporters and communities to absorb the costs of crumbling systems.

On the Northern Corridor alone, which links coal producers to Richards Bay, Transnet needs R13-billion simply to restore basic functionality. Over the next five years, that bill climbs to around R65-billion.

With no funds to cover the shortfall, Transnet has turned to the market. In March this year, the the Department of Transport issued a request for information to test market appetite for private participation in freight rail and ports. The first focus areas are three national corridors: coal to Richards Bay, iron-ore to Saldanha, and container traffic to Durban. Request for proposals are expected to be phased over the next year, with further processes likely for manganese and even passenger services.

The government has already had to backstop the operator, approving a R51 billion guarantee facility in May (R41 billion for funding needs over the next two years and R10 billion for liquidity), less than two years after a R47 billion lifeline – and since then, a further R94.8 billion in guarantees has been added. These may buy time, but they won't fix the system.

It is clear that Transnet cannot rehabilitate its own network, nor can the state underwrite its losses indefinitely. Without private capital and operational input, the country's core transport infrastructure will continue sliding into disrepair.

## Lessons from Abroad

South Africa is not the first country to face this dilemma. International precedents show that when governments bring in private partners, share risks fairly, and enforce transparent performance, rail networks can be rebuilt and confidence restored.

In Mexico, where 63% of freight moves by rail – dominated by coal, minerals, agricultural goods and oil derivatives – success came through dedicated commodity corridors run on concession models.

By contrast, South Africa has no such corridors, yet. Rail lines are general-purpose, under-maintained, and lack the focused investment needed to support bulk exports. The result is chronic underperformance.

Yet the country has proved it can make public-private partnerships (PPPs) work. The N4 toll route between Pretoria and Maputo remains one of the continent's most important templates for successful PPPs. Structured as a 30-year concession, it was sub-Saharan Africa's first large-scale cross-border transport PPP, which was successful because government commitments were firm, risk allocation was clear, and local business got involved.

These cases show that investor interest is piqued when the rules are clear, obligations are defined, and returns are predictable. Without that, investors lose interest.

## Unlocking Investment

The next phase of Transnet's turnaround will be guided by how private participation works practically. The government has made clear that ownership of the rail network will remain public. What is up for discussion is operational control and capital participation. That requires flexible models: from track upgrades and terminal development to end-to-end corridor concessions.

What matters is alignment. A corridor cannot function on piecemeal investment: track, signalling, rolling stock and terminal capacity all need to work in sync. That makes consortiums more effective than solo players, with miners, funders, equipment manufacturers and logistics specialists each making an important contribution.

Private involvement, however, has to be structured in such a way as to ensure that efficiency gains do not come at the cost of accessibility or affordability. South Africa cannot afford to repeat models that serve investors while excluding communities or raising barriers for smaller operators.

This means contracts must build in obligations for open access and fair tariffs. Corridors cannot become exclusive highways for a single set of players. International experience shows that balancing investor certainty with wider access is possible, but only if regulators have the authority and capacity to enforce the rules consistently, set fair prices, and hold operators accountable for full transparency.



## The Road Ahead

Decisions taken in the next year will be key. The request for proposal will need to be more than a procurement exercise; it will be a chance to redesign national logistics. Investors and operators should be preparing now: studying the corridors, understanding the regulatory changes, and assessing where their interests align with the broader need for system-wide renewal.

What is at stake goes far beyond freight volumes. Rail failures are eroding the competitiveness of mining, pushing up manufacturing costs, weakening exports, and ultimately holding back South Africa's growth.

The government has made a significant concession by acknowledging that it cannot do this alone. That opens the door for private capital, but the window will not stay open indefinitely. If partnerships are not formed and funded soon, the situation will worsen; the longer the delay, the higher the cost of recovery.

South Africa cannot afford to do nothing. Either we allow the rail system to go to rack and ruin, taking mining, manufacturing, and exports with it – or private capital steps in to rebuild what the government no longer can. One thing is for certain: our choices will have knock-on effects that will be felt across the entire economy.

● Mark Evans is a partner at the strategic management consultancy firm, Oliver Wyman.

# Modernisation aligns with changing realities

DEVINA HARIPERSAD | CREAMER MEDIA REPORTER

**T**ransport Month is a timely opportunity to reflect on how the country's forecourt network is adapting to shifting travel patterns, consumer expectations and the global energy transition, says petroleum company bp Southern Africa.

The company, with more than a century of operations in South Africa, has embarked on an extensive programme to modernise its assets and rethink convenience, bp Southern Africa GM for mobility and convenience **Nokwanda Khumalo** tells *Engineering News*.

Part of this rethink is preparing for the uptake of electric vehicles (EVs). While South Africa's EV uptake remains small, she says bp expects growth in the segment within three to four years as lower-cost imports and hybrid models begin to reach local consumers.

"Our industry is being disrupted by the energy transition and we need to keep ahead of that pace. We see EVs becoming more mainstream, once affordable models gain traction, particularly as Chinese manufacturers bring hybrids and battery-electric vehicles into the country. That's when we plan to make a more serious investment into charging infrastructure."

Khumalo stresses that bp will not move prematurely, given regulatory uncertainty about EV policy and incentives in South Africa.

"We didn't want to invest too far ahead of the curve because the business models and regulatory frameworks for EVs in this country are still evolving. But once there is clarity, and once we see critical mass building in the car parc, we will expand decisively into EV charging."

## Fuel, Food Still Core

While the EV transition gathers pace, Khumalo says bp remains focused on improving the experience for drivers of conventional vehicles, particularly long-distance travellers.

The company's fuels portfolio, including bp Ultimate with Active Technology, is marketed as helping engines run cleaner and delivering more kilometres per tank, which is an important benefit on extended journeys.

It has also invested in revitalising its Wild Bean Café and convenience shop offerings.

"Wild Bean Café has been our hero proposition for years, and in 2023 we launched a refreshed look under the bp Express brand. So far, 13 locations have been upgraded, but it's not just about the hardware – it's about food. We've added ethnic meals, wings, grab-and-go options, and partnered with regional suppliers. We sell more pies than anyone else in the industry, but we don't want to be known for just pies," Khumalo adds.

Highway sites are positioned as rest hubs, with menus geared towards hearty, on-the-go meals, while suburban sites lean more heavily towards grocery and top-up offerings through the Pick n Pay Express format.

## Forecourt Digitalisation

The role of technology has also become central to bp's strategy, with mobile apps, digital payments and loyalty integration being scaled to provide consumers with quicker, more connected experiences.

"Consumers today live on their phones, and forecourts must reflect that reality. We've invested in upgrading our payment platforms



**NOKWANDA KHUMALO**

bp's strategy is about layering improvements across energy, technology, food and safety

so customers can use anything, from SnapScan to Apple Pay or even their rewards balance ... attendants are being trained to handle this variety seamlessly. Soon, we will also announce new payment solutions to make transactions even easier," Khumalo adds.

Sustainability measures are also being implemented across bp's operations, with service stations gradually being equipped with solar solutions to lower grid-based energy consumption, while refrigeration systems and packaging in Wild Bean Cafés are being made more energy efficient and recyclable.

"We are looking at everything – from cleaner diesel with lower sulphur content to recyclable packaging for our food offerings. These steps, while small on their own, add up across the network. They make our sites more sustainable, reduce costs for operators and, ultimately, improve the overall customer experience."

The company's programme of forecourt upgrades, which reached 104 service stations in 2024, is part of a broader push to modernise its network of more than 500 sites. This includes improved lighting, cleaner facilities and safer, more welcoming layouts.

Khumalo adds that bp's strategy is about layering improvements across energy, technology, food and safety. 

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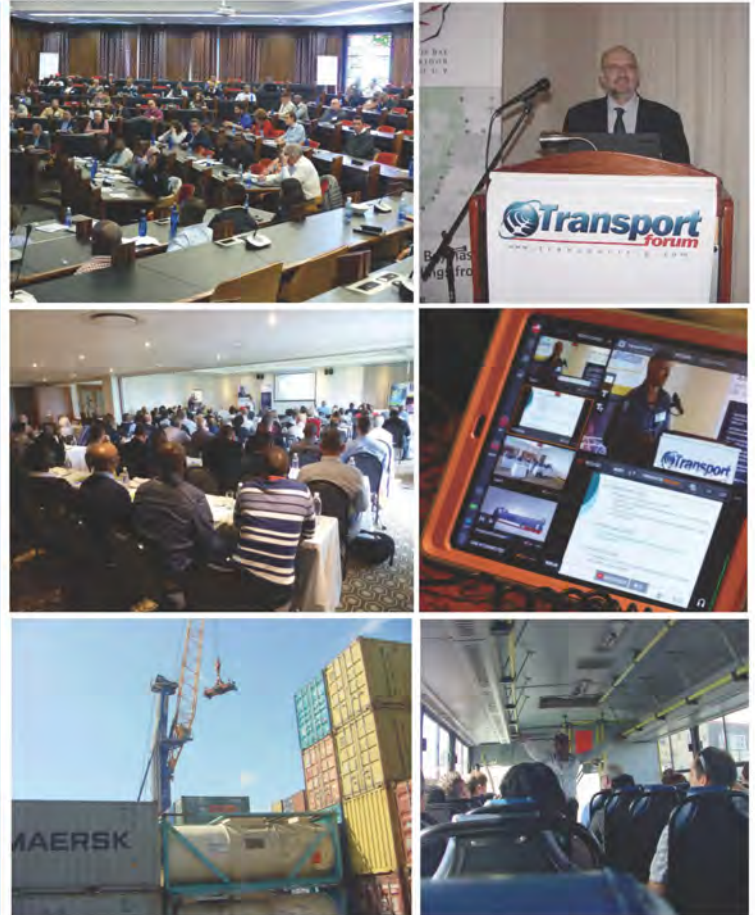
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# Collaboration key to safer, more efficient corridors

DEVINA HARIPERSAD | CREAMER MEDIA REPORTER

**T**his year's Transport Month should firmly spotlight collaborative projects between the private and public sectors that are strengthening the country's freight network, says advocacy body Road Freight Association (RFA) acting CEO **Kevin van der Merwe**.

The National Corridor Performance Measurement and Monitoring Project uses data to identify and resolve bottlenecks on major routes to improve efficiency and delivery times, while private-sector partnerships along high-risk corridors such as the N3 are introducing advanced tracking, rapid-response teams and intelligence-sharing to help to improve security.

Another important initiative cited by Van der Merwe is the Smart Truck and Performance-Based Standards programme, which is trialling vehicles designed to be safer, more efficient and less damaging to road infrastructure.

However, Transport Month must be more than a showcase: "It must be a catalyst for meaningful action throughout the year."

Van der Merwe adds that while the initiative provides a platform to celebrate progress, its real value lies in confronting long-standing problems and building support for practical solutions. For the road freight industry, this means drawing attention to innovation and ongoing challenges.

## Innovation

The push towards more sustainable and climate-resilient transport is shaping industry practices, though adoption is gradual. Van der Merwe says operators are investing in telematics and fleet management systems that allow for reductions in fuel and

emissions, as well as the monitoring of driver behaviour.

Although companies are also using aerodynamic designs, fuel-efficient tyres and preventative maintenance to shrink their environmental footprint, the widespread adoption of greener technologies has been constrained by high capital costs, the limited availability of alternative fuels and the lack of infrastructure to support electric and next-generation vehicles.

"Larger operators are beginning to introduce Euro 5- and Euro 6-compliant vehicles, which emit far fewer harmful gases, and some fleets are piloting diesel/liquefied-natural-gas trucks or testing electric vehicles for last-mile deliveries.

"Green logistics practices, such as consolidating loads or reducing empty trips, are becoming common as they not only save money but also support sustainability goals," Van der Merwe adds.

Yet, he warns that scaling up these efforts will remain difficult without government incentives and support, as well as a stronger refuelling network.

## Challenges

The greatest threat to efficiency remains the state of the road network.



**KEVIN VAN DER MERWE**

While Transport Month provides a platform to celebrate progress, its real value lies in confronting long-standing problems and building support for practical solutions

Maintenance backlogs, poor surfaces and congestion around ports are severely undermining competitiveness. Potholes and deteriorating road conditions increase accidents and repair costs, while congestion adds hours to journeys and reduces reliability. "These problems do not just affect truckers. They drive up the cost of logistics and make South African goods less competitive," Van der Merwe highlights.

The RFA regards the private sector as an essential partner in addressing these infrastructure challenges. Van der Merwe says the industry is not only paying levies and tolls but is willing to contribute expertise, capital and operational know-how through well-structured public-private partnerships.

He urges government to create a transparent framework that can

unlock this potential and ensure that projects are delivered on time and within budget.

Technology is also playing a growing role in strengthening the sector, with advanced telematics, digital freight platforms and transport management systems helping operators optimise routes, reduce idle time and automate administration.

While autonomous trucks are unlikely to be seen on South African roads in the near future, Van der Merwe points to the uptake of advanced driver-assistance systems that improve safety and reduce fatigue as an important step forward.

"To support these developments, the RFA is advocating for a clear policy framework that includes a long-term roadmap for alternative fuels, incentives for fleet renewal and regulatory recognition for Smart Truck programmes."

Van der Merwe also emphasises the importance of harmonised cross-border rules to ease the flow of goods regionally.

Skills development is another priority, and the RFA works with the Transport Education Training Authority to modernise training programmes, which now focus on telematics, compliance and maintenance, in addition to driving skills.

"We want to professionalise the role of drivers, who are central to the success of the freight system, and equip them for the technologies and requirements of tomorrow."

Van der Merwe sees opportunities and risks in the near future. Using technology and data to build a hyper-efficient logistics network is a major opportunity, as is the potential for new-energy vehicles to stimulate local manufacturing if policy is supportive. The risks, however, are just as stark: infrastructure collapse, the high cost of green technologies and regulatory uncertainty.

He concludes that overcoming these barriers will be essential if the road freight sector is to remain a driver of South Africa's economic growth and a responsible contributor to its climate goals. **EN**

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Maintenance backlogs, poor surfaces and congestion around ports are severely undermining competitiveness

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# Vehicle converted to showcase cleaner transport solutions

**A** pilot project to demonstrate how practical, cleaner solutions can be implemented, supporting both operational efficiency and environmental sustainability, has seen natural gas solutions provider Egoli Gas, in collaboration with compressed natural gas (CNG) solutions provider NGV Gas, convert a 2014 Volkswagen (VW) Polo from a petrol to a dual-fuel vehicle.

The initiative demonstrates how existing vehicles can be adapted to achieve both environmental and operational gains, says Egoli Gas GM **Erika Da Cruz**, adding that the project forms part of the company's broader sustainability focus and its effort to promote lower emissions transport alternatives.

Natural gas offers significant

potential for the automotive industry, she says.

"Natural gas is on track to reshape the automotive industry, offering a cleaner-burning alternative source compared to conventional petrol and diesel.

"Our partnership [with NGV Gas, under the energy solutions company CNG Holdings] represents an important milestone, blending innovation with a mutual dedication to a greener Johannesburg. This project is only the beginning . . . collectively, we are forging a path toward more cost-effective and environmentally responsible transportation for South Africa's future," says Da Cruz.

She explains that the converted VW Polo continues to perform reliably, with the CNG tank requiring refuelling "every



## SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL

The use of natural gas offers significant potential for the automotive industry

few days" – representing a minor adjustment when considered with the environmental and cost-saving benefits presented by the conversion.

"Key advantages of CNG include reduced emissions compared with petrol and diesel, lower fuel costs, and potentially reduced engine maintenance owing to cleaner combustion," says Da Cruz.

"As part of the Reatile Group, CNG Holdings is committed to driving sustainable innovation across our operations. Converting

Egoli Gas' fleet vehicles to CNG is a practical demonstration of how cleaner energy solutions can reduce emissions, lower operating costs, and contribute to a greener future for our cities," says CNG Holdings CEO **Josua le Roux**.

With the project showing just how "cleaner, cost-effective, and environment-friendly transport is achievable", he adds that the pilot is expected to guide a broader fleet conversion plan, with more vehicles to follow. **EN**

COUPON ON PAGE 24 E706366

# New bus depot construction nears completion

**T**he Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA), on behalf of the City of Johannesburg's (CoJ's) transport department, is nearing completion of the Selby bus rapid transit (BRT) depot, which the CoJ says is a key upgrade to strengthen the efficiency and reliability of the Rea Vaya BRT system.

According to the JDA, the depot, located in Selby, south of the Johannesburg central business district, will have the capacity to accommodate up to 270 buses, serving as a central-

ised facility for both major and minor maintenance of in-service and out-of-service public transport vehicles.

This infrastructure development, according to the CoJ, will reduce the distance between depots and route starting points, enabling buses to enter service more quickly and will also serve to improve public transport operational efficiency.

The depot will serve as the central hub of Rea Vaya operations, incorporating workshop facilities and refuse buildings.

These facilities are intended

to improve the reliability of the CoJ's public transport system.

The administration block, currently in its final construction phase, will house the Intelligent Transport System control centre.

Other infrastructure will include bus brake testing facilities, spray booths, automatic and manual washing stations, and a refuelling system with AdBlue dispensers, which the CoJ says will ensure compliance with international standards for sustainable transit operations.

In addition to technical facilities, the CoJ reports that the administration building will include new offices, boardrooms, meeting rooms, a canteen and a gymnasium for staff.

The CoJ notes that the design of the building is aimed at modernising operational support for the depot while creating a work environment that enables efficient day-to-day management of Rea Vaya services.

"The Selby BRT depot represents a significant milestone in Johannesburg's commitment to building a safe, reliable and accessible public transport system.

"Its completion will not only enhance the efficiency of the Rea Vaya network but also lay the groundwork for a more connected and sustainable city," says JDA CEO **Themba Mathibe**. **EN**

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# Junior aims for midtier status

NADINE RAMDASS | CREAMER MEDIA SENIOR WRITER

## TARGETING GROWTH

Thor Explorations is conducting exploration at its Segilola gold mine, aiming to build sufficient resources for an updated mine plan and potentially extending mine life

Through diversifying its portfolio and advancing exploration projects, West Africa-focused gold producer Thor Explorations is transitioning from a single-mine junior producer towards its goal of achieving midtier status, says Thor Explorations CEO **Segun Lawson**.

Thor's portfolio includes the 100%-owned Segilola gold project, in Nigeria, and exploration projects in Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire.

Compared to similar geological areas in Australia and Canada, West Africa's highly prospective geology, particularly the Birimian greenstone belt, remains significantly underexplored, increasing the attractiveness for exploration and mine development.

West African countries' permitting processes are also "relatively efficient, enabling a quicker path from discovery to construction", he adds.

Owing to these factors, combined with high gold prices and supportive governments, the region presents strong opportunities for value creation, enthuses Lawson.

Leveraging these benefits, Thor's immediate priorities include further exploration underneath and within a 50 km radius of its Segilola project, along with defining a maiden resource estimate at its Côte d'Ivoire project this year, adding another growth pipeline alongside the company's assets in Nigeria and Senegal.

The Segilola project is currently the biggest gold-producing mine in the country and is on track to meet its guidance of 85 000 oz to 95 000 oz for the 2025 financial year, highlights Lawson.

He explains that production was based on an initial feasibility study, which was updated in March 2021, outlining over 500 000 oz

of total probable reserves over the life of the mine; however, the project has never been fully drilled out, owing to budget constraints and debt facility covenants tied to the mine's construction.

With the senior debt facility being fully repaid at the end of December 2024, cash was redeployed into exploration, says Lawson, adding that this enabled Thor to focus on better understanding the geological controls of gold mineralisation and continue drilling.

In addition, with the release of two sets of exploration results this year thus far, he says gold was intersected below the pit design at mineable widths and grades.

Ongoing drilling aims to build sufficient resources for an updated mine plan, potentially extending mine life.

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# Producer targets organic growth in stable region

NADINE RAMDASS | CREAMER MEDIA SENIOR WRITER

Through leveraging West Africa's significant exploration potential, favourable mining regimes and administrative efficiency, gold producer Endeavour Mining is targeting growing organically to 1.5-million ounces a year by 2030, says Endeavour Mining CEO **Ian Cockerill**.

The company currently produces over 1.1-million ounces of gold a year at an all-inclusive sustaining cost (AISC) of \$1 281/oz from its portfolio of five mines across Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso.

Endeavour also has development projects and exploration assets within West Africa's highly prospective Birimian greenstone belt, he adds.

In Senegal, the company's Sabodala-Massawa gold mine – the biggest in the country – has been elevated to top-tier status with the addition of a new biological oxidisation facility, supporting production of up to 300 000 oz/y.

In Côte d'Ivoire, Endeavour's Ity operation – the longest-operating gold mine in the country – is aiming to sustain production above 300 000 oz/y over a ten-year mine life, while Cockerill says the newly commissioned Lafigué mine is positioned as a low-cost, long-life asset, aiming to produce over 200 000 oz/y.

In Burkina Faso, the company's Houndé operation delivers over 250 000 oz/y and is supported by a rich exploration pipeline along the Houndé gold belt, while the nearby Mana mine offers strong upside potential, with mineralisation open at depth, and exploration for additional underground resources and reserves under way.

Concurrently, Endeavour is expanding its

resource base through near-mine exploration and regional-scale drilling, having already achieved its latest five-year target of discovering 12-million ounces to 17-million ounces.

Cockerill adds that the company is advancing the development of its Assafou project, in Côte d'Ivoire, which has emerged as one of the most significant recent gold discoveries in West Africa.

Discovered in 2021, Assafou already hosts 4.6-million ounces of indicated gold resources and a maiden reserve of 4.1-million ounces, which Cockerill says, showcases the deposit's scale and quality. The project also benefits from favourable logistics, as it is within close proximity to existing power and transport networks.

Following a positive prefeasibility study in December 2024, Assafou is advancing towards a definitive feasibility study, expected by early 2026.

The project is forecast to produce 329 000 oz/y over its first decade at an AISC of \$892/oz, with a mine life of about 15 years.

"Assafou demonstrates the success of our screened exploration approach, which has enabled us to deliver 20.7-million ounces of measured and indicated resources at a discovery cost of less than \$25/oz – about one-third of the industry average," notes Cockerill.

Ongoing exploration at the nearby Pala Trend 2 and 3 targets, which host similar near-surface mineralisation and grades to those of Assafou, is expected to further expand the project's growth potential, with drilling results anticipated later this year.

The company's current brownfield projects



**IAN COCKERILL**

Endeavour's ongoing projects hold significant potential to sustain production and extend mine life at the company's flagship operations

include Vindaloo Underground at Houndé, Ity Doughnut at Ity, and Sabodala Underground at Sabodala-Massawa, with these projects holding "significant potential" to sustain production and extend mine life at Endeavour's flagship operations, says Cockerill.

In its greenfield pursuits, Endeavour is progressing district-scale exploration at Assuefry, in Côte d'Ivoire, and across the broader at the Ity Trend.

Cockerill notes that Endeavour holds a strong competitive advantage in West Africa, owing to the significant exploration potential of the Birimian greenstone belt, favourable mining regimes and the industry's ability to develop mines on schedule and with low capital intensity.

West Africa is among the most geologically prospective regions globally, yet remains relatively underexplored, compared with more mature jurisdictions such as Canada and Australia.

Between 2010 and 2024, more than 70-million ounces of gold were discovered in the region, making it the leading jurisdiction globally for new discoveries over the past 15 years, he adds. ■

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# Producer aims for projects to lift production

NADINE RAMDASS | CREAMER MEDIA SENIOR WRITER

As part of its strategic objective to reach 500 000 oz/y of gold production, precious metals mining company Fortuna Mining is advancing the Diamba Sud gold project toward a construction decision following the completion of a preliminary economic assessment expected later this year, alongside increasing 2026 production at its Séguéla mine, in Côte d'Ivoire, says CEO **Jorge Ganoza**.

Through its operations in West Africa and Latin America, Fortuna reached a key production milestone in 2024, delivering about 460 000 oz of gold equivalent production in the year.

Following this, the company divested from the San Jose mine, in Mexico, and Yaramoko mine, in Burkina Faso, resulting in lower production for 2025, with the company currently guiding gold equivalent production of 309 000 oz to 339 000 oz.

However, through its various new projects, Fortuna is targeting a return to its 2024 production levels, he says.

Aligned to this goal, Fortuna is advancing several projects in West Africa, with projects spanning the full mine development cycle – from exploration to development, including conceptual targets and early-stage exploration, to advanced-development projects and brown-field expansions. Fortuna is “very attracted to the West African region”, says Ganoza.

He acknowledges, however, that many West African nations are young democracies with developing economies and industries.

The main challenges of Diamba Sud’s development to date has been Senegal’s relatively underdeveloped mining industry, which lacks the well-established mining culture and service clusters of other West African nations such as Côte d’Ivoire, Burkina Faso and Ghana.

Ganoza says Fortuna is confident that proper

planning can overcome these challenges as the company moves towards a construction decision for the project. Over the past two years, the company has invested close to \$50-million in mineral exploration and studies.

An updated mineral resource estimate for the project was announced in August, showing significant growth. The report showed an indicated mineral resource of 724 000 oz, representing a 53% increase since year-end 2024, and an inferred mineral resource of 285 000 oz, reflecting a 93% increase since year-end 2024.

A preliminary economic assessment is expected to be published in the fourth quarter of this year, followed by a construction decision before the end of the first half of 2026.

“We are envisioning an openpit mine with an initial projected mine life of about eight years. However, there is strong exploration potential to extend this further.”

With a strong balance sheet, including more than half a billion dollars in liquidity, and low debt, Ganoza adds that the Diamba Sud gold project is technically robust and financially de-risked.

## Additional Investments

Fortuna’s flagship Séguéla mine, in its second full year of operations, is expected to deliver

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# South African pumps supplier official Grindex distributor in West Africa

TRACY KLÜCKOW | CREAMER MEDIA CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

To better support operations in West Africa’s rapidly expanding mining sector, Gauteng pumps supplier Integrated Pump Technology was officially appointed an authorised distributor of the Grindex submersible pumps range in the region, in July.

“There’s significant investment in mining operations and substantial opportunity in the region if we can get in at the right time and support these mines and build relationships with them early on. That includes the mining contractors that are responsible for dewatering or underground mining applications,” says Integrated Pump Technology MD **Jordan Marsh**.

The company will primarily focus on growing its footprint in countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali, Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana, owing to the number of mines in these territories.

“The idea is to build traction in West Africa by supplying Grindex pumps to these countries initially before expanding further in the region,” explains Marsh.

The company has already started to build relationships in these mining territories, establishing a bonded warehouse in Ghana to enable quicker turnaround when servicing mines in the region.

Integrated Pump Technology realised over the last four or five years, through its success in sub-Saharan Africa, that hav-



## COMMITTED

Integrated Pump Technology has established a bonded warehouse in Ghana that will help ensure rapid turnaround and reduced lead times for customers across West Africa

ing the right stock in the right territories, at the right time, is critical. Therefore, in preparation for its West African expansion, the company has tried to understand the requirements of mining territories in the region over the past year.

“Since then, we have placed an ex-stock order to ensure that there is stock in country that can immediately support those mining requirements. Demanding as the operating conditions are in West Africa, having Grindex pumps there is such a win for end-users. Being able to access these pumps quite quickly certainly makes their lives easier while improving our business,” says Marsh.

Having another quality supplier in West Africa that can assist mines quickly is important, he adds, noting that the Grindex distributorship is also an opportunity for Integrated Pump Technology to expand its footprint and grow the business further.

The company plans to initially stock complete units in the region and focus on “getting those up and running”.

“We have a large order of complete Grindex units coming through, which will later start evolving into a stockholding of boxed spares packages, as well as maintenance support,” highlights Marsh.

The company has hired a local area manager and is in the process of looking for a technical salesperson to provide sales support on the ground.

“As we start progressing and understanding the lie of the land, the ultimate goal is for us to establish an entity with a service centre that will cater for on-site requirements. We’ll also have to consider the possibility of having a fully-fledged service team in the region to support local mines. Having good people on site and a sufficient stockholding in West Africa is key,” notes Marsh.

The company intends to offer mines in the region access to the same high level of face-to-face, value-added service that mines enjoy in the territories Integrated Pump Technology currently serves, he emphasises.

“This is a very exciting time for us, because we are now able to spread our reach and gain more traction in new territories



## JORDAN MARSH

Demanding as the operating conditions are in West Africa, having Grindex pumps there benefits end-users

and strengthen our footprint across Africa.”

Integrated Pump Technology also represents the Godwin range of diesel-driven pumps in West Africa along with Grindex.

Integrated Pump Technology’s Grindex range has three different models that cater for dewatering, slurry and sludge applications, with small to large pumping capacities available.

“Having access to both these brands, we are able to offer a full turnkey dewatering solution for mines. Whether it’s submersible pumps for underground or self-priming diesel electric units for surface mining or for in-pit dewatering, we now have a pump to cater for any requirement on a specific mine.

“As West African mining territories host extremely wet and large mines, they need to operate many pumps in several areas,” elaborates Marsh.

Many mines in West Africa are subject to extreme operating conditions, which includes considerable rainfall and water ingress, which can often disrupt operations and negatively impact on mining production.

“Where there’s considerable rainfall, access to a considerable number of pumps is needed. With us having pumps and stock in the territory, we’re able to quickly fulfil demand in these situations, providing not only several pumps but the right pumps for these applications,” adds Marsh.

It is vital for a mine to have the correct pumps in position at the correct time and in the correct application to avoid unnecessary stoppages and ensure the efficient continuation of its production, he underscores. ■

COUPON ON PAGE 24 E705751

• From page 56

“We believe there will be an inflection point where this mine will transition from an openpit to an underground [operation],” he adds, noting that upcoming work will assess this underground potential.

**Douta Project**

Thor announced its completed acquisition of the Douta gold project, in Senegal – from the project’s joint venture (JV) partner International Mining Company – last month.

Thor will be able to further diversify its portfolio by adding a second jurisdiction, thereby reducing risk, says Lawson.

Previously holding 70% ownership of the project, Thor now owns 100%, having greater flexibility in decision-making regarding Douta’s efficient development, without being subjected to JV approval processes.

Thor aims to release a prefeasibility study for Douta by the end of this year, having already completed “much of the heavy lifting”, particularly metallurgy and process flow sheet development, he acknowledges.

Infill drilling was completed in the second quarter of this year to upgrade the inferred resource into an indicated resource.

Following this, Thor will consolidate the results, update the mine plan, finalise costs and complete engineering designs.

The company also acquired an initial 65% interest in the early-stage Bousankhoba gold exploration permit, located to the east of the company’s Douta West permit.

Noting the significance of the Bousankhoba project in relation to Douta, Lawson explains that the former shows encouraging early exploration results across a big and highly prospective area, with its providing upside potential, either by supporting extended mine life or by allowing for expansion of production capacity in future for the anticipated Douta mine.

“If we ever are in a situation where we want to increase the production capacity of the mine, [Bousankhoba provides] additional good ground from which we can find resources.”

**Guitry Project**

Thor also undertook a maiden 3 000 m reverse circulation drilling campaign at its 100%-owned Guitry gold project, in Côte d’Ivoire, earlier this year, with Lawson commenting that “positive” results have been obtained.

He notes that Côte d’Ivoire has become a regional success story in gold exploration and mine development, which motivated Thor’s entry in 2024.

While benefiting from significant historical exploration work, Lawson says vast areas of the Guitry gold project remain unexplored. ■

COUPON ON PAGE 24 E706342

• From page 60

about 145 000 oz of gold this year, with production on track to meet this guidance.

The company has increased the exploration budget to about \$60-million for this year, up from \$41-million in 2024.

Fortuna acquired Séguéla through its acquisition of Canadian gold mining company Roxgold in 2021, which Ganoza notes was largely owing to the strong exploration potential of Séguéla.

“It is very rewarding to see, over the last three to four years, that potential being realised,” he elaborates.

Looking ahead to 2026, Ganoza anticipates expanding output at Séguéla to between 160 000 oz/y and 180 000 oz/y: “That work

is advancing well, and we should be in a position to meet that 2026 target.”

While current production at Séguéla is from an openpit, Fortuna is aiming to keep the mine in production by leveraging the Sunbird deposit - where drilling continues to expand underground mining potential.

Infill and expansion are also being pursued at the Kingfisher deposit, 1 km east of Sunbird.

An updated resource estimate for the Séguéla expansion project is expected to be published by year-end, which Ganoza notes will showcase the projects’ potential to offset depletion at the mine’s other deposits, and increase the company’s resource inventory. ■

COUPON ON PAGE 24 E706431



**BACKGROUND**

The Aachen reactor is a **highly efficient mass transfer and shear device** developed alongside Maelgwyn’s Imhoflot flotation technology. The unit can be used for any application where it is required to intimately **mix a gas with a liquid** but has been found to be **particularly suitable for gold leaching** applications where it is required to **boost the dissolved oxygen levels** of slurry either prior to, or during the leach reaction.

**SUITABILITY**

Aachen reactors are particularly **suitable for the treatment of transitional material consisting of a mixture of oxide and sulphides**, or where sulphide grades are too low/variable for flotation.

**USES**

Can be used to **increase the leach kinetics in gold and silver cyanidation** by thinning the Nernst diffusion layer and removing the passivation deposits.

**Aachen applications for gold ores include:** Refractory ores, Transitional material, Oxides, Gold tailings retreatment and Cyanide detox.

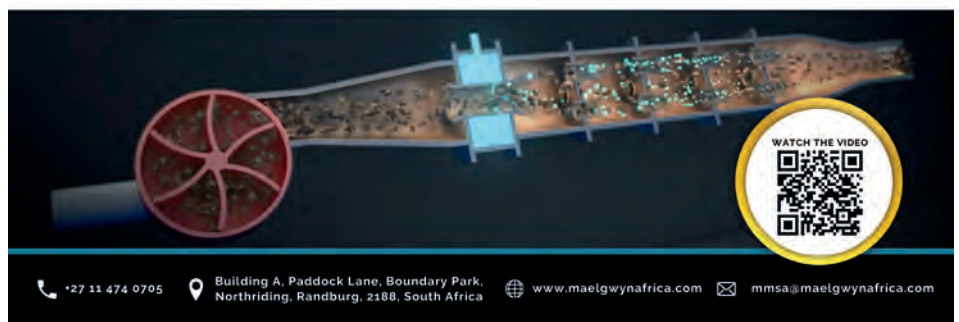
**BENEFITS**

- Increased gold recoveries/ lower residue grades
- Accelerated leach kinetics
- Reduced cyanide consumption
- Improved oxygen utilisation
- Increased tonnages without compromising recovery

Aachen reactors may be applied in a **variety of ways** and used on a variety of **ore types to increase gold and silver recoveries:**

- Pre-Ox
- AAL - Aachen Assisted Leach
- Leachox™

Currently there are over **70 Aachen reactors installed** globally.





PUMPS

# Partnership sees Italian pumps enter SA market

TRENT ROEBECK | CREAMER MEDIA FEATURES WRITER



## IMPROVED EFFICIENCIES

The first shipment of centrifugal pumps from SAER will be delivered to Bi this month, spurring the start of improved pump efficiency for various industrial processes

A partnership was formed between South African interconnected mechanical consumables supplier Bearings International (Bi) and Italian industrial pump manufacturer SAER, as publicly announced on September 25, to add SAER pumps to Bi's product portfolio, enabling customers to access various submersible and surface pumps in addition to its range of mechanical products, says Bi product application engineer **Glen Espag**.

SAER chose to introduce its pump range to the South African market owing to the country's large centrifugal pump market share, which is a result of its advanced industrial base, established water structures and developed mining sector, claims SAER sales enablement head **Ilaria Favella**.

She adds that industry in South Africa is also an "interesting field" for further opportunity and growth in the centrifugal pumps market.

"Despite several challenges, South Africa remains a key market for centrifugal pumps, offering opportunities in original-equipment manufacturing and the replacement segment," says Favella.

Moreover, the Bi team has identified a strong demand for SAER's surface pump range, for agricultural, industrial and municipal

applications in Gauteng, the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, says Espag.

Some of the SAER surface pumps now on offer from Bi include centrifugal, high-pressure and multistage pump units, which will be complemented by close-coupled variants and end-suction solutions.

In addition to offering customers fluid handling solutions, the partnership between Bi and SAER will also prove beneficial in that it will afford both companies access to the "lucrative pumps market in South Africa, which is steadily growing", he says.

"By adding pumps to our product portfolio alongside drive systems, torque transfer, bearings and seals, as well as field services, we're now positioned to offer a comprehensive suite of products. The partnership will add further value for customers through reduced lead times and enhanced technical support by leveraging local expertise," notes Espag.

There is also a growing demand for premium pump solutions in sectors such as, construction, infrastructure and commercial development, industrial water processing and treatment, as well as the sugar industry, he adds.

"Historically, the market has seen steady growth and we're currently witnessing

renewed momentum driven by infrastructure investment and water security initiatives . . . Growth is expected to exceed 4% (a year) between 2024 and 2029," says Espag.

All of SAER's centrifugal pumps will be manufactured and stocked in Reggio Emilia, in Italy, and delivered to Bi in South Africa, with the first shipment scheduled to arrive in South Africa this month.

Going forward, a SAER-certified technician will provide Bi team members with in-depth training to equip the team with knowledge and skills relating to product specifications, installation protocols, and maintenance and troubleshooting processes.

Bi will also maintain a local stockholding of critical spare parts, which will be supported by a strategic branch network with a national footprint, enabling the company to provide clients with after-sales services.

"This SAER partnership underscores our unwavering commitment to helping customers futureproof their business sustainability by anticipating and meeting their evolving needs. We look forward to a long-lasting and mutually beneficial partnership with SAER, one that will create lasting value for both our companies and for our customers," concludes Espag. 

COUPON ON PAGE 24 E406343

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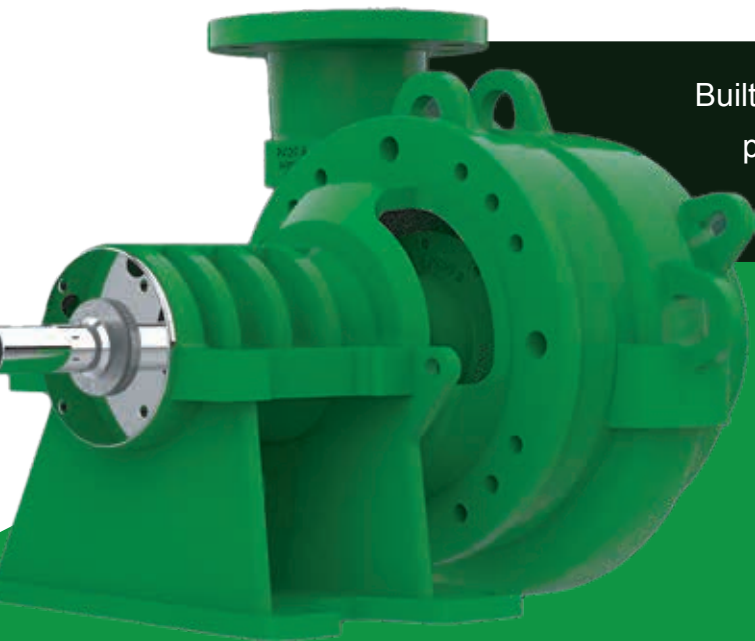
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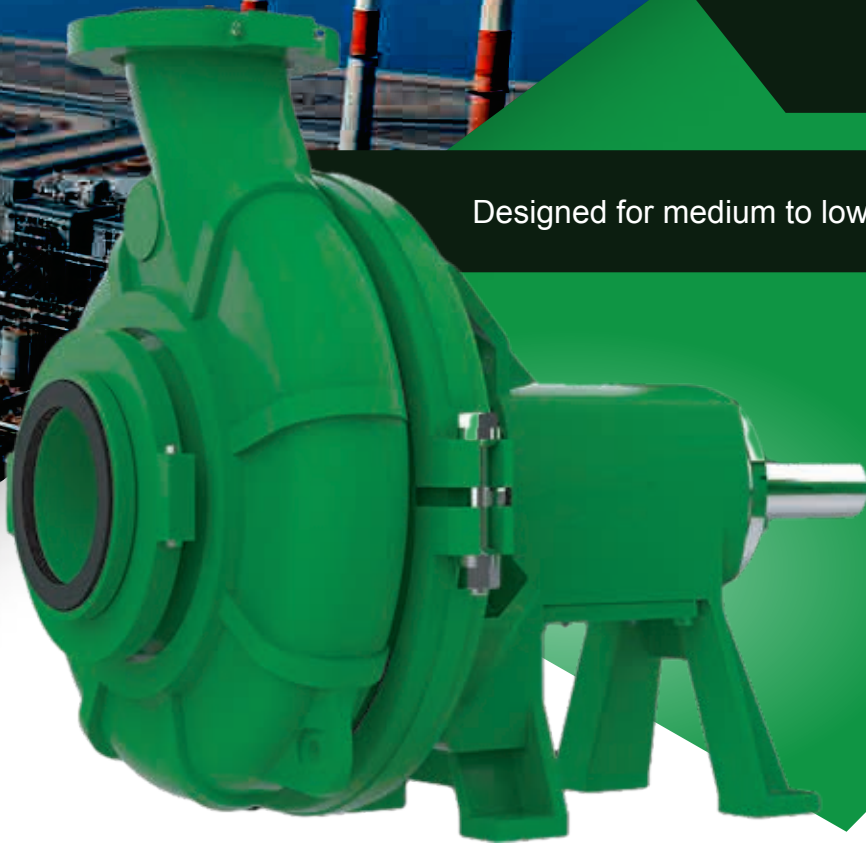


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extreme discharge pressures.

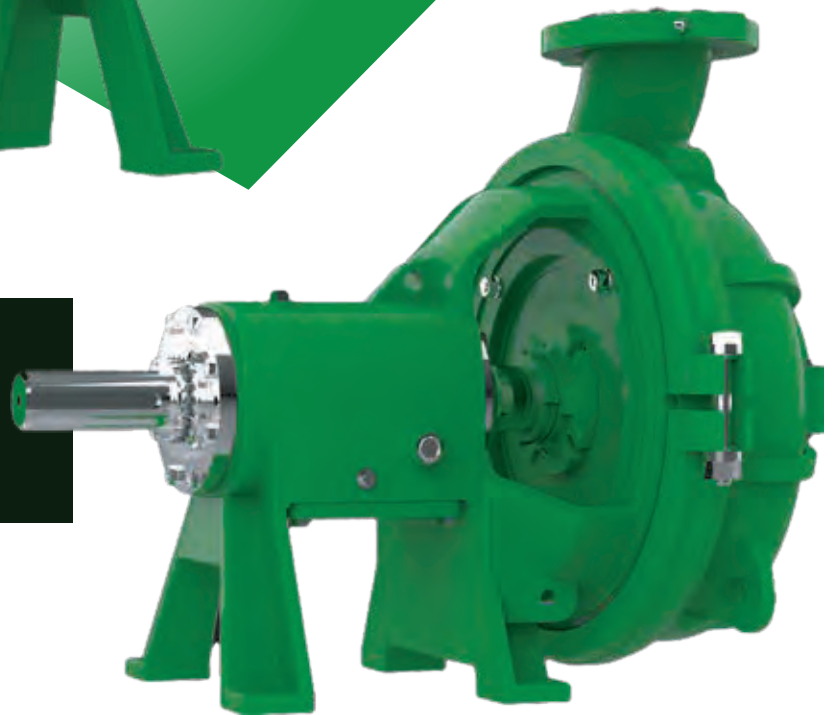


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# System compatibility ensures efficiency

TRENT ROEBECK | CREAMER MEDIA WRITER

Industrial operations should ensure that their pump systems are compatible with the chosen plastic pipe systems, says professional body for plastic pipe manufacturing South African Plastic Pipe Manufacturing Association (Sappma) CEO **Jan Venter**.

“Correct, informed design ensures that the pipes can reliably withstand the required operating pressures, flow rates and potential surges without risking leaks, ruptures or premature deterioration. This alignment between pump and pipe protects the client’s investment, ensures uninterrupted operation and significantly extends the service life of the entire system.”

A pump’s pressure, temperature and chemical load could cause incompatible pipe systems to fail prematurely. This would result in bursts, blockages and/or leaks – all of which could also lead to operational inefficiencies, increased downtime, environmental harm and equipment damage

Additionally, he highlights the importance of identifying the Sappma logo on pipe products, which is indicative of a certified plastic pipe system that has been produced in accordance with the association’s exacting standards and has been subjected to independent audits.

Venter notes that a pump’s pressure, temperature and chemical load could cause incompatible pipe systems to fail prematurely. This would result in bursts, blockages and/or leaks – all of which could also lead to operational inefficiencies, increased downtime, environmental harm and equipment damage.

Therefore, choosing the correct plastic pipe system to match the operation’s pump will assist in realising cost-savings while improving efficiency, safety and overall operationality.

## Criteria for Pipe Selection

Although the role of qualified design engineers cannot be substituted, Venter emphasises Sappma’s playing a crucial role in advising clients on selecting certified and reliable pipe solutions.

This includes selecting the correct pipe material to accommodate the pump system’s fluid, environmental conditions and operating pressure; quality assurance; recommending the most suitable joining methods; and providing aftermarket services such as technical guidance and practical support.

Before providing clients with a turnkey solution to match their pipe system to the operation’s pump system, Sappma evaluates the technical and environmental factors. It also helps clients to identify key considerations – including the nature of the fluid being pumped,




**JAN VENTER**

It is important to choose the correct plastic pipe system to match an operation’s pump to save on costs and improve efficiency and operationality

operating pressure and surge capacity, hydraulic requirements, environmental exposure and expected service life, as well as maintenance requirements.

“Clients can be confident that these factors have been accounted for through rigorous standards, ensuring the system is durable, safe and fit for purpose,” he adds.

Venter says Sappma will continue to provide clients with pipe solutions to properly match to pump systems, thereby enhancing operationality and averting potential shortcomings.

“Together, these services form a turnkey assurance solution: clients can proceed with confidence, knowing that the piping system they are investing in has been backed by the collective expertise of Sappma’s trusted network,” he concludes. 

COUPON ON PAGE 24 E706352





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# New pump range suitable for demanding applications

**P**ump and valve product manufacturer KSB Pumps and Valves (KSB) has launched a rugged stainless-steel submersible pump range – CORAChrom – designed for deep borehole use and other demanding freshwater and saline pumping applications.

The new CORAChrom pumps are a “game changer” for African conditions with all wetted com-

ponents, including the diffusers, being fabricated from corrosion-resistant, high-grade AISI 304 stainless-steel, or engineered polymer impellers depending on the environment, thereby ensuring the longest possible operational life even in mineral-rich or aggressive groundwater.

Additionally, the CORAChrom series is available in 100 mm and 150 mm multistage centrifugal

variants and is designed to cope with the kind of variable borehole conditions and challenging water chemistry commonly encountered in South Africa and across the continent. This includes high iron or salt content, variable water tables and unreliable electricity supply, especially in rural areas, says KSB area manager **Hugo du Plessis**.

Unlike traditional cast iron or bronze pumps that may degrade or clog over time, the new CORAChrom submersible pumps use investment-cast stainless steel for key components such as the suction housing and non-return valve. The range also features integrated intermediate bearings and a counter-thrust ring to support axial loads and extend bearing life and further enhance reliability.

The pump’s lightweight modular design allows it to be installed vertically, horizontally or inclined, which makes it adaptable to a

variety of borehole and tank installations.

The CORAChrom’s wide power compatibility allows it to operate on both single and three-phase alternating current power and is also available in direct current (DC), solar-ready options, which are proving especially valuable in off-grid or energy-constrained areas.

“Our CORAChrom pumps are capable of delivering flow rates of up to 12 m<sup>3</sup>/h (200 l/min), with maximum heads of 638 m at 50 Hz (2 900 rpm) or 780 m at 60 Hz (3 500 rpm). Motors are available up to 22 kW, depending on model and application. This is tested and certified in our global manufacturing sites where each pump undergoes rigorous hydraulic testing under ISO 9906 Grade 3B standards, verifying its real-world efficiency,” says Du Plessis.

The KSB CORAChrom series is already gaining traction across multiple sectors with successful deployments in borehole-based irrigation for farms and small-holdings; garden and nursery watering systems; domestic water supply in rural or peri-urban housing developments; dewatering and groundwater management in construction and mining; and pressure boosting and cooling water systems in commercial and industrial buildings.

Further, Du Plessis notes that in drought-prone areas such as the Northern Cape, Karoo and North West province, where boreholes may be drilled to depths exceeding 500 m and access to reliable electricity remains a challenge, the solar-ready DC models have proven to be transformative.

As with all KSB products, the CORAChrom range is backed by KSB’s South African sales and service network with “expert support and technical backup” available through its branches and distributors.

“These pumps deliver excellent output per Watt-peak, even in low-light conditions, making them ideal for solar applications. It’s part of KSB’s commitment to sustainable water access and long-term value for our customers,” he concludes. 



## IDEAL SOLUTION

KSB’s new range of CORAChrom pumps are ideal for optimising water processes for various industrial and mining applications

COUPON ON PAGE 24 E706414

# ADVICE TO PURCHASER OF PLASTIC PIPING SYSTEMS

When procuring plastic piping systems, purchasers are advised to ensure that all products and manufacturers meet the highest quality and compliance standards to ensure the product meets the design life requirements. The following considerations and requirements are recommended and to be stated in any RFQ (request for quotation).



## MANUFACTURER TO SUPPLY THE FOLLOWING:

- ISO 9001 QMS (Quality Management System) Certificate or Quality Management Plan of the production facility with a copy of the latest Quality Audit Reports to be submitted throughout the supply period
- Product Certification (e.g. SANS ISO 4427-2 if HDPE, SANS 966-1 if uPVC, etc.)
- Raw material Certification (e.g. SANS ISO 4427-1 if HDPE)
- Certificate of analysis (COA) of polymers used
- Certificate of conformance (COC) of products
- Undertaking not to use any bought-in recycled material
- Laboratory test results, in accordance to the certification bodies' Specific Permit Conditions (SPC), for each supplied pipe batch shall be submitted
- Full traceability of the pipe Batch Number to the raw material used
- SAPPMA Membership Certificate with a copy of the latest SAPPMA Audit Reports throughout the supply period



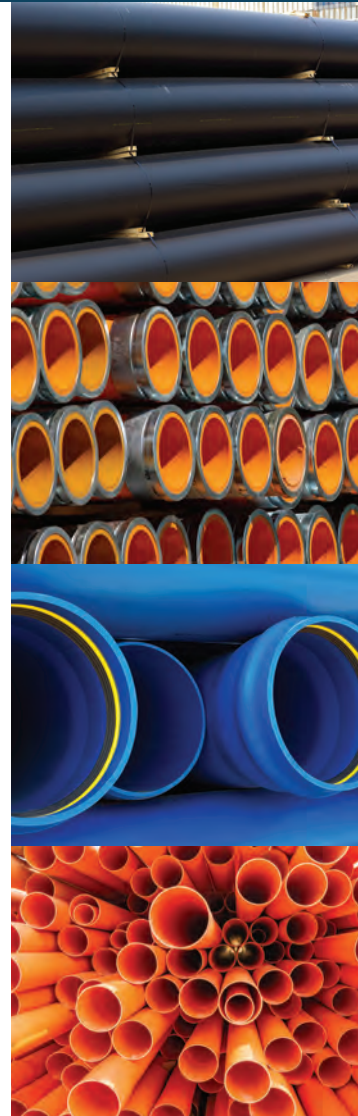
## ALL PRODUCTS TO BE INSPECTED ON DELIVERY AND THE FOLLOWING CHECKED FOR COMPLIANCE:

- Pipe to be marked in accordance with the relevant standards, with the logo of the certification body and SAPPMA clearly visible.
- Pipe to be inspected for dimensions (OD, wall thickness and ovality) and damage (scratches, gouges, cracks, missing rubbers, etc.)



## THE FOLLOWING SHOULD ALSO HAVE AN IMPACT ON YOUR CHOICE OF SUPPLIER:

- Is the manufacturer open to unannounced inspections during production?
- Is the quoted price realistic in terms of current polymer prices? (Beware of tenders where the selling price in R/kg is suspiciously low)



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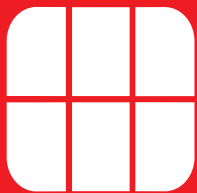
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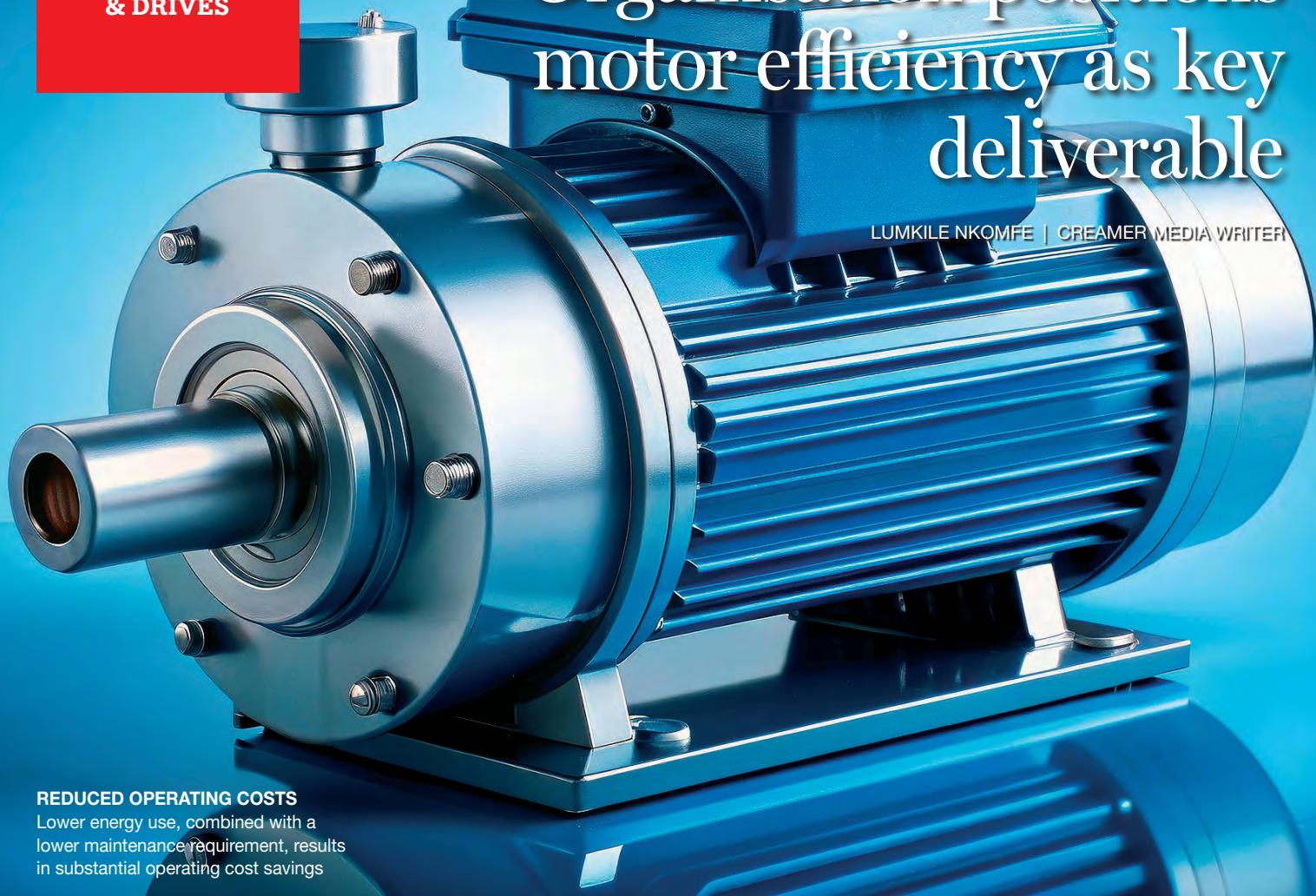
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LUMKILE NKOMFE | CREAMER MEDIA WRITER



## REDUCED OPERATING COSTS

Lower energy use, combined with a lower maintenance requirement, results in substantial operating cost savings

**E**lectric motors are central to South Africa's mining operations – powering fans, pumps, conveyors and other essential equipment – making developments in motor and drive technology increasingly more important, highlights industry organisation South African Institute of Electrical Engineers (SAIEE) rotating machines section (RMS) chairperson **Fanie Steyn**.

Mining – having to deal with challenges, such as energy constraints and having to extract lower-grade ore more efficiently – forms a big part of the end-user segment in South Africa, as motors comprises about 60% of the electrical consumption of a mine.

Therefore, it is important to integrate new technological developments for motors and drives into mining operations, with recent advances, such as (IE4) motors, variable-speed drives (VSDs) and the integration of AI and

machine learning for predictive maintenance, he adds.

“VSDs, in particular, are being applied to centrifugal pumps, fans, compressors and conveyors to adjust speed according to process demand. This allows operators to reduce energy consumption while maintaining process output.”

Steyn also notes that the adoption of VSDs has increased from about 5% of applications in the past, to between 30% and 50% in mining operations, of late.

In mechanically controlled processes, VSDs replace flow-reducing valves and other devices, allowing for precise speed control and energy savings, notes SAIEE RMS representative **Ruveer Persad**.

VSDs also reduce energy spikes during startup, lowering strain on South Africa's electricity grid, which remains an

important consideration amid the country's energy constraints.

While energy savings are important, Persad says the primary driver is process control, as the VSD allows for operations to run more smoothly, with energy efficiency being a beneficial outcome of that control.

## Technological Considerations, Sustainability Objectives

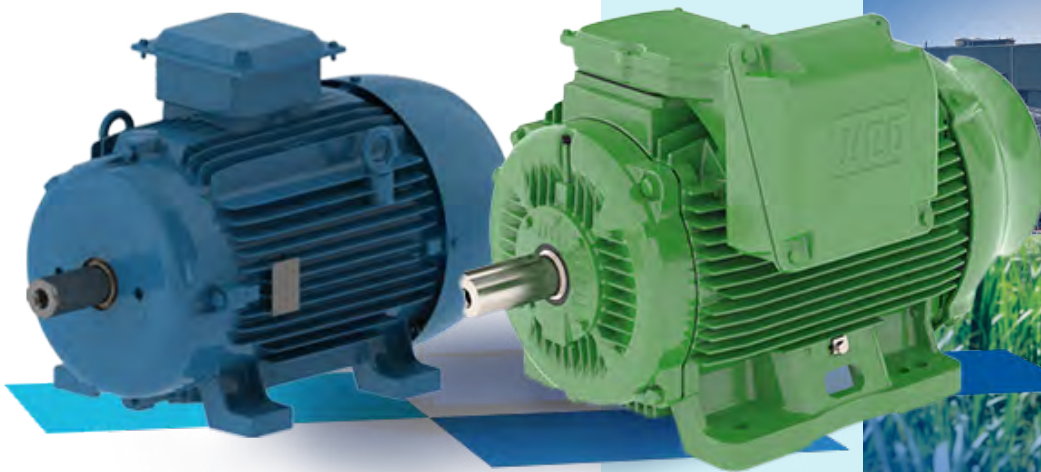
AI and machine learning are being integrated into the operation and maintenance of motors through smart sensors which monitor temperature, vibration, running hours and other operational parameters.

Data from these sensors is analysed to predict potential failures, allowing for maintenance to be scheduled before equipment breakdowns occur.

• To page 76

# MEPS Compliant Electric Motors

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# Transition can be phased as new regulations loom

MARLENY ARNOLDI | CREAMER MEDIA SENIOR DEPUTY EDITOR ONLINE

**D**rive and control technologies company SEW-EURODRIVE says a holistic approach to system efficiency using its IE3-standard motors, combined with other equipment, can realise cost savings of up to 40%, as opposed to undertaking individual motor upgrades.

The June 2026 deadline looms for companies to install new electric and geared motors to conform to South Africa's Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS), introduced in June this year. The MEPS provide a standard for electric motor efficiency, mandating that certain three-phase and low-voltage motors sold in the country meet at least IE3 efficiency levels.

SEW-EURODRIVE has been supplying IE3 motors since 2017.

This compulsory specification applies to motors with a capacity of between 750 W and 375 kW, which should reduce energy consumption and, therefore, bolster grid stability if less efficient IE1 and IE2 motors are phased out.

According to SEW-EURODRIVE, replacing one component with a more efficient one can result in about 8% savings on electricity use every hour; however, following a holistic approach to the system, such as adding a more efficient gearbox and a variable-speed

drive, these savings can increase to between 35% and 40%.

Higher efficiency motors, such as IE4 and IE5, which SEW-EURODRIVE business development electronics manager **Willem Strydom** says many industrial customers have adopted already, offer further savings and simplified installation.

While regulations in many countries do not yet specify the use of IE5 motors, many customers opt for them, owing to precision control and specific application requirements, especially in the automotive, and food and beverage industries.

The introduction of the MEPS has caused concern among some customers, owing to new urgent upgrades that are necessary, says SEW-EURODRIVE business development electronics proposal engineer **Natasha Meintjies**.

However, SEW-EURODRIVE offers assistance with a phased approach to help customers transition to IE3 motors during the grace period of the remaining months afforded by the MEPS regulations to sell older motors. Customers can implement the transition into their maintenance plans, which allows for the phased approach, she adds.

In this regard, existing stock of IE1 and IE2 motors can be sold until May 2026, while motors currently in use may remain operational, according to the MEPS.



## DRIVING COSTS DOWN

A holistic approach to motor and drive system efficiency can result in up to 40% savings

sustainability and operational costs, which is a positive development for the industrial landscape.

“Operating more efficiently will save money for customers in the long run,” affirms Strydom.

Meanwhile, SEW-EURODRIVE also offers free on-site energy efficiency testing and analysis for customers to determine the optimal equipment and motors required for particular applications.

This helps customers to make informed investment decisions by providing tangible information about their facilities. Here, the company uses a power analyser to measure critical values during tests.

SEW-EURODRIVE's flexible product portfolio, ultimately, allows for custom solutions to specific customer applications. 



**WILLEM STRYDOM**

Many customers have adopted IE5 motors owing to their electricity efficiency and simplified installation

Operating more efficiently will save money for customers in the long run

– Willem Strydom

## Positive Steps

Strydom and Meintjies agree that the MEPS are a positive development for industries as they will boost efficiency and be less carbon intensive; however, they warn that ill-informed companies could face risks such as acquiring old stock that has been dumped in the market.

Meintjies points out that the introduction of the MEPS has catalysed conversations about



**NATASHA MEINTJIES**

South Africa's Minimum Energy Performance Standards have catalysed conversations about sustainability and operational costs

COUPON ON PAGE 24 E705461



## Africa's world-class service provider for rotating equipment

**F**ounded in 1954 by a group of recognised leaders in the repair and servicing of electric motors, Marthinusen and Coutts (M&C), a division of ACTOM, has grown into a trusted service provider for the remanufacturing, repair and maintenance of rotating equipment, most notably for the rewinding of medium and low voltage AC and DC motors, generators, transformers and coils, along with advanced testing.

"We have extensive capabilities in power generation and mechanical engineering from seven well-equipped repair workshops in Southern Africa that now employ almost 450 people," says M&C marketing executive **Mike Chamberlain**.

As well as the 9 500 m<sup>2</sup> Cleveland workshop in Johannesburg, M&C has a 14 000 m<sup>2</sup> workshop in Benoni and a facility in Rustenburg. "We also operate through other ACTOM outlets across Africa, including Kitwe in Zambia, GEC in Harare, Namibian Armature Rewinders in Walvis Bay, amongst others," he says.

"As well as being a leading repair business for all sizes of motors and generators, we also have a sister division on the mechanical side, ACTOM Turbo Machines, for repairing and re-engineering turbines and

all types of large rotating machines," he adds.

### The Difference

"We can quickly respond to customers' needs, be they onsite repairs and refurbishments of large motors or motor/generator rewinding and refurbishments at one of our facilities."

For very large machines, the Benoni facility includes a 140 t Wagner lathe that can accommodate a 40-t, 11-m workpiece with a swing of 3.2 m. "We have also invested in specialised equipment and tooling for coil retaining ring removal, and we have a 90 t crane capacity and 1 000 t hydraulic presses for very large salient pole coils used for hydro and synchronous generators. At our Cleveland operation, we have the best-equipped rotating electrical machines load test facility in Africa and a 32 t balancing machine.

For windings, four insulation systems can be accommodated, along with three different vacuum pressure impregnation systems for void-free insulation, which enhances the dielectric and mechanical strength of the windings and delivers improved thermal conductivity.

"We offer full load testing of HV, LV and DC equipment, and onsite diagnostics, including electromagnetic core imper-

fection detection testing; turbine vibration analysis; partial discharge monitoring, and rotor flux analysis, amongst others.

"We also have a highly skilled and well-equipped field service team that offers 24-hour field service support for breakdowns and continuous improvement programmes for our customers," Chamberlain explains.

### Notable Projects

M&C installs, services and repairs gearless mill drives (GMD) across the continent and as far as Panama and Indonesia. Chamberlain describes an installation of new GMDs at copper mines. A Perth-based mining client has mines all over the world, including in Kansanshi and Kalumbila, which are both in northern Zambia, and Minera Panama.

M&C was contracted to interconnect the electrical sub-assemblies for nine new ABB GMDs for a copper project in Panama. This mine's life is estimated at more than 30 years, and it produces copper, gold and molybdenum, says Chamberlain, adding that M&C has become the preferred provider of GMD services to this mining house.

On the power generation side, he cites a success at the N'Zilo hydroelectric power station on a 26 MW, 18-pole sta-

tor rewind for a vertical AC synchronous generator in the DRC, a very remote and isolated location.

"Further complicating the work, the stator was lap-wound, which required a high level of expertise.

### The Reverse Engineering Approach

M&C's design team, led by Rob Melaia, is the top motor design team in Africa. "They check the winding design of every motor/generator we rewind, looking for ways to improve reliability and performance. Our engineering teams have the experience and ability to apply practical insights gained from years of repairing and analysing motors across various industries.

In 2012, ACTOM acquired Marthinusen and Coutts. ACTOM is an industry leader and the largest manufacturer, solution provider, repairer and distributor of electro-mechanical equipment in Africa, and Marthinusen and Coutts is an independently run division of ACTOM.



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Many of our mines have grasped the concept of energy efficiency in the prime mover's electric motors, and are already installed with IE4 motors. These machines operate continuously and their impact on energy stability, operational efficiency and sustainability is significant

### Fanie Steyn

• From page 72

“AI forces you to be proactive rather than reactive. It is now becoming an era of predictive maintenance rather than actual maintenance, allowing operators to act before downtime affects the plant,” says Steyn.

Persad notes that efficient motors and drives also contribute to sustainability, adding that reduced electricity consumption directly lowers CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, which is particularly significant in South Africa, where coal-fired power stations remain the primary electricity-generation method.

Electrification and using energy efficient equipment are, therefore, essential to reducing the environmental footprint of mining

operations, says Persad.

For new mining projects, Steyn highlights the importance of installing high-efficiency motors from the outset, while in existing operations, replacing older motors and upgrading mechanical control systems with VSDs can deliver energy and cost savings.

He adds that durability, ease of maintenance and availability of spare parts are important considerations when implementing these technologies.

With end-users increasingly standardising motor and drive combinations from a supplier, simplifying maintenance and support, the adoption of IE4 motors, which exceed current IE3 regulatory requirements, is becoming



**RUVEER PERSAD & FANIE STEYN**

The adoption of variable-speed drives has increased from about 5% of applications in the past, to between 30% and 50% in mining operations, of late

ing more common, particularly in applications requiring continuous operation.

“Many of our mines have grasped the concept of energy efficiency in the prime mover's electric motors, and are already installed with IE4 motors. These machines operate continuously and their impact on energy stability, operational efficiency and sustainability is significant,” he concludes.

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# Certified braking system boosts mine winder safety

**S**afety Integrity Level (SIL) 3 certification from the International Electrical Commission (IEC) has been achieved for electric motors and large drive systems company Innomotics' and mechanical engineering company OLKO-Maschinentechnik's COBRA 02 S multichannel-controlled mine winder braking system.

Offering higher levels of safety for mine winder operations, the SIL 3 compliant COBRA 02 S features a number of failsafe components.

The COBRA 02 S ensures precise, delay-regulated braking independent of the winder's operational state. Its multi-channel

capability is customised to each unique application, allowing for a controlled and consistent stop under all circumstances, the companies claim in a statement.

The COBRA 02 S integrates with the Innomotics winder controller, which is already SIL 3 certified, enhancing operational safety. This comprehensive braking system addresses both hydraulic and electrical control functionalities, enabling its application across all types of mine winder machines.

This novel technology achieved SIL 3 certification in line with the requirements of the IEC EN 61508 and IEC EN 62061, validated by TÜV Süd in Germany,



## COMPREHENSIVE CONTROL

The COBRA 02 S braking system addresses both hydraulic and electrical control functionalities

ensuring enhanced safety for mine winder operations.

One of the standout features of the COBRA 02 S is its electro-hydraulic brake control system, which ensures constant deceleration. Whether facing varying load levels, changing movement directions, or friction-related fluctuations during safety mode activation, the system guaran-

tees a preset, steady deceleration to safely halt the winder.

“As the demand for safety in mining operations continues to rise, OLKO and Innomotics are reinforcing their commitment to excellence and innovation in mine winder technology,” says Innomotics senior sales manager **Bernd Erdtmann**.

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## EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION

Innomotics' collaboration with OLKO-Maschinentechnik underscores a combined commitment to innovative mining technologies

As the demand for safety in mining operations continues to rise, OLKO and Innomotics are reinforcing their commitment to excellence and innovation in mine winder technology

**Bernd Erdtmann**

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# Marius Wessels

**SYSPRO**



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**Full Name:** Marius Wessels

**Position and Company Name:** Senior VP: Consulting Services International at SYSPRO

**Main Activity of the Company:** SYSPRO is a global enterprise resource planning (ERP) software provider specialising in simplifying business complexity for manufacturers and distributors

**Date and Place of Birth:** 1984, Bloemfontein, South Africa

**Schools and Tertiary Education:** University of Pretoria, industrial engineering, 2007; Gordon Institute of Business Science, Managing Managers for Results, 2023

**First Job:** Implementation consultant, 2008

**Career History Prior to Current Position:** Implementation consultant, iPlan, 2008 to 2011; project manager, iPlan Global, 2012 to 2015; business principal, iPlan Global, 2015 to 2018; GM, iPlan Global, 2018 to 2019; key account manager, SYSPRO Africa, 2019 to 2020; head of professional services, SYSPRO Africa, 2020 to 2025

**Size of First Pay Packet:** R6 800 a month

**First Job with Present Group:** Key account manager

**Number of people under your leadership:** 55

**Management Style:** Collaborative, strategic, and people-focused. I believe in empowering teams through structure, process, and accountability

**Personal Best**

**Achievement:** Raising a family and managing to keep balance with an active lifestyle close to nature

**Professional Best**

**Achievement:** Successfully leading complex ERP implementations across multiple industries and driving SYSPRO Africa's consulting, support, and education divisions towards service excellence and measurable customer outcomes

**Person Who Has Had the Biggest Influence on Your Life:** My parents

**Person Who Has Had the Biggest Influence on Your Career:** I've been fortunate to work with leaders who shaped my path, but Mark Wilson, former SYSPRO EMEA CEO, stands out

**Person You Would Most Like to Meet:** Sir Richard Branson — partly for his business wisdom, and partly just to experience his energy and outlook first hand

**Philosophy of Life:** Strive for balance, integrity, and continuous improvement — professionally and personally. And never forget to laugh, even when things don't go as planned

**Biggest Ever Opportunity:** Leading the international consulting services division at SYSPRO during a transformative period of global ERP expansion

**Biggest Ever Disappointment:** I prefer to see disappointments as lessons

**Hope for the Future:** To enable African businesses to thrive through technology and to grow a legacy of customer success and empowered teams

**Favourite Reading:** Deon Meyer — there is nothing like a gripping South African crime novel to unwind

**Favourite TV Programme:** *Clarkson's Farm* — it's farming, chaos, and comedy rolled into one

**Favourite Food/Drink:** Biltong and droëwors — proudly South African fuel!

**Favourite Music:** Kip Moore — his music keeps me grounded and inspired

**Favourite Sport:** Rugby (can't escape it as a South African) and netball, where I'm now proudly a 'netball dad'

**Hobbies:** Hiking, cycling, connecting with nature, and family adventures

**Car:** Hilux (it's reliable — even if my garage once tried to fight back!)

**Miscellaneous Dislikes:** Inefficiency, poor communication, and lack of accountability. Life's too short for these

**Favourite Other South African Company:** Naspers — bold in vision and fearless in execution, proving that South African companies can lead on the global stage

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