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SA's injured workers crippled by failed compensation fund system

So says the Injured Workers Action Group IWAG.

WORKERS from across South Africa who have been injured on duty are facing "a crisis of epic proportions" as a result of the technological collapse of the R60-billion Compensation Fund that is legally mandated to cover their medical bills and disability pensions.

Grave concern over the situation has led to the official launch of an emergency council of concerned industry leaders, the Injured Workers Action Group (IWAG). The group is calling on the government to address the crisis swiftly and is especially concerned about the Compensation Fund Commissioner Vuyo Mafata and Labour Department Director-General Thobile Lamati's apparent failure to address industry's calls for urgent remedial action.

Spokesperson for IWAG, Tim Hughes, says the severity of the matter cannot be underestimated. "If you look at the sheer number of vulnerable people who have now been failed by the system and left to fend for themselves under very trying circumstances, and the extent of that failure by the state and its technology partners, you'll see that this is an untenable situation. Tens of thousands of families of injured workers, those workers' medical caregivers and employers, and several critical industries in the economy, have all been struck a terrible blow here. This is a crisis of epic proportions and it is wreaking havoc on the economy at a scale that we are still in the process of quantifying."

Impact of the crisis

Hughes explains: "Consider for a moment that a thousand workers on average are injured on duty in South Africa every single day. The backbone of SA's economy, these



are farmworkers, fishermen, builders, security guards, nurses, paramedics, factory workers, kitchen staff and many more. All of them rely on the Labour Department's Compensation Fund to cover their medical costs, as prescribed by the law.

"These patients are supposed to be treated in private hospitals and by private physiotherapists, occupational therapists and other medical specialists, because they have special needs and require long-term rehabilitation, which state facilities are neither equipped nor mandated to supply to them. This is why the state has set up a fund to which all ±650 000 employers in this country are contributing ±R9-billion per annum. This fund must ensure that injured workers can claim for the medical care they need to enable them to return to work. And medical practitioners who devote their lives to working with Injury on Duty (IOD) patients, need to be compensated timeously - or face financial ruin."

The department has long struggled with its claim system, and on 15 August 2019 switched off its previous uMehluko electronic system with the intention to migrate users to a new and improved system called CompEasy (S4i). It should have been live

since 1 October 2019, but, says Hughes; CompEasy was "dead on arrival". "The website never worked. The system was never parallel tested with the old one as you would expect when the stakes are this high. As a result, about 150 000 working-class South Africans who have been injured or disabled on duty since mid-2019 have been left out in the cold. And to make matters worse, the state granted a R300-million tender plus five years of maintenance fees to Britehouse, a division of Dimension Data, to implement this SAP-based system that is not working."

"The technical failure of the system is now at such a level that, according to a large industry survey, only about 2,8% of injured workers have been able to submit claims since October 2019 and less than 1% have been paid, compared to 80% on the old system. This is scandalous. This is total systems collapse. One cannot underestimate the far-reaching devastation that this has caused for the lives and livelihoods of the injured blue-collar workers of this country and everyone around them," says Hughes.

Update

The Injured Workers Action Group (IWAG) is challenging the Minister of Employment and Labour Thulas Nxesi, Compensation Fund commissioner Vuyo Mafata and Group CEO of Britehouse, Ed Gassner in an open letter about the Compensation Fund disaster for SA workers, the medical profession and employers.

Similar sentiment was expressed by the National Employers Association of SA (NEASA) in an editorial in CBN February 2020 edition, p6, under the heading - Another dud? WCF - dysfunctional - Ed.

Hyundai hands over new library and resource centre to Lindisa Primary School



Mr Lawrence Ngcobo (left), principal of Lindisa Primary School, receives the new library and resource centre from Mr Niall Lynch, CEO of Hyundai Automotive SA. On the right is Mr Osman Arbee, CEO of Motus Holdings.

Hyundai Automotive South Africa has handed over a brand new library and resource centre as part of its ongoing social investment project to the Lindisa Primary School in Evaton, south of Johannesburg.

The initiative, in which Hyundai Automotive SA collaborates with the Imperial and Motus Community Trust, has to date delivered excellent library and resource centres to eight schools in and around Johannesburg where the dire need for such education aids were identified in less advantaged communities.

Mr Lawrence Ngcobo, principal of Lindisa Primary School, took delivery of the new library and resource centre at his school and thanked Hyundai Automotive SA and the Imperial and Motus Community Trust for their involvement in education and improving the learning opportunities of children.

Two librarians are part of the sponsored library and resource centre, which contains several shelves of books ranging from encyclopedias to fiction series, computers and a "clever whiteboard" for the school with a total number of about 1 200 learners.

The cost to refurbish a classroom at Lindisa Primary School and convert it to a library, furnish it with

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Readers wishing to view the contents of the Open Letter can view it at:

<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-03-13-the-workers-compensation-fund-software-is-failing-the-people-of-south-africa/>





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Hyundai hands over new library and resource centre to Lindisa Primary School

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tables and chairs, bookshelves, the big-screen "whiteboard" and fill the shelves with about 4 500 brand new books amounted to R1,5 million.

The Imperial and Motus Community Trust also supplies the service of two librarians for six months, after which one librarian will continue to help learners at the Lindisa Primary School library.

Hyundai Automotive SA's first library project was finished and handed over to the Southview High School in Lenasia in 2013, and the company has since established library and learning centres at the Libra Primary School in Lenasia, the Heerengracht Primary School in Eldorado Park, the Motheo Foundation Primary School in Lawley, the Freedom Primary School in Devland, the Mid-Ennerdale Primary School and the Phehello Primary School in Sebokeng.

Hyundai Automotive SA's corporate investment programme follows the global Hyundai Motor Company's firm commitment to its philosophy and conviction in fulfilling its responsibilities. Under its slogan, "Realizing the Dreams and Aspirations of Humankind through Creative Thinking and Rising to New Challenges," the Hyundai Motor Company carries out genuine, authentic corporate social investment campaigns and programmes that reflect its mission statement and core values.

Apart from the library sponsor programme in South Africa, the Hyundai Motor Company on the African continent also supports, among others, an educational program on road safety and environmental protection in Morocco and the donation of educational equipment to schools in impoverished areas in Nigeria.

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Editorial comment

Prepare to be sickened and outraged, yet again

THE blatant cronyism, incompetence, cadre deployment and the theft and looting of the public purse has hit a new low with the publication of two reports on the shocking state of the Department of Water & Sanitation under the control of the former Minister of Water Affairs, Nomvula Mokonyane.

One report entitled "Money down the Drain: corruption in South Africa's water sector" is penned by respected Professor Mike Muller, and makes grim reading. For those with a strong stomach go to www.corruption-watch.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/water-report_2020-single-pages-Final.pdf

The work is published by Corruption Watch and the Water Supply Integrity Network.

Corruption Watch Executive Director, David Lewis calls the crisis in the water sector a 'woman-made problem' - he is referring to former Minister of Water Affairs, Nomvula Mokonyane. Under her watch the Department of Water Affairs had, according to a report by the Auditor-General of South Africa collapsed, with billions of rands of irregular expenditure, huge debts and failed projects. An example of this is the *Giyani Water Project that grew from a R502m project to R2.7bn in a year because of irregular contracts.*

Writing in the Daily Fiend of South Africa's water problem, is, according to John Kane-Ber-

man, a man-made crisis and he suggests that independent water producers similar to those in the energy sector could be the answer.

It is reproduced here with his and permission from the Daily Friend.

Water: The worst of the ANC's great and many failures

By John Kane-Bermana - Fellow at the Institute of Race Relations (IRR)

The coronavirus crisis has prompted health authorities around the world to remind everyone of the importance of regular hand-washing using soap and water. For most people in South Africa that is easy to do. But for a great many it is extremely difficult.

The ruling African National Congress (ANC) has many failures: pervasive corruption, state capture, tragedies such as Esidimeni, rampant crime, power blackouts, poor schooling, and bankrupt state-owned enterprises among them.

But probably the worst in terms of its effect on vast numbers of ordinary people across the land is its failure to ensure reliable supplies of clean water. This despite the fact that the Constitution states that 'everyone has the right to have access to...sufficient food and water'.

Hardly a day goes past without yet another report of people in villages in various parts of the country having to trudge from their homes to springs or rivers or dams

to collect water which they then carry home in buckets on their heads or cart by wheelbarrow.

Frequently the problem is not a temporary breakdown, but one that has been part of their lives year in and year out. The daily drudgery of the quest for water no doubt consumes so much time and energy that there is little left for more than the odd protest.

Spending mocks victims

If the words of the Constitution mock these people, so do the ANC's spending priorities. Last month's budget noted that the National Treasury had spent R162 billion over the past 10 years on 'financially distressed' state-owned enterprises, with another R16.4 billion to be given to SAA alone in the next few years.

In a special report published recently, the Institute of Race Relations (IRR) shows how South Africa's water system, once admired around the world just as Eskom was once admired, has become a man-made crisis, just like Eskom. The report shows how failures in the supply of reliable water and disposal of sewage are to a large extent the result of the disintegration of local government. It also examines failures at national level.

Moreover, the report quotes a leading water specialist as saying that there is no technical or economic reason why poor communities should not have reliable water.

The report - entitled *Thirsty Land: South Africa's Water Crisis and How to Overcome It - also identifies solutions. Some of these are technical, such as better systems of detecting and dealing with the wastage caused by leaks. (Read the full report on the IRR website www.irr.org.za.)*

Desalination, recycling

The report further explores opportunities to augment the country's water supply via desalination and the recycling of waste water. It notes that South African companies did pioneering desalination work in the 1970s, and that the recycling plant in Windhoek, built by South Africans using South African technology and operational since 1970, is still regarded as one of the finest on the planet.

The master plan of the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), now in its eighth version, believes that curbing losses, reducing overconsumption, and augmenting supplies in various ways could enable South Africa to have a slight surplus of water available by 2030.

The IRR points out, however, that achieving this objective would necessitate major political reforms. Among these are getting rid of corruption, and of the policies of cadre deployment and affirmative action, which have crippled not only municipalities but also the DWS itself. The crisis in Cape Town in 2018 showed that

it was possible to reduce consumption, but reduced consumption across the country would have to be permanent: at 237 litres a day, South Africa's domestic consumption of water is much higher than the international average of 173.

Amount required

Last month's budget review reported that R117bn would be spent on water and sanitation infrastructure over the next three years. Over the next 10 years, according to water specialists in the private sector, the amount required for both new infrastructure and repair of existing infrastructure would top R1trn.

At least a third of this will have to come from the private sector - probably much more, given the country's fiscal straits. The IRR paper notes that various initiatives have been launched in the private sector to mobilise capital for infrastructural investment in water. One idea is to establish 'independent water producers' following the model of 'independent power producers' in the energy sector. Such independent producers could be used for both desalination and wastewater treatment.

The money is available. Mobilising it will require bankable projects, sound policies, secure contracts, timeous decisions, and a serious willingness to engage the private sector. It will also require a fundamental transformation of the ANC.

- **John Kane-Berman, a graduate of Wits and Oxford (where he was a Rhodes Scholar), is a former CEO of the IRR. Prior to that he spent ten years in journalism, where he was senior assistant editor of the Financial Mail and South African correspondent for numerous foreign papers. He is the author of several books on South African politics, and has also published his memoirs. He is the author of the *Thirsty Land* report.**

Eskom reaches new heights of arrogance and contempt for the public

"ESKOM's application for a 17% electricity tariff increase to compensate it for the millions of rands it lost by imposing the recent power cuts - marked a new level of arrogance and contempt for the public," says Geoff Jacobs, President of the Cape Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

"It was typical of monopoly managers who think they

are invulnerable to the market and can therefore treat their customers like dumb sheep", he said.

"But, they are in for a shock. Like the postal service and landline operators elsewhere, Eskom will find the progress of technological change unstoppable. Just as email has dealt a body blow to letter writing, and cell phones are slowly but surely

edging out landlines, there will come a time when massive state-owned power utilities run by overpopulated bureaucracies like Eskom will meet the same fate.

"It would be better to recognize the inevitable and unbundle Eskom now, rather than allow political thinking to trump economic reality. There is no other way to stop its massive drain on

the public purse and to end its damage to the South African economy," Jacobs said.

"Meanwhile the market will take action. People will turn to gas for cooking and cooling, to solar powered geysers and LED lighting.

"Technology will follow the demand. Already, University of the Free State researchers are confident that within a

decade their breakthrough will produce window glass that will double as a photovoltaic panel.

"In other words there is a very real prospect of thousands office blocks, factories and homes going off grid.

"Eskom managers should read the writing on the wall," Jacobs said.

"Their days are numbered".

Cape Town hospitality plagued

THE OUTBREAK of Covid-19 could have devastating effects for the Cape Town hospitality sector, which has only recently recovered from the over-capacity issues that have dogged occupancy levels since the 2010 Soccer World Cup. Last month Tsogo Hotels – which operates the Southern Sun brand that covers iconic Cape

Town Southern Sun properties in the Waterfront, city centre, City Bowl, Woodstock and Newlands – issued a dire warning around a prolonged recovery from the prevailing pandemic. Tsogo said that the impact of Covid-19 – combined with the acceleration in travel bans being imposed by many countries – had

resulted in forward bookings for April through June reflecting a total collapse of demand. The group said that given the environment of the past few weeks, actions to reduce costs and capital expenditure had already been taken. “These have now been expanded to eliminate virtually all variable costs, substantially

reduce the fixed cost overheads, conserve cash in order to preserve the sustainability of our business and the people whose livelihoods depend on us.” Tsogo explained that in order for this to be achieved, a reduction of excess capacity was required. This would be implemented through an orderly deactivation of a number of

hotels in the key nodes where the Tsogo had multiple properties and consolidating the available demand into the remaining operating hotels in those areas. Tsogo stressed it had the ability to reactivate this capacity on short notice should there be an upturn in demand. This meant all booking channels would remain active for the close monitoring of demand patterns.

Tsogo said the first phase would affect up to 36 hotels representing 7 700 rooms (or 40%) of the group’s portfolio over the next few weeks.

Tsogo noted that during this period, all capital expenditure had been postponed and only essential maintenance would endure.

Tsogo confirmed it had been approached by both the public and private healthcare sectors to assist in the provision of quarantine

facilities through the use of hotels that would otherwise have been deactivated.

Although near impossible to predict, Tsogo said it was working on the assumption that hotels would begin to be reactivated by no later than July 2020. The group also expected the corporate and government travel sectors to recover relatively quickly. “Many of the events and conferences that were to take place during the next three months have been postponed to the second half of 2020 as opposed to being cancelled.”

Sadly, Tsogo noted that March was typically a peak month – adding that until the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic began to impact trading the group was on track to achieve a satisfactory performance in the month. Despite the March impact, Tsogo said it would still meet the covenant obliga-

tions to its various debt providers for the 12 month period ended March.

But assuming exceptionally low occupancies and the deactivation of a number of hotels for a period of three to six months, Tsogo conceded it would be unlikely to meet the covenant requirements for the rolling 12-month period ending September this year. The group said it was engaging with its various lenders to request waivers of these covenants and to ensure that the loan facilities are still maintained.

Naturally, the V&A Waterfront – Cape Town’s biggest leisure and retail precinct – could also bear the brunt of social distancing and lock-down efforts aimed at containing the spread of Covid-19.

Continued on P4

Equites goes big in Brackenfell

CAPE TOWN-based property group Equites is joining forces with supermarket giant Shoprite for a mega distribution centre development in Brackenfell.

This entails Equites and Shoprite forming a joint venture company. Shoprite will contribute a portfolio of distribution centres and associated undeveloped bulk land in Brackenfell in the Western Cape and Centurion in Gauteng valued at R2 billion, Equites will contribute cash of R2.1 billion.

Equites will own 50.1% of the joint venture, and Shoprite the balance.

More specifically, the joint venture will acquire the Cilmor distribution centre in Brackenfell (with associated undeveloped bulk

land) from Shoprite for R1.2 billion.

The joint venture will then conclude “triple net” lease agreements for the Brackenfell Cilmor distribution centre, as well as manage the property and serve as a platform for the future development of the undeveloped bulk land.

Equites noted that the Cilmor and Brackenfell distribution centres were situated in one of the oldest and largest industrial hubs in Cape Town.

The group pointed out that major access routes are the N1 and the R300 – providing easy access to Cape Town International Airport, Cape Town Harbour and Container Depot and the Cape Town CBD.

Fire technology company comes of age

WHILE 1990 may be remembered by many for the fall of the Berlin Wall, the release of Nelson Mandela from prison, the birth of the World Wide Web and the launch of the Hubble Space telescope, amongst other ‘firsts’ for the Feldon father and son combination, was the birth of the DoseTech business.

Although DoseTech started life as a chemical dosing technology company, changes in both the local and international chemical dosing landscape necessitated a change in course and so a specialised company with a focus on foam dosing for the special risk fire protection industry was born.

Through partnerships with leading worldwide companies in the field such as FireDos of Germany, AKRON Brass and Mueller from the USA and Delta Fire UK, the latest special risks fire protection products and technologies are available to the South African and the southern African market through DoseTech.

In addition to specialised foam dosing

equipment other products include monitors for various applications, from manually operated to fully automated and remote-controlled units, end-of-line nozzles, water valves, hydrants, foam, bund pourers, tank top pourers and rim pourers.

The company offers specialist advice on the selection and installation of its product ranges, as well as pre-commissioning and commissioning services, full maintenance contracts and customer training.

DoseTech has successfully introduced advanced methods of accurate foam addition to firefighting applications with benefits which include reduced foam wastage, easy installation, testing and maintenance, as well as lowered installation and operational costs.

Some of the most notable projects include the harbour fuel out-loading protection installation and refinery firefighting fixed and mobile foam applications, and the first exclusive foam trailer for refinery use in South Africa.

Cape Town’s Foreshore

DoseTech has been responsible for two of the most significant fire protection projects for landmarks in the Foreshore area: the Christiaan Barnard Memorial Hospital and the Cape Town Harbour.

“When you are protecting a hospital full of patients and harbours that are stocked with fuel and other highly flammable substances, you need to ensure that you have the best equipment engineered to handle the worst-case scenario,” said DoseTech’s Managing Director Michael Feldon.

To achieve UL listing and FM Global approval, Feldon worked closely with process design engineers from both the Cape Town Harbour and the Christiaan Barnard Memorial Hospital, in addition to employing many of DoseTech’s advanced foam dosing and fire protection products.

Netcare Christiaan Barnard Memorial Hospital

A key aspect of the Hospital access is its heli-

deck where DoseTech was tasked with devising a fire protection system. This presented particularly complicated challenges, not only because of the varied fire protection technologies involved, but also because of the required coordination between Cape Town Fire and Rescue Service, DoseTech, and South Africa’s national aviation and hospital authorities.

The new hospital’s comprehensive fire protection design included foam dosing technology, foam concentrate, water cannons, and a combination of deluge and pressure-reducing valves.

The company’s heli-pad special risk fire protection project has received recognition as a new industry standard.

Cape Town Harbour

DoseTech’s expertise was called upon to address three different fire protection needs, each a complicated challenge relating to the harbour’s petroleum operations. The first was a fuel ship off-loading wharf,

an intricate facility requiring a multifaceted fire protection system.

To ensure comprehensive protection, DoseTech supplied equipment installed on the fire water ring main for the general fire protection systems, which includes fuel tanker loading bays and 5-inch flat hose water supply, for use on portable firefighting equipment. FireDos foam dosing equipment together with AKRON remote controlled monitors were employed.

The second and third tasks were to protect a fuel storage facility and a refinery, both of which required a large amount of fire hydrants to provide adequate response in case of an emergency. To protect these key areas, DoseTech installed Jones® J4060 BR and J6200 fire hydrants, complete with 2½” British instantaneous couplers and 4” and 5” pumper connectors.

DoseTech offered its valuable expertise at every step of the process, working side-by-side with on-site contractors, conducting valve and



Fire protection for heli-pad on the roof top of Christiaan Barnard Hospital.



Testing the remote water cannon for fire protection in the Cape Town docks.

hydrant commissioning, and providing staff training for those responsible for overseeing proper operation of the fire protection system. “By combining our product experience with the location-specific expertise of harbour personnel, the Port of Cape Town now

has a world class fire protection system in place for years to come,” concluded Feldon.

For more information contact: Mike Feldon mgf@dosetech.co.za +27 (0) 861 111 544 firefos@dosetech.co.za www.dosetech.co.za

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Capitec still sprinting

WHILE the bigger South African banks have toned down their profit growth expectations in light of the morbid economic outlook for the medium term, Stellenbosch-based Capitec Bank continues to thrive.

A recently released trading update showed Capitec expected earnings for the financial year to end February to increase by between 18% and 21%.

This performance is comfortably ahead of the mainstream banks, and - as yet - shows scant evidence of any disruptive influence of new banking ventures like Tyme Bank and Discovery Bank.

Capitec, which was

launched out of investment house PSG in the late nineties, stole a march on the mainstream banks by offering simple banking solutions to SA's sprawling unbanked market. Extended opening hours, easy-to-open bank accounts and low costs were the main thrusts that saw Capitec compete aggressively with SA's traditional 'big four' banks.

The bank has remained innovative and nimble - despite growing into a much larger banking enterprise.

But last month Capitec still needed to reassure the market - specifically in light of the serious outbreak of the

Covid-19 virus - that its earnings guidance was unchanged and that its fundamental business remained strong.

Capitec's share price on the JSE, however, was extremely volatile - falling from R1 100 to under R700 in a matter of days in mid-March. The share, at the time of writing, had recovered close to the R1 000 mark again.

Capitec conceded that markets are in economic turmoil due to the effects of Covid-19, and many companies - including the banks - had seen big declines in their share prices.

Capitec reckoned the sharp fall in its share price in mid-March was mainly attributable

to technical reasons - most likely international shareholders impacted by the weaker Rand and algorithms applied by professional traders to enforce the disposal of a share when the price falls below a certain limit.

Capitec was also keen to address speculation that the bank would be severely impacted by Covid-19 due to the market on which it focuses and its unsecured credit business model. Capitec stressed that only 1.1 million of the bank's 12.6 million active clients (or 9%) have credit with Capitec Bank.

In addition, Capitec's business model is well diversified and income

is strengthened by transaction fee income and funeral cover sales.

Capitec disclosed that net transaction fee and funeral income contributed a hefty 46% of net income - and this reassuringly covered 91% of operating expenses.

Capitec also indicated that there had been a significant migration in the bank's client base to the middle and higher income segment.

So much so, that 81% of credit granted in August 2019 was to clients with a gross salary of over R10 000 per month. What's more 47% of credit granted was to clients with a gross salary of over R20



000 per month. Capitec also reiterated that it had a strong retail deposit base.

So despite the market getting itself in a twist about Capitec's prospects, the bank maintained that its liquidity position remained strong and its liquidity ratios were still in line with that published at

the end of 2012 - that being Capital Adequacy Ratio at 28.4%; Liquidity Coverage Ratio at 1 444%; Net Stable Funding Ratio at 186% and Leverage Ratio at 16.6%

In addition, Capitec Bank's excess deposit base had grown by more than 5% from the end of August last year.

'Right of repair' rules planned for EU smartphones

SMARTPHONES are notoriously difficult to repair, with manufacturers not releasing parts and making it easier to buy a new phone rather than fixing your old one. The European Union is attempting to put an end to these practices with their newly proposed 'right

of repair' rules.

The European commission wants to introduce these rules to increase the recycling of electronic goods like smartphones and tablets. This is an extension of the eco-design law which promotes the idea of a circular economy. Currently

this law applies energy efficiency standards to computers, TVs, dishwashers and washing machines.

"The linear growth model of 'take, make, use, discard' has reached its limits," Virginijus Sinkevicius, European commissioner for the environ-

ment, told reporters, "With the growth of the world population and consumption, this linear model pushes us closer and closer to a resource crisis. The only way ahead is decoupling economic growth from extraction of primary resources and their environmental

impacts."

This removal of planned obsolescence is expected to come into effect and halve the amount of electronic waste by 2030.

The expanded legislation will apply to a wide range of products, including mobile phones, textiles, elec-

tronics, batteries, construction and packaging.

South Africa also struggles with e-waste, with the Department of the Environmental Affairs estimating a national tally of 360000 tons each year, according to Mail & Guardian.

This problem is quite

significant in spite of legislation in place to tackle the issue.

The EU pushing for better use of electronic technology is part of an overall trend, which aims to reverse the linear production and consumption of technology instituted by the biggest tech companies.

Compressor air leaks = lost money

CONTRARY to what some companies or employees think, compressed air is not free. Compressed air leaks are a direct source of wasted energy and increase the running time of the air compressor thus using more power than required. Air leaks can cause pneumatic equipment to function less effi-

ciently and pressure drops can shorten the life of equipment.

When air leaks go unchecked for a long period of time it can lead to higher than normal electricity bills, additional maintenance, unnecessary or unscheduled production downtime or even shutdowns.

The combination of

the high energy usage and reduced lifespan of the equipment can negatively affect business profitability.

Even after fixing the leaks and correcting the system pressure, the air compressor may be too large for the application, causing the compressor to cycle more frequently or partially loading

more often and running inefficiently. This still has an effect of a higher electricity bill.

This mismatch between demand and application in multiple compressor installations could mean turning off some compressors or even purchasing a lower duty compressor. A variable speed compressor can adjust

to meet demand without wasting energy by partial loading.

Rotovane offer a plant assessment or air audit, the cost of which will be deducted from the new price should the plant be upgraded to an energy efficient Mattei Compressor.

Contact Rotorvane 011 472 5954

Cape Town hospitality plagued

Continued from P3

At the time of going to press, Growthpoint - the 50% owners of the V&A Waterfront - had not issued an updated statement regarding trading in the property.

But in the half year to end December 2019, the V&A Waterfront once again showed its reliance in operating in leaner economic times.

Growthpoint reported that net property income from the V&A Waterfront shifted up to R344 million - well ahead of the R315 million and R299 million recorded in corresponding periods for the previous two years.

Growthpoint now values its stake in the V&A Waterfront at R7.6 billion - inferring a value R15.2 billion for the precinct.

Incredibly vacancies stood at just 1% (previously 1.8%) with total rental arrears a mere R40 million. The property's renewal success rate was an enviable 86% with the weighted average future escalations on rentals sitting at a sprightly 7.6%.

Growthpoint cau-

tioned that the V&A Waterfront - which benefits from local and international tourism - was positioned to deliver growth but was not immune to the erosion in the domestic economy.

The group added that there was, however, still demand from corporates for offices at the V&A. "This is positive for our investment returns."

Growthpoint said the V&A Waterfront continued to look for opportunities to enhance earnings, increase bulk, densify the precinct and grow its footprint.

Of course, it remains to be seen whether the Covid-19 situation reins in further development efforts at the V&A Waterfront. Growthpoint indicated that development would focus on bulking up the Canal District and prioritising the Pierhead district.

Growthpoint indicated that the Granger Bay 'masterplan' was a work in progress - and would be the next area of focus.

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Kaap Agri in it to 'bin' it

KAAP Agri, the Paarl-based agribusiness services specialist, has ploughed a hefty R150 million into a sophisticated plastics manufacturing facility to broaden its manufacturing capabilities.

Kaap Agri is best known for its Agri-mark retail outlets and its petrol and diesel sales network (under the The Fuel Company) – but the group also has interests in gain storage (Wes-graan), fruit and vegetable packaging as well as an existing manufacturing component that revolves mainly around irrigation products.

The R150 million investment is a bold move for Kaap Agri, and entails kick starting a recently formed Brackenfell-based subsidiary called TEGO Plastics.

TEGO, which was formed late last year, specialises in the manufacturing of large format, injection moulded plastic products using state-of-the-art robotics and machinery. Kaap Agri even needed to commission one of the largest injection moulding machines available on the global market for the manufacturing facility (that will provide 33 new job opportunities).

TEGO will at first produce high-quality, food grade bulk bins for the agricultural market. But the group stressed there is an opportunity to manufacture additional solid form products at a later stage.

The TEGO Bulk Bin is a food safe, bulk bin which is used in the harvesting and post-harvesting processes of fresh fruit and vegetables. These bulk bins are essential to the Western Cape's sprawling pome, citrus and stone fruit sectors.

Kaap Agri CEO Sean Walsh said the launch of TEGO Plastics was in line with the group's strategy to diversify its manufactured product range and to offer more value to its agricultural customer base.

"With limited availability of new bins and product options it became clear to us that we could help address challenges producers face with the storage and transportation of fresh produce."

Walsh added that Kaap Agri provided the ideal platform from which to launch such a product because of its already-established infrastructure and the relationships built up with farmers over

more than a century. He said TEGO's durable bins performed well under different environmental conditions in various locations – "whether it's under the blazing sun in an orchard, on a transport truck, in cold storage or in a packhouse."

TEGO executive manager Edward

Smith explained that some of the challenges fruit producers faced include damage to produce due to limited air flow, bruising because of the shape of the inside of the bins, sun damage as well as compatibility issues when moving bins with forklifts and pallet jacks.

"The transportation of fruit or vegetables

from the field to the packhouse is possibly the most important part of the farming process.

The difference between losing 6% and losing 10% of produce due to bruising or heat damage is huge, and it translates to a big difference on the bottom line."

He said the design

features of the TEGO Bulk Bin included a smoother inside to help eliminate bruising, a centre support structure to prevent warping and bulging (associated with heavy loads), unique drenching slots (to ensure better ventilation and draining) and a higher base for use of a standard pallet jack.



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Hake profit net bulging

CAPE TOWN'S two biggest hake fishing companies Irvin & Johnson (I&J) and Sea Harvest are still netting strong profits – although the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic could see profit lines slacking in the short term.

In the year to end December Sea Harvest – which now also owns aquaculture and Australian seafood interests as well as a big slice of the local cheese market – reported revenue from its South African operations

to the Viking Fishing acquisition and improved efficiencies in the Saldanha Bay fresh fish processing factory in the second half of the year.

Operating profit increased a whopping 45% to R527 million with the important operating profit margin expanding to 20% (17% in 2018).

Sea Harvest CEO Felix Rathebe said international demand for MSC-certified, wild caught Cape hake remained firm. He said Europe remained

higher proportion of Viking Fishing product now directed to export markets.

Locally, Sea Harvest's revenue through the foodservice channel increased 32%, with the foodservice mix increasing to 31% (2018: 29%) of sales revenue. Revenue from the wholesale channel increased 80%, and this channel now makes up 6% of sales revenue.

But Sea Harvest's revenue from the local retail channel declined 14% with tough eco-

for the half year to end December with operating profit coming in 11% higher at R169 million.

AVI CEO Simon Crutchley said I&J benefited from improved wet fleet fishing performances and a higher (hake) quota.

I&J's domestic revenue was up 5% on the back of a 3% volume increase, while export revenue and volume was up 5% and 4.2% respectively. I&J man-

aged a selling price increase of 1.9% in the domestic market, but export pricing crimped by 1.1%.

Crutchley noted selling prices in some of I&J's export markets were lower due to increased competition.

Looking ahead to the remainder of 2020, Sea Harvest believed that within the South African fishing segment, global demand for high value, wild caught, MSC-certified seafood was expected

to continue. Rathebe said this would support firm pricing in the export markets.

He predicted that the local foodservice and wholesale markets would remain stable.

Rathebe reckoned Sea Harvest's investment in the state-of-the-art Marel fresh fish processing facility in Saldanha Bay would drive production efficiencies with the facility having reached its design capacity in the

second half of 2019.

Crutchley said I&J's prospects remained materially dependent on fishing performance and exchange rates. "We remain of the view that the performance of the hake resource is set to improve over the next few years, while export exchange rate hedges are at levels that support sound profitability, and the more recent Rand weakness provides some upside potential."



increasing 23% to R2.47 billion on the back of a 10% increase in hake Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and the annualised effect of the Viking Fishing acquisition (made in July 2018).

Gross profit increased 28% to R953 million with the margin fattened to 36% (2018: 35%) thanks to synergies relating

to Sea Harvest's most important export market – noting that strong growth had been experienced in the traditional hake markets of Southern Europe.

Sea Harvest disclosed that export revenue increased 26%, which meant the combined export mix improved marginally to 53% (2018: 52%) of sales revenue with a

nomie conditions taking their toll.

I&J, which is part of the AVI consumer brands conglomerate, do not provide as much granular detail as JSE-listed Sea Harvest.

The performance of hake is also somewhat clouded by the group's aquaculture interests.

Nevertheless, AVI reported I&J's revenue static at R1.18 billion

Fish farming not easy

BOTH Sea Harvest and I&J have made considerable inroads into the aquaculture sector – although these efforts, which are largely export driven, could suffer from the global outbreak of Covid-19.

I&J conceded in their latest financial report that there was "considerable uncertainty" as to how long the Coronavirus and Hong Kong protests will disrupt abalone demand. "But it is very likely that the contribution from this business will be lower than last year."

I&J's abalone contribution decreased last year because of lower export prices and lower unrealised profit in valuation of

live abalone stock.

I&J's Danger Point abalone farm near Hermanus has the capacity to produce more than 300 tons per annum with future projections well in excess of this volume. In addition to the farm (where primarily live abalone is produced), I&J also have a factory which produces secondary products such as canned, dried and frozen abalone.

Sea Harvest is a more recent entrant to the world of aquaculture, having acquired a 51% stake in Viking fishing's fledgling seafood farming enterprise in mid-2018.

Sea Harvest recently reported that revenue for the period to end

December from Viking Aquaculture increased to R69 million – but there was a R30 million operating loss after the segment's performance was negatively impacted by lower abalone sales after an extended red tide event and the market disruptions in Hong Kong.

Sea Harvest also reported increased competition in the smaller size category from other abalone-producing nations.

But the group was encouraged that both Viking's abalone farms had reached their design capacity in terms of biomass.

Sea Harvest said the performance from the greenfields trout

operation in Saldanha Bay was negatively impacted by higher than expected mortalities, while oyster and mussel sales had seen good growth year on year.

Viking Aquaculture has also commenced work on the expansion of the Diamond Cost Aquaculture abalone facility in the Northern Cape.

Sea Harvest indicated that the Covid-19 virus had a negative impact on abalone sales into China and the region since its outbreak in January 2020. The group believed this would continue to have a negative impact on sales volumes and price through the first half of 2020.

Fiscal and economic crisis increases every year

"THE budget of the Minister of Finance, Tito Mboweni shows very clearly that the country is in even a greater fiscal and economic crisis than the previous year," says Fanie Brink, an independent agricul-

tural economist.

He says the cosmetic changes to the new budget of a few billion rand are in fact negligible compared to the government's total debt burden, which will increase from R3,2 trillion in the current

financial year to R4,4 trillion over the next three years! This means that the government's debt as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) will increase from 62% to 72% which is totally disproportionate and

immensely worrying.

The budget deficit is increasing every year and may even rise beyond the new high of 6,8% for the 2020/21 financial year since the economy could very easily fall into a long-term recession if

the economy enters a permanent negative growth phase. As a result, the South African Revenue Service will find it increasingly difficult to achieve its revenue targets.

In addition, the National Treasury

estimates that the economy grew by just 0,3% last year and will grow by just 0,9% this year, while it is well known that the National Treasury's growth projections are usually too high.

"With these already

very low growth expectations and the fact that the ANC government has never really understood how economic growth is created, the chances that the economy will grow again are very slim," according to Brink.









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Ship loaders boost exports

THE commissioning of two new and independent mobile ship loaders at the Saldanha Multipurpose (MPT) Terminal follows their assembly by local engineering firm Westarcor. The equipment forms part of Transnet Port Terminals' R2 billion infrastructure investment programme, which is intended to improve the efficiencies across all terminals in the current calendar year.

Currently, the terminal handles dry bulk and break-bulk commodities for both import and export. Cargo is loaded through a skip operation across four berths, through the use of front-end loaders, haulers and trailers. According to Terminal Manager Ettiene Albertus, "The acquisition of these two mobile ship loaders will change the existing operational model

and significantly boost our terminal's handling capability, specifically for bulk commodities, which comprise more than 80% of total MPT volumes".

The handling of manganese at the terminal has contributed to an increase in volume as well as employment opportunities. The mobile ship loaders' ability to load manganese at higher throughput rates will further improve customer service levels.

According to mining production and sales numbers published by Statistics South Africa in June 2019, mining accounted for over 45% of South Africa's foreign exchange earnings with iron ore ranking as the third-highest earner at 13.80% or R6,172 bn. Manganese was ranked fifth, earning South Africa 10.67% or R4,771 bn.

Large bore welding efficiency upped by 50%

ON the back of recent successful welding trials at a major power station, Babcock's engineering business is ready to roll out a semi-automated welding solution for high pressure pipe welding that doubles process efficiency by drastically reducing welding time, and process-related wastage.

The semi-automated process is the culmination of three years of developmental trials which will improve the efficiency of traditional high integrity pipe welding while maintaining a quality weld. It offers a radical, innovative solution to large bore welding in the power generation, oil and gas, as well as industrial sectors, utilising the Miller PipeWorx's Regulated Metal Deposition (RMD™) MIG welding process.

Babcock welding

technologist Conn Roux says that Babcock is the first company in South Africa to apply this repeatable welding solution, developed in collaboration with Afrox, the exclusive supplier of Miller welding machines in the country. "The new process is a breakthrough for the South African welding industry and offers a better solution in terms of cost, efficiency, productivity and quality without any of the drawbacks associated with conventional GMAW welding," says Roux.

"Traditional methods of pipe welding rely on the use of gas tungsten arc welding (GTAW/TIG) for the root pass, followed by shielded metal arc welding (SMAW/stick) for the fill and capping runs. These processes are time-consuming and require specialised welding skills which

are in short supply in South Africa and often have to be sourced from other countries," continues Roux.

Babcock's innovative approach therefore offers an excellent solution for localisation of labour. Tendani Manenzhe, welding manager at Babcock, says that the company will initially concentrate on improving in-house skills, and later train external welder resources. "By implementing this process, Babcock not only can offer our customers improved efficiencies, but can also contribute to skills development and employment creation in South Africa," she says.

After many trials to perfect the process, Babcock was able to produce qualified and repeatable procedures that significantly increased the welding deposition rate and



PipeWorx 350 FieldPro FieldPro Smart Feeder.

reduced welding time by 50%. Improved travel speeds and deposition rates resulted in faster weld completion times, thereby lowering the cost per weld.

Miller's Regulated Metal Deposition (RMD™) & ProPulse MIG welding process makes it much easier to improve the root and subsequent weld run quality and productivity of pipe welding with a precisely controlled metal transfer that makes it easier for the welder to control the puddle which minimises heat input.

Babcock training manager and expert welder, Houston Isaacs, took part in the trials and says that the improvement of heat input allows for continuous welding, reducing the frequency of stoppages due to interpass temperature being reached.

"As opposed to conventional GTAW and SMAW welding, there is no need to pause during the welding process, allowing the welder to complete the weld faster and reducing welder fatigue," says Isaacs.

Stainless steel quality and consistency crucial for the packaging industry

THE applications for hygienic and corrosion resistant stainless steels and aluminium in the packaging industry are vast - including shrink wrappers, case packing and palletising, filling, labelling and conveying systems - using products such as:

- Stainless steel flat products (sheet and plate) - equipment bodies and frames, base plates and stiffeners
- Round bar - guard rails, bearings and guides
- Flat bar - guides and stoppers
- Square bar - mostly

for keyways

- Hygienic tube and fittings - lines which convey food products
- Aluminium tube - rollers (fruit industry)

Using good quality stainless steel from reputable mills for the fabrication and operation of packaging equipment delivers significant benefits, including saving time and reducing scrap.

Heinrich Vollgraaff, Sales Manager for NDE Stainless Steel - Cape, explains some of the pitfalls of low quality stainless steel use in the packaging industry.

"Stainless steel from less reputable mills may be sub-standard which could cause consistency issues. For instance, different sheets, even from the same batch, may cut and bend differently due to stresses in the sheets caused by the mill's rollers," says Heinrich. "This requires constant resetting of equipment during cutting and bending which could cause a lot of expensive scrap and wasted, unproductive time.

"Cold rolled sheet stresses can cause problems with laser cutting when a sheet or plate bows due to the

stresses being released during cutting. If bowing takes place and the operator doesn't realise it, it could damage the laser's head," he said.

"Let's say you are building a 30-40 m conveyor with a body and sub-frame for fitting rollers: there is a lot of repetitive bending. If each sheet or plate behaves differently, there will be a lot of resetting and stoppages.

"Another example of low quality inconsistencies occurs with round bar and flat bar tolerances. Poor quality stainless steel round bar can sometimes be

oval, when the round bar starts with a negative tolerance and ends with a positive tolerance, causing problems with bearing alignment. Flat bar can also be problematic: I have seen inferior stainless steel flat bar with rounded edges or very deep rolling marks along the width of the flat bar."

NDE supplies a comprehensive range of quality stainless steel and aluminium, including customer specific aluminium extrusions.

"We have the skill set, experience and stockholding that permits many of our cus-



Heinrich Vollgraaff, Sales Manager for NDE Stainless Steel - Cape.

tomers to order 'just in time'. This illustrates the confidence our customers have in NDE's ability to provide a seamless supply for their production line, saving them time, effort and the cost of holding stock."



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Late payments threaten small and medium enterprises

MAKING small suppliers wait more than 30 days before paying them delivers a double blow to the economy because when times are tough and jobs scarce, it is small business that that steps up to the plate, often able to grow employment while larger corporations shed jobs.

"Paying bills on time should be a national duty for large corporates, government

departments, provinces, municipalities or individuals," says Geoff Jacobs, President of the Cape Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

"The news may be dominated by non-payment of electricity bills by municipalities and state-owned entities like South African Airways and Eskom but it tends to ignore the serious knock-on effect of late payment

on the small end of the private sector.

"While bigger corporations can borrow to bridge a cash flow problem, small business operators cannot. For them late payments don't merely hurt, they can kill. As others have noted, late payments are the assassins of small businesses", Jacobs said.

A Small Business Institute survey has found that some big-

ger businesses treat small ones "as a line of credit", some paying in 130 days not thirty. Nearly half of late payments were being written off as bad debt.

Government is far worse. According to the Department of Small Business Development, in one month it found that 71 883 invoices worth R4.3bn and older than 30 days were unpaid by government departments.

Another survey found that in one month more than 23 000 invoices for a total of R2 billion were paid late by provincial government departments.

"Small businesses rely on a regular cash flow to pay wages, promote their products and services, and invest."

"If the flow stops for more than 30 days, it can mean that the business fails and with

it more people become unemployed.

"It's time we realized that paying small business invoices on time stimulates the economy, gives them stability and confidence to grow faster, have a better cash flow, and employ more people. In short everyone will benefit.

Globally, the majority of registered businesses are small businesses. Although

they each employ less than 25 people, this accounts for two thirds of the entire working population. South Africa lags far behind, with our small business sector employing less than a third of those of working age.

"We can and must do better. Paying bills on time should be a priority, and in this regard, the private sector should set an example," Jacobs said.

Virus just one challenge to fruit exporters

SPEAKING to the Agriculture Writer's Association in the Western Cape, South Africa's largest apple and pear exporter, Tru-Cape Fruit Marketing, just back from attending Fruit Logistica in Berlin, Germany, says that global uncertainty fuelled by the impact of the coronavirus coupled with tariffs on fresh produce are challenges the industry currently faces.

Commenting on the experience of being at Fruit Logistica, Tru-Cape Managing Director Roelf Pienaar said that with over 3 300 exhibitors and more than 72 000 trade visitors this show is a global opportunity to meet established contacts and to make

new ones. Pienaar also attended the World Apple and Pear Association (WAPA) meeting while in Berlin which illustrated that even though South Africa only represents about one percent of global apple and pear production, the country is a major player within the southern hemisphere producers.

"In South Africa the 2020 apple export forecast is for 35.7 million 12.5kg equivalent cartons which is about a six percent increase on last year. Pear exports are expected to be down by about three percent to 16.6 million 12.5kg equivalent cartons," he says adding: "Although Africa accounts for more than 50% of

Tru-Cape's total volume (local market and export to the Continent) the focus at Logistica is mainly on Europe. The hot issues at Logistica seem to be the impact of climate change on production and consumer eating habits; the widespread potential impact of the coronavirus; and the continued downward pressure on price by supermarket groups trying to maintain their margins against the impact of the discounters like Aldi and Lidl. We also see the growth potential in on-line fresh fruit delivery."

Pienaar also used the opportunity to sample the newest crop of Flash Gala, the improved full-red Gala strain discovered by

Tru-Cape's New Variety Expert, Buks Nel. Flash Gala, the fruit from the Bigbucks tree, is now the most successful new variety in the history of SAPO, the Plant Improvement Organisation that propagates Bigbucks trees. "There are now more than 1.6 million Bigbucks trees in the ground," he says.

Pienaar ended the briefing explaining that macro economic indicators like Foreign Exchange indices, the oil price and tariffs can and do all shift the trading landscape. "We are cautiously optimistic about the year ahead but, like the rest of the world, concerned about how the coronavirus will play out."



Left to right: Tru-Cape Marketing Director Conrad Fick with Die Burger's Samantha van den Bergh, Porchia Adams of Fruitways, Marike Brits of Netafim and Tru-Cape Managing Director, Roelf Pienaar photographed at Die Burger newspaper's boardroom in Cape Town.

Plastic pipes body calls for quality water infrastructure

THE Southern African Plastic Pipe Manufacturers Association (SAPPMA), the standards body for the plastic pipe industry, says the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus in South Africa has once again highlighted the dangers that the country's lacking water infrastructure pose for the most vulnerable in our society.

Jan Venter, CEO of SAPPMA, says frequent hand washing with soap and clean water is one of the first lines of defence against contracting the Corona virus. "However, it is a sad and worrying reality that many informal settlements and communities around our country do not have access to clean water for drinking, hand washing or cooking to protect them against the ravaging effect of this highly contagious disease," he says. "The country desperately needs a reliable network of water and sewage pipes capable of serving the whole population".

SAPPMA is a non-profit association representing the leading companies in the plastics piping sector, with the primary purpose and mission of creating absolute customer confidence in the plastics pipe industry through facilitating high standards of ethics, product quality and technical information. Each year, approximately 150 000 tons of pipe (PVC and HDPE) are produced in South Africa, used for forming integral, long term and extremely important infrastructure networks for water, gas and telecommunications supply.

"We were relieved when Water and Sanitation Minister Lindiwe Sisulu launched the National Water & Sanitation Master Plan (NW&SMP) towards the end of last year in which she committed to address the issues of insufficient water infrastructure, maintenance and investment, water and sanitation, deteriorating water qual-



ity and a lack of water engineers as a matter of urgency. However, we have not seen much progress made in this regard and believe the Corona-virus outbreak once again highlights that we cannot afford to delay the process any longer," Venter implores.

SAPPMA is urging Government to engage with them and the plastic pipe manufacturers they represent in order to develop a plan of action that will only see pipes installed that

meet to international health and manufacturing standards.

"The SAPPMA brand is well known and is recognized by design engineers and customers as a safeguard against poor quality products. Pipes that bear the SAPPMA mark of quality will last up to 100 years before they need replacement, plus they are economical, sustainable and quick to install. As an industry we are offering our expertise and our assistance to help

find workable solutions aimed at supplying and installing water pipes as quickly as possible in order to protect local communities against diseases, droughts and water shortages as a result of the loss of potable water. It is no longer an exaggeration, but the harsh truth, when we say that our country's future and thousands of lives depend on it," Venter concludes.

For more information visit www.sappma.co.za

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Direct flights promise tourism boost

VIRGIN Atlantic Airways has announced that it will be adding a direct flight route between London and Cape Town starting October 2020, and British Airways has said that it will be increasing the number of flights between London (Gatwick) and Cape Town to five per week.

These additional flights to Cape Town join a raft of newly announced direct flights to Cape Town, with direct flights from New York, Vienna, and Nairobi being recently introduced.

According to reports each regularly scheduled long-haul flight - which means any destination requiring more than seven hours of travel - can be expected to support up to 3 000

jobs and every 10% increase in passenger volumes results in 2% regional job growth.

These new routes are testament to the work the Cape Town Air Access project - a partnership between Wesgro, the City of Cape Town, the Western Cape Government, ACSA, Cape Town Tourism, and SA Tourism - is doing in establishing new direct routes to Cape Town and the Western Cape from destinations around the world. Since its launch in 2015, it has helped land 15 new routes and 21 route expansions.

The city was placed 3rd on the Forbes 20 Best Places to Visit in 2020 list due to its warm, mild climate and being the only beach

destination in winter with the same timeline as Europe. The city's popularity is evident in the increasing number of people visiting Cape Town since 2016. According to ACSA passenger statistics, 890 000 international passengers landed at Cape Town International Airport in 2016 in comparison to 1 193 000 in 2019. The fact that Cape Town doesn't yet feature in the global top 100 cities by international arrivals suggests significant potential for catch up growth.

Chris Derksen, Partner at 12Cape, a section 12J venture capital company investing in Cape Town's tourism sector, says, "Tourism is responsible for 10% of all jobs in the world,

as estimated by The World Travel and Tourism Council, and South Africa, in particular Cape Town, is creating employment and spurring economic growth by attracting tourists through increased direct flight routes. At 12Cape we're excited to see the impact and be part of it through our Latitude Aparthotels, which are filled with happy tourists!"

In the context of our current pedestrian GDP growth figures, news of a local source of hard currency growth is encouraging.

"Tourism remains a key economic enabler for not only Cape Town and the Western Cape, but South Africa at large. Direct flights facilitate seamless accessibility, which will

no doubt have a positive effect on our tourism sector - creating opportunities for further job creation and a welcomed boost to our economy," said Margie Whitehouse, Wesgro's Chief Tourism Officer.

Whitehouse added, "Boasting a breadth and depth of experiences in our province and country, accompanied by a favourable climate and exchange rate - we welcome Virgin Atlantic's announcement of a direct route from Gatwick, and British Airways increased frequency of flights. These announcements are also met with much excitement, as they are indicative of continued interest in our destination from one of our top tourism markets."

NO TIME TO PANIC

Read recently the business stats, which did not paint a pretty picture. In fact it is deeply troubling, with government finances and households stretched to the limit.

Budget speech out the way sees some relief, however the economy is still in a slump with little growth (recorded and forecast), load shedding, job cuts to name a few serious issues which will impact on these outcomes. Biggest concerns, are government spending R25 billion more a month than it is getting in. Draining state coffers further, including the bailouts of SOEs. Debt is 61% of the GDP (72% if you take into account the loan guarantees of SOEs). Not great figures to work with if the economy is to be stimulated.

The results in manufacturing are down 25% from the year before. Land freight (a clear indicator of business) plunging to its deepest rate since 2009. The construction industry has taken a massive knock, with a slow down in new developments.

All of this and more leaves one feeling quite nervous, with the on set of a mild to severe panic attack. But this is not the time to PANIC. Infact it is the best time to really consider ones business strategies and to go back to the basics. To make sure you are doing the ABCs right and effectively.

YOU CAN DO THIS Practice and experience keep you from panicking in three ways: A) They provide the same sort of muscle memory that allows you to stay calm and call the shots under pressure. B) They give you confidence by way of that little voice in your head that says "Don't freak out; you know you can do this." And C) they

give you courage to face your fear. Managing a crisis as like being on autopilot. You just go into some sort of crisis mode and you somehow know what to do. It's a combination of muscle memory, confidence and courage at work.

Some ABC pointers to gaining more of the right customers who will buy your products.

PEOPLE BUY BENEFITS or the results that product will give. Identifying your ideal customer by making a list of all of the benefits.

CLEARLY DEFINE your customer. Who is the person who is most likely to buy your product and buy it immediately?

IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM What kind of problem does your customer have that you can solve? Clients will pay you to solve their problem.

THE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Focus on the benefits of what makes your product better than others, by defining your advantage.

SOCIAL MEDIA can build relationships with your customers, and you can access more people than ever. Plus it's free!

COLD CALLING Whether you are doing it in person or on the phone, it is your job to warm up a potential customer.

THE RIGHT PRICE can be determined by the perceived value of your product. If you can make your product seem superior to your competitors, you can charge a higher price.

PROPER NEGOTIATION TECHNIQUES Look for the "win-win" situations, where both parties are happy with the results of the negotiation.

CUSTOMERS FOR LIFE Once a customer has purchased your product, this should not be once off sale. Keep a strong relationship with your customers. This will create more trust and add value to your product.

SOMETHING FOR FREE Your ideal customer is far more likely to buy your product if you give them a preview to try out.

THE INSIDE SCOOP Tell your customers about an upcoming sale or promotion. They will be happy to hear about it. They may even buy more as this builds trust with them.

This article was written by

Saldanha Bay IDZ lands new investments



By David Maynier, Western Cape Minister of Finance and Economic Opportunities

I am pleased to announce that the Saldanha Bay Industrial Development Zone (SBIDZ) has signed three new investment agreements worth R300m, bringing the total number of signed investors to eleven. The SBIDZ has also recently launched several new developments. This will contribute to the growth of the economy and create jobs in the West Coast region and I want to congratulate CEO, Kaashifah Beukes and her team for the excellent work done to make these a reality.

Construction has started on the first investment project - a specialised corrosion protection facility - and building plans have been submitted for an additional two investment projects involving specialised manufacturing and fabrication, as well as partial assembly

and manufacturing of components which are currently being imported into South Africa.

The SBIDZ also has a robust investor pipeline that continues to grow, not only in manufacturing and warehousing facilities, but also in new-build port infrastructure. Several private investors have undertaken, at their own cost, bankable feasibility studies that demonstrate demand for repair, maintenance and equipment servicing facilities linked to the Oil & Gas and Marine Services sectors, and we look forward to announcing these investments very soon.

The Saldehco Off-shore Supply Base in the Port of Saldanha Bay is one such investment that has made good progress, with construction on the facility due to commence in Q4 2020 pending completion of design development and necessary statutory approvals. This facility will offer internationally competitive services to

vessels passing along our coastline, as well as to projects looking to undertake surveys, exploration and production activity on the West Coast.

The SBIDZ has also started construction on the Access Complex Building - a 5ha state-of-the-art commercial office facility - that is due to be completed in April 2020.

The existing temporary Project Leasing Facility is another development by the SBIDZ that already delivers value in assisting with strategic government energy projects. The 6.5ha facility located in the south-east property, accommodates projects with duration shorter than 24 months assisting tenants with an easy-to-access facility near the port infrastructure.

Both these facilities will support investment in the SBIDZ, and have received significant backing from the Department of Trade and Industry. The Project Leasing Facility is currently assisting the Transnet National Ports Authority with

temporary storage for wind blades, nacelles and tower sections in support of the national Renewable Energy IPP Programme (REIPPP) and we anticipate more projects related to REIPPP in 2020, along with several Oil & Gas projects linked to equipment certification and maintenance.

In February, the SBIDZ also launched their SME Co-Lab Centre in Platinum Street in Saldanha Bay. The Centre is a shared work space for the Saldanha Bay business community providing offices, meeting rooms, free Wi-Fi,

printing facilities and access to laptops. The Centre also offers access to networking sessions with relevant public and private sector stakeholders and partners.

These investments in the SBIDZ will not only create jobs through the construction of the tenant facility, but as these projects open their doors, there will be more opportunities for jobs in the Oil & Gas, Maritime Fabrication and Repair industries and related support services industries, making the SBIDZ a vibrant hub of opportunity, job creation and sustainable growth for the Western Cape.

The SBIDZ has long been recognised as an important catalyst for growth and job creation in the West Coast region, and this vision is quickly becoming a reality. That is why we remain committed to working with all stakeholders to convert the interest from investors into fully operational infrastructure and facilities that support this vision for economic growth and job creation in Saldanha Bay, the West Coast and the Western Cape.

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Five main trends impacting the motor body repair industry

ARTIFICIAL Intelligence, Electrification, Virtual/Augmented Reality, Block chain and Increasingly Connected Vehicles are five of the main trends that will alter the repair and insurance industry.

During 2019, these sectors saw the introduction of electric and hybrid vehicles. The rate of change in design in vehicles is significant for the MBR sector because of the new electronic, digital components and of course, electrification. "The industry has no choice but to adapt but in South Africa," says Richard Green, national director of the South African Motor Body Repairers Association (SAMBRA), "we don't always have the quick response from an OEM perspective

which our colleagues have in Europe in terms of access to product information and training."

He says this time lag is concerning. "We urgently need to start developing new learning programs for existing and new entrants into the sector so they can be introduced to this new technology at an early stage," says Green.

Like many trades, the MBR sector is facing a serious shortfall of skilled talent and an ever-widening skills gap as repair businesses struggle to keep up with the latest OEM repair methods and industry best practice. Ben Horan, director of the CADET VR Lab at Deakin University, said "Virtual Reality can provide access to training environments which are either diffi-



Virtual Reality can provide access to training environments which are either difficult to access or don't exist, and Augmented Reality can help provide digital assistance while performing a task. Photo courtesy of Tradiebot Industries / Bodyshopbusiness.

cult to access or don't exist, and Augmented Reality can help provide digital assistance while performing a task."

In addition, the company is also researching the use of plastics and carbon fibre to determine if it's possible to supply on-demand 3D printed

parts. The company is currently working with motor body repair industry partners to create a more efficient and cost-effective method for manufacturing parts that are unavailable to be bought separate, out of stock or discontinued.

Materials like composites, high-strength

steel and aluminium are already in use but now we are seeing the introduction of graphene, an ultra-light weight and immensely strong material that is capturing world-wide interest

From an RMI perspective, RMI president Jeanne Esterhuizen says the

organisation is busy working with merSETA and all role players to design a qualification for the repair of hybrid and electric vehicles.

Unfortunately registering new or revising existing qualifications takes time in South Africa because of the way our system is structured. Esterhuizen says there is no direct flow of information from OEM to Industry and as such it takes time to get everyone on board and all stakeholders in agreement. "Much progress has already been made. It is not only post school that we need to look at however. Our training needs must be addressed in primary school as well. The good news is codification is already being piloted from grade 4 in a school in the Free

State," she says.

The introduction of new technologies is forcing all industry sectors to adapt in order to provide and maintain client service levels. As the complexity of these vehicles increases, motor body repair shops will have to invest time and money in training, obtaining factory certifications and investing in specialized equipment.

"Considering the average car on the road is approximately 10 years old, the majority of body shops shouldn't have to worry about having to adapt in the short term. Specialist MBRs who are structured to, and traditionally service, the more technologically sophisticated vehicles will need to adapt faster however," concludes Green.

SAIW tackles industrial sector challenges



THE South African industrial and manufacturing sector is grappling with one of the toughest economic eras in living memory, made even more challenging by the tension between a rampant unemployment figure of 29% (Stats SA) and a shortage of relevant world-class technical skills.

In light of this, the Southern African Institute of Welding (SAIW) is tackling the

education and training challenges facing the country with a brand new approach that also offers its members an ongoing return on their investment.

SAIW Executive Director **John Tarboton** says; "Welding and weld related technologies are key enablers in the manufacturing space, particularly in metals fabrication and skilled and competent people are vital for the promotion of these key

drivers of economic growth and employment.

"As SAIW we have therefore identified four service areas namely training; technology; certification; and member marketing that we believe all contribute towards our vision: to promote world-class excellence in welding, NDT and allied technologies; and our broader mission of championing the development and upliftment of the national welding capability," he explains.

Technology for training

With skills development training and personnel qualification courses as the starting point – the Institute offers welding, inspection and NDT training courses to internationally approved standards, much of which

is required to remain certified to ISO 3834.

The SAIW is also revamping its approach to the use of technology in its training programmes, to improve accessibility and reduce costs. "For example, we have recently conducted trials by providing live online lectures in the form of webinars. This allows the possibility of interaction with the lecturers whilst not having to physically attend the courses," reports Tarboton.

In addition, the Institute is launching a monthly webinars series that will contribute towards the accumulation of professional development points (CPD) for those who need them. These will be free to members, who log in at the appropriate time to access the session.

Certification forms the third leg of the

renewed offering and the SAIW is offering company members discounts on certifications and recertifications such as ISO 3834.

Meaningful marketing

On the marketing side, the SAIW aims to promote the capabilities of our members to the broader industry, nationally and internationally. Tarboton stresses; "Being a member of the Institute means something with regard to credibility and we are encouraging members to take advantage: for companies by using our 'Member of SAIW' logo for example, or by individuals taking advantage of MSAIW branding for recognition.

The member databases are also being strengthened and SAIW will keep a register of certified weld-

ers as well company and individual members – and these will be free to access for corporate members. Free job advertisements are also available on the SAIW website.

"We want to encourage all welding professionals to register and join so that an employer can quickly and reliably vet their SAIW qualification status. And *vice versa*: we want welding personnel to prefer to work for SAIW member companies."

Strong alliances

There is also a drive to foster wider collaboration across the industry and the SAIW is talking to other industry associations, such as AFSA, SASSDA and SAISC. "We aim to build strong alliances, which we believe is at the heart of making our Institutes and

associations, as well as the businesses of our members, more robust and sustainable," says Tarboton

He adds; "We are on a strong and determined drive for greater member involvement. For fabricators looking to reduce rework and improve productivity, we see partnering with the Institute and, together, seeking to improve our processes and performance, as the simplest path to long-term success.

"In addition, the success of our welding industry is highly dependent on the qualifications, skills, knowledge and dedication of its personnel. For any individual wishing to succeed in the industry, SAIW membership offers multiple pathways for networking, continuous professional development and career success," he concludes.

Coronavirus halts Ford's IMG production

FORD Motor Company is temporarily suspending vehicle and engine production at its International Markets Group (IMG) manufacturing sites in response to the growing impact of the coronavirus.

The IMG production suspensions began Saturday, March 21, and will continue for several weeks depending on the pandemic

situation, national restrictions, supplier constraints and dealer stock requirements.

"The health and safety of our employees, dealers, customers, partners and communities is our highest priority," said Mark Ovenden, president, International Markets Group. "We are continuing to act in real time and taking added safety measures by tem-

porarily halting production at our manufacturing sites in the international markets."

While Ford will continue to monitor the situation, the company is adjusting its original IMG production schedule and will temporarily suspend production market-by-market. The last working day per market is as follows:

- March 21: India -- Chennai Vehicle

Assembly Plant, Sanand Vehicle Assembly Plant, Sanand Engine Plant and Chennai Engine Plant.

- March 26: Vietnam -- Ford Vietnam Limited Haiduong Assembly Plant.
- March 27: Thailand -- Ford Motor Company (Thailand) Limited.

- March 27: South Africa - Silverton Assembly Plant (Pretoria) and Struandale Engine Plant (Port Elizabeth).

The measures announced follow actions previously announced by Ford, including the temporary suspension of vehicle and engine production in North and South America and Europe. Ford also is

requiring employees to work remotely unless they are performing a business-critical job that requires being onsite. The company's working remotely policy will continue until further notice in a continued effort to help contain the virus. Precautionary measures are being taken to protect the safety of the small number of employees who are

unable to work from home.

"In these extraordinary times, we must come together to put our people first," Ovenden said. "We will continue working across our region to explore additional protocols and procedures to help prevent the spread of the virus and define new work practices to lessen its effects wherever we can."

Review of excessive debt financing rules



Graeme Palmer.

TAX is an important factor when a business decides whether to use debt or equity financ-

ing. Debt is often preferred as the interest payments will generally be deductible when determining taxable income. Payments for equity on the other hand, are usually an after tax return on a capital investment and not deductible. National Treasury released a discussion paper on the 26 February 2020 reviewing the tax treatment of excessive debt financing and interest deductions.

Loans can be provided to a business for

a variety of reasons and also from a number of sources, such as financial institutions, group companies or affiliates. Interest on these loans, like any other business expense, will generally be a deductible expense. The concern of governments worldwide is that these debt financing payments become excessive and erode a country's tax base.

In 2015 the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

considered rules that are currently in place limiting excessive debt or interest deductions, including transfer pricing rules, thin capitalisation rules, ratios that limit interest deductions and withholding taxes. The recommendation was that the best means of curtailing tax base erosion was to limit net interest expense deductions to a fixed percentage of earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA).

The OECD recommended using a net interest expense / earnings (NIE/ EBITDA) ratio between 10% and 30% to limit excessive interest deductions and prevent tax base erosion. As a minimum, it said that this should be applied to multinational groups as they posed the biggest risk.

Many countries have implemented a version of the OECD recommendations. According to Treasury's discussion paper, South Africa's

current interest limitation rules are less strict and narrower than the OECD recommendations. Our rules target a smaller set of transactions and the limitation for net interest expense deductions are set at a higher percentage of earnings.

Based on the analysis that has been conducted by government it proposes to implement the OECD recommendations. This will entail replacing the existing interest limitation rules,

for example, those found in section 23M of the Income Tax Act, with the OECD approach. Government proposes to restrict the net interest expense deductions to 30% of the EBITDA. Taxpayers have until 17 April 2020 to submit their comments on the proposal.

This article has been written by Graeme Palmer, a Director in the Commercial Department of Garlicke & Bousfield Inc.

Gathering water and hydro experts

WATER and hydro-power are always key topics and discussion points at the annual **African Utility Week and POWERGEN Africa in Cape Town, which has been moved from 12-14 May 2020 to 24-26 November 2020 due to the Coronavirus. The conference will bring together experts from public and private sectors,**

project developers, investors and technology providers.

The 3-day water conference will focus on *"Shaping a Water Secure Future: Meeting our Universal Water Sustainable Development Goals"*.

But it is the current excitement about small scale hydro in the renewable generation sector that has also led

to the event organisers putting together an entire day dedicated to its potential, current success stories, innovations, advances in hydro-powered mini-grids and a very practical guide to developing a small hydro plant.

Says Theresa Smith: "Why devote an entire day to small scale hydro? Setting up a small scale hydro-powered plant is

not an exercise predicated on creating massive engineering projects, which are prone to budget and time overruns and they are mostly considered as low risk in terms of technology failures. These particular projects are backed by private finance, this is where the quick wins exist."

Speakers, moderators and panelists on

the Small Scale Hydro Day programme will include:

- Anton-Louis Olivier, MD, REH Group, Board Member for Africa of the International Hydropower Association and award-winning project developer;
- Wim Jonker Klunne, renewable expert, hydropower pioneer

and founder of Hydro4Africa will chair the Small Scale Hydro Day:

- Sebastian Surie, Regional Head Africa, Climate Fund Managers, South Africa;
- Carole Rosenlund, Head of Africa at the International Centre for Hydropower, Norway;
- Andy Eaton, Head

of Sales Africa, Latin America & Oceania for Gilkes Hydro;

- Bo Barta, researcher and promoter of small scale hydropower:

Read the full interviews with these expert speakers on the event website here: <https://www.african-utility-week.com/expert-interviews/>

Two ways to fight SA's youth unemployment crisis

Losing a generation to unemployment will make true economic recovery more difficult in later years.

By Yolandi Esterhuizen, registered tax practitioner & Compliance Manager, Sage Africa & Middle East

PRESIDENT Cyril Ramaphosa highlighted the urgency of South Africa's youth unemployment crisis in his State of the Nation Address, promising a wide range of programmes to help put young people in work. His commitment to setting aside 1% of the budget to fund a youth unemployment initia-

tive is welcome, and it will be interesting to learn more about these plans in the Minister of Finance's Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement later in the year.

Certainly, high levels of youth unemployment remain one of the biggest challenges we face as a nation. Joblessness among South African youth is more than 50%.

This is a tragic waste of potential, when the energy and youthfulness of our country should be one of its biggest assets.

Bear in mind that a young person who remains unemployed

for several years is denied the opportunity to build a career, and may spend most of their life unemployed or underemployed. In addition to the level of suffering and poverty this causes, losing a generation to unemployment will make true economic recovery more difficult in later years because we'll lack the skilled people needed to grow and build the country.

Say YES to the ETI

In the interim while government fine-tunes its plans, there are several opportunities for South African busi-

nesses to step up to the plate and create employment and skills development opportunities for the youth. The Employment Tax Incentive (ETI) and the Youth Employment Services (YES) programme are both excellent initiatives, and I'm surprised that businesses are not making more use of them.

The ETI is an incentive from National Treasury that aims to encourage employers to hire young jobseekers and was put in place some six years ago. For growing companies, the benefits are quite attractive. It reduces the cost of hiring young

people by reducing the amount of Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE) companies pay over to SARS. Employers can claim the incentive for a 24-month period for all employees who qualify.

Although R20.5 billion had been claimed from January 2014 to March 2019, it has not been utilised in full by all employers. As far as we can tell, the reason for this is that many businesses, particularly smaller companies, find it so complex to administer the ETI that they don't bother with it. Some of the companies we speak to worry about the risks of claiming the incen-

tive incorrectly and the associated penalties of getting it wrong.

Make it easier for businesses

I urge businesses to give the scheme a second look. With the proper tax advice and a robust payroll system in place, the ETI can generate a significant benefit for an employer.

The YES programme is also a good initiative, but awareness seems to be lower among the medium businesses that could benefit most from it. YES, which is a partnership between business, government and labour, aims to cre-

ate one million jobs for youth. In the process of hiring young workers, firms can gain one or two levels on their B-BBEE scorecard.

These two avenues could help a business to grow, and in so doing, help to spur on South Africa's economic recovery. But more than that, participating in these initiatives is a way for businesses to invest in South Africa's future.

Let's not lose a generation to unemployment – it is within our reach to help them develop the skills they need to thrive in the future as employees or entrepreneurs.

No Payment guarantee: Is it worth the risk?

THE building industry is one of the largest contributors to the HVAC industry, many contractors, small and big, acquire a lot of business from this industry. However, an increasing number of HVAC contractors report a similar difficulty when entering into a contract with builders.

According to the JBCC Nominated/Selected Subcontract Ed 6.2; the contractor shall 11.5.1. *Provide to the subcontractor a guarantee for payment equal to ten per*

cent (10%) of the sub-contract sum where required in the accepted tender (CD) within fifteen (15) working days of acceptance of the subcontractor's tender.

The South African Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Contractors Association (SARACCA) hosts some of the most dynamic industry players, some of those members have reported a similar experience when entering a contractual agreement with builders. When HVAC contractors request

a payment guarantee from the builder, as is expected, they are often denied the request and expected to carry the cost risks of completing the installations without receiving payment on time or any form of Payment Guarantee. It should be noted, it is not the responsibility of the HVAC contractor to fund the projects due to late payment of claims.

"Credit has always been a huge risk to the HVAC industry" - SARACCA Director, Barney Richardson

Based on a logical risk-analysis, an HVAC contractor should not enter into a contract which provides no payment guarantee. However, it has been reported that when one contractor insists on a payment agreement, the project manager simply moves on to the next contractor who is willing to complete the work without a guarantee and risk not being paid on time. Could this be contractual bullying?

On the face of it, the contractor could either accept the risk of sign-

ing a contract and completing the work at risk and hoping to get paid. Or, reject the contract and be victimised and lose out on future work. For the growth and success of the HVAC industry, the contractors should be running profitable and reasonably safe businesses.

Competitiveness is healthy in every industry, however, poorly principled practices can jeopardise HVAC contractor by placing unnecessary risks in their way. The JBCC form of Contracts is

there to protect all parties and must not be modified to the benefit of on against another

About SARACCA

SARACCA is an association of contractors who have individually and jointly agreed to a set of governing standards whilst operating in free competition against each other.

The common aim is to continually strive to improve the image and standards of the industry and the association provides a forum for

this purpose.

In July 2009 the Department of Labour published the "Pressure Equipment Regulations" as part of the Occupational Health and Safety Act Number 85 of 1993. The South African Qualification and Certification Committee for Gas (SAQCC Gas) has been accredited by the Department of Labour to register "Authorised Persons". SARACCA, as a member of that committee, is tasked with registering refrigeration and air conditioning practitioners.

Multotec installs green power



684 Photovoltaic (PV) solar panels were installed at Multotec providing almost 20% of the daily electricity demand.

MAKING a sustainable contribution to easing South Africa's energy crisis, leading mineral processing OEM Multotec has installed renewable power at one of its facilities in Spartan near Johannesburg.

The substantial investment saw 684 photovoltaic (PV) solar panels being installed in November 2019, creating a 223 kW generating system. It serves Multotec's most energy-intensive works – its injection moulding facility – providing almost 20% of the daily electricity demand.

According to Multotec's group manufacturing executive, Werner Stessl, the impact of the new system is not just economic. It will also have important environmental benefits in terms of the country's climate change targets.

"Multotec is committed to environmental sustainability and we

value the fact that this installation is likely to save about 30 000 kg of carbon dioxide emissions each month," says Stessl. "This is the equivalent of planting about 100 trees a month."

He says the organisation has been carefully monitoring its rising electricity costs, and sought a responsible solution that would leverage the latest renewable energy technology. In collaboration with solar power experts Energy Capital, a thorough investigation of its energy consumption and available opportunities was conducted.

"After months of planning and research, it was established that we could run a battery-less system which would valuably augment our current municipal supply," he says. "After some structural engineering to prepare our designated roof

areas, the panels were efficiently placed and linked up by mid-November last year."

To date, the system has more than met Multotec's expectations, which were contractually guaranteed by the service provider. The detailed up-front investigation showed that the installation could be repaid by energy savings within about four and a half years. System performance – right down to the electricity generated by each PV solar panel – can be monitored daily on an online dashboard, he says.

The local municipality has also begun to benefit from Multotec's initiative, as there is usually 'overflow' power generated at weekends which the moulding facility does not need. This excess electricity is now channelled back into the main grid by Multotec, at no cost to the municipality.

PPPs key to unlocking gas potential and energy security

THE South African economy is expected to grow by 0.9% and will hover around 1% over the next three years amid a persistent threat of load shedding. The country remains dependent on coal for electricity even though global demand for cleaner energy is on the rise – with natural gas and LNG (liquefied natural gas) both being strong alternative energy sources.

Global demand for gas grew 4.6% in 2018, its fastest growth spurt in a decade. The strong demand has been driven by China's landmark shift in energy policy away from carbon-intensive coal.

"Natural gas is regarded as a transition energy source to renewables because its CO₂ emissions are significantly lower than coal, which has an 82% higher carbon intensity," says Prashaen Reddy, a principal at Kearney, a global management consulting firm.

Reddy says that demand for oil and coal is declining globally with companies like Shell and BP investing in gas assets, setting the tone for future developments.

These moves are taking place against a backdrop of concern about the effect of greenhouse gas emissions on global

warming. In line with the Paris Agreement, countries and corporations are under pressure to curb their carbon emissions.

"The Carbon Tax introduced in South Africa last year uses the polluter-pays-principle to force corporations to factor environmental costs into their business decisions," says Reddy.

Although shifting from coal to natural gas makes environmental and business sense considering the financial repercussions for big emitters, South Africa has yet to tap into the potential of gas for power generation.

The country's lack of investment in critical electricity infrastructure means it does not have the capacity to convert gas to power for household consumption as yet. However, this will have to change because the tide is turning against coal and investors are reluctant to fund new coal-fired power plants.

"On the upside, Mozambique is poised to become a major exporter of natural gas and LNG thanks to a multi-billion-dollar project off the Rovuma Basin, which means there will be a potential supply options right on our doorstep," Reddy points out.



"For South Africa to capitalise on its neighbour's abundant gas reserves, we need investment in electricity and gas infrastructure through private sector participation as well as strong collaboration and corporation within the region," he explains.

There are two options; either construct a pipeline to carry gas between the two countries or import LNG for ease of transport and storage.

"Although most of the country's gas is for commercial rather than domestic power consumption, this could change with an increased investment in gas-to-power technology in the form of a Closed Cycle Gas Turbine (CCGT) or Closed Cycle Gas Engine (CCGE)," Reddy adds. But these projects could take between 5 to 8 years to complete.

Reddy says that South Africa's Budget deficit of around R370

billion – amounting to 6.8% of GDP – means that Treasury does not have spending leeway for large infrastructure projects in the short term.

"If government expenditure is constrained by slow economic growth and rising debt levels, then it's up to independent power producers and private investors to take the lead in kick-starting our gas sector," he adds.

Reddy says that the energy regulator has an important role to play in facilitating investment, streamlining the licencing process, and monitoring compliance. "On the other hand, the government must ensure policy certainty and should attract investors with tax incentives."

"To move away from a reliance on coal, we need public-private cooperation and a collective shift in mindset about the role of gas in this transition going forward," Reddy concludes.

Energy storage market will hit \$500 bn by 2035

Increased electric mobility demand drives expected 10x revenue growth

THE total energy storage market is expected to grow to \$546 billion in annual revenue by 2035, according to a report released by Lux Research.

The report, "Global Energy Storage Market 2019," estimates that the three main drivers of energy storage – mobility applications, electronic devices, and stationary storage – will reach an annual combined deployment level of 3 046 GWh over the next 15 years, up from the current 164 GWh, with mobility applications making up the lion's share of the growth.

"The energy storage industry is poised for a massive increase in annual revenue and deployment capacity as key innovative technologies, such

as solid-state batteries and flow batteries, reach commercialization," said analyst Chloe Holzinger, one of the report's lead authors. "We continue to expect electric mobility applications, primarily light-duty passenger vehicles, to be the principal long-term driver of energy storage annual revenue and demand, with a total market share of 74% by annual revenue and 91% by annual deployed GWh by the year 2035."

Growth in revenue and deployment for the energy storage market over the next three years will be markedly different from the overall 2035 projections, with plug-in light-duty vehicles remaining the largest market with a predicted

\$24 billion increase in revenue by the end of 2022. Medium- and heavy-duty vehicles come in next, growing from \$600 million a year in 2019 to a projected \$3.6 billion per year in 2022, but have the highest combined annual growth rate (CAGR) of 80%. Residential storage has a CAGR of 76% and \$8 billion revenue increase over the next three years, followed by personal mobility with a CAGR of 49% and \$4.6 billion revenue increase.

Mobility applications remain the long-term growth and demand driver for energy storage through 2035, with personal mobility devices expected to increase to \$43.7 billion from their current \$2 billion

in revenue. Stationary storage is expected to grow to \$111.8 billion in revenue by 2035, marking a significant increase from its \$9.1 billion revenue in 2019. Meanwhile, energy storage demand for electronic device applications is expected to remain flat over the next 15 years with a CAGR of only 1.9%, as the markets for laptops, cell phones, and tablets are already saturated, leaving growth pegged primarily to population increase.

The report identifies five major technologies that are well-positioned to drive growth in energy storage markets: battery recycling, electric aviation, flow batteries, thin-film batteries, and solid-state battery improvements.



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Solar system uses recycled aluminium to store energy - without batteries

By Andy Corbley of the Good News Network (www.goodnewsnetwork.org)

A new renewable energy startup company has come up with a low-cost, zero-emissions solution to the thorny issue surrounding what happens when the sun isn't shining and the wind isn't blowing.

Paradoxically, the more the world embraces clean energy like solar and wind, the more it must embrace something markedly less-clean—diesel fuel or batteries.

In a building cut-off from a reliable grid powered by fossil fuel, diesel generators might be used to cover the hours of darkness when solar panels cease providing electricity. An alternative to this is to store the energy generated from the sun during the day in batteries, but along with representing a serious recycling problem, batteries require rare-earth minerals that are obtained from environmentally-destructive mining operations.

"Batteries are very expensive to store power for a 24 hour period," says Jonas Eklind, CEO of Azelio, the Swedish energy startup that has potentially solved this problem for good. "If you want to store a lot of renewable energy, the most cost efficient way of storing this is thermal energy."

Instead of the critical energy storage compo-

nent using rare and expensive minerals, the Azelio system uses recycled aluminium, which emits nothing, is much cheaper than lithium, and—as Jonas joked during an interview with GNN—"only lasts 62,000 years."

Molten aluminium can save the earth

The former CEO of a battery company, Jonas helped start this remarkable energy storage project in 2016 when he came on-board, around the same time Azelio was looking into thermal storage technology.

"When we started the project, we had a conversion unit that converts high temperatures into electricity," he said.

This device was called a Stirling Generator, and at first they would use biogas from landfills, water purification units—or from manure in a combustion engine to generate electricity—but after running numerous computer simulations on cost and energy capacity, determined that aluminium was the best choice.

Photons absorbed by solar panels on your roof enter into the system where an aluminum alloy is heated so it moves from a solid to a liquid. This allows for the storage of an incredibly dense amount of energy within the material which can be sent as heat into the Stirling Generator and turned into electricity on demand, with

zero emissions and at a lower cost.

This is in direct contrast to fossil fuels, uranium rods or pellets, or diesel fuel, because the energy in the aluminium can constantly be melted and hardened again to produce or store energy.

With its high energy density, the material has the ability to store energy for an extended period of time, while the aluminium suffers no degradation in capacity over time.

Versatile yet Stable

The technology would prove to be ideal in parts of the world where grid reliability is low, like in Southern Africa where Jonas estimates that people only have access to a stable power grid 45% of the time.

Azelio's thermal storage would allow for people to implement solar into a community, an industry, or just their homes, to defend against failing or unreliable grids, which Jonas says is becoming more and more normal even in the developed world. In his home country of Sweden, during the long winter, trees knock out power all the time, forcing rural communities to switch to diesel generators or similar interventions—sometimes for weeks.

"Our system can give you decentralized power based on solar and wind so you can build a local micro-grid that provides you with almost everything you need 24 hours a day," said Jonas.

Transformers for renewable energy projects

ZEST WEG's local transformer manufacturing facility has supplied 36 specialised photovoltaic (PV) transformers to a solar energy generation plant in the Northern Cape.

This heralds Zest WEG's entry into the local production of transformers for the renewable energy sector, according to sales team leader Stuart Brown. He stresses that conventional 'off the shelf' distribution transformers are not adequate for these applications.

Distribution photovoltaic (DPV) solar energy transformers and generator step-up (GSU) wind turbine transformers are therefore specially designed.

"This exciting step into the renewables sector was achieved through our technical collaboration with WEG's extensive research and development resources in Brazil," Brown says. "We see great potential in the future of renewable energy solutions in Africa, especially as generation technologies evolve for the harnessing of solar and wind energy."

To ensure the highest standards, the design had been reviewed by an international independent consultant, says Ronaldo Bertoldi, engineering manager at the facility. The dual-system PV transformers were manufactured to the customer's specification of 3800/1900-1900 kVA and 22/0.66-0.66 kV.

The units were also subject to routine and



WEG PV transformers are specially designed for solar energy generation plants.

type testing, including heat run, impulse and partial discharge tests. They were delivered to the project in batches between July and November 2019.

Bertoldi says the increasing use of renewable energy creates new demands and challenges for transformer design.

"Transformers for wind and solar energy generation have installation and operation characteristics that strongly affect their design," Bertoldi says. "The design must also continue to meet the requirements for quality and cost."

Among the specific factors affecting transformers in distribution photovoltaic (DPV) power generation systems is solar irradiation.

"This directly affects the load profile and the thermal stress in the transformer materials," he says. "A wide range in transformer temperature must be accommodated – from

minus 25 to plus 50 degrees Celsius."

Transient overvoltage is also an issue to consider, he says. On the high voltage (HV) side, overvoltage transients may occur due to multi-stage capacitor banks switching, or from the circuit breaker operation. On the low voltage (LV) side, voltages are controlled with high frequency inverters which create harmonics and pulsed voltages.

"An electrostatic ground shield is required between the primary and secondary windings to eliminate capacitive coupling and transient overvoltage transformers," he says. "This also filters harmonics of high frequencies and pulsed LV voltages."

Bertoldi notes that the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) and the International Council on Large Electric Systems

(CIGRÉ) are working to update standards related to this equipment. A number of international standards already apply.

"These include IEC 60076-16 standards for wind turbines, for transformers from 100 kVA to 10,000 kVA, as well as dry-type and liquid-immersed transformers up to 72.5 kV," he says. "The IEEE standard P57.159/D6 guides the design of transformers in DPV systems."

The CIGRÉ standard WG A2.50 also applies to distributed energy sources and induced reverse power flow on transmission and distribution transformers.

In addition to the local design and manufacture of transformers for renewable energy projects, Zest WEG can provide a range of integrated solutions for these projects. These include sub-station, e-houses, switchgear and inverters.

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New forklifts launched

KEMACH has launched their new range of KEMACH forklifts for the South African and Sub-Saharan African markets, which will be promoted under their newly formed KEMACH Forklifts division.

Speaking at their March 2020 presentation, Frans van den Heever, General Manager for KEMACH Forklifts said "We at KEMACH are delighted to announce the KEMACH Forklift range, in partnership with Anhui HELI, which we believe will complement our existing quality earthmoving products. The KEMACH Forklift range offers our customers a South African forklift warranty first - a five years/12 000 h warranty on the complete machine, not just parts of the machine".

The KEMACH range of forklifts have specified Japanese engines, Heli built ZF transmissions and robotically manufactured chassis, ensuring premium brand quality at very competitive pricing. "The range comprises a walk-behind powered pallet jack up to 45 ton container handling units, enabling us to compete in all sectors of the market. KEMACH has a national footprint of 11 branches and eight sub-dealers across South Africa, giving us the biggest footprint in the materials handling



industry when it comes to service-ability and guaranteeing uptime for our customers" said van den Heever.

The construction industry contributes 4% of the South African GDP and the forklift industry taps into more than 80% of the markets of that sector, so we are optimistic that we can penetrate materials handling markets, explained van den Heever.

The supplier agreement between KEMACH Forklift and Anhui HELI was formed in January 2020. Anhui HELI is the biggest forklift manufacturer in China and complies with all European standards

as well as being ISO approved.

Local Input

Local support features include aftermarket suppliers for battery and charger supplies, forklift attachments and management systems. Driver training and monitoring through KEMACH's forklift management system is also available.

Stock forklift machines can be delivered within two weeks, while non-stock machines can be delivered from the factory within 10-12 weeks. KEMACH Forklift has a large stock holding at its off-site stock yard.

Pick-&-place solution for new brick and block plant

WHEN a local Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) of concrete brick, block, and paving machinery had the opportunity to build a greenfield plant for a longstanding customer in the East London area, it turned to SEW-EURODRIVE (Pty) Ltd. for its easily-configurable HandlingKinematics pick-and-place solution.

The HandlingKinematics application module allows for machine control at a higher level by means of a lower-level Configurable Control Unit (CCU) for carrying out precision path movements. During start-up, all the end user is required to do is enter the relevant mechanical data for the initial configuration of the motion parameters.

During production, the trajectory positions necessary for commencing movement are simply transferred to the CCU, which coordinates the path movement in real-time. It even allows for 'wait' points to be defined in the trajectory. The system is so flexible so that, during palletising and stacking, the target position can be adapted immediately during the runtime by the CCU, without higher-level controller

intervention.

Even greater flexibility can be allowed for by incorporating the freely-programmable MOVI-PLC® in the HandlingKinematics application module. This provides for exactly the same functionality, and completely repeatable configuration. While the hardware is the same, the only extra element needed is a different memory card for the programmable MultiMotion software, which ensures unlimited consistency.

MAXOLUTION® Engineer Dylan Enslin explains that the pick-and-place solution from SEW-EURODRIVE (Pty) Ltd. is essential for bricks or concrete blocks to be palletised in cube-sized packages for easy transport. Bricks or blocks are manufactured, compacted on a vibrating screen, placed on steel or wooden boards, and stacked in a curing chamber for three days, during which time a high humidity is maintained to crystallise the cement.

Thereafter a destacker feeds the boards onto a conveyor belt, which is where the pick-and-place application comes into play. Shaving even a single second from this process can translate into

a massive increase in the daily production rate. The actual pick-and-place machine itself is robotic, which is not supplied by SEW-EURODRIVE (Pty) Ltd. as an off-the-shelf unit. Instead, it supplies a retrofit kit that includes geared motors, cables, inverter, Variable Speed Drives (VSDs), and the software.

Pick-and-place robotics is based on kinematics, a mathematical model used to control and coordinate multiple axes. The machine developed by the OEM is essentially an automated gantry system, with an upper-level controller to send the relevant coordinate data. The distance involved during the pick-and-place process is about 4 m, with a 2 m to 3 m lift. The rotation and clamping of the gripper is controlled by a combination of pneumatics and servo motors.

SEW-EURODRIVE (Pty) Ltd. has been working intensively with the OEM for about two years to refine its latest upgraded equipment. A specific recommendation, for example, was to use a combination of high-flex and standard cabling, as the cabling is subjected to a lot of bend-

ing. This saves costs, as well as increasing the durability of the system. Other factors that had to be taken into account were the motor mountings, as the oil levels had to be correct and all the necessary oil seals in place.

"From the initial designs, we actually ended up with a unit smaller than envisaged initially, due to us refining the calculations provided by the client. The smaller the unit, the more cost-effective it is," Enslin explains. Such has been the close working relationship established with the OEM that SEW-EURODRIVE (Pty) Ltd. has already collaborated on an improved vibrating screen.

"There are global companies manufacturing similar equipment, but it wanted to design and build its own unique version compatible with local operating conditions and requirements. A standout feature of the OEM's equipment is the application of servo technology. The fact that we have been able to supply it with the latest advances in this field positions us firmly as a complete solutions provider for our customers in a range of industries," Enslin concludes.

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Excavator boosts productivity at scrapyards

A scrapyards operator has increased its productivity significantly by acquiring a SANY SY215 excavator with a six-finger grab attachment, as opposed to the traditional bucket. The excavator was supplied by Goscor Earth Moving (GEM) with the grab already fitted, reports Sales Consultant Murray Leith.

"This is the first time that we have sold a grab attachment with a SANY excavator to a local customer, and therefore this represents an important reference project for us," Leith highlights. "The scrap industry is a major opportunity for SANY, and the success of the project will prove the viability of this attachment in particular." The grabs are sourced from a separate company, and installed by a hydraulic specialist.

When to replace, and when to refurbish

IS it better to replace or refurbish an overhead crane reaching the end of its life?

At least one South African firm reckons that there are advantages to both options, and Condra, a specialist in new crane manufacture as well as crane refurbishment, believes that the choice should be very carefully considered.

According to Marc Kleiner, the company's managing director, refurbishment allows the customer to immediately realise a cost saving over buying new, and carries the additional advantage of providing an as-new machine already familiar to his operators, avoiding any need for re-training. Production can continue as before, with no change to established procedure.

Buying new, on the other hand, offers the advantages of lower operating costs quickly realised, a reduction in projected overall lifetime cost, and more efficient operation as a result of newer cranes' increased speeds, lower weights and lower electricity consumption. According to Kleiner, hoists today are as much as 50% lighter than they were 30 years ago, and the consequent reduction in crane weight also reduces the rate of wear on the overall factory structure.

Signs that an overhead crane will soon need either refurbishing or replacing include brittle electrical cable loop systems, failing contactors, extreme wheel wear, structural cracks and a general increase in maintenance costs.

If the customer should decide to refurbish, then the procedure generally comprises a dismantling of the crane followed by inspection of all brakes and mechanicals, a change of bearings, and an assessment of the overall crane structure using MPI to inspect critical sections for rust. Crane girders and crabs are also re-aligned, and the girders checked to ensure that they remain true. All main components are then shot-blasted, reassembled and painted.

Condra refurbishes not only its own cranes, but also competitors' machines.

Kleiner explained that competitor crane refurbishment is becoming increasingly popular because it allows the circumvention of delays caused by long component lead times of up to 18 months. Such delays

are common among European companies because they have to import their spares.

Besides its own machines and competitors' cranes, Condra also refurbishes overhead machines originally supplied by companies that have recently closed.

Kleiner explained

that the benefit Condra gains during refurbishing, whether one of its own machines or one from a rival firm, is that its engineers can ascertain from a technical perspective precisely how the machine has been performing.

"If the crane is our own, then we get the chance to look inside

it, examine wear rates and make projections of expected component life," he said.

"One thing we're seeing is that Condra's component life expectancy presently far exceeds the international norm, and we will be reducing the size of some of the components for our 2025 models to improve

efficiencies and reduce power consumption, especially within the gearboxes."

Kleiner explained that overhead cranes are sent back to the factory for refurbishment anywhere between 15 years and 30 years after commissioning, depending on the operator's maintenance

policy and how hard the crane has been working.

He pointed out that Condra offers the option of changing both crane capacity and span during a refurbishment by fitting new hoists, changing the rope and modifying the gear reduction.

"Whatever the case, whether upgrade or

refurbishment of a Condra crane or a competitor's crane, or one from a company that has closed, we work closely with the client on a solution that will deliver back a fully reliable, fully refurbished machine that will work happily for many years into the future," Kleiner said.

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Diverse product range seals the deal



MAJOR tyre manufacturer Sumitomo Rubber Industries has taken delivery of 43 machines on a long-term rental from leading materials handling equipment supplier, Goscor Lift Truck Company. The machines have been deployed to work at Sumitomo's manufacturing plant in Ladysmith, KwaZulu Natal.

The fleet comprises 15 DEC 5-tonne (t) electric tow tractors recently introduced to the local market by GLTC, 20 Doosan diesel forklifts with capacities from 1,8 to 7 t and eight Crown ESR520-2.0 reach trucks with 11,5 m lift heights.

Applications

Jogen Moodley, Associate Manager Procurement at Sumitomo Rubber Industries, says the DEC electric tow tractors are deployed to transport work-in-prog-

ress material used for tyre production within the factory. He says the machines are powerful and smaller, and fit the bill for the factory's confined working spaces.

"Space constraints have created a challenge to move material within our factory. The DEC tow tractors can easily access confined spaces which cannot be accessed by conventional forklifts. Another key benefit is that these units use less gas or fuel, which in turn translates into both operational savings and less emissions, ensuring the health of our employees," explains Moodley.

Dale Rosewall, GLTC KZN Sales Manager, says the 20 Doosan forklifts – ranging between 1,8 and 7 t – were all specified according to the different department and application needs

within the facility. This was done after an extensive site investigation.

Moodley explains that the forklifts are being used to move heavier loads than those handled by tow tractors. These include raw materials, equipment and tooling, among others.

The eight Crown ESR 5260-2.0 ESR lift trucks are being used in the raw material and finished goods warehouses. Moodley explains that space between the aisles at the two warehouses is restricted. "Due to the space constraints, we cannot use conventional fork trucks, and reach trucks are winning the day for us. Offering 11,5 m of lift height capacity, the ESR reach trucks also assist with the height factor for storage at higher level racks," he says.

Intermodal side-tipper bins for rail and road

SPECIALISED Container Agencies (SCA) - suppliers of niche market container products - has developed an intermodal side tipper bin that provides efficient bulk handling rail solutions encouraging greater utilisation of rail wagon container haulage.

"SCA's intermodal tipper bins ensure quick, safe and cost-efficient bulk handling in rail and road applications. What's notable is this intermodal side tipper bin system increases payload on rail wagons – from 54 metric tons to 60 metric tons. A single tipper bin is able to hold 30 metric tons for road transport," explains Ken Mouritzen, director, Specialised Container Agencies. "Robust intermodal side tipper bins are easily handled onto container rail wag-

ons and road trucks by a container handler.

"Side tipper bins have been designed for rapid and efficient off-loading of materials from both rail wagons and road trucks, using specially designed hydraulic tipping cylinders.

"An important feature of these intermodal side tipper bins - which are able to be stacked two-high for storage - is they can be used across different modes of transport, including road and rail, without the need for investment in double handling cargo. This system is boosting the utilisation of rail infrastructure, which significantly reduces transport costs, decreases national road congestion and minimises product damage.

"In areas that are not fully serviced by rail, the intermodal side tipper can be loaded



onto road transport, for closed loop, short-haul operations. Road vehicles are then used to carry the tipper bin containing bulk material to the railhead. This means cargo can be received at non-rail serviced facilities, for example on mines, terminals and ports."

For the transporter, benefits of using robust intermodal side tipper bins are lower operating costs, minimal cargo loss and weather-proof tarpaulins ensure product integrity during

transport. Advantages also include cost-efficient, easy handling of bulk, improved safety for drivers, vehicles and cargo, as well as reduced insurance premiums.

Road infrastructure benefits include less long-haul bulk traffic on national roads, resulting in reduced congestion, greater safety and decreased wear of road surfaces.

SCA provides a technical advisory and support service throughout the African continent.

New Crown reach trucks

Latest from Goscor Lift Truck Company (GLTC) is Crown's new ESR 1000 Series reach trucks.

RECENT developments in forklift technology have resulted in cutting-edge reach trucks that are much smarter, offering an array of benefits to the end user. A true case in point is Crown's new ESR 1000 range of reach trucks – comprising the ESR 1020 with narrow chassis, the ESR 1040 and the ESR 1060 for intensive use.

GLTC – says its technological appeal is the new Gena operating system. The system creates a particularly intuitive and safer user experience via a 7-inch colour touchscreen with a variety of customisable widgets and assistance systems such as Auto Height Select and Capacity Data Monitor.

Patrick Barber, Sales Director at GLTC, says of note is that InfoLink is seamlessly integrated into Gena and can be enabled for a fee on customer request. "Via the Gena display, operators have a variety of new safety and coaching functions. The full connectivity via GSM and wi-fi makes the ESR 1000 Series fit for the challenges of the future" says Barber.

"The ESR 1000 takes a considerable leap forward in reach truck design, building on the award-winning ESR 5200 Series. Customers can now benefit from advanced productivity, safety and management capabilities as standard features,

thanks to the Gena operating system and InfoLink," adds Barber.

The range

The ESR 1020 is available in 1,4 t and 1,6 t capacities. With its maximum lift height of 9 090 mm, the narrow chassis model is ideal for confined spaces, block stacking applications and rack aisles only 2,5 m wide.

The ESR 1040 is also available in 1,4 t and 1,6 t capacities. The standard width model offers a maximum lift height of 9 450 mm and a maximum lift speed of 0,61 m/s.

Designed for heavier loads, higher lift heights and greater throughput, the ESR 1060 is available in 1,4; 1,6; or 2 t capacities. The model offers a maximum lift height of 13 560 mm, overall width of 1 285 mm and maximum lift speed of 0,8 m/s.

Working smarter at height

The Optional Xpress Lower technology lets the operator double lowering speeds, resulting in substantial savings in time and money. "With the Xpress Lower technology, the mast lowering speed has been doubled to 1,1 m/s, which is unique in the market. This allows productivity increases of up to 21%," says Barber.



The ESR's Auto Height Select (AHS) feature automatically stops the forks at programmed rack heights, either by selecting the desired destination on the screen or by using the one-touch button to stop at the next programmed height. Its precise, automated positioning capabilities help avoid product, rack and truck damage, while improving throughput significantly.

The ESR's optional Tilt Position Assist compensates for mast and carriage deflection and automatically levels forks relative to the ground for more precise positioning. Camera options for the forks or mast further optimise load handling and positioning.

Driving efficiency

Operators will benefit from features such as regenerative braking and lowering, which recover energy for longer runtime. The regenerative lowering and braking functions enable energy savings of up to 11%.

The OnTrac Anti Slip Traction Control ensures optimum tractive performance in wet, dusty or freezer applications. "Crown's patented OnTrac Anti Slip Traction Control reduces tyre spin during acceleration, plugging and braking. The Gena operating system analyses truck speed, wheel revolutions and driver inputs to optimise tractive performance and increase tyre life," concludes Barber.

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Study confirms bio and synthetic LNG provide a viable pathway towards decarbonisation

Liquefied Bio Methane and Liquefied Synthetic Methane have the potential to be available, scalable, with costs similar to other low and zero carbon marine fuels

SEA-LNG, the multi-sector industry coalition, has released the latest in its series of independently conducted reports. The CE Delft study analyses the availability and costs of Liquefied Bio Methane (LBM) and Liquefied Synthetic Methane (LSM) and concludes that both could become available in sufficient quantities to make a contribution towards future decarbonisation for the shipping industry, and that the costs need not be significantly higher than those of other low- and zero-carbon fuels.

The study explores the potential availability and cost of LBM and LSM produced from renewable electricity with the aim of providing industry-

leading, timely, and proven analysis to support the growing case for LBM and LSM in driving forward LNG as a decarbonisation solution towards 2030, 2050, and beyond.

The findings are that both LBM and LSM are scalable solutions for the maritime sector, with estimated sustainable global supplies potentially exceeding the demands of shipping in the future, and likely to be commercially competitive relative to other low- and zero-carbon fuels. Further, the growing LNG-fuelled fleet could use LBM or LSM without requiring major modifications, and the existing supply infrastructure will remain fit for bunkering purposes with either fuel.

The study was conducted by independent research and consultancy organisation CE Delft and commissioned by SEA-LNG. The study included the latest academic and industry literature, comprising thorough analysis of circa 150 publications.

Dagmar Nelissen (CE Delft): "Based on an extensive review of the global availability of biomass, and the maturity of technologies to produce biomethane and synthetic methane, we conclude that, in principle, sufficient amounts could be produced to fuel the shipping sector. However, other sectors are also likely to demand methane, and there needs to be significant investments in produc-

tion capacity".

Analysis of the global sustainable biomass resource shows that biomethane from energy crops, agricultural residues, forestry products and residues could significantly exceed the global total energy demand of the maritime sector. The sustainable potential for LBM could be substantially higher in 2050 compared to 2030, even when excluding aquatic biomass, which has the potential to play a dominant role in the long term.

The biomass resources from which LBM can be produced are globally available. The availability of LSM will be dependent on the future build-out of renewable electricity capacity, and therefore

relies on investment within this space. This will also be a key driver within the development of other synthetic fuels reliant on renewable electricity, such as green hydrogen and ammonia.

The production costs of LBM and LSM could be broadly comparable to other renewable fuels like green hydrogen and ammonia. Compared to those fuels, LBM and LSM have the advantage that they can be transported, stored and bunkered, utilising existing and technically matured LNG infrastructure.

"The shipping industry faces unprecedented challenges if it is to meet the IMO's decarbonisation targets," commented

Peter Keller, Chairman, SEA-LNG. "Confusing and countering claims abound for different zero-emissions technologies – all of which require decades of research and development before they are proven safe for marine operations, globally available, and commercially viable.

"In combination, the studies we have commissioned definitely proves that, through LBM and LSM, LNG offers a clear pathway to net zero-carbon emissions from shipping while also future-proofing ship owners' investments. By investing in LNG-fuelled vessels now, ship owners can realise immediate GHG benefits – up to 21% on a Well-

to-Wake basis and 28%, Tank-to-Wake, including the impact of methane emissions. These LNG-based assets can use non-fossil fuel methane such as LBM and LSM with little to no modifications. As LBM and LSM become available at scale, the carbon-free future will become reality.

"If we are to make effective, meaningful progress with emissions reductions, waiting for the 'perfect' solution is not an option. We must act today, and LNG is the only option that both provides considerable GHG emissions reductions now, while charting a clear pathway towards a sustainable future for the shipping industry."

Hollow bore encoder offered



INSTROTECH is offering SCANCON's Model: SCH88BEX, ATEX absolute encoder with Profibus Interface. It's a strong, compact (89 mm footprint), cost-effective, through hollow bore encoder. Engineered for rugged conditions, it's reliable for extra harsh environments, and is the encoder of choice for Zone 1 & 2 applications.

The SCH88BEX encoder has hybrid sensing technology and features optical tech-

nology for the single turn encoder, and magnetic for the multi-turn encoder. There are no gear wheels that can wear out. The unit can be mounted directly onto the shaft and the innovative, removable end-cap allows for ease of mounting cables. It can also be mounted directly into the application without the need for any barrier, isolator or special cable.

The SCH88BEX is certified for world wide application ATEX, IECEx and North American Class I Div.

1 certifications, and has the following features and advantages:

- Hollow Shaft Encoder – ϕ 89 mm (ϕ 3.46 in.)
- Through Hollow Bore: ϕ 25 mm to ϕ 30 mm (1.18 in.)
- IP 66/67/68 (~ Nema 6) Environmental Protection
- Aluminium (Chromital TCP surface treatment)
- Material option Stainless Steel (AISI 316)

Applications for the Scancon SCH88BEX absolute encoder are found primarily in the industrial oil and gas fields, heavy industry, agriculture, marine and shipping, as well as for cranes. A Fibre Optic Ex-Proof version is available for

ATEX Zone 1 applications, that eliminates signal degradation due to electrical noise

issues, while providing the same superior qualities found in the standard model.

Contact INSTROTECH for more information on the Scancon SCH88BEX absolute encoder with Profibus 010 595 1831 or sales@instrotech.co.za

CMA CGM launches new cargo loading solution

By Port Technology International Team

CMA CGM, the fourth largest container shipping line in the world by market share, has launched SEAPRIORITY Go, a new solution that offers priority for goods during the loading of vessels.

In a statement, the carrier described

SEAPRIORITY Go as "a new high value-added service within the CMA CGM+ range of solutions designed to meet the needs of its customers".

The solution, it explained, ensures customers' goods receive priority whether it be for container allocation or loading on board.

CMA CGM's ambi-

tion is for SEAPRIORITY Go to expand customers' business, even when demand is strong, giving them more agility, flexibility and protection.

It will be a key component of CMA CGM+, the carrier's range of solutions that are meant to complement its conventional and maritime logistics operations.

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BMG's range of NORD aluminium drives is available with the nsd tupH (Sealed Surface Conversion System) anti-corrosion treatment, which has been developed by NORD DRIVESYSTEMS, for improved process reliability in extreme environmental conditions and for hygienically critical applications.

"NORD's nsd tupH surface and corrosion protection system, which is resistant to acids and alkalis, is a highly efficient anti-corrosion treatment for gear units, smooth motors, frequency inverters and motor starters in washdown-optimised cast aluminium housings," explains Derrick Louw, NORD product specialist, Electromechanical Division, BMG. "BMG's NORD nsd tupH drive units are a robust alternative to painted geared motors or Stainless Steel versions. The nsd tupH catalytic surface treat-

ment process permanently bonds a high hardness layer to the aluminium substrate, to offer the same corrosion-resistance as Stainless Steel. Advantages include extended surface life, a substantially lower mass, improved installation options and cost efficiency.

"NORD's easy-to-clean surface treatment is not a coating like a paint layer that can detach or flake off. This durable protective layer offers optimum protection against scratching, blistering and the penetration of corrosion, even if the unit is damaged. This surface conversion system is highly resistant to extreme environments and aggressive cleaning chemicals, even under high pressure washdown conditions."

NORD drives with nsd tupH comply with FDA Title 21 CFR 175.300 and for this reason are suitable for food applications. They



BMG's range of NORD aluminium drives is available with nsd tupH (Sealed Surface Conversion System) anti-corrosion treatment, which has been developed for improved process reliability in extreme environmental conditions and for hygienically critical applications.

have been successfully tested according to ASTM D714 (blistering), ASTM D610-08 (corrosion), ASTM D1654-08 according to DIN EN ISO 2409 (scratching), ASTM B117-09 according to DIN EN ISO 9227 (salt spray test) and ASTM D3170 (Gravelometer). In addition, resistance to common cleaning agents, which are used in the food industry,

has been confirmed in tests.

All DIN and standard components for BMG's NORD nsd tupH aluminium drive units, including drive shafts, are made from Stainless Steel. Fanless smooth motors, which run quietly, do not spread germs. They are available as synchronous and asynchronous motors and comply with efficiency

classes IE2 and IE3 (asynchronous motors) and IE4 (synchronous motors). Typical applications for NORD drives with nsd tupH surface treatment, include the food and beverage industry, bottling and canning plants, water treatment and sewage plants, as well as offshore and onshore applications. This range is suitable for use in any plant that

requires a washdown after production.

The NORD range, which is assembled locally by BMG according to stringent international quality and safety specifications, has earned recognition by the local market for reliability, high efficiency, reduced noise levels, extended service life and minimal maintenance requirements.

Refurbish old concrete surfaces

TEXTURE TOP® offers a decorative solution to save money and time by refurbishing old concrete surfaces.

Ageing, worn or surface damaged concrete no longer has to be demolished and recast at a cost to the customer and the environment. Instead, Texture Top®, a CHRYSO Southern Africa product, can be used to enhance existing surfaces through renovation and repair.

Texture Top® is a polymer-modified cementitious coating

which could be applied either with a spray gun or trowel to obtain a specified finish. The spray technique allows coverage of large surfaces in a short time.

At an application thickness of merely 2 mm, this thin anti-slip coating offers excellent mechanical resistance.

The product is available in a standard range of colours, and could be custom pigmented to complement various finishes.

Texture Top® can be applied to achieve any textured or smooth

finish. This is a simple and durable solution to renovate and add aesthetic value to surfaces around swimming pools, paths, terraces, driveways, patios, floors and stairs, as well as interior and exterior walls.

CHRYSO Southern Africa's technical and sales teams provide leading edge expertise in support of Texture Top® which makes it easy to achieve customised modern and trendy decorative finishes in a cost-effective and environmentally responsible way.



Standard available colours: Silica, Dune, Pebble, Cobble, Sandstone, Terracotta, Limestone and Ash.

Formula 1 car features high-tech coatings technology

AS official paint and coatings partner of the McLaren Racing team, the company's Sikkens brand has helped McLaren to stand out on the grid since 2008. With a new look and design for the 2020 season, all painted parts of the latest race car – as well as the team's transport, garage and accessories – feature AkzoNobel's high-performance products.

This season, the car also uses heat-shielding provided by the company's Protec-



McLaren Racings MCL35. Photo credit: Autodius.

tive Coatings business. Intertherm 50 – from the International

product range – has been applied to critical components sur-

rounding the engine and exhaust to help them withstand tem-

peratures of up to 540°C. A single coat of the product is just 25 microns thick – around a third of the width of a human hair.

"We're extremely proud of our long partnership with McLaren, which is built on collaboration, a shared passion for innovation and a commitment to performance," said Patrick Bourguignon, managing director of AkzoNobel's Automotive and Specialty Coatings business. "The car looks fantastic – both on top and underneath – and

we're especially looking forward to seeing it in action at Zandvoort when the F1 Grand Prix returns to the Netherlands this year."

The McLaren Racing team will be looking to build on a positive 2019 season when it finished fourth in the Constructors' Championship.

Scientists and technicians at McLaren and AkzoNobel have been collaborating for more than a decade, with the partnership being extended in 2012 to include McLaren road cars.



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Den Braven Sealants South Africa

Support for SABI schools training

KSB Pumps and Valves has once again thrown its support behind Suid Afrikaanse Besproeiingsinstituut's (SABI's) initiative to present irrigation courses to grade 11 school pupils. The SABI training forms part of the curriculum for the subjects Agricultural Technology, Agricultural Science and Agricultural Management Practices for schools and is presented as a two-and-a-half-day course (Irrigation) to grade 11 learners.

"This training gives us a golden opportunity to engage with the next generation of South African farmers."

The courses held in 2019 were given at Weston Agricultural College in Mooirivier, Wagpos Landboueskool in Brits, Hoërskool Bekker in Magaliesburg, Landboudal in Jacobsdal and Unicom Agricultural School in Tweespruit. This year's course will include the same schools with the addition of Kempton Park Hoërskool in Kempton Park and Hoërskool Merensky in Tzaneen.

Pumps training

According to SABI's Riana Lombard, the program is expanding as the interest grows and the word gets around. "We are confident that the SABI training programme for agricultural schools yields positive results on many fronts in the irrigation industry in South Africa and are

thankful to KSB for presenting the pump and motor section of the course. We believe that the SABI agricultural schools' program is important for the next generation of young South Africans".

Jason Nel, KSB Durban branch manager who provided the training, says the company has a long history of supporting agriculture and irrigation. "This training gives us a golden opportunity to engage with the next generation of South African farmers."

"It provides basic training specific to irrigation and water supply for farming. This year we included physical pump components so that the experience was more interactive, and learners were able to touch and see the working parts of a pump.

Future farmers

"We know that our investment will provide these future farmers with a positive sentiment towards KSB and an understanding that we have ... and always will be there to support our farmers.

As for the future, the group represented people from all areas and all population groups and shows that farming will be in good hands with our coming generations," Jason says.

He concludes that the giveaways and KSB-branded bags given to top students in each school were well received and it was clear that these token gifts instantly became prized possessions of those students.

WC water team offers one-stop shop

AS South Africa comes to terms with a water-scarce future, SRK Consulting is consolidating its extensive water-related expertise in the Western Cape into a one-stop shop.

"Growing concerns about the country's water security are demanding changes in the ways that industry and government tackle water challenges," says Cape Town-based SRK principal hydrogeologist Leon Groenewald. "To respond more effectively to client needs, SRK has integrated our groundwater and surface water departments in the province to offer a wider range of scientific and engineering solutions."

The new water group will consolidate and extend its services beyond traditional groundwater supply services into surface water services like water treatment, stormwater and flood design, and advisory services, with a full range of borehole-to-tap services available.

"This includes everything from groundwater feasibility studies to pump, pipeline and water treatment plant designs or drought relief projects, as well as our specialist Environmental Impact Assessment and Water Use Licence applications expertise," he said.

Experience in the group includes drought relief projects for municipalities, private property owners, developers and industrial clients, including siting, drilling and testing of boreholes, wellfield monitoring and flood line determinations.

"Our expertise equips us to conduct work ranging from borehole

pump specification to pipeline and water treatment designs," said SRK principal engineer Xanthe Adams. "We have assisted municipalities with tender processes and supervised their contractors."

In the mining sector, the group's integrated approach includes groundwater and surface water impact assessments - to local rivers, for example - as well as flood risk assessments and improved accuracy of predicted groundwater recharge from rainfall percolation, particularly in the context of climate change. Numerical modelling is one of the main surface and groundwater tools to quantify the baseline, predict impacts and guide water management.

"Our modelling work of tailings dams considers issues like transient drain flows - which is



Back Row From Left: Seabelo Seroalo (engineering intern), Shuaib Dustay (hydrogeologist), Des Visser (principal hydrogeologist), Chris Dalgliesh (partner), Leon Groenewald (principal hydrogeologist)

Front Row From Left: Sheila Imrie (principal hydrogeologist), Annalisa Vicente (hydrogeologist), Masibulele Fubesi (GIS technician), Xanthe Adams (principal engineer).

critical for water engineering design - and pore pressures for factor-of-safety slope stability assessment to prevent tailings dam failure," said principal hydrogeologist and numerical groundwater

modeller Sheila Imrie. Assessing pollution and contamination are also important areas of work, including groundwater pollution studies at landfill sites, analysis of contaminant plume footprints and remedia-

tion assessments. Multi-disciplinary teams that tackle these projects comprise professional hydrogeologists, water treatment engineers, water engineers, hydrologists and hydraulic engineers.

Integrated water team offers one stop shop

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Protection against welding fumes

BMG's Tools & Equipment division has introduced a range of specialist products, systems and services to assist industry to create a healthy and safe work environment, by reducing the risks associated with welding and cutting fumes, grinding dust and oil mist.

"Global industry has instituted new legislation – even in agriculture – to protect workers from the harmful effects of welding. We at BMG believe local businesses need to be more cognisant about the hazards of welding fumes and how important it is to protect workers' health through the extraction and control of welding fumes," states Andrew Johns, business unit manager, Tools and Equipment division, BMG. "Airborne welding fumes are a mixture of metal fumes and gases produced during welding operations that are harmful to workers. Toxic welding fumes can contain a mixture

of manganese, chromium VI, carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide and ozone – which cause serious short and long-term health problems.

"Our welding products and services are tailored to meet specific customer requirements and encompass source extraction, personal protection equipment (PPE), general filtration and extraction hoods.

"International standards for the preferred order in which welding fumes should be captured, are firstly source extraction, which contributes significantly to a better work environment."

"The next step is the provision of adequate PPE, followed by the separation of source and worker by automation, for example via extraction hoods. General filtration and ventilation systems are also critical in keeping the concentration of welding fumes within legal limits, according to international



Auto darkening welding helmets, with integrated lightweight Powered Air Purifying Respiratory (PAPR) units, provide protection against eye and face injury, as well as preventing respiratory problems.

guidelines. The most effective solution for a cleaner workshop, is normally a combination of all these methods."

BMG's Plymovent solutions for source extraction include portable fans, fume extractors and extraction hoses, mobile and stationary welding fume filter units with integrated fans.

The range also includes filtration systems, modular extrac-

tion hoods, fire safety solutions and oil mist filters. A specially designed workbench provides extraction and filtration for welding and grinding applications.

The PHV filter unit is a compact, portable unit, which is particularly well-suited for the extraction of welding fumes at source during maintenance and moderate welding applications. This unit is fitted with

two motors to ensure effective extraction, while using nozzles or extraction through the welding torch. A HEPA filter – fitted as standard – ensures high filtration efficiency and also makes the PHV unit suitable for stainless steel welding fume applications.

BMG's Plymovent PPE PersonalPro range includes helmets to protect the eyes, face and head during manual welding, cutting and

grinding. These versatile auto-darkening welding helmets, with an extended side vision, provide improved visibility, comfort and safety.

An integrated lightweight Powered Air Purifying Respiratory (PAPR) unit provides protection against eye and face injury, as well as preventing respiratory problems. The PAPR unit blows clean air into the helmet, allowing the worker

to weld and grind, while breathing purified air via a particulate filter. This system offers the choice of two air-flows and for additional safety there are 'automatic clogged filter' and 'low battery' alarms.

BMG also offers Translas plug-and-play ClearO2 systems for the extraction and filtration of fumes from welding processes, micro dust, vapours and odours.

Connected firefighter platform helps keep firefighters accountable, connected



IN 2014, MSA Safety launched its G1 SCBA. The G1, marketed as the platform of the future, was designed with firefighters' comfort in mind. Its advanced ergonomics allow for longer wear, better situational awareness and cleanliness.

Now, five years later, the platform of the future has been updated and expanded to enable supreme firefighter connectivity.

Connectivity and accountability

The Connected Firefighter platform is not one specific product. Instead, it's a suite of firefighting products that link together. The platform not only

assists in keeping firefighters safe, but it also ensures that everyone – from on scene firefighters to command staff – are connected and in the know.

"This platform enables firefighter connectivity, which is something we didn't previously have," Jasmine Spencer, fire service marketing manager at MSA, said.

Connectivity, she says, is exactly what it sounds like – everyone is connected to each other.

"It helps firefighters know what's going on with themselves, the status of their fellow firefighters, making sure that dispatch or incident command – whether they're onsite or offsite – is aware of

the situation," Spencer said. "It lets you know who's in distress, how much air someone has or how much time is remaining."

The platform creates a network of safety by linking the products, processes and firefighters for an overall safer fire ground experience.

Spencer, who has been with MSA for nearly a decade and began her career as an industrial engineer, says the Connected Firefighter platform is accessible, approachable and offers accountability for everyone on scene.

The platform, which started with the G1 SCBA, includes the MSA Hub, LUNAR and Firegrid.



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The company – a level 3 BEEE contributor – is proud of its reputation, stock holding and service delivery to its customers. A comprehensive range of personal protective equipment is supplied to a diverse spectrum of industries including Mining, Manufacturing, Oil & Gas, Agriculture, Construction, Fishing and Food industry.

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Over the years Pienaar Brothers developed their own range of products that cater for a number of industries, one of them is the well-known Raven Spectacle range. It also has close relationships with number of international suppliers and provides premium PPE products from 3M, Bova, LeMaitre, Wayne, Neptune, Profit, Uvex, Honeywell, DuPont and CAT amongst others.



Pienaar Brothers recently completed a major revamp of its retail outlet at its Paarden Eiland premises -22 Auckland Street - and invites customers to view its comprehensive range of PPE approved gloves, workwear, safety footwear, eye protection and respirators – all in one modern and accessible retail outlet that provides for all industry.

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Warehousing facility keeps mines productive



A view of the spare parts store at the FLSmidth Stormill facility.

OPTIMISING customers' production and maximising their return on investment is the ongoing mission of the well-resourced FLSmidth's warehousing facility in Stormill, west of Johannesburg.

According to Derek Lane, operations manager at FLSmidth, continued investment in the facility over the past decade has kept it at the leading edge of customer service. Today, it has grown to 10,500 m² under roof and 1,660 m² under crane, with dual lifting capacity of up to 40 tons.

"We have technical capability across FLSmidth's range of KREBS® slurry pumps, cyclones and valves," says Lane, "allowing us to service customers through sub-Saharan Africa and into the Middle East."

Strategic stocking is done on the full range of KREBS pumps from the UMD™ heavy duty, millMAX™, split casing

slurryMAX™, gravelMAX™ and vMAX™ range, all of which feature a recessed impeller design allowing the pumps to run dry. In addition, Technequip™ valves are stocked in a variety of sizes, both flanged and wafer type.

"Our workshop and warehousing capacity equip us to respond quickly to customers in various regions of Africa and beyond," he says. "This is critical in helping maintain their operational uptime while keeping costs down."

The quality of the FLSmidth's KREBS pump range also allows them to be offered to customers on a trial basis. Trial pumps can be run against time or tonnage targets to ensure that they exceed the performance of existing equipment, says service manager Martin Jones.

"The service component in these trials includes a dedicated service technician who visits site for checking and

fine-tuning during the trial," says Jones. "This level of technical on-site collaboration from our teams allows operational parameters to be closely monitored and refinements made to specific performance requirements."

The large stockholding of spares at Stormill for pumps, cyclones and valves is based on historical and forecasted customer consumption. Key customers also hold strategic consignment stocks at their sites. These are currently located in Zambia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Tanzania, as well as with an agent in South Africa's Northern Cape Province.

He emphasises that all the Stormill facility's activity is strictly governed by recognised international standards. The operation is certified with ISO 9001 for quality, ISO 14001 for environmental management and OSHAS 18001 for safety and health.

Nestle's new \$77m UK 'distribution centre of the future'

WE all have an image in our head of what happens behind the doors of a typical warehouse.

Lots of people handling boxes, forklift trucks buzzing about and a cacophony of noise.

Then you step inside the Digital Distribution Centre of the Future – a new \$77 million facility at the SEGRO East Midlands Gateway, near Castle Donington in the UK.

Inside, there is technology that is set to revolutionise how goods are distributed – not just for the present time, but for the next quarter of a century.

Once up and running, the Digital Distribution Centre of the Future, will handle the distribution of Nestle goods made by 11 manufacturing sites.

The centre has been created thanks to a partnership between XPO, Nestle and Swisslog Logistics Automation – and has had a gestation period of around five years.

Gavin Williams, XPO's UK and Ireland managing director, said: "It has definitely been a team effort. All three companies have worked together to create a distribution centre which we believe is truly ground-breaking."

In terms of feet on the ground, the processes within are not as human intensive as neighbouring sites such as Amazon and Shop Direct. The size of the car park compared to its neighbours gives an indication of that.

That said, the centre will employ real people. Mr Williams argues that the technology is there to help humans do their job better, rather than replacing them.

He said: "Because these are more technical roles, they are higher



The ACPaQ machine, pictured in the top right of this image, makes up the pallets (Image: Rod Kirkpatrick/F Stop Press/National Trust)

value jobs. The technology is there to give an improved employee experience.

"What we have created through the use of technology is a state-of-the-art facility that places great emphasis on safety, security and efficiency."

In particular, technology developed by Swisslog has played a key role in making the centre a reality.

Its technology is a big feature of the custom-designed centre, which features advanced sorting systems and robotics alongside state-of-the-art automation.

According to James Sharples, managing director of Swisslog UK, the site's digital ecosystem integrates predictive data and intelligent machines to deliver one of the most advanced distribution management centres in the world.

But as well as being a distribution centre, the building will have its own on-site laboratory, in which new systems will be tested and trialled, with a view to being introduced at some point in the future.

He said: "We've taken some of our existing technology and adapted and improved it to create this bespoke facility."

"But it does not stop there. Even when the centre is up and running we will be working with XPO, continuing to look at new ways of improving efficiency and increasing volume."

In terms of how the distribution centre works in its current intended form, the whole process begins with the goods arriving at the building on pallets. These are then lifted by machine onto a conveyor and taken to a monorail.

Hung from an elevated pedestrian walkway, the monorail is a key element of the operation, transporting goods throughout the building.

The monorail takes the deliveries to the appropriate storage area. The centre is fitted out with huge areas of racking – some of which are temperature controlled, depending on the goods in question.

When it comes to distribution, one of the major benefits of the new centre is its ability to make up bespoke orders.

For example, a customer may not want to order a whole pallet of Kit-Kats. Instead, they might want a mixed pallet of products – known at the centre as a "rainbow pallet".

To make up a mixed pallet, there is a very clever piece of kit that has been introduced by Swisslog. Called ACPaQ, this machine can make up a pallet with different products – a bit like a 3-D Tetris game.

It can also work out which products should be on the bottom (namely the heavier items) and which should be at the top (the lighter products that would be likely to get damaged if they were on the bottom).

These pallets are then grabbed by another machine, put on a conveyor and sent to dispatch, ready to be loaded onto a lorry and off to the customer.

All of this is overseen by staff in an office, who are constantly monitoring the performance and health of the machines.

At present, the distribution centre is still in the testing phase, with engineers putting all of the machines through their paces and fine-tuning the processes.

It is then hoped that the site will start operating for real some time in Spring 2020.

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Door solutions for largest independent fresh-produce store

EVERGREENS Fresh Market opened its first store in Pretoria, Gauteng, 35 years ago supplying fresh produce, groceries and frozen goods to retail and bulk shoppers. In Q2 2019, the construction of a second store was completed in Kempton Park.

Catering to the local Tembisa community, this 22 000sqm flagship facility is the largest independent fresh-produce retail store in the southern hemisphere, supplying fruit, vegetables and dairy produce as well as meat and bread from the in-store butchery and bakery. As the largest CO₂ installation

in the local commercial sector, with a refrigeration capacity of 1.9 MW, efficient temperature control is essential for this store.

Maxiflex's entrance system trio which comprises of 16 electrically operated sectional doors and 12 swing lip dock levellers out of the renowned ASSA ABLOY stable as well as PVC strip curtains, presented the perfect solution. "Evergreens are known for delivering high quality products and demand the same standards from their suppliers. Already familiar with the quality of our products and ser-

vices due to our existing relationship, the customer had no hesitation in appointing Maxiflex as door supplier of choice," comments Maxiflex Managing Director, Bram Janssen.

The modern, robust and flexible electrically operated sectional doors are next generation products, presenting unmatched insulation qualities. Manufactured from high quality materials and featuring wind-resistant reinforced panels combined with class 3 certification for water tightness, wind-load and air permeability, these dependable doors

perform optimally even in the most adverse of conditions over a long life cycle.

Maxiflex also installed swing lip dock levellers connecting the Evergreens building with delivery vehicles for safe and efficient loading and unloading. The swing dock's swing lip bridges the gap between the ramp and the vehicle bed ensuring safe goods transfer and avoiding injuries to personnel and damage to equipment. Dock levellers were installed outside the building to prevent unnecessary loss of cold air through the dock leveller.

Enlightenment in time of Corona

Continued from back page

again (this was Obama's economic rescue package in 2009, to get America out of Bush's sub-prime crisis and the Big Recession, Stevie added) long before any other advanced economy did. Same folks who didn't vote for the auto industry assistance that resulted now in record-breaking auto sales.

"The same folks who try to take away folks' health insurance every chance they get, who refuse to allow votes on giving minimum-wage workers a raise, refuse to support making sure women earn equal pay for equal work.

'Don't act like this started with Donald Trump. He did take it to a whole new

level. I've got to give him credit. But he didn't come out of nowhere.'

"Sadly," added Stevie, "the video stopped there."

"Indeed," agreed The Prof, adding a picture of a light bulb. "Most enlightening."

E-mail: noag@maxitec.co.za

Why don't Green's embrace nuclear power?

Continued from back page

evacuation of some 250 000 people some say unnecessarily. And, because of the evacuation some died.

You see, not all nuclear radiation is harmful. You can be irradiated along with the delicious sheep while walking on a Karoo farm.

You can get a Geiger counter to buzz loudly by passing it across the face of a granite outcrop in Paarl or a concrete pillar – but none of that radiation will kill you or harm you in any way.

Hell, there are beaches in Brazil and elsewhere where people cover themselves in radio-active sand for hours at a time. Even sunbathing on a South African beach will allow the sun to irradiate you.

The really bad stuff which nuclear power stations produce as waste can kill you if you get too close but it is a small amount by volume and is buried way down a very deep hole where its ferocity will continue to decline over time.

In fact, the nuclear waste that scares the uninformed because it is radioactive for 500 years and may still make a Geiger counter click away even after that is not dangerous at all even at the outset when it is buried in concrete in sealed drums and surrounded by impervious clay.

I could go on. And I shall.

Take Chernobyl again. Yes, it was a nuclear disaster. Yes, radiation killed 16 brave Russian firemen. No, radiation from Chernobyl killed nobody else. No children died from thyroid cancer 30 years afterwards. Yes, the Chernobyl design was USSR Russian, was not safe by Western standards and was originally intended to produce weapons grade plutonium not electricity.

But those stubborn families who refused to be moved to Kazakhstan (six or so couples out of 300 000) not only survived, they prospered (as much as anyone could who was not a member of the communist party in those days).

Those hardy souls are now in their 80s, growing and eating their own vegetables and slaughtering the odd rabbit. Chickens or deer which are now in abundance along with wild pigs, wolves, fish and other animals.

The animals that died were too close to the bad radiation. The rest survived, adapted and bred like crazy once people were removed from their habitat. There have been no genetic mutations of wild creatures either.

No, I would not like to live in Chernob-

yl, but not because I am afraid of radiation. I do not fancy living like a peasant. It's not nearly as fun as the Greens would say. If it was, how come there is a flood of African peasants trying desperately to get into Europe or here in Cape Town for that matter?

Mind you, I would not mind living in Duinefontein north of Cape Town on the borders of the Koeberg nuclear power station (500 metres from it in fact). The worst radiation scare was when a worker at the plant sparked a Geiger counter reading when he went to work. After a thorough investigation of his home, they found the radiation was coming from his newly installed granite kitchen table top.

Footnote:

As at the end of 2019, there are 445 nuclear power reactors in operation in 30 countries.

The current level of nuclear energy supply avoids more than 2,500 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions annually, had the same amount of electricity been generated using fossil fuels. The use of nuclear energy in France and Sweden, for example, has illustrated that it can be the "catalyst for delivering a sustainable energy transition".

Socialism must be rejected!

Says Fanie Brink, Independent Agricultural Economist

AGRICULTURAL producers will need to reconsider the support and financing of socialism very urgently and seriously which is endorsed by Agbiz, (Agricultural Business Chamber) and its "social partners," says Fanie Brink, an independent agricultural economist.

He referred to the comments by Dr John Purchase, Chief Executive Officer of Agbiz, on the 2020/21 government budget presented to Parliament by the Minister of Finance, which appeared in the Chamber's newsletter.

Brink says the political transformation of the ANC government has already landed South Africa in the final destruction phase of the economy. In reality, the so-called "inclusive growth" is nothing more than a cliché for the purely socialist policy direction of the ANC, which is enforced by the legislative communist doctrines on the economy and the country. The support of the ANC's "economic transformation" of the country by the private sector that can only destroy economic growth as already proven and is largely and collectively responsible for the total bankruptcy and the resulting "failed state".

The economic policy document "Towards an Economic Strategy for South Africa" of the Minister of Finance cannot create any growth because it is based on the same destructive ideology of the ANC. Not on the most basic economic principles that growth is driven, firstly, by the profit motive on both the supply and demand side of the economy and, secondly, by the private ownership of the factors of production in the economy and good entrepreneurship which are generally accepted and applied worldwide.

In fact, South Africa is one of the few countries that still cling to the ideology

of communism and socialism that was totally rejected worldwide years ago. Its devastating effects are already clearly visible in South Africa.

No job creation summit can create jobs because it is only possible through economic growth which is the only way to get more investment in the economy that in turn creates greater returns to generate more money for the government to solve the serious social problems in the country.

The supporters of socialism will apparently never understand that the income of the government is totally dependent on the profits generated and the salaries and wages paid to the management and employees of these businesses, as well as to the government officials, and are decisive for higher private consumption spending on the demand side of the economy and in both cases taxable in terms of the Income Tax Act.

Communism and socialism are nothing but the destruction of economic growth created by entrepreneurs who can identify profitable business opportunities and manage the risks associated with them which are only possible in a capitalist economic system, but which have been virtually destroyed in South Africa. There can also no longer be any policy uncertainty about the very clear policy direction of the ANC's ideology!

It is not possible that the whole world can be wrong while the supporters of the ANC's ideological delusions about the process of creating economic growth in the world are correct. Like the delusions that the "key focus for all social partners should be on driving inclusive growth in the economy" and that the "... various platforms (should) continue to support growth-enhancing initiatives and policies..." that cannot be achieved through socialism.

In fact, this is what Trevor Noah meant in one of his shows when he said: "If the

whole world decides that the right path is straight ahead then South Africa makes a left turn backwards!"

"The further support of the ANC's ideology with its socialist and inclusive growth policy will further destroy the already failed state into an underdeveloped state with much greater poverty, unprecedented famine and human suffering. It totally overestimates the ability of the agricultural industry to eventually sustain 85% of the population when the rest of the other industries in the economy have collapsed, but that is precisely the way the ANC is already paving the way for the country," says Brink.

VWSA's work offer

FOR the second consecutive year, Volkswagen Group South Africa (VWSA) is supporting the national Youth Employment Service (YES) programme by offering work opportunities to 520 unemployed youth.

The group, which began its 12-month employment period last week, consists of 141 candidates placed at VWSA, another 194 working for the VWSA dealership network and 185 candidates being taken in by SME host partners.

Of the 141 that will work for VWSA directly, 123 will be placed at the plant in Uitenhage, 10 candidates at the National Sales Organisation (NSO) in Sandton and another 8 candidates will join the Group Parts Warehouse facility in Centurion.

This is the second year that VWSA is supporting the YES programme, launched by President Cyril Ramaphosa to enable young people without formal qualifications to gain work experience with the aim of improving their chances at long-term quality employment.

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- Tooling / Machine Tools & Equipment
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- Wire, Rope Hoist, Sling, Chain

Cape Business News is always on the lookout for stories of companies that are shaping the Cape business landscape. If your company has a story to share, in these, or any other business sector, send your story to editor@cbn.co.za for consideration.

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Tel: 021 2500400

Printed by:

RSA Litho

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Enlightenment in time of Corona

NOW what?" asked Luke the Dude, evidently upset by the Corona lockdown. "How are the wise and the opinionated going to convene for the High Parliament of the Public House? I mean, without your convivial conversation, what will life be?"

"Come now, come now, Lucas," I consoled, as he did not appear to be taking the Michael. "It's not that bad."

"Humph," frowned Luke the Dude. "Easy for you to say. As for me, I won't be able to see Miss Lilly, ever."

Ah well. Corona, unrequited love, we all have our problems.

"Look," I suggested sympathetically, "I'll set it up, or rather, get my grand-kid to set up a Facebook page we can all join and there we'll continue as usual, you'll just have to supply your own beer. Even better than usual; none of The Governor's rules and beer at half the price!"

Luke the Dude was not convinced, so I cut to the chase: "At least you'll still be able to talk to her ..."

And that is how it came to pass.

Jon the Joker was his usual charming self. "At least," typed he, "This disaster has exposed Donald Trump for the dumbass he is – surely even to all but the thickest of his base, sitting in their intellectual trailer parks, dressed in their Sunday vests, deep into their home-brewed hooch with their cousins on their laps and still cussing Obama."

"I do not agree," contradicted Big Ben. "At least he cares about those people. You are just being nasty."

"Ha!" responded Jon like lightning, and a little later, "Nasty nogal! Spoken like a true Trumpwit!"

"Sorry Ben," pretended Bob the Book, "much as it pains me to say, Jon has a point. Trump cares for one thing only and that is Donald Trump. He gives not a snort for other people, healthy or sick. In fact, I'm sure he dislikes people who are sick."

"Prove it!" challenged Ben.

"I was hoping you'd say that," Bob retorted. "Consider this episode I saved."

"When a cruise ship with Corona-infected Americans neared, Trump wanted to turn them away. Yes, that was his initial response. He did not care about the sick people, he cared only about their 'too large' number. His sole concern was how it would look for him, Donald Trump. These were his direct words: 'I don't need to have the numbers double because of one ship that wasn't our fault.'"

"Think on that while I give you some Trump quotes I collected during the beginning of the crisis:

"2 Feb 'We pretty much shut it down coming in from China.'

"24 Feb 'The Corona Virus is very much under control in the USA... Stock market started looking very good to me.'

"25 Feb 'I think that's a problem that's going to go away... In fact, we're very close to a vaccine...'

"26 Feb 'The 15 (confirmed Corona cases) within a couple of days is going to be down to close to zero.'

"28 Feb 'And now the Democrats are politicising the Corona Virus ... and this is their new hoax.'

"4 Mar 'If we have thousands or hundreds of thousands of people that get better by just, you know, sitting around or even going to work, some of them go to work but they get better.'

"5 Mar 'I never said people that are feeling sick should go to work!'

"6 Mar 'Anybody right now, and yesterday, anybody that needs a test gets a test.'

"6 Mar 'I like this stuff. I really get it. People are surprised that I understand it. Every one of these doctors said, how do you know so much about this? Maybe I have a natural ability. Maybe I should have done that instead of running for president!'

"8 Mar 'We have a perfectly coordinated and fine-tuned plan ...'

"9 Mar 'This blindsided the world.'

"11 Mar 'We will be suspending all travel from Europe.'

"13 Mar 'I am officially declaring a national emergency.'

"15 Mar 'This is a very contagious, this is a very contagious virus. It's incredible. But it's something that we have tremendous control of.'

"On the contrary," concluded Bob the Book. "Not even close to under control, said the experts. Trump made up the lie as he went along – as with most of the above."

"Very impressive," The Prof showed signs of attention. "Not to be topped tonight, I'm sure."

"I'm not competing," Stevie the Poet manifested on the screen, "but I wish to share this, which I lucked upon on the Internet. You know that Obama has been keeping a low profile throughout the Trump frolic? Well Corona has finally got his tongue back from the cat. This is a speech of his I transcribed."

"Former President Barack Obama: 'So the problem is not that all Republicans think the way this guy does. The problem is that they've been riding this tiger for a long time. They've been feeding their base all kinds of crazy for years, primarily for political expedience.'

"So, if Trump was running around saying I wasn't born here, they were okay with that, as long as it helped them with votes. If some of the folks on talk radio started talking about how I was the Anti-Christ, yeah, you know, 'It's just politics ...'

"You think I'm joking? Donald Trump, as he's prone to do – he didn't build the building but he just slapped his name on it and took credit for it. And that's what's

happened in their party. All that bile, all the exaggeration, all the stuff that was not grounded in fact just kind of bubbled up, started surfacing.

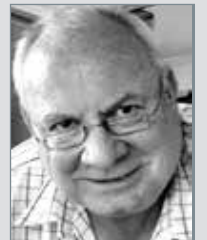
"They know better, a lot of these folks who ran, and they didn't say anything. And so they don't get credit for, at the very last minute, when finally the guy that they nominated and they endorsed and they supported is caught on tape saying things that no decent person would even think, much less say, much less brag about, much less laugh about or joke about, much less act on. You can't wait until that finally happens and then say, "Oh that's too much, that's enough!" and think that somehow you are showing any kind of leadership. And deserve to be elected to the United States Senate. You don't get points for that."

"In fact, I'm more forgiving of the people who actually believe it than the people who know better and stood silently by out of political expediency, because it was politically convenient."

"And if your only organizing principle has been to block progress and block what we've tried to do to help the American people – every step of the way – so you're not even consistent anymore: you claim the

OPINION

ON THE CONTRARY



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Pieter Schoombee
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mantle of the party of family values and this is the guy you nominate? And stand by, and endorse, and campaign with? Until, finally, at the eleventh hour, you withdraw your nomination? You don't get credit for that.

'Donald Trump may make most Republican politicians look a little bit better by comparison, I mean, it's like the bar has gotten so low. But these are the same Republicans who tried to block us from rescuing the economy. Did not offer a single vote when it came to the recovery package that made sure that we started growing

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Why don't Green's embrace nuclear power?

WHY don't Green's embrace nuclear power? The answer – after considerable research on the subject and the application of common sense – even embracing the Green idea that carbon dioxide is "poisoning" the planet/altering the climate for the worse, and so on – is "Blowed if I know!"

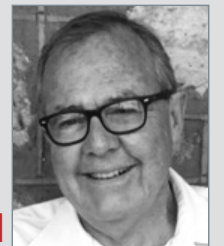
I have some theories though.

Applying reason to the question of nuclear power as a source of clean energy, as opposed to coal, diesel, liquefied natural gas, or liquefied petroleum gases (butane and propane), seems to me to make nuclear a winner.

Nuclear power stations emit no carbon dioxide whatsoever although they may do so if you take their make up into account like the cement and steel used. But then you could apply the same caveat to wind farms (huge plastic propellers, lots of steel and concrete too) or indeed to photovoltaic panels (nasty stuff like cadmium, sundry plastics, aluminium and so on).

So let's stick to emissions for the sake of the comparison, shall we?

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN



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Keith Bryer
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Objections to nuclear are not therefore on the grounds that nuclear power stations emit carbon dioxide. But they do emit (OMG) radiation. That's it, they emit radiation – like Chernobyl, Fukushima, Three Mile Island and And No, there aren't any other so-called nuclear disasters in almost 80 years of nuclear power generation.

But! But!... I hear the splutter of rage and indignation of the anti-nuclear lobby. Calm yourselves, only Chernobyl can accurately be called a nuclear accident, the others were a minor malfunction which killed no one, failed to cause a meltdown (Three Mile Island) and Fukushima which was not a nuclear accident but was caused by a Tsunami, irradiated no one to death, produced no three-eyed fish but did cause the forced

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