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Western Cape attracted R140-billion in foreign investment, with the region becoming a hub for renewable energy and tech sectors

Irish renewable energy group Solar Capital is the region's largest investor, with R38,98-billion invested in 2023. Tech giant Amazon is the province's second-largest investor.



Amazon's R4,5-billion multi-purpose complex is currently being constructed in Cape Town.

By Larry Claasen

The Western Cape is becoming a magnet for foreign direct investments (FDI), with 269 global companies investing R139,6-billion and creating 17 822 jobs in the province over the past ten years.

FDI is seen as key to generating economic growth by all spheres of government. According to Wesgro, the trade and investment promotion agency for Cape Town and the Western Cape, FDI brings much-needed capital and expertise to the region and provides access to global markets, talent, and technology.

Wesgro's 2024/25 annual report reveals a significant surge in FDI into the Western Cape from January 2014 to December 2023. In 2014, the region drew in R4,67-billion, but by 2021, 2022, and 2023, the annual investment had more than tripled, reaching over R13-billion per year over the past three years.

The 2023 period was a particularly

good year for attracting investment from abroad, with R45,93-billion being invested in 37 projects, creating 3 679 jobs.

Renewables power the economy

Solar Capital, a subsidiary of Irish-based Phelan Green Energy, made the biggest investment in terms of capex value, with R38,98-billion, equivalent to 27,92% of total capex, invested over the 10-year period.

Solar Capital's local headquarters are in Cape Town. Its two De Aar Projects, located in the Northern Cape, will produce 85,26MW and 90MW in power, respectively.

The investment by Solar Capital is the main reason Ireland is the leading FDI investor in the cape. Investments from Ireland totaled R42,76-billion from 10 projects.

The US came in second with investments of R30,64-billion across 68 projects. The UK was in third position with capex worth R11,52-billion invested across 63 projects.

The growing importance of the renew-

able energy sector to the Western Cape economy cannot be underestimated. When measured by capex, the renewable energy sector dominates, with accumulative capex investment value of R50,33-billion.

The country's move to become less dependent on its coal power stations has been a big driver of growth in the renewable energy sector, notes Wesgro in its annual report.

"Over the past decade, the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producers Procurement Programme (REIPPPP), which was established in 2011, has driven and continues to drive investment in this sector, with much of this investment focused on solar PV [photovoltaic] and wind. Other IPP sources of power under the REIPPPP program include concentrated solar power (CSP), biogas, biomass, landfill gas and small hydro."

Silicon Cape

Aside from the renewable energy sector, the province and the country have also had success in attracting investment into the technology sector. FDI into South Africa's software and IT sector peaked in 2020, with capex investment worth R10,82-billion invested across 18 projects.

"Tech giants such as Amazon, International Business Machine (IBM), Otello Corporation (Opera Software), Oracle and other leading tech companies continue to invest and support South Africa's economic digital transformation," said Wesgro.

Though Gauteng was the leading investment destination for tech FDI, the Western Cape came in second, attracting R19,17-billion in investment, which went into 106 projects and creating 9 598 jobs between January 2003 and November 2023.

Continued on P2

Transnet will not bring in private company to run container operations at the Port of Cape Town



By Larry Claasen

STATE-owned transportation group, Transnet is not looking to bring in an outside party to run its container operations at the Port of Cape Town.

The Western Cape Government and the City of Cape Town have called on Transnet to speed up the participation of the private sector in the running of the Port of Cape Town. Though Transnet has issued a tender to run the port's liquid bulk terminal, it said there were no plans to bring in an outside partner to run its container operations.

Transnet, under its Recovery Plan, is implementing its Private Sector Participation (PSP) strategy, which sees it turning to private companies to help turnaround its underperforming operations.

This strategy has seen it grant a tender to Philippine based International Container Terminal Services, Incorporated (ICTSI) to run its Durban Container Terminal Pier 2 for 25 years.

It is also looking to bring in partners to operate its Transnet Rolling Stock LeaseCo, and its Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Terminal in Richards Bay.

The group is also looking for partners for its Ngqura Manganese Export Terminal (NMET) and the Richards Bay Dry Bulk Terminal.

However, those hoping to see the Port of Cape Town's under container

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Western Cape has attracted R140-billion in foreign investment, with the region becoming a hub for renewable energy and tech sectors

Continued from P1

The growing importance of the tech sector in the province can be seen in Amazon Web Services (AWS) investing R5,97-billion in the region - the second largest after Solar Capital's investment.

AWS plans to invest R46-billion in the Cape Town region by 2029.

The payoff of this investment into the cape will be huge, according to the AWS Economic Impact Study, which came out in 2023.

"The investment associated with the AWS Africa (Cape Town) Region will contribute an estimated R80-billion to the GDP of South Africa from 2018–2029. By the end of 2022, the AWS investment in Cape Town had generated R12-billion in domestic GDP," said the study.

The Belgium bakery

Though Solar Capital and Amazon's investments in the region are well known, less known is that of Belgium bakery, Lotus Bakeries, which has invested a total capex of R5,33-billion in 2023.

Lotus Bakeries invested in two factories in Wolseley in 2019, and opened a new state-of-the-art production facility for its nākd® Bars in the town in February 2024.

"This expansion positions the South African site as the second-largest production site for Lotus Bakeries, contributing significantly to the local economy and employment opportunities," said Lotus Bakeries in a statement at the time.

Homeowners Sentiment Index signals cautious optimism as confidence improves - ABSA

ABSA's Homeowners Sentiment Index for the first quarter of 2024 reveals an uplift in confidence in the property market, with overall sentiment among respondents surveyed climbing to 82% as optimism begins to remerge.

In the survey of 1 149 respondents, the number of positive responses rose 4% compared to the final quarter of 2023 and 9% relative to sentiment recorded a year ago.

This quarter's index also indicates healthy growth in sentiment across investors surveyed, surging 6% quarter-on-quarter.

This increase is the highest score recorded in the index's investor subcategory in three years.

"These figures indicate that consumers and investors are increasingly optimistic about the property market's prospects, anticipating better days ahead," said Nondumiso Ncapai, Absa home loans managing executive.

"While risks remain, sentiment around the property market's future returns is promising, reflecting what we have known to be true in South Africa for many years – property remains an aspirational and desirable investment."

Key Findings of the Q1 2024 Homeowners Sentiment Index:

- Overall sentiment improved to 82%, up from 78% in Q4 2023, while there was growth in all the subcategories surveyed in the index.
- Sentiment to buy property grew 8% to 72% compared to the previous quarter and 11% compared to Q1 2023 – an inflection point in what has been a downward trend since the final quarter of 2021.
- Investor sentiment increased by 6% compared to Q4 2023, reaching the highest level since Q1 2021.
- There was a notable increase in positive sentiment among first-time homebuyers, with many feeling that now is an opportune time to invest in property.
- A significant uptick was also observed among women who now consider it more appropriate to buy rather than rent in Q1 2024.

The security of property as an asset, consistent appreciation in property values over time, and the creation of long-term income were among the main factors cited by respondents concerning the attractiveness of property as an investment class. This, while a challenging economy, political instability, crime, high unemployment rates and escalating property prices were identified by respondents as significant barriers to market enthusiasm.

"The Homeowners Sentiment Index serves as a barometer for the health of the property market and reflects the evolving attitudes of consumers towards home ownership and investment in real estate," said Ncapai.

"The data underscores a growing confidence that is likely to stimulate further activity in the market."

While interest rates are now expected to remain higher for longer than expected at the start of 2024, extending the time anticipated for a full recovery of the property market, positive signals in the period under review suggest consumers are already gearing up for better times.

Nedbank continues the green revolution with the launch of Indalo Fund

NEDBANK has launched the R10-million Indalo Fund at the Indalo Inclusive Symposium at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research.

The Indalo Fund is designed to change the way entrepreneurs are funded, creating a pipeline of viable businesses that will be ready to attract high-ticket investment.

Poovi Pillay, executive head of corporate social responsibility at Nedbank, explains that the Indalo Fund builds on the successful partnership between Indalo Inclusive and Nedbank, which has seen the creation of 215 enterprises with an average income of R5 933 283 each.

Many of these enterprises are now at the stage where they can become eligible to attract larger investments from commercial lenders to scale significantly.

"When we launched our commitment to a green economy that works and delivers on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, we were clear that we wanted to make a significant positive impact to help create a new type of economy," says Pillay.

"Building on our experience over the past three years, we have decided to enhance the funding model in the final phase by introducing incentive- and performance-based grants."

Pillay says this has important implications. "For us it means that we can fund more enterprises with the same capital, and for the enterprises it validates their status as investment-worthy businesses."

The current Indalo-preneur programme covers four phases, each at its own grant level. The final phase, Indaloaccel, is reached by enterprises with a business model that already has been proven to be successful. These enterprises are considered ready for investment. The new Indalo Fund will come into play only in the Indaloaccel phase.

In terms of the new funding principles, enterprises receive 50% of the R250 000 Indaloaccel grant at the outset if they commit to creating a minimum of five full-time jobs at the minimum wage. They will also have to reach a number of targets relating to their environmental, social and economic impact.

Those enterprises that exceed their targets by 100% within 12 months are rewarded with the payment of the remaining 50% of the grant. Those that achieve only 50% above the job-creation target will receive only half of the remaining 50%.

"In other words, we are linking the final R250 000 to the ability of the enterprise to reach and exceed agreed-upon targets. This is an important new approach, because it prepares them to grow out of grant dependence and make them compete for funding from investors who want returns instead," says Pillay.

"It also means that part of the capital committed by Nedbank is recycled, enabling us to help more entrepreneurs. Our calculation is that by making part of the Indaloaccel grant potentially recoverable, we would be able to reach an extra 8 enterprises."

The first phase of the Indalo Fund will run for 18 months, during which its entire capital of R10-million will be disbursed, although some of this money will be recoverable as described above. At this point it will need recapitalising and will then run for a further 36 months.

Nedbank and Indalo Inclusive will conduct a comprehensive impact assessment at the end of this 5-year period.

WEG Africa pioneers local manufacture of medium voltage Softstarters In South Africa



In a first for South Africa, medium voltage softstarters are now being manufactured locally by WEG Africa.

WEG Africa has become the first OEM to produce medium voltage (MV) softstarters in South Africa, reducing lead times for customers and supporting the drive for local manufacture.

The WEG SSW7000 units are produced at WEG Africa's Robertsham facility south of Johannesburg to the high quality standards for which the company is well known. According to Pervin Gurie, director of the digital & systems division at WEG Africa, the popular SSW7000 range is well-regarded by the market. These softstarters, which are extensively used in pump and fan applications in Africa's mining sector, have now also become more cost effective.

"As the demand for our MV softstarters has grown in recent years, we recognised that customers could benefit considerably from having these products manufactured locally," says Gurie.

"The immediate benefit is that we can almost halve the lead time from 20 to 24 weeks to 10 weeks, by removing the need for long distance shipping from WEG's Brazil facilities."

He notes that the strategic value of softstarters has come to

the fore as users look for ways to address the rising cost of electricity, as well as to protect their electric motors and extend their operational lifecycle. Softstarters allow a gentle ramp up of power as electric motors are started, reducing the peak energy demand during startup.

Motors starting with a conventional direct-on-line (DOL) starting will draw up to 700% more than its rated current, while a softstarter can reduce this to just 300%.

"Our Robertsham design and production facility already manufactures a range of Variable Speed Drive Panels and Motor Control Centres, among other solutions," he explains.

"Our customers are always impressed by our infrastructure and expertise here, and we look forward to welcoming more of them when they visit to inspect the new MV softstarter manufacturing area."

The local manufacturing capability will include the continued customisation of MV softstarters, where units are designed to meet specific requirements in customers' applications.

Gurie highlights that solutions can also be packaged in a containerised substation,

as was the case with a recent order for a mining customer in Angola.

"The order of 11 units that we built last year was delivered in three containerised substations, and could be easily transported and installed on site for quick commissioning," he says.

"We have also found that customers in Africa have particular needs, such as extra space in their panels to accommodate thicker cables with less flexibility."

He sees ongoing potential for the WEG SSW7000 range, which includes a monitoring feature that tracks whether the electric motor is overheating or drawing excessive current. This enables the shutdown of the motor down before damage is caused.

"To produce these MV softstarters locally, we have been able to apply our stringent manufacturing quality systems in place at our Robertsham facility," he says.

"We also use the proven WEG designs from our head office in Brazil, as well as technical input from our engineers there, as and when required. This assures customers that all these units continue to be produced to WEG's world class standards."

What will South Africa's new government be?

By Chris Hattingh,
Centre for Risk Analysis

WITH all the votes counted – and the results announced by the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC) on 2 June, the African National Congress has obtained below 50% for the first time in a national election. This time around, the ANC has obtained 40,18%. In 1994 the party obtained 252 seats in the National Assembly (NA); in 2024, 159. From 2019 to 2024 South Africa's (still) biggest political party suffered a 17-percentage point hit.

The Democratic Alliance (DA) remains the official opposition, with 21,81% (87 seats in the NA). The party performed well in its stronghold, the Western Cape (55%), and grew its vote share in Gauteng (26,63%).

The DA is now involved in post-elections talks with its Multi-Party Charter fellows, as well as (if some reports are to be believed) the ANC. Markets and investors prefer an ANC-DA coalition at national level. In our analysis, a confidence-and-supply arrangement is the best option going forward, for both parties' longevity as well as for the country's growth prospects.

For a possible ANC-DA tie up, there are two broad paths ahead: a more formal coalition agreement between the two, along with a host of other parties included. Secondly, a more flexible, negotiated confidence-and-supply arrangement between the two (possibly with the IFP included as well), has come to the fore.

The more formal first option does soothe markets and investors in the short-term, but is not necessarily stable or sustainable, for either party or the country, over the medium to long-term. This path portends a broader tent, but not necessarily a tent that can hang together well, with effective policy-making and executive actions – numerous competing interest groups will be at play.

On the other side of the list of options, we have the confidence-and-supply option. This allows for parties that might diverge very strongly on some core ideological or policy points but provides stability and overlap in terms of priorities of government business. Should the ANC and DA (possibly with the IFP too) take this route, it is likely that the ANC would retain the executive, while the DA would take control of



parliamentary positions and duties, such as the speakership and positions in parliamentary committees.

As to the 'supply' part of this agreement, it entails that those parties party to the agreement will support crucial items and government business, such as the passing of budgets. Overall, this agreement could be the best of all option to ensure medium-to-longer term government stability, something that markets, investors, and citizens are desperate to see. In this confidence-and-supply agreement, those involved are also able to retain their own identities and ideological and policy values.

In 2004 the ANC obtained 69% - this year, just above the 40% mark. Cyril Ramaphosa now has to oversee and manage the ANC's coalition and agree-

ment negotiations with a host of other political parties. For the DA, it is also a seminal moment in the party's history; an opportunity to greatly expand its influence within the government and policy-making spaces. Should it lose sight of its identity and its voters' concerns values, though, it could become a much less effective force by 2029.

Of the top four largest parties now in South Africa (ANC, DA, MK, EFF) two are more committed to protecting and strengthening the Constitution, rule of law, etc., while the other two would be more comfortable with diluting (or even jettisoning), the Constitution. A confidence-and-supply agreement could provide the ANC and the DA with a path to keeping the country largely on the first path.

Transnet will not bring in private company to run container operations at the Port of Cape Town

Continued from P1

operations private sector management are set to be disappointed.

"Transnet is not actively pursuing a PSP for the Cape Town Container Terminal. However, considerable efforts are underway to enhance the terminal's operational performance through collaboration with customers and industry. This includes initiatives such as procuring and deploying critical equipment within the terminal," the group said in a statement in response to questions from CBN on the matter.

Not easy to outsource

Though Transnet did not elaborate on why it is not considering a PSP partner for the container operations at the Port of Cape Town, it pointed out that bringing in outside partners to run its operations was not an easy task, given the complexity involved.

To manage the PSP selection process it created the Joint Investment and External Partner Selection (JIEPS) framework. This framework includes developing a detailed business case with option anal-

ysis, a financial model, risk analysis, and due diligence to assess the value that the private sector can bring.

A decision is then made on whether a private sector partner is the best option. As a state-owned enterprise Transnet also requires certain Public Finance Management Act approvals from its shareholder and the National Treasury to enter such partnerships.

"The PSP process is complex and challenging, as demonstrated by the over 24-month period it took for Durban Container Terminal

Pier 2 to reach financial close. The focus for the current financial year is to finalise these PSPs and move them to the execution stage."

And even if everything goes to plan, there can still be delays in implementation.

This can be seen in a legal challenge by rival bidder A.P. Moller - Maersk A/S on the awarding of the Durban container terminal contract to ICTSI.

Transnet said the legal dispute has delayed the implementation of Durban container terminal contract with ICTSI.



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KSB’s latest range of inline pumps ideal for space-saving applications



Space saving EtaLine pumps are ideal for industrial application in confined spaces

PUMP manufacturer KSB Pumps and Valves has introduced its latest EtaLine range of inline pumps including the advanced EtaLine Pro for diverse applications such as HVAC, industrial recirculation and heating systems.

The single stage volute casing pump requires a smaller footprint while maintaining high outputs as required in tight industrial applications where space is at a premium. The standard range of dry installed EtaLine pumps range in outputs from 1 400l/min to 3000l/min, making the pumps suitable for a wide variety of applications in tight quarters where performance and reliability are key.

The pumps are engineered to excel in air conditioning, heating systems, water supply, heat recovery, industrial recirculation and cleaning circuits. Key features include space-saving inline design allowing for vertical or horizontal installation, ideal for environments with limited space such as roofs or attics. Unlike traditional

long-coupled pumps, the EtaLine range eliminates unnecessary space requirements while maintaining exceptional performance.

Despite their compact design, the EtaLine pumps boast impressive efficiency, delivering reliable performance without the need for balancing valves. This efficiency is further enhanced by the integration of a Variable Speed Drive (VSD) in the EtaLine Pro model, produced in Germany, providing users with unmatched control and energy savings.

“Our EtaLine pumps represent the pinnacle of fluid management technology,” says KSB Pumps and Valves market area manager, Dylan Mitchell. “With the innovative design and advanced features, our pumps offer unparalleled performance, flexibility and efficiency for applications in industrial pumping solutions.”

In addition to the advanced design of our standard EtaLine pumps, the EtaLine Pro pump incorporates advanced intelligence

features, including a VSD with remote capabilities and our user-friendly flow manager App. These features enable users to have greater control over their pumping systems, simplifying operation and maintenance processes from remote locations if required.

Intelligent settings available allow the pumps to adapt to the conditions for optimal performance regardless of demand and flow rates and allow vastly enhanced efficiency as a result. These pumps are designed for efficiency and longevity from the bottom up and contribute to sustainable manufacturing practices by reducing material usage and weight, aligning with global efforts to minimise environmental impacts. Their carbon neutral production process reflects KSB’s commitment to sustainability and corporate responsibility.

With a focus on local manufacturing, KSB aims to expand its market share and solidify its position as an industry leader in fluid management solutions.

BPO sector created 8 000 jobs and injected R2,8-billion into Cape Town’s economy in 2023

By Larry Claasen

THE Business Processing Sector created almost 8 000 jobs and injected R2,8-billion into Cape Town’s economy in 2023, according to the Invest in Cape Town Regional Market Analysis and Intelligence 2023/24 report. The report, which looked at the economic achievements of the city said the BPO sector “has emerged as a catalyst for economic growth, creating thousands of job opportunities and making a significant impact on the local economy.”

It said the BPO sector’s ability to work together with its own stakeholders, as well as local service providers like transportation operators, facilities management, IT infrastructure providers, training and development institutions, and telecommunications companies has created an environment that has attracted foreign investment into the cape.



in the last financial year alone.

Continued growth

These latest figures confirm the upward momentum of the BPO sector’s growth in Cape Town.

“In total the sector accounts for more than 55 000 jobs. This achievement has been made possible through

powerful economic driver. According to CapeBPO for every offshore BPO job based in South Africa, R350 000 in foreign revenue is injected into our economy.

This means with about 100 000 BPO jobs in South Africa - the majority of which are right in the Western Cape - R35-billion goes into our national economy.

CapeBPO is a special purpose vehicle for the City of Cape Town and the Western Cape’s strategic business partner responsible for the growth and development of the BPO sector.

The growth in the BPO sector is showing no signs of slowing down. Luxembourg based BPO operator Foundever set up operations in Cape Town in May and said it planned to employ 3 500 people in the city by 2026.

This follows the announcement by Phil-

ippines-headquartered group Sourcefit saying in March that it was setting up operations in the city.

The report notes that South Africa has been quite adept at catering for a wide range of sophisticated requirements of offshore BPO operators.

“Cape Town’s BPO sector exhibits remarkable diversity, catering to clients from a wide range of industries and source locations, in particular from the UK and the US. From customer support and technical assistance to finance and accounting, the industry provides.”

It points out that the city has positioned itself well to continue attracting international BPO companies.

“Cape Town’s BPO sector embodies the perfect blend of digital advancements and the human touch, making it a destination of choice for businesses seeking exceptional offshore solutions.”

BPO operator Foundever set up operations in Cape Town in May and said it planned to employ 3 500 people in the city by 2026

“The industry’s collaborative supply chain, sector diversity, and commitment to providing exceptional services have positioned Cape Town as a premier destination for outsourcing and offshoring needs.”

This type of collaboration has seen it create 7 978 new jobs and inject R2,79-billion into the city’s economy

strong partnerships with funders from the City of Cape Town, provincial government, and national government, most especially to accelerate the development of the right skills programmes,” said the report.

The BPO sector has grown rapidly in the country and especially in the Western Cape, seeing it become a

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Heritage Capital invests in Fairview Cheese company



HERITAGE Capital, a pioneering 100% black female-owned private equity fund manager, has announced its latest investment in the specialised dairy sector with Fairview Cheese. This strategic move marks the culmination of Heritage Capital's maiden fund investment endeavours.

Since its inception in October 2017, Heritage Capital Fund I has been leveraging capital from investors such as the Transport Sector Retirement Fund (TSRF). The infusion of additional institutional investors in May 2021 empowered the fund to broaden its investment horizon, focusing on sectors crucial for South Africa's economic transformation, including industrial, services, and consumer branded goods.

Grace Chauke, the investment officer at TSRF congratulated Heritage Capital on the successful closure of Fund 1. She says, "It is not only a testament to the expertise and dedication of the female-led team but also a significant milestone in promoting diversity and inclusion within the investment industry. As an investor, TSRF is thrilled to have been part of this journey and

looks forward to seeing the positive impact this fund will make in the market."

Philile Maphumulo, managing partner at Heritage Capital, emphasises the fund's commitment to fostering job creation, skills development, and transformative impact within the South African economy. She says, "Our investment philosophy centres on companies that contribute to local manufacturing and service provision. Fairview Cheese's addition to Heritage Capital's diverse portfolio underscores the fund's strategic vision. With investments ranging from heavy industrial applications to health-care products, Heritage Capital remains at the forefront of fostering economic growth and sustainability."

Fairview Cheese, located in Paarl in the Western Cape, has a repertoire of over 50 cow's and goat's milk cheeses, including white mould, blue mould, feta, and cream cheese. The company recently expanded its offerings to include plant-based cheese and ice cream, catering to evolving consumer preferences. Their product innovation has recently earned

the company the Qualité Mark of Excellence for six of its products, the greatest number of awards to any other participant, at the 2024 South African Dairy Awards.

Echoing Fairview Cheese's ethos, Heritage Capital emphasises the importance of aligning with partners who share their values, fostering synergistic collaborations for sustainable value creation.

Heritage Capital has partnered with Nurture Brands, a long-term investor in the growing functional and convenience food sector. Maphumulo affirms, "Our partnership with Fairview Cheese and Nurture Brands exemplifies our dedication to generating positive returns and long-term impact."

Riël Mallan, partner at EXEO Capital and chairman of Nurture Brands commented: "We are delighted to be co-invested with the dynamic team of Heritage Capital in Fairview Cheese. This will hopefully be the first of many collaborations in the functional and convenience food sector between Heritage Capital, EXEO Capital and Nurture Brands."

Looking ahead, Heritage Capital is poised to raise Fund II, with a vision to expand its assets under management to over R1-billion. With a proven track record of capital growth and investor distributions, Heritage Capital remains committed to driving inclusive economic growth and fostering transformative change.

"The South African specialty cheese sector is primed for above-average growth, aligning with global trends in cheese consumption," remarks Maphumulo. "Factors such as increased home-based food consumption, remote work dynamics, and innovative product offerings by producers like Fairview Cheese are anticipated to propel this growth trajectory."

2 000 Olive trees planted at Mardouw estate in Swellendam – a tree for every Verder Group employee



Left to right: Gerbrand Nijman (Mardouw executive chairman), Schalk van Eeden (Langeberg Municipality executive mayor) and Richard Hattersley (Verder Scientific SA MD) at Mardouw Olive Estate.

GLOBAL technology leader, Verder Group, is marking its commitment to environmental and social responsibility and has chosen the multi-award winning Mardouw Olive Estate to plant, for each of its employees around the world, a massive 2 000 olive trees at the estate.

A ceremony to mark the occasion held recently at the Mardouw Olive Estate in Swellendam was attended by Langeberg Municipality executive mayor, Schalk van Eeden, Richard Hattersley, MD of Verder Scientific SA, Nina Verder representing the Verder family, and Mardouw executive chairman, Gerbrand Nijman.

In describing how this gesture helps to enable progress, Richard Hattersley said: "This signifies our commitment to sustainability and our belief in the power of collective action for the greater good. In partnership with Mardouw Olive Estate, one of South Africa's premier producers of quality extra virgin olive oil, this project symbolises our

dedication to reducing our ecological footprint. We have planted more than 2000 trees at Mardouw because we are always expanding, and we will soon have over 2000 employees."

Mardouw's Gerbrand Nijman says the trees will contribute to a better environment: "We will take pride in taking good care of these trees – which will of course contribute to making more of our award-winning extra virgin olive oil. As South Africa's most decorated olive oil brand, our high standards of quality have been

– like Verder Group's – recognised around the world as evidenced by our platinum and gold awards not only in South Africa but also in Europe, USA, and South America. It will be our honour to nurture these trees."

SA Olive Industry Association CEO, Wendy Petersen, is delighted by the news and says: "The planting of new olive trees is a fantastic initiative with numerous long-term benefits for our industry. There is a worldwide demand for excellent olive oils and

table olives, and meeting this demand through increased production can be highly lucrative. Beyond the economic benefits, planting olive trees is crucial for sustainability and environmental stewardship. This initiative has significant social implications, particularly in terms of job creation. The process of planting, cultivating and harvesting olives provides numerous employment opportunities. This is a wonderful turnkey solution offering a comprehensive approach to long-term sustainability."

Choosing abrasive sanding sheets with Grinding Techniques

WHEN it comes to woodworking or any DIY project involving surface preparation, the choice of abrasives are crucial. Among the myriad options available, waterpaper and cabinet paper abrasive sanding sheets stand out for their exceptional versatility and effectiveness.

Indispensable for achieving smooth finishes, removing imperfections, and preparing surfaces for painting or staining, both waterpaper and cabinet paper have their own characteristics, uses, and advantages contributing to their popularity by craftsmen and hobbyists alike.

Although both water - and cabinet paper consist of a flexible material backing coated with either Aluminum oxide or Silicon carbide, abrasive waterpaper has a waterproof backing, allowing for applications with water or

other lubricants suited for wet sanding applications.

Grit sizes range from coarse to fine, with each grit serving a specific purpose. Coarse grits- categorised by the lower numbers, are ideal for removing material quickly or smoothing rough surfaces, while finer grits categorised by higher numbers, excel at refining surfaces and achieving a polished finish.

Whether it's heavy material removal or delicate surface refinement, there's a waterpaper or cabinet paper grit suitable for the task at hand.

The uniform distribution of abrasive particles ensure consistent results with minimal effort on a wide range of materials, including wood, metal, plastic, and composites.

From smoothing rough lumber, removing old finishes, or preparing wood for stain-

ing or painting in the woodworking industry, to smoothing body panels, removing paint and rust, or preparing surfaces for priming and painting in the automotive industry, their versatility is evident in their wide range of applications.

Also used to refine metal surfaces, remove burrs, and achieve smooth finishes on fabricated metal parts, whether it's shaping, deburring, or polishing, both waterpaper and cabinet paper sheets offer precision and efficiency in metalworking applications.

Due to their flexible cloth backing, they are designed to withstand rigorous use, making them ideal for contour sanding, ensuring uniformity and consistency across curved surfaces enabling users to tackle intricate shapes and curved surfaces with ease whilst providing long-lasting performance even in demanding environments.

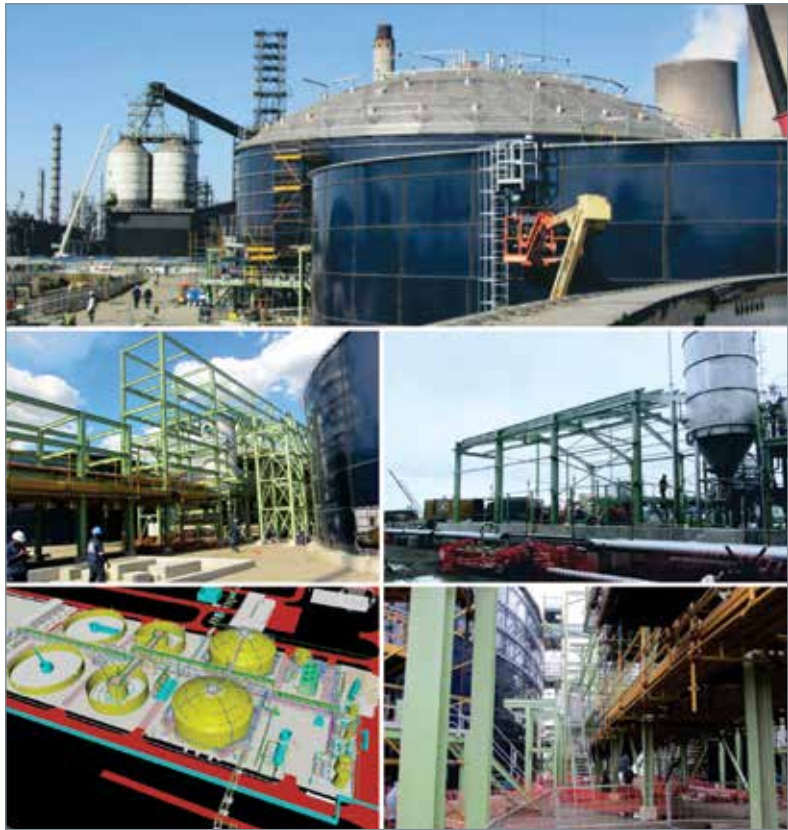
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thyssenkrupp Uhde's end-to-end EPC(M) solutions for efficient and effective project execution



THE ability of the local subsidiary to tap into the specialisation available through its parent company, thyssenkrupp Uhde GmbH in Germany, while applying agility and local expertise to successfully deliver to very specific customer requirements uniquely positions the South African office in the market.

"We work seamlessly with global technology providers and we are competent and familiar with leveraging a global supply chain," states Richard Kirk, head of project management and services at thyssenkrupp Uhde South Africa.

"We apply our learning from diverse project contracting environments to our entire value chain of cutting edge technologies and EPC(M) solutions. This makes our local office efficient and effective."

thyssenkrupp Uhde's engineering services include concept, Front End Engineering & Design (FEED) as well as basic and detailed engineering across all disciplines within a single integrated team. The competent local EPC(M) team of specialist individuals can work within a wide range of both thyssenkrupp Uhde and 3rd party technologies with global collaboration.

Tendering, bid evaluations, purchase orders, contract awards and management, logistics, quality control, technical compliance and expediting are some of

the capabilities that fall within the company's procurement scope. "Procurement/commercial contracts provide a full service in acquiring the technical requirements and delivering these within budget," notes Kirk.

thyssenkrupp Uhde's extensive construction service portfolio comprises construction, contract, work package and customer interface management; quantity surveying; planning; material and cost control; modularisation; health, safety, security and environment (HSSE) compliance and management; quality control; testing and handover; deviation, concession management, etc. Kirk points out that stakeholder management is a vital and yet often overlooked component of successful construction management and here too thyssenkrupp Uhde has the necessary know-how.

The management portion of EPC(M) encompasses the full spectrum of project management, planning, material and cost control, modularisation, and HSSE. "Effective project initiation, monitoring and control, reporting, risk management, change management, and project close-out also form an integral part of our management solutions," says senior piping engineer at thyssenkrupp Uhde, Sundip Lokhande.

thyssenkrupp Uhde's EPC(M) capabilities

can essentially enhance any project irrespective of the nature or technology involved. The organisation's ability to offer the complete EPC(M) portfolio offers several advantages that, according to Kirk and Lokhande, deliver cost-effectiveness and efficiencies to customers.

Kirk explains, "By keeping the same team throughout the project means that there is no need to change the team between engineering and construction. Subsequently the same team is able to develop along with the project, avoiding the time and costs involved in having to develop a new team. From an efficiencies point of view, there is for example, no need to 'on-board' a procurement lead and team halfway through the project especially if they have been engaged from the project get-go. This helps to avoid restraints and mitigations throughout the project, reducing the overall risks and ensuring timely delivery." Lokhande also highlights the benefits of single point responsibility as well as savings due to fixed costs associated with the agreed schedule.

"Our EPC(M) services add value to all our technology offerings including scanning, green technologies (hydrogen, ammonia, methanol, etc.) as well as to our modularisation and refurbishment capabilities," affirms Kirk.

Going nuts about level measurement in peanut butter batch tanks?

PEANUT butter is a kitchen staple in South Africa has evolved into a highly industrialised product in today's commercial market. As manufacturers strive to meet growing demands while maintaining quality and consistency, the need for precise level measurement in batch filler vessels has grown drastically.

The production of commercial peanut butter involves a blend of factors, from roasting peanuts for the flavour to incorporating additives like sugar, salt, and oils for taste and shelf life. These variations in ingredients and processing methods create complexities that demand great attention to detail, especially during the filling and packaging stages.

In response to these challenges, the use of advanced instrumentation for level measurement has emerged as a critical aspect of peanut butter production. With production challenges like the changing product density and viscosity, condensation in the vessels and the presence of agitators, the task of ensuring optimal filling levels becomes both essential and intricate.

VEGA offers a tailored approach to address the specific needs of peanut butter and

similar products. The VEGAPULS 42 radar sensor stands out as a compact yet powerful tool for continuous level measurement in vessels of varying sizes. Designed to operate reliably in challenging environments, the VEGAPULS 42 utilises 80 GHz radar technology, providing accurate readings even in vessels with limited space. Its non-contact operation minimises the risk of contamination and ensures maintenance-free performance, crucial for food processing applications.

One of the key advantages of the VEGAPULS 42 is its versatility in handling changing product densities and temperatures. Whether dealing with peanut butter, chocolate spread, or other viscous substances, this sensor delivers consistent results, contributing to efficient production processes. The integration of IO-Link functionality enables seamless connectivity with existing control systems, facilitating smooth operation and monitoring. This capability enhances overall efficiency and enables real-time adjustments to optimise filling levels and minimise waste.

In addition to addressing technical challenges, the VEG-



APULS 42 offers practical benefits for manufacturers, such as easy installation and setup. Its compact design allows for flexible placement within production facilities, ensuring compatibility with various equipment configurations.

The accurate measurement of peanut butter levels in filler vessels is crucial for maintaining product quality, maximising efficiency, and minimising downtime. With innovative solutions like the VEGAPULS 42, manufacturers can meet these demands with confidence, ensuring consistent results and customer

satisfaction in every jar.

With a legacy of innovation spanning decades, VEGA stands as a global leader in providing cutting-edge measurement technology. Through dedication to precision and reliability, VEGA has redefined the landscape of industries worldwide. VEGA's customised solutions have empowered businesses to optimise processes, enhance efficiency, and ensure the highest quality standards. Driven by a commitment to excellence, sensors and instruments continue to set new benchmarks for accuracy, durability, and performance.

RMB/BER Business Confidence Index edged up ahead of national election

THE second quarter fieldwork for the RMB/BER Business Confidence Index (BCI) was conducted among 2 500 businesses and took place from 9 to 27 May 2024, a period preceding the 29th of May national and provincial elections that were widely expected to produce a national coalition government. The second quarter BCI survey results, therefore, predates the outcome of the elections.

The RMB/BER BCI rose by five points to 35% in the second quarter of 2024. This means that roughly just over a third of the survey respondents were satisfied with prevailing business conditions. There are two salient features of this survey, which could have played a role in the results. First, the uncertainty around the election was top of mind for many respondents, with comments alluding to a

'wait-and-see' approach, likely holding back domestic demand.

Second, there has been no load shedding for over a month prior to the survey and throughout the survey period, which could have had a more positive impact on survey respondents. However, we must wait and see the implications on policy and the business operating environment of coalition government arrangements, as well as the sustainability of the improvement in the energy availability factor (EAF) observed over the past two months before we can draw any link to the BCI in future.

The five-point increase in the RMB/BER BCI to 35 points followed two consecutive declines and brought confidence back closer to the 36-point level seen in the first quarter of 2023. Confidence rose in four of the five sub-sectors except

for new vehicle dealers.

It is noteworthy that current confidence among wholesalers and building contractors is above its long-term average level, while confidence among retailers is at its long-term average level. Wholesale traders were the most optimistic, with 53% of respondents satisfied with prevailing business conditions.

Confidence in the closely linked retail sector was slightly worse than that of wholesalers but still increased by five points to its long-term average level of 39%. On balance, sales volumes were better.

This was largely driven by durable goods, with hardware retailers a notable outperformer. In contrast, sales volumes for non-durables declined as selling prices rose. Sales volumes for semi-durable goods sales also declined in line with non-durables, however,

this is despite declining selling prices.

Business confidence among building contractors picked up and rose above its long-term average of 44% to reach 47%, going against expectations for a continued slowdown in the building sector which could have weighed on confidence.

The uptick was supported by fairly solid activity in KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape, and shows that the sector remains resilient.

On the other hand, confidence among new vehicle dealers, who are arguably most sensitive to the prevailing high borrowing costs and subdued consumer demand, declined by 6 points to 10%.

This means that just one out of ten respondents were satisfied with prevailing business conditions, well below the long-term average of 43%.

Kinetiko Energy's Amersfoort Development to start producing gas in 2025

By Larry Claasen

KINETIKO Energy expects to start micro-scale liquefied natural gas (LNG) production at its Amersfoort Development as early as the end of next year.

The Australian based energy group's Amersfoort Development, which stretches across Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal says though its production will be small scale, it will still be on a commercial basis.

Kinetiko Energy CEO Nick de Blocq says the plan is to start with "just a handful of wells producing a single, modular cryobox which freezes the gas into LNG in the field. Each of these 'boxes' requires about ten wells worth of flow and puts out about 5 000 tons per annum of LNG."

He adds: "As we progress the field we will add more of these mobile cryoboxes until such time as we are able to flow to a fixed plant with around 60 000 tpa output."

News that Kinetiko Energy is looking to produce gas locally came shortly after the publishing of the Gas Master Plan by the Department of Mineral Resources and

Energy. The plan notes that Sasol's gas fields in Mozambique, which has been one of the main suppliers of gas to the country for the past 20 years, are coming to their end and will result in substantial shortages from 2026.

No quick fix

De Blocq says despite various moves to produce LNG locally, the country will have to depend on imports.

"Kinetiko Energy, are well positioned geographically to take up the challenge, but the timing is substantially offset to become a seamless shoe-in to take over what Sasol leaves behind. Our calculations show that even with all of the known onshore upstream gas companies collaborating towards a common goal of cleaner energy provision for SA Inc, we cannot avoid having to import LNG one way or another."

Though Kinetiko Energy is taking a methodical approach to scaling up production, de Blocq says, given the quality of its gas, it is one of the top onshore gas prospects on the planet.

How much gas there is, however, still remains an open ques-

tion.

"In terms of flow and volumes of production over time, we can only really talk in terms of well-cluster output. Until we have performed some planned appraisal work, starting later this year, we can only make assumptions in our models."

Even so, the signs are promising.

"As a high-altitude view, with rounded numbers, we believe that fields of about 100 wells or so should provide about 50MWe (mega-watt equivalent) output, which relates to around 60 000 tons per annum of LNG (liquefied natural gas). That is about 3,5-billion cubic feet per year per well cluster, and we can conceive of multiple of these."

De Blocq adds: "Of huge importance is to understand the recent resource certification provided by Sproule out of the US. They have certified Kinetiko's 2C (mid-range, contingent) gas resource at 6 tcf (trillion cubic feet) with another 5,8 tcf in prospective terms. Compare this to Moss gas who flowed profitably for 20 years and used only 1 tcf. A discovery of 6 tcf of gas equates to a billion barrel oil-field."

Machine Tools Africa puts on a world-class show with exceptional technology advancements on display

THOUSANDS of visitors from across the country attended Machine Tools Africa eager to see the latest machinery, products, services and technologies that South Africa has to offer. The show last took place seven years ago and there have been huge advancements made since that time.

Visitors were able to engage with eighty industry-leading exhibitors and their technical teams to learn about the latest global industry trends and technological developments in the machine tools market. The show took place at the Johannesburg Expo Centre from 21-24 May.

Machine tools are the backbone of the manufacturing industry providing essential equipment for the fabrication processes of all major manufacturing sectors, including automotive, aerospace, electronics, and energy.

Machine Tools Africa is extremely important to this sector, the success and growth of which can contribute to the local economy and to creating jobs. It's crucial for the machine tools industry to be able to bring these latest machines into the country and showcase what they can do.

"The number of machines on the show was mind-blowing," says Charlene Hefer, portfolio director at specialised exhibitions,



a division of Montgomery Group.

"One of our exhibitors had 24 machines on their stand with 20 technical advisors and the machines were running the entire time throughout the show. Some of the machines on display at the show run into millions of rands. By its very nature it is a focused show."

"We welcomed 6 500 visitors to the show over the four days, which was a 10% increase in visitors compared to the previous show. The quality of visitors has been really good. Many travelled from Cape Town and Kwa-Zulu-Natal, in addition to those from Gauteng, and from other provinces. The feedback we have had from visitors and exhibitors has been very positive."

World-class show

Gary Corin, MD at Specialised Exhibitions,

says it's incredible to see the technology that is available and the amazing machinery, products and services that are relevant and important to the industry.

"It's been a world-class show in every sense of the word," he says.

"It's been a jam-packed week. The quality of the machinery, products and services on the show floor and the live demonstrations have been superb. A number of exhibitors have had sales on machines, and many are following up sales leads as well."

Corin went on to say that the capital investment required in purchasing these machines is high and the decision making process involved with the acquisitions is complex, ensuring that the specific technology, equipment, or machinery, is compatible with the customers current

manufacturing process.

Machine Tools Africa presents a perfect environment as it facilitates all these necessary conversations, not only with sales and marketing experts but with technical experts who can assist and facilitate them.

Focusing on education and training

A focus on education and training was also evident at the show.

"We partnered with some academic and career-based institutions who are looking at attracting talent to the engineering, manufacturing and industrial sectors in South Africa," explains Hefer.

"It's been very exciting having the WorldSkills competition running at Machine Tools Africa. It's a first for the show and demonstrated the incredible talent and skills of young professionals in the industry."

Astron Energy signs 10-year partnership extension agreement with leading forecourt retail brands, FreshStop

ASTRON Energy has signed a 10-year partnership extension agreement with one of South Africa's leading forecourt retail brands, FreshStop.

The deal sees Astron Energy, which operates a retail network of over 800 service stations in South Africa, continuing its 15-year journey with FreshStop, part of the Food Lover's Market group of companies.

Astron Energy operates a network of Astron Energy and Caltex service stations. Currently, over 330 service stations feature a FreshStop, which house a number of on-the-go food offerings, as well as internationally renowned coffee brand Seattle Coffee Company at selected sites.

Astron Energy CEO Thabiet Booley said:

"Our strategic alliance with FreshStop goes back to 2009 and we are pleased to extend this partnership for a further 10 years."

"This signifies the trust and value we place in the FreshStop offering and also speaks to Astron Energy's long-term commitment to investing in our network and the future of the country."

"In Astron Energy and FreshStop we have two proudly South African brands looking to deliver exceptional service and rewarding experiences for consumers," he added.

Brian Coppin, CEO of the Food Lover's Market Group, said, "Over the last 15 years, with an investment of over R830-million, the Freshstop brand has become synonymous with innovative



24-hour convenience. This continued winning partnership with Astron Energy will ensure that we can continue to grow our ever-expanding footprint, offering over 200 000 daily South African customers incredible value, variety and a world-class forecourt

experience."

FreshStop CEO Joe Boyle added, "We are delighted with the extended agreement. The partnership has seen the creation of 7 000 new jobs, and we've successfully established the Crispy Chicken, Sausage Saloon, Grill to Go and

Seattle Coffee as popular food and beverage brands within our stores."

Across its 330 stores, FreshStop boasts Seattle Coffee Company outlets at 126 stores, Crispy Chicken at 154, Grill-to-Go at 102, Fill A Kota at 42, Sausage Saloon at 22, and Man-

hattan Coffee at 23 stores.

FreshStop is one of South Africa's leading forecourt retail brands, bringing 24-hour shopping convenience to forecourts.

Astron Energy, which operates the Caltex network under license from Chevron, launched its new brand in late 2021 and rebranded the first of its over 800 sites in August 2022.

Astron Energy GM Retail and Marketing, Farouk Farista, said: "FreshStop is one of the stand-out features on the South African fuel retail landscape and we are committed to growing this partnership even further. This includes potentially refreshing or reimagining the look and feel of FreshStop at Astron Energy's sites."

According to Farista, sites featuring a FreshStop have seen significant returns in terms of revenue and traffic as a result of the prime convenience store offering.

Added Boyle: "Our figures show that when a fuel forecourt store converts to the FreshStop brand, the franchisees experience growth in fuel volume, and the FreshStop brands experienced 60% on average per year compound growth in sales in the first ten years."

The 10-year extension agreement between Astron Energy and FreshStop is no longer exclusive and Farista said the fuel company was constantly looking at evolving trends and opportunities in the fuel retail space.

Optimised spray technology maximises sulfuric acid production – every droplet size matters

By Diane Silcock

SULFURIC acid is an important commodity chemical with companies producing vast quantities daily. Maximising efficiency in the production process is therefore essential to meet demands. This is where Monitor Engineering comes to the fore providing high quality spray technology that improves operating efficiency.

“Achieving the proper sulfur droplet size and the correct temperature are both key factors to maximising production and furnace efficiency,” says Monitoring Engineering MD Grant Orsmond. “As experts in spraying technology representing Spray Systems Co, a number of problems can be avoided with the correct selection of the sulfur burning gun and spray nozzle.”

He says if droplets are too big, or the droplet size distribution is too large, or the sulfur isn't in the ideal temperature range, vaporisation and combustion can be compromised, build-up on the waste heat boiler tube sheet face and damage to the furnace refractory and/or downstream equipment can occur, and guns can plug, thereby dramatically increasing maintenance time.

“Our advanced spray technology which includes a wide range of hydraulic and air atomising guns for spraying both molten sulfur and spent acid,” continues Orsmond, “enables us to improve our customers' operating efficiency. Through decades of research and testing, Spraying Systems Co has compiled a vast library of unmatched droplet size data. Our computational modelling services can validate sulfur gun performance and placement to solve problems



like carryover and wall wetting – prior to purchase.”

Solutions for sulfur combustion furnaces

Monitor Engineering's BA WhirlJet sulfur guns are precision-engineered to produce the exact droplet size and droplet size distribution required for complete vaporisation and efficient combustion.

The new CBA sulfur nozzles offer the same performance as the BA WhirlJet sulfur gun but with dramatically reduced plugging. Plugging occurs when the temperature of the sulfur falls outside the optimal range. This commonly happens when the sulfur flow is decreased or turned off. “Producers try to compensate for this by purging or removing guns quickly at the end of the production run. However, this creates safety issues and isn't always possible. The design of the new CBA WhirlJet nozzle eliminates both problems,” says Orsmond.

The CBA gun features a unique design that keeps the temperature of the sulfur consistent as it passes through the gun, even when flow rates change. Unlike conventional sulfur guns that protrude slightly from the steam jacket, the CBA sulfur gun is recessed into the steam jacket. This ensures temperature uniformity and eliminates or dramatically reduces the chance

the sulfur will solidify and plug the gun. The recessed design of the gun also helps increase wear life. The nozzle is threaded on the front of the gun and offers easy access when maintenance is required.

Solutions for spent acid plants

Two-fluid guns are widely used in spent acid plants because the atomisation process produces smaller droplets than hydraulic guns and provides better decomposition with reduced risk of carryover.

“FloMax sulfur guns use a unique three-stage atomising process to produce a focused air stream that shears the liquid with minimal air. The result is a D32 droplet size 34% smaller using 20% less air than other two-fluid guns. The smaller, uniform droplets decompose at the same time and maximise process efficiency. The atomising air flow provides a secondary benefit of purging the guns of potential build-up and ensuring uninterrupted operation. The high turndown ratio of the FloMax sulfur guns of 10:1 enables the air pressure to remain constant while the liquid flow rate varies and extends operating flexibility,” says Orsmond.

For expert advice in spray technology contact grant@monitorspray.co.za or visit www.spray.co.za

Steinmüller Africa: leader in heat exchange technology for the oil and gas industry

FOR over 60 years, Steinmüller Africa has been a leading steam and high-pressure piping expert. The company leverages its extensive experience and in-house design and engineering to provide customised industrial shell and tube heat exchangers for sub-Saharan Africa's oil and gas industry. The industry uses industrial heat exchangers for pre-heating, heating, steam generation, crude oil cooling, oil refining, and heat transfer.

Steinmüller Africa offers a comprehensive range of thermal, heat, sizing, and mass transfer services tailored to the industry. Its expertise includes pressure drop analysis and vibration design, ensuring that its heat exchanger solutions meet the stringent demands of oil and gas operations.

Industrial heat exchangers play an important role in improving the operational efficiency and safety of oil and gas processing plants. Their primary function is to transfer heat from one medium to another without the fluids coming into contact with each other.

This is necessary to maintain optimal thermal conditions, improve energy efficiency, minimise operational costs, and decrease environmental impact by facilitating efficient heat transfer.

Steinmüller Africa designs and fabricates turnkey industrial shell and tube heaters at its state-of-the-art facilities in Pretoria West and Sasolburg. It designs, manufactures, and installs industrial heat exchangers that meet the Heat Exchange Institute (HEI) and the Tubular Exchanger Manufacturers Association (TEMA) stringent design codes, as well as various health and safety standards.



The company's industrial heat exchangers are optimised to provide the smallest environmental footprint as well as the lowest mass for the given heat transfer duty.

This is achieved through its in-house developed solutions for material selection and heat and mass transfer coefficients. Phased Array Ultrasonic Testing (PAUT) and Radiographic Testing (RT) are used to detect flaws and examine the internal structure of the equipment accurately, ensuring its integrity before it is installed.

A unique aspect of Steinmüller Africa's production capability is its licence to conduct explosive welding for industrial heat exchangers. Using explosive welding for the tube to the tube sheet joint and explosive expansion for the tube to the tube sheet

joint, this allows for an extremely neat, clean, and safe weld, eliminating the risk of a tube bursting during operations and harming personnel and equipment.

The same method is applied to the headers on the header-type heaters, speeding up the joining of these components and reducing the manufacturing period.

Steinmüller Africa uses a 3D parametric model that allows engineers and designers to create and edit 3D equipment models before they are built. It also allows them to explore multiple design variations, enabling streamlining of the iteration process up to ten times faster. This allows engineers to optimise the manufacturing sequence, highlighting areas of concern for welders and boilermakers.

One of Steinmüller Africa's advancements is procuring new tube and pipe bending machines that allow both sides of a tube to be bent at once. The company also uses the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University's eNtsa laboratory, enabling them to use friction welding for heat exchanger nipples to the headers. This method, like explosive welding, offers a clean, fast, and safe weld with no defects and has the potential to replace the current arc welding method found in the industry.

Steinmüller Africa is the only Pressure Equipment Directive (PED) certified manufacturer of heavy, large, and high-pressure equipment in South Africa thereby enabling it to export its high-quality products to the European Union.

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bpSA celebrates 100 years in South Africa

bp SOUTHERN Africa (bpSA) notches up one hundred years of fueling South Africa, on 9 May 2024, and will use the milestone to refresh and re-energise for the next century and beyond.

A programme of centenary events is planned over the coming months to thank employees, partners, dealers and stakeholders and inspire them with the global group's purpose of "reimagining energy" on the path to Net Zero.

Select communities will also get to share in the festivities when the energy company settles students' outstanding university fees, details of which will be announced soon. Customers will also walk away with various goodies at bp filling stations as an appreciation for their patronage.

To signal its commitment to a long-term future in South Africa, bpSA has designed a special 100-year identifier, in which the double zero has been converted to the well-known "lazy eight" sign for infinity.

"From our forecourt to our partners in retailing, storage and distribution, we are dedicated to remaining a forward-looking,



responsible and effective steward of South Africa's energy supply networks for as long as the country needs us," CEO Taelo Mojapelo says.

Over the past 100 years, bpSA has evolved from the Atlantic Refining Company of Africa, incorporated in 1924, to the well-known brand seen today on all South Africa's major highways and urban areas. Its varied history has included refining fuel and coal mining (both of which it has now exited), as well as groundbreaking black economic empowerment deals. It has willingly taken on its

responsibility to help with education, skills, enterprise development and transformation of the local energy sector.

Among some of the highlights of the past 100 years are that bpSA was the first local oil group to beat the government's deadline for a lead abatement strategy for fuels; one of the first in its sector to implement a BEE deal by forming a JV company managed and controlled by historically disadvantaged South Africans (Masana Petroleum Solutions); and the first international oil company in South Africa to appoint a

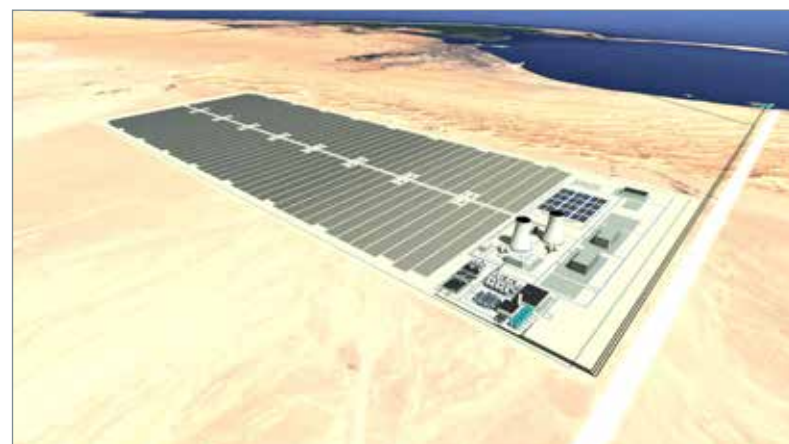
female CEO.

To guide the next stage of bpSA's journey, its leadership has drawn up a strategic roadmap for the long term.

Its goals are, firstly, to expand and high-grade the portfolio of over 500 service stations, while growing the number of forecourts owned by black entrepreneurs or run by black franchisees. Secondly, it intends to redefine convenience retailing by upgrading and expanding its forecourt offerings. Thirdly, it is working on optimising its supply model, by implementing a robust, integrated product and supply chain that will drive topline growth.

bpSA's strategy fits into the global group's broader focus on reimagining energy, as bp pivots from being an international oil company that produces resources to an integrated energy company that delivers solutions for customers. By focusing on resilient hydrocarbons; convenience and mobility; and low carbon energy, bp is ensuring that it remains relevant to future generations by adapting to an evolving market and the needs of people and the planet.

Obrist Group Plans Gigaplants for methanol production as a climate-positive global energy source



THE German-Austrian industrial group Obrist Group is planning to build so-called gigaplants, a type of giant solar park that will not supply electricity, but green methanol. During production, more climate-damaging CO₂ is removed from the atmosphere than is released during subsequent use, claims company CEO Frank Obrist. As a result, the gigaplants are said to be CO₂-negative and therefore climate-positive.

"Net zero is not enough, we are going for net negative," says the inventor, entrepreneur and visionary: "In order to leave an intact climate for future generations, we need to recapture the carbon dioxide emitted through the extensive use of fossil fuels, i.e. remove it from the atmosphere."

The Obrist Group recently entered into a global alliance with EWU Tech, DSE Green Technology Holdings with over 25 European technology partners and Global Enterprises to build gigaplants using the patented Obrist process. Projects worth billions are planned in Namibia, Egypt, Thailand and the US.

Obrist holds 190 patents that should make this possible. The United Nations supports the concept. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) recently named the Obrist concept "The Most Promising Solution Award Winner in Energy Efficiency Category".

Four million tons of methanol per gigaplant per year

The specifications of the planned gigaplants are

impressive. Almost four million tons of methanol are to be produced per year on an area of around 280 square kilometers.

At today's energy prices, this corresponds to a sales volume of around \$4.3-billion per year. The annual operating costs are estimated at around \$340-million leaving a gross profit of almost four billion dollars a year.

The construction costs for a gigaplant, calculated at \$18.6-billion, would therefore be recouped in less than five years, which corresponds to an annual return on capital costs of over 21%.

However, the high profitability is only possible if the plant is operated in the Earth's sun belt, where solar power is available at a cost of just 0.88 cents per kilowatt hour due to the intensity of the sun.

These so-called electricity generation costs for the conversion of another form of energy into electricity are between 3 and over 5 cents for conventional solar parks, between just

under 4 (onshore) and around 12 cents (offshore) for wind power plants, between 7 and 17 cents for biomass, between just under 8 and 13 cents for natural gas, between ten and 20 cents for hard coal and lignite and between 3.5 and 8 cents per kilowatt hour for nuclear power plants.

The Obrist concept therefore generates electricity at more than three times the cost of the cheapest alternative method.

Low costs thanks to production in the desert

However, as electricity is difficult to store on a large scale and even more difficult to transport, it is "only" used for electrolysis in the gigaplant to produce hydrogen from water in the first step and methanol from this in the second step. Methanol is liquid at normal temperature and can be transported via all the transportation routes that already exist today for fossil fuels (pipelines, tankers, tanker trucks, etc.).

Vestas to test Sustainable Aviation Fuel

VESTAS will pilot Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) at the Baltic Eagle Wind Farm in the Baltic Sea during 2024.

The Obrist Group recently entered into a global alliance with EWU Tech, DSE Green Technology Holdings with over 25 European technology partners and Global Enterprises to build gigaplants using the patented Obrist process. Projects worth billions are planned in Namibia, Egypt, Thailand and the US.

The pilot project entails Vestas technicians and jack-up vessel crew using helicopters partly powered by SAF to transport themselves to and from the Baltic Eagle wind farm during the construction phase of 50 offshore wind turbines.

SAF is a fuel produced from bio-waste materials such as used cooking oil or tallow. Because SAF can help reduce lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions associated with

air travel, it is generally considered a more sustainable alternative to conventional jet fuel.

The pilot project is scheduled to take place until September 2024. Helicopter service provider HeliService, will use helicopters from Leonardo S.p.A. flying on approximately 40% SAF provided by DCC & Shell Aviation Denmark A/S. A blend rate of 40% SAF is close to the highest possible blend rate permitted today and it is the first time that SAF-fueled helicopters with such a high blend rate are used for an entire part during the construction phase of an offshore wind farm operation.

CO₂ savings of approximately 32% per flight are expected compared to using a standard helicopter powered by conventional jet fuel. Vestas will assess the impact of the SAF following the end of the pilot project.

The initiative is in line

with Vestas' sustainability strategy which includes becoming carbon neutral in our own operations by 2030 and reducing emissions in our supply chain by 45% per MWh generated. In relative terms, offshore wind projects experience higher CO₂-emissions from construction and service operations than onshore wind projects due to the need of vessels and helicopters, and we need to develop new solutions for offshore wind to become carbon neutral.

Kieran Walsh, Senior vice president and head of construction at Vestas Northern & Central Europe, says: "This is yet another initiative through which Vestas continues to implement its sustainability strategy. There is a significant need for more sustainable solutions during these wind farms' construction and operation phases. The potential for using SAF in offshore operations is high and

we are pleased to further exploit this potential."

Sune Petersen, head of strategy and sustainability at DCC & Shell Aviation Denmark says: "The delivery of SAF to Roskilde Airport, which will serve as a helicopter base during Vestas' pilot project, marks another milestone in our efforts to support the growing demand for alternatives to conventional jet fuel. It also marks an initial step towards introducing SAF into the fuel mix for helicopter services - not only in Denmark but also on a European scale".

Oliver Freiland, CEO HeliService says: "Vestas' decision to use SAF for the crew change flights demonstrates our joint commitment to operate more sustainably in terms of CO₂ reduction. HeliService's Leonardo helicopters powered by engines from aerospace manufacturer Pratt & Whitney are designed to operate with SAF already today."

CAPE Business News

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The specifications of the planned gigaplants are

HXLWCC: A reliable stainless steel meter with remote load-limiting



AS South African utilities grapple with the challenge of recovering revenue from industrial clients, the prevalence of theft has exacerbated both technical and non-technical losses within municipalities.

The Hexing C&I Prepayment Cabinet Solution offers a robust response to these issues, ensuring and protecting revenue. Here are the best features that make

our solution indispensable for municipalities.

Enhanced Anti-Tamper Features

Security is a top concern when it comes to metering, and the HXLWCC series delivers with its anti-tamper feature. The sealable and lockable cabinet doors, combined with open-door detecting sensors, offer a high level of anti-

tamper protection. This ensures that the integrity of the meter readings is maintained and unauthorised access is prevented.

A Compact and Flexible Solution

Beyond its durability, the HXLWCC series offers internal space designed to accommodate a variety of components, including high-accuracy

meters, communication modems, current transformers (CT), and molded case circuit breakers (MCCB). The control wire of the electric operating mechanism connects to the meter, enabling comprehensive management methods for load control.

The prepaid high current solution features Radio Frequency (RF) communication between the meter and Customer Interface Unit (CIU), with optional GPRS/4G uplink to the Head End System for smart capabilities. This system supports currents ranging from 200 to 1 500 amps.

Some of the standout features include:

- High accuracy smart metering
- Remote load limiting
- High quality construction with an IP level rating
- Real-time tamper detection with automatic disconnect and active reporting events
- Overload and short circuit protection
- Lightning and over-voltage protection

Additionally, the HXLWCC solution is versatile, making it suitable for a wide range of applications and installation types. It can be installed in various setups, including wall-mounted, pole-top, and ground-mounted configurations, and it accommodates all standard cable sizes.

Built to Withstand Tarnishing Elements

With its rugged stainless-steel construction offering exceptional resistance to corrosion, dust, rust, water, ultraviolet (UV) exposure, and fire. This makes it ideal for both indoor and outdoor use, enabling it to withstand harsh weather conditions and environmental factors without compromising its integrity.

At the heart of the system is the HXE330 smart meter, which boasts an accuracy class of 0.5s, ensuring high accuracy for C&I metering with currents above 100A.

Whether you're a utility company, an industrial facility, or a residential complex, the HXLWCC series provides a reliable, durable, and flexible metering solution. Its combination of robust construction, compact design, anti-tamper features, and versatile installation options makes it a top choice for LV metering applications.



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All records were broken at our 11th Annual WCPDF Conference



Deon van Zyl
- Chairperson
- Western Cape
Property Development
Forum (WCPDF)

ONCE again, all records were broken at our 11th Annual WCPDF Conference which, under the theme of IGNITING GROWTH AND INNOVATION, took place from Wednesday 8 to Thursday 9 May 2024. Many contributors are to thank for the success.

We had a full house of just under 400 delegates, who attended the vibrant two-day programme, and we thank all who took part – from our audience members to our 27-strong and highly-esteemed speaker and facilitator lineup. As a result of their own Delegates Q&A session facilitated by Conference MC Africa Melane (host of Early Breakfast, 702/CapeTalk) both Premier Alan Winde and Executive Mayor of Cape Town Geordin Hill-Lewis pledged their willing participation at future conferences.

Presentations are now available for all paid delegates which can be accessed via the Delegates Resources page on the website or QR code in the front of the Official Conference Booklet.

The profile of our 2024 conference delegates confirms this event's unique attraction and offering.

We were also overwhelmed by the support from Sponsors, including: AL&A, the Association of South African Quantity Surveyors (ASAQS - Western Cape Chap-

ter), Bruce Wilson Architects, Citra, dhk Architects, EFG Engineers, Garden Cities, Nako Iliso, ooba Home Loans, SVA International and Wesgro.

Our expanded exhibition space this year saw 11 exhibitors taking up 16 stands among them, including ASAQS (Western Cape Chapter), Assa Abloy Global Hospitality Solutions, the Building Industry Bargaining Council, BPAS Architects, Kaackai, Maskam Water, PPC Cement, Transnet Property, TUHF (in collaboration with uMaStandi), Viribus Property Marketing & Sales, and Wesgro who hosted a special "Western Cape Corner" for a variety of municipalities.

We also thank Ampersand Architects, ASAQS (Western Cape Chapter), ask Property, C&A Friedlander Attorneys, Garden Cities, ooba Home Loans and SALT Architects for taking ads in our Official Conference Booklet.

Not least of which, I would like to thank our conference partners, SBS Conferences & Exhibitions, as well as the African Agenda team who help to facilitate the event.

Our 2024 Conference was such a success, we are already planning our 2025 event, which will take place once again at the CTICC in Cape Town, from Wednesday 4 to Thursday 5 June 2025.

We look forward to welcoming back our 2024 participants in 2025. And, if you weren't in the room with us this year, you'll definitely want to be there in 2025.

A sustainable future for ceramic, from the start

THERE's no escaping the fact that manufacturing ceramic products requires resources.

The raw materials, the gas that fires the furnaces, process water, packaging and transport are all factors that impact the environment. For any manufacturer to be sustainable, each of these inputs need to be considered from an ecological point of view – for Ceramic Industries, that's a process that started many years ago.

The locally-based producer has been investing heavily in energy-efficient, world-class technology and homegrown innovation since it's very first tile run in 1976. In the past decade, that investment has ramped up considerably – and it's not stopping.

One recent in-house innovation that has made a major difference to raw material usage, energy consumption and transportation emissions is the EcoTec

tile. Engineers developed a process to make ceramic tiles using 10% less clay, but without a compromise on tile strength. Less energy is needed to fire the tiles, and when they leave the factory, they're lighter to transport, reducing CO₂ emissions.

Energy consumption is something manufacturers must focus on constantly, and Ceramic Industries has tackled it from various directions. Their large factory spaces and warehouses offer plenty of real estate for solar panels, and in just the last year they've added more generation capacity to four of these sites, with more planned for the year ahead.

Even their buildings conform to sustainability goals, designed to make use of natural light wherever possible.

Ceramic Industries employs heat-recovery systems that capture hot air from their kilns for use in the dryers,

reducing their natural gas consumption. To optimise efficiency, an IoT-based platform ('internet of things' – a network of devices that share data with each other) was recently introduced to monitor heat recovery uptime and downtime.

In our water-stressed country, water management is another vital issue. Ceramic Industries has tapped borehole water on their premises but also realise the importance of managing this precious resource.

They track consumption and recycle, operating their own water treatment facilities at factories in Vereeniging and Hammanskraal.

Besides water, Ceramic Industries recycles a host of other materials.

The clay to make their tiles is recovered and reused in manufacture, with some of the newer machinery able to recover nearly 100%



of the material. Wooden pallets in the warehouse are recycled, and all their packaging is made from recycled materials.

Perhaps one final example sums up their attitude to the environment. The source of their operations are the quarries where they obtain their raw materials. Here, the company

makes sure that as the sites are mined, they're concurrently rehabilitated, with the aim of fully restoring them at the end of their lives.

Ceramic Industries is clearly a company that takes its environmental responsibility seriously, with a commitment to minimise their impact – from start to finish.

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Creators of style

STRONG ON SUSTAINABILITY

Ceramic Industries' commitment to environmental responsibility shows up everywhere from factory design to product design. Our EcoTec tiles are a proudly homegrown innovation that's a step forward for sustainability. A process developed in-house allows for a 10% reduction in raw materials, resulting in less energy use in manufacture. And because they're lighter, they use less CO₂ to transport – even so, they're up to 55% stronger than SABS standards.

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Portland Group takes advantage of Western Cape construction boom



Portland Group celebrates 36 years in business

By Diane Silcock

CONSTRUCTION in the Western Cape is soaring with locally-based Portland Group taking full advantage of the boom. Established 36 years ago, the family-run business located in Durbanville, just outside of Cape Town, has three main legs to its business: quarries, readymix concrete, and precast concrete.

Portland is well known for the quality of its aggregate from the natural Malmesbury Hornfels deposits in its 65Ha quarry in Durbanville. This is also home to their offices, a crushing plant, three readymix concrete plants, and the Hollowcore 5600 m² indoor production plant. Over the years, it has expanded its operations to Saldanha Bay, Paarl, Worcester, and recently acquired the Paardeborg granite quarry in Malmesbury.

Portland Group general manager Martin Mostert says there is extensive development taking place in the Western Cape creating a high

demand for concrete and related products. "It's an open market and highly competitive, therefore it's vital we keep up-to-date with what's happening in the market across all areas of our business. We are a hands-on operation and know our clients' needs, working smarter and better to remain competitive."

Their ability to gauge the growth in this sector, knowing when to invest and the expectation around investment, has stood Portland in good stead. This is evident by the expansion of their operations and their growing footprint in the Western Cape. In the past five years, the company established two new quarries, namely Portland Worcester Quarry in Rawsonville and Portland Paardeborg Quarry, just outside Malmesbury. Their biggest readymix plant is situated in Saldanha, but their flagship plant is still based in Durbanville. There are also two established readymix plants located in Malmesbury and Paarl, with demand having picked

up steadily in those areas over the past few years.

Recent capital equipment purchases include Volvo articulated dump trucks from Babcock with a further order having been placed for an excavator. Added to this is Portland's acquisition of new readymix concrete trucks and upgraded staff transport vehicles, from FAW Cape Town.

One of the group's latest projects is supplying aggregate for the upgrade of the long-awaited Viessershok road which is right on its doorstep. This is a three-year project and entails a bypass with two bridges.

"At our new granite Paardeborg quarry," says Mostert, "we have also started mining our own sand and I believe it will be one of the best in Cape Town. Quality of sand influences finishing for instance when it comes to plastering."

At Worcester, Portland is utilising the river stone for crushing which is helping farmers in the area to maintain the river especially during

the rainy season when flooding occurs. A river management plan is in place which is monitored daily plus environmental studies are undertaken.

Precast slabs allow for faster construction

Hollowcore precast slabs are another expertise offered by Portland manufactured at their Durbanville facility where they utilise technology from Elematic in Finland. A project the group is proud of is the V&A Waterfront parking system which was the first demountable parking deck in South Africa. Slabs with a thickness of 200 mm were used at an 8 m span with no structural topping or screed done on top of the slabs due to the deck being demountable.

A new development is the extension of their Hollowcore plant to enable the manufacturing of concrete pre-slabs, the application for which is decking for high-rise buildings and flats. Mostert says one of the key benefits of using precast slabs is the speed of construction thereby providing a cost saving to the contractor.

Serving the Western Cape

Portland is no doubt a leading supplier to the construction industry in the Western Cape and well respected, having a rich 36-year history of product development, reliability and technical expertise. With its clear growth trajectory, the group is capitalising on the construction boom in the region.

IFC partners with FirstRand Bank to expand green building and affordable housing finance in South Africa

THE International Finance Corporation (IFC) has gone into partnership with FirstRand to support and scale the availability of green building and green home loan finance for South Africans, stimulating economic growth and boosting climate resilience in the country.

on FirstRand's product development, as needed.

"We are pleased to continue to partner with IFC to deliver sustainable financing solutions particularly anchored to developers of green buildings, affordable housing, and women borrowers. This is in line with

This investment will benefit from a performance-based incentive grant, under the IFC and the German Government's Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) Partnership and the Market Accelerator for Green Construction (MAGC) Program. FirstRand will allocate the PBI grant to eligible developers and buyers constructing green buildings or purchasing green homes.

Green homes are residential properties that are certified for reducing water, energy, and or materials use under an eligible green building certification program, including IFC's EDGE. Green home loans are used to finance the purchase of houses that meet equivalent green building standards.

Under the Paris Agreement, South Africa aims to reduce its GHG emissions by 42% by 2025, with green buildings designated as a major part of the solution to meet its targets.

Since 2020, IFC has invested and directly mobilised \$1.5-billion green and sustainable investments in South Africa through its financial institutions' partners, with a focus on renewable energy and green buildings.

For more information, visit www.ifc.org.

"By scaling climate finance and strengthening green finance standards, we are also encouraging other financial institutions to do the same."

IFC will provide a \$250-million senior loan to FirstRand, South Africa's second largest bank by balance sheet, to further scale-up the bank's lending to property developers and home buyers for green buildings. Designated portions of the home loan portfolio will be specifically allocated to the affordable housing segment and to women.

The investment comprises an IFC loan of up to \$200-million, and a loan of up to \$50-million from the Managed Co-Lending Portfolio Program, IFC's syndications platform for institutional investors. IFC will also provide capacity building to FirstRand's appraisers, loan officers, and internal teams, and to its construction partners. IFC will advise

the bank's ambition to facilitate growth in home ownership, particularly for low-income customers and women, in a climate responsible way," said Bhulesh Singh, FirstRand group treasurer.

"IFC's partnership with FirstRand will not only provide vital funding for access to housing but also expand green-certified construction loans and home mortgages in South Africa, helping the housing sector become more climate friendly and resilient," said Cláudia Conceição, IFC's regional director for Southern Africa.

"By scaling climate finance and strengthening green finance standards, we are also encouraging other financial institutions to do the same."

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Revolutionising construction with Gyproc South Africa's lightweight building solutions



IN the dynamic landscape of construction, innovation is the cornerstone of progress. Gyproc South Africa stands at the forefront of this evolution, bringing forth cutting-edge lightweight construction solutions that are reshaping the way buildings are designed and erected.

Championing the cause of lightweight steel frame buildings, Gyproc have partnered with leading contractors specialising in LSF, and providing sustainable, environmentally friendly products to use in LSF buildings.

"Traditional construction methods, while steeped in history and reliability, often come with inherent challenges that impact both efficiency and sustainability," explains Farayi Muhamba from Saint-Gobain, owner of Gyproc South Africa.

"We, at Gyproc, recognise these challenges and address them head-on through the adoption of flexible, easy to use products within lightweight building systems. This innovative approach combines state-of-the-art materials with advanced engineering principles to deliver a host of benefits, revolutionising the construction process."

One of the primary advantages of constructing a lightweight

building is the accelerated construction timeline. Unlike traditional methods that can take months to complete, lightweight structures can be erected in a fraction of the time. This time efficiency not only reduces labour costs but also allows for quicker occupancy, making it an ideal solution for projects with tight deadlines.

"Moreover, Gyproc's range of products that are used within lightweight steel frame systems boast enhanced structural integrity. Both our internal and external boarding and cladding systems offer fire resistance and excellent acoustic performance that can withstand the test of time and various environmental conditions. This durability not only contributes to the longevity of the structures but also minimises maintenance costs, offering a cost-effective solution in the long run," says Farayi Muhamba. Versatility is another key feature that sets Gyproc's lightweight solutions apart. The flexibility of the gypsum boards and Glasroc® X Exterior Wall Cladding System allows for creative and customisable designs, catering to the diverse aesthetic preferences of clients.

Whether it's residential, commercial, or industrial projects, Gyproc's systems pro-

vide architects and builders with the freedom to innovate and create structures that are not only functional but also visually appealing.

Gyproc's success in implementing lightweight buildings in South Africa is reflected in various projects across the country, with the Cape Town Stadium and world-renowned Leonardo skyscraper in Johannesburg as prime examples. The use of Gyproc's systems has led to the completion of structures that stand as testaments to the efficiency of this alternative construction method.

Gyproc South Africa's commitment to innovation has propelled the construction industry into a new era with lightweight building systems. This alternative method addresses the shortcomings of traditional construction, offering a faster, more durable, and versatile solution. With successful implementations both in South Africa and globally, Gyproc's lightweight building systems are undeniably shaping the future of construction, setting new standards for efficiency, sustainability, and excellence in the built environment.

For more information, please visit www.gyproc.co.za

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"Our tanks are custom-built to accommodate any height/diameter or specified requirements."

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Park Place, Rabie's new residential showpiece in Ratanga Park, is a soaring success



Rabie Property Developers launched the first phase of Park Place, comprising the first two of three buildings, to the public on Saturday 25th May. The launch was a soaring success with 90% of the units sold.

Park Place is Rabie's exciting new waterfront development comprising luxury studio, one-bedroom, two bedroom and penthouse apartments. The development is set within Ratanga Park in Century City – an expansive six hectares of green parkland of mature trees, indigenous planting and tranquil waterfront connected to 8.5 kilometres of canals.

Park Place boasts exceptional lifestyle amenities with a clubhouse, a sparkling swimming pool, a boules court and a braai area with pizza oven. All the apartments and penthouses in Park Place are oriented towards the north, optimising natural light and providing maximum protection from the summer south-easter. From the higher floors, the views open up further, offering mesmerising vistas of Lion's Head, Signal Hill and the glistening blue expanse of Table Bay. The ground-floor apartments offer private garden spaces.

Birdsong and the sound of running water make you feel like you're deep in the country... and yet just 500 metres away is Century City's vibrant urban square, Canal Walk Shopping Centre, a bevy of boutique hotels, an international conference centre, and a great line-up of top coffee shops and restaurants.

Investors and residents benefit from total peace of mind, thanks to highly effective security measures that facilitate a healthy, walkable, connected and sociable new urban lifestyle.

Here you can stay near the epicentre of a major business hub, an international conference centre, and a host of co-working spaces, but never lose touch with the beauty close to nature.

Residents can kayak, hit a nearby gym, join in a popular weekly 5km Park Run, or simply relax at the swimming pool.

It's the perfect space for digital natives and young professionals who rely on constant communication for work and leisure.

Park Place residents will benefit from a high-speed open access fibre network providing lightning-fast and reliable internet access. A network of Wi-Fi hotspots throughout Century City lets you stay connected on the go, relaxing with your laptop in the park or enjoying an espresso at a nearby cafe.

Residents of Park Place will enjoy complete comfort every minute of the day, thanks to a unique system of security measures.

These start with the safe environment of Century City itself, with its extensive network of constantly monitored CCTV cameras and its own, dedicated rapid response team. All of which makes it perfectly safe to run through Ratanga Park at dawn or stroll back late at night from an evening out at Gusto, La Parada or Tiger's Milk.

KEY INVESTMENT FEATURES

- Studio apartments from R1,5 million
- One-bedroom apartments from R2.2 million

- Two-bedroom apartments from R3,3 million
- 10% deposit
- No transfer duty payable
- Occupation: late 2025
- Capital growth at Century City is growing at 10% p.a.
- Insatiable rental demand for apartments at Ratanga Park
- Aimed at EDGE certification for lower interest rates
- Green building efficiencies lower running costs

KEY LIFESTYLE FEATURES

- Tranquil, north-facing water's edge location
- Pool, sun deck, play park & boules court
- Clubhouse with pizza oven & braai areas
- Exquisite waterfront lifestyle with magnificent park views
- An array of great shops & restaurants within 500m
- Pre-installed fibre with access to a high-speed network
- Full backup power – no more load-shedding
- Perimeter fencing & monitored CCTV cameras
- Secure onsite parking plus garages & storage units for sale
- Timber-look vinyl flooring in bedrooms & living areas

Just 13 units are currently available from the release of Phase 1 and a third building will be released in Phase 2 soon.

Devon Usher, CEO at Property World, explains that the evergrowing semigration trend has driven impressive rental returns and multiple applications per apartment. "We have also seen buoyant capital growth and numerous profitable re-sales. This combination coupled with a diminishing supply of new developments in Century City makes Park Place an ideal investment."



DEVON USHER
082 446 9188
devon@propertyworld.co.za

TAMARIN SMITH
084 301 8616
tamarin@propertyworld.co.za

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Speeding up concrete curing in cold weather



A 30 to 40 minute workability is achieved by applying the accelerator upon readymix arrival.

WITH South Africa's winter season on its way, many concrete users will know that slower curing times could derail their contract or production schedules, but accelerating admixtures – or accelerators – are available to solve this challenge.

“Accelerators work during the first 18 hours of the concrete's curing time to ensure efficient hydration required to depalletize.”

With the country's generally temperate climate, it is easy to forget that many provinces and neighbouring Lesotho regularly experience sub-zero temperatures, points out Hannes Engelbrecht, concrete business unit director for domestic and Sub Saharan Africa (SSA) at CHRYSO Southern Africa.

Temperatures do not even need to reach freezing point; the concrete hydration process slows down steadily as temperature drops and actually stops when it goes below about 5 degrees Celsius.

A significant amount of current concrete construction – especially for wind turbine bases and foundations for solar photovoltaic infrastructure – is, in fact, taking place in provinces like the Northern Cape and Eastern Cape where temperatures fluctuate widely.

Efficient stripping time of formwork is crucial in allowing these projects to meet their stringent deadlines to complete construction and start delivering renewable energy.

“Low temperatures create a range of problems for contractors and concrete product manufacturers,” says Engelbrecht.

“Most projects in today's world need to be delivered on a fast track basis, so there is no room for slow concrete curing to hold up the schedule. Similar constraints apply in the manufacture of precast products, where production must simply keep up with customer

their stripping times and reduce the storage space needed for products to cure.

Accelerators work during the first 18 hours of the concrete's curing time to ensure efficient hydration required to depalletize. Should temperatures be lower than freezing point, this makes the concrete strong enough to resist the expansion of water as it freezes – so that the concrete will not crack.

Patrick Flannigan, technical manager of the concrete business unit at CHRYSO Southern Africa, explains that there are two categories of accelerator – chloride and non-chloride. While

chloride-based accelerators are usually the first choice, they cannot be used if there is steel in the structure or where steel reinforcing is present due to the risk of rust, corrosion and degradation.

“If there is steel reinforcing in the concrete, then a non-chloride accelerator must be selected,” says Flannigan.

Regarding the use of accelerators in readymix concrete that must travel varying distances to site, he points out the accelerator is best applied once the readymix has arrived on the customer's site. After it is added to the concrete in the mixing truck, it needs to be thoroughly mixed for 5 to 10 minutes before being poured. The admixture gives operators a good 30 to 40 minutes of workability before the accelerated hydration begins, depending on the type of concrete mix.

Another growing benefit of accelerators has emerged as a result of the global sustainability drive, he says, as cement producers, contractors and other customers aim to reduce their carbon footprint. This trend has seen the increased use of extenders such as fly ash and granulated slag in cement.

Rubber crumb bitumen – where Mathe Group's recycled rubber hits the road

THE use of large amounts of recycled rubber crumb for the manufacture of road surfaces and related products is propelling South Africa towards a circular economy where waste products are usefully used to address key infrastructure needs, says Dr Mehran Zarrebini, CEO of Hammarsdale-based radial truck tyre recycler, Mathe Group.

Much of the production from Mathe Group factory, which recycles approximately 1 000 radial truck tyres per day to produce 45 tons of rubber crumb, goes to bitumen product manufacturer, Tosas, for the manufacture of rubber modified bitumen, a product that is being used by the South Africa National Road Agency (SANRAL) for massive upgrades to the N1 in Gauteng and the N2 / N3 leading from the port of Durban.

Deon Pagel, MD of Tosas, explains that the company has been operating for more than five decades and was originally jointly owned by Total and Sasol. Tosas became

part of the JSE-listed Raubex Group and operates from seven locations - Wadeville, Bloemfontein, Worcester, East London, Durban, Gaborone and Tsumeb in Namibia. The company has one of the best bitumen testing laboratories in southern Africa and is a world leader in the development of new bitumen products.

According to Pagel, although people still refer to so-called black top roads as “tarred” roads, the use of tar which is extracted from coal and is carcinogenic has been discontinued and replaced with bitumen, which is extracted from crude oil.

Bitumen, which, for chipseal applications is sprayed onto the road surface at up to double the temperature of boiling water, seals the top road layerworks, protecting the foundation layers beneath, acting as a waterproofing layer. Alternatively, it can be mixed in with the asphalt and acts as a glue, strengthening the road itself.

This bitumen that exits a refinery is mod-

ified. Rubber modified bitumen is created by mixing 20% rubber crumb with 80% bitumen and extender oils. “This is one of the most superior road bitumen products in the world and you have the benefit of recycling. You take old tyres and convert them into a usable product. It's a win-win,” Pagel notes.

Bitumen rubber has now been generically specified by government and other road authorities for use in road construction throughout the country. Mathe Group's role goes beyond producing rubber crumb through ambient grinding of radial truck tyres for Tosas. Together with Tosas, it designed and developed a second plant to produce New Crumb Rubber Technology (NCRT). This involves coating the rubber crumb with aromatic oil and specialised waxes to produce a pre-swollen rubber crumb that is bitumen rubber for asphalt mixes and spray seal applications that have greater longevity and much lower mixing temperatures.



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Disappointment with the outcome of construction projects, including segmental block retaining walls may manifest itself in two ways.

Aesthetics: unattractive sloppy finish or sub-standard material utilized.

Structural; poor design, insufficient supervision, non-compliance, quality control, and maintenance.

It stands to reason that in communities where, due to circumstances, aesthetic values are not highly regarded, the demand for quality outcomes is not a priority. The emergence of free-loading material suppliers and unscrupulous contractors is thus encouraged and the downhill trend is set in motion.

In this scenario, the question of ethical values among individuals and corporate entities comes to play. Dr. John C. Maxwell, well known author of numerous business books maintains that corporate ethical values are reflected in values of their CEO's. However, ethical values, like moral values are not universally normative, i.e. cannot be regulated without risking abuse of such laws. That means that other, self-regulating mechanisms must be employed.

At the Civiliation Congress in 2014, Adv.Thuli Madonsela addressed the infrastructure engineering industry on the subject of corruption and ethics, highlighting 7 points in the SAICE Code of Ethics. (S.A. Institution of Civil Engineering)

1. Act with integrity and fairness.
2. Have regard for those that are affected by your professional activities.
3. Maintain and broaden competence and assist others to do so.
4. Exercise appropriate skill and judgement.
5. Avoid conflict of interest.
6. Treat people with dignity.
7. Don't misrepresent your level of competence.



No drainage, no supervision, no reinforced concrete infill as specified.

When applied as intended, these guidelines will have an uplifting effect on dealings in general. However, as Groucho Marx cynically put it in one of his shows, "if you can fake it, you've got it made", the fake-brigade is often hiding in the background.

An experienced academic and environmentalist, Saliem Fakir, mentioned two kinds of entrepreneurs in a 2017 article:

"The **productive entrepreneur** who relies on innovation, skills and acumen to generate profits."

and

"The **political entrepreneur** who relies on political connections to gain preferential access to government allocation of resources."

To the selection one might add the **opportunistic entrepreneur** who relies on copying products, skills, and acumen to generate profits.

So, if ethical values and behavior are difficult to regulate with legislation, what remains to be done to maintain acceptable levels of quality in the building industry?

1. **Suppliers** to remain at the forefront of providing specifiers, clients, designers, and contractors with state-of-the-art information to ensure delivery of quality products/structures. (Which Terraforce and its licensed manufacturers have done for almost 45 years, in the form of design and installation guidelines, design software, laboratory testing, evaluation reports and numerous newsletters/case studies.)

2. **Statutory bodies** and professional institutes (such as SAICE) to publish and promote minimum standards and codes of practice.

SANS 508: 2006, Concrete Retaining Blocks (or as amended), being a material specification, based in part on the original Terraforce block specification of 1991.

SANS 207:2011, The design and construction of reinforced soils and fills (or as amended), being a performance specification, also influenced by the Terraforce manual of 1991.

SANS 1044, covering general issues related to safety on building sites, during construction and after.

Various booklets published by the CMA (Concrete Manufacturers Association) pertaining to the design and construction of segmental block retaining walls.



Excellent design with Terraforce in Spain, combined with impeccable construction techniques.

3. **Raising awareness** among consumers of the true cost of taking short-cuts and habitually choosing the cheapest offer on the table. Selecting experienced contractors or Terraforce recommended installers is always a safe idea. (Terraforce, the CMA and various construction publications have regularly raised awareness to good effect. However extraordinary weather outbursts, as they occur at irregular intervals, can put a damper on the good results that were achieved).

This brings us to the need of publishing this advisory, but not before shining the spotlight on some misconceptions that can lead to misrepresentations.

The aforementioned material specification SANS 508: 2006 stipulates a much higher standard for concrete mix designs and dimensional tolerances for retaining blocks, than is required for building blocks. This is often not understood by the customers of such products or in isolated cases not even by the producers of such blocks.

The design of load bearing retaining structures as per SANS 207:2011, BS 8006-1 and ASTM D6916-18 must be undertaken by qualified professional engineers. Some engineers are not routinely dealing with these complex design mechanisms and prefer to task other engineers with more experience in this field. Free design tools such as the Terraforce Table Creator can at best be used to design low domestic retaining walls or they can be used as an estimating tool for tender purposes. Free branded software such as Terraforce Maxiwall is a full design tool that can also be used for estimating purposes and further for difficult calculations in respect of global stability and complex soils, according to international standards. It stands to reason that designs undertaken with free design tools are "belts and braces" designs to minimize the risks involved.

Engineers with years of experience in rational design will produce more cost-effective designs that have the same stability characteristics.

If, and when failures do occur, it is mostly due to poor design, sloppy installation/supervision, inadequate stormwater/subsoil water management.

SANS 10400: Part R stormwater disposal prescribes in essence:

- A landowner is allowed to discharge natural, unconcentrated stormwater run-off onto the lower laying land.
- Upgrades in the form of buildings of impervious areas add a responsibility, namely to accumulate and convey the excess run-off to the nearest municipal storm water system, at his own expense and over neighbouring property if necessary. The owner of neighbouring land must allow access for installation of such a conveyance route.

The designer of such a system should be suitably qualified and must consider the entire potential flood volume of the properties in question and must also stipulate a regular maintenance programme.

A few failure reports that we have seen in recent years, unfortunately suggest that some forensic investigators tasked with assessing such failures, are not fully aware of the stormwater challenges and issues involved.

In conclusion: It is probably fair to say that by following these guidelines, you will gain peace of mind and maintenance of value, that insurance providers will be happy to cover.



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We must protect SA's groundwater



By Chetan Mistry,
Strategy and Marketing
Manager at Xylem
Africa.

THE borehole is a South African staple, accessing water from underground aquifers.

This is called groundwater, which South Africa has relatively abundant supplies of but if we don't take care of these underground reservoirs, they will start to buckle just when we need them the most.

South Africa relies primarily on surface water, which is rainwater captured on the surface by rivers, dams and reservoirs.

But groundwater is our backup, and there is already substantial usage of this resource. Agriculture operations are the main consumer, accounting for two-thirds of current groundwater consumption, followed

by mining and residential consumption at roughly 15% each.

South Africa predominantly relies on surface water for around three-quarters of local demand. Yet, local groundwater usage is growing, reflecting global trends. In most places on the planet, groundwater is crucial: according to the Groundwater Project, it supports nearly half of Earth's population and three-quarters of its irrigation needs. South Africa is currently an outlier, but this is changing. Growing populations and shifting climates are increasing the demand for groundwater. Rural communities, in particular, often depend on groundwater to supply safe drinking water.

Groundwater's delicate state

One might think that groundwater is naturally

protected, seeing as it resides deep underground. But the influence of human activities is not sparing these underground reservoirs.

Different types of pollution are contaminating groundwater sources, while a lack of aquifer rehabilitation and counter-pollution measures allows the damage to fester and grow.

The 2021 study, Groundwater contamination in Sub-Saharan Africa, published on ScienceDirect, exposes a worrying groundwater pollution trend. Traditionally, we assume water pumped from underground sources is clean and ready for consumption. Yet, the researchers tested groundwater at numerous boreholes and discovered concerning levels of harmful bacterial life, such as E. Coli, likely contamination from SA's buckling wastewater treatment

sites. The study suggests what was once unthinkable: local groundwater may need treatment before it is fit for human consumption.

How to invest in groundwater

This trend is very concerning, but it's not a foregone conclusion. We can still make an impact and protect our groundwater sources. Greater investment in smart systems, which provide better water management insight and efficiency, will help reduce pollution from treatment and industrial sites. Mines can invest in better water recycling and filtering, which adds the double benefit of more operational resilience. Farming operations can reduce overall water consumption and curtail manure pollution. Urban areas can promote smarter water management and encourage citizens to report leaks and pollution. Hefty fines and enforcement of environmental laws will reduce the harm being caused to underground water.

Nature is our ally. South Africa's many wetlands are natural filters for clean water and play a massive role in feeding underground aquifers. Reducing pollution and improving sanitation are the most effective ways to secure both groundwater and surface water in South Africa.

Effective urban planning and conservation strategies will help establish and maintain a balance between growing settlements and sustainable water sources.

Sanitech celebrates 50 years with a commitment to community and future growth



SANITECH, a leader in integrated hygiene and sanitation solutions, recently celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Reflecting on the company's journey from a small plumbing business to a comprehensive sanitation provider, Sanitech's MD Robert Erasmus, shares insights into the company's history, recent initiatives, and future aspirations.

The Sanitech name was registered in 1974 by Grant Murray in Kwa-Zulu-Natal. Initially, it was a small plumbing business, but Murray quickly identified a market for portable sanitation services.

Over the years, Sanitech expanded, albeit on a limited scale, by partnering with various agents. The significant transformation began in the 1990s and early 2000s when private equity ownership enabled national growth. In 2007, the business continued to expand following the acquisition of Sanitech, which marked the begin-

ning of global support for WACO International.

Erasmus joined Sanitech in 2008, marking a pivotal moment.

"My role was to transform Sanitech into a corporate entity aligned with WACO International's standards in health, safety, policies, and procedures," Erasmus explains.

Under his leadership, Sanitech expanded from eight locations to 24 and diversified its services beyond portable toilets to include integrated hygiene services, water and waste treatment, and pest control. Today, Sanitech employs over 3 000 people, a substantial increase from 350 in 2008.

Instead of a traditional celebration event for its 50th anniversary, Sanitech chose to invest in Corporate Social Investment (CSI) projects.

Sanitech sponsored 50 Khusela sanitation units across various regions in South Africa. These units were installed in disadvantaged schools

in areas such as Witbank, Johannesburg, Durban, Gqeberha, and Cape Town, providing proper sanitation facilities and meals for the day. "It was a school-focused initiative, ensuring that learners have access to clean and safe sanitation, which is crucial for their health and education."

Looking ahead, Erasmus envisions Sanitech continuing its trajectory of growth and innovation.

"We aim to expand our product and service offerings in the hygiene and sanitation sector, especially as we face new challenges like the potential water crisis. Sub-Saharan Africa presents significant opportunities, and we've already established a presence in Mozambique," he notes. Sanitech plans to enhance its contributions to clients' Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) requirements by expanding its hygiene, cleaning, and pest control services.

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Industry-leading alignment and rail analysis maintains optimised crane performance



WHEN cranes suffer from premature wheel wear, rail wear, structural component failures, crane noise, bad positioning or drive faults, it is normally the result of incorrect crane geometry. Konecranes' CraneQ Crane Geometric Survey and RailQ 3D Runway Survey assist in finding the cause of these symptoms so that major problems and costly downtime can be avoided. They work together to create a complete view of the crane and rail geometry to be inspected and assessed.

Ian Grobler, sales manager for Konecranes and Demag South Africa, explains, "The two surveys are used to verify the alignment and square of a crane and to deliver accurate information on the alignment of the rail. This helps locate where the problem lies when an operator experiences a problematic performance. The surveys provide recommendations for any needed corrective actions with a highly detailed and accurate analysis."

CraneQ Crane Geometric Survey

Cranes that are straight, square, and aligned, experience less repair costs and have a higher level of reliability. The CraneQ survey provides the information that is required for detailing the alignment and

the square of a crane. It measures dimensional tolerances of wheels, guide rollers, end trucks, girders, and other components of the crane.

The survey provides more accurate information than traditional surveying techniques because it is based on advanced surveying methods developed specifically for crane geometry. Konecranes' specialised software and their skilled survey technicians provide customers with a geometric analysis of their crane as well as present feedback on what corrective actions need to be taken.

The survey also minimises downtime due to component wear by assuring correct component alignment.

RailQ 3D Runway Survey

RailQ 3D Runway Survey uses high-definition surveying techniques combined with point cloud data analysis to provide information on runway condition. The 3D visual inspection provides information on runway span, straightness, elevation and rail-to-rail elevation.

Symptoms that may indicate the need for a runway survey include crane tracking and skewing issues, excessive wear on wheels and rails, loose rail fasteners, abnormal noises during bridge travel, frequently

replacing bridge couplings, rail splices, rail sections and crane wheel axles, and broken wheel flanges.

Two major benefits resulting from the RailQ 3D survey, are that it is safer to perform than a traditional runway survey because it uses a remotely operated data collection instrument, and more data is gathered in less time than a traditional survey delivering the same information.

"Performing RailQ 3D as part of a periodic inspection programme on critical production crane runways helps identify chronic issues. This approach allows our customers to plan maintenance far in advance and implement corrective actions during planned outages and production stoppages to limit the effects of lost production," says Grobler.

"It's not rocket science to see the benefits of the CraneQ and RailQ 3D assessment interventions. The cost savings that can result from the analysis of highly accurate data are immense, especially when preventive maintenance is scheduled. Couple that with decreased downtime in the production cycle makes it a win-win situation for all industries that require continuous cycles of production," concludes Grobler.

Charco Cranes: A dynamic materials handling equipment service provider



CHARCO Cranes, based in Benoni, Gauteng, South Africa, is a dynamic, innovative materials handling equipment service provider providing comprehensive sales and service of overhead cranes, hoists and lifting equipment.

From its humble beginnings in 2017, with its core values of complete customer centricity, the business has grown from supporting small local businesses to supporting larger industrial clients not only in South Africa but also those establishing an Afri-

can footprint.

In 2019 Charco Cranes was appointed the sole distributor for Italy-based crane and hoist manufacturer, Donati.

Established in 1930, Donati has a reputation for producing reliable, high quality overhead cranes, jib cranes and hoists and supplies its products to crane manufacturers and materials handling system integrators worldwide.

Donati offer an industry leading 36-month warranty on all Donati products, a true testament to the

reliability and quality of the Donati brand.

Donati product range comprises:

Electric chain hoists up to 4 000 kg capacity

- Electric wire rope hoists and crane sets up to 50 000 kg capacity
- Jib cranes, in manual or electrical execution, up to 10 000 kg capacity
- Profiled small crane systems up to 1 000 kg capacity
- Geared motors and drive units

• Wheel blocks

Charco Cranes service offering comprises :

- Asset management software for your overhead crane / hoist fleet
- Service and maintenance contracts
- Load testing
- Lifting tackle inspection
- Crane rail surveys and repairs
- Crane & hoist repairs and modernisations
- Machinery repairs and general engineering

SkyJacks appointed as Jekko dealer for South Africa

SKYJACKS, a premier supplier of powered access and material handling solutions, has been appointed as the exclusive dealer in South Africa for Jekko products. The partnership further expands Jekko's global presence and provides customers in the region with access to cutting-edge lifting technology.

Joining forces signifies a shared dedication to delivering reliable and efficient lifting solutions to customers across various industries, including construction, mining, and industrial maintenance with the aim to meet the evolving needs of the South African market.

SkyJacks MD Alistair



Bennett commented, "Over the last 45 years, SkyJacks has been trusted to provide working at height and material handling solutions in some of southern Africa's most challenging working environments. Initially, our focus was on suspended access platforms and aerial work platforms. As the company

evolved, our offerings grew to include telehandlers and construction hoists. Continuing to innovate, we believe that adding Jekko mini cranes to our offering is a natural progression that will allow us to meet the changing demands of the construction, mining, and industrial maintenance sectors in southern Africa."

Keith Freel, business development manager at SkyJacks, added, "The growth of SkyJacks has been led by our customers' need for robust products and service excellence. The addition of the Jekko mini cranes into the SkyJacks offering brings to our customers lifting solutions across the market spectrum."



CHARCO CRANES is a leading service provider for maintenance and product solutions for all major brands of overhead material handling equipment.



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Saiccor Mill's 12,5/25/12,5-ton overhead travelling crane under factory load test before delivery.

Condra to manufacture a second maintenance crane for Sappi's Saiccor Mill

CONDRA is to manufacture a second maintenance crane for Sappi's Saiccor Mill, at Umkomaas on the KwaZulu-Natal south coast.

Ordered for turbine maintenance duty, the 25-tonner will join a 12,5/25/12,5-ton overhead travelling crane manufactured by Condra last year for one of the mill's dryer lines, and commis-

sioned in March.

Both cranes are part of Sappi's R7,7-billion expansion and upgrade programme to position Saiccor among the world's leaders in dissolving pulp pro-

duction. Dissolving pulp is a key input in the textile industry, in pharmaceuticals and in food processing.

The latest crane will be similar to its predecessor. Both feature identical double-girder, 25m span frames, and differ only in the number of hoists: one on the new crane and three on the first.

Load lifts on both cranes are failsafe, with secondary emergency brakes on the hoists' rope drums backing up standard brakes on the electric motors.

As before, Condra will use corrosion-resistant materials to manufacture specific components, and apply a high-spec coating to girders, end-carriages and the hoist itself.

This will protect the crane for operation in a highly corrosive environment. Handrails will be of stainless steel, with platforms and walkways made from fiberglass grating instead of ordinary steel tread plate.

On the electrical side, Condra will fit armoured power cables and insulate all stainless steel motor and electrical panels to IP65 standard.

Commenting on the order, a Condra spokesman said that the design of both cranes will facilitate simple maintenance by authorised agent Natal Cranes.

"Our South Coast partner has spare parts holdings more than sufficient to ensure fastest possible repair and maximum machine uptime. Overall lifetime cost will be the lowest possible," the spokesman said.

"We have a third crane – a single-girder machine – that has been working at Saiccor Mill for forty years, so Natal Cranes already has a good working relationship with the staff at Saiccor, and long experience of the operating environment there. We are ready to ensure maximum machine uptime for the new double-girder installations," the spokesman concluded.

Saiccor Mill's second Condra crane is scheduled for delivery later this year to coincide with a planned shutdown for plant maintenance.

Visit Condra's website: www.condra.co.za



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Significant investment by Pepsi's largest bottler boosts South Africa's battle of the beverages

Pieter Spies, CEO at BevCo says Varun Beverages' deal to buy South African bottler BevCo underscores the attractiveness of South Africa as an investment destination and also promises to reshape the landscape of the carbonated drinks market in the country.

SOUTH Africa's economic profile, characterised by its dynamic markets and strategic positioning in Africa, makes it a compelling hub for international investors. In a landmark deal, valued at close to R3-billion, Varun Beverages, A New Delhi based multinational that is the second largest bottler of PepsiCo beverages, recently acquired BevCo, bottler of all PepsiCo-branded non-alcoholic beverages in South Africa, along with its wholly-owned subsidiaries.

The acquisition is also a win for the South Africa's beverage sector, bringing global expertise to a market characterised by growing consumer sophistication and demand for variety. This strategic move underscores the

significance of international investment in bolstering local brands, driving innovation, and ultimately elevating consumer experiences.

From an economic standpoint, the acquisition promises substantial benefits in terms of job creation and stability in the beverage sector that will have ripple effects across the entire supply chain.

Varun Beverages' commitment to investing in the local market will likely lead to an expansion in production capabilities and distribution networks, meaning a larger workforce will potentially be required. By expanding its footprint in South Africa, Varun Beverages is not only creating job opportunities but also fuelling



economic development and prosperity within the country.

At the heart of this acquisition lies the promise of creating a powerhouse of global brands. By integrating BevCo's portfolio with Varun Beverages' renowned Pepsi portfolio focus, the market will certainly see the emergence of an

unparalleled array of beverages that cater to varied tastes and preferences.

This injection of competition into the South African beverage market will drive innovation. Competition is the cornerstone of progress, driving companies to find new ways to diversify and enhance their offerings.

to meet the evolving demands of consumers. With Varun Beverages stepping into the arena, consumers can anticipate a surge in creativity and differentiation, leading to elevated product offerings, including new flavours, and innovative packaging solutions, tailored to local tastes and preferences.

Competition will also catalyse growth within the category and bolster the visibility of BevCo's established local brands, like Refreshhh, Reboost, Coo-ee, and JIVE. Leveraging the global scope and expertise of Varun Beverages, homegrown brands will have the opportunity to tap into wider markets, expand their distribution networks, and access crucial resources for research and development.

With greater scale and resources, the company has the opportunity to enhance efficiency and perhaps even drive down costs, making products more affordable without compromising on quality – an ethos that has always been a cornerstone of BevCo's offering. For

a price-sensitive market like South Africa, affordability remains a crucial factor in consumer choices and brand loyalty.

The acquisition of BevCo heralds a new era of innovation, choice, and collaboration in the beverage industry. The beauty of this deal lies in its ability to celebrate South Africa's rich beverage heritage while propelling the industry forward. BevCo's local brands will continue to be a cherished part of the South African beverage landscape while Varun Beverages' global expertise and resources will ensure these brands reach new heights. As the fizz settles, one thing is clear: the country's beverage industry is on the cusp of a refreshing transformation.

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Metpac-SA: Leading the charge towards sustainable metal packaging



IN the dynamic landscape of waste management and recycling, MetPac-SA stands as a beacon of success, particularly in the realm of metal packaging.

As the Producer Responsibility Organisation (PRO) focused on metal packaging in South Africa, MetPac-SA has achieved significant milestones in promoting the collection and recycling of metal packaging materials, ranging from aerosol canisters to aluminium beverage cans

and ferrous food packaging.

Key Achievements

MetPac-SA's commitment to understanding the material flow of aluminium beverage containers through a Material Flow Analysis (MFA) exemplifies its dedication to informed decision-making. By updating the MFA annually, MetPac-SA gains crucial insights into the local market dynamics, identifying areas for

improvement and optimizing recycling processes.

In addition to data-driven initiatives, MetPac-SA has invested in educational outreach through the "Plant the Seed" video series, emphasising the importance of recycling and metal recovery.

These videos serve as catalysts for raising public awareness and fostering a culture of sustainability.

Challenges and Solutions

Navigating the complexities of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regulations has presented formidable challenges for MetPac-SA. From aligning reporting cycles with member timelines to grappling with fluctuating EPR fees, the organisation has encountered hurdles along the way. However, through pro-

active engagement with stakeholders and meticulous planning, MetPac-SA has managed to streamline processes and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.

Innovative Approaches

MetPac-SA's partnership with GeT Metal and Waste, a specialist recycler of all types of ferrous and non-ferrous metals with an impressive footprint consisting of 8 branches throughout the Western Cape, has yielded innovative approaches to waste characterisation and provided valuable insights into the composition of recyclable materials. By conducting in-depth assessments over several months, MetPac-SA has gained a nuanced understanding of the materials being processed, thereby paving the way for targeted interventions and optimisation of recycling infrastructure.

Collaborative Partnerships

MetPac-SA understands the power of collaboration in driving sustainable change. By partnering with other PROs and government bodies, such as PETCO and Polyco, MetPac-SA has managed to successfully expand its reach and effectiveness in meeting recycling targets. Through joint initiatives like onboarding additional buy-back centers and supporting waste picker payment systems, MetPac-SA fosters a holistic approach to recycling, engaging stakeholders across the value chain.

MetPac-SA has also supported various awareness and education campaigns aimed at educating pupils and consumers alike about the importance of recycling, effective waste management and supporting a circular economy. They are the lead sponsor of the Trash

4 Treats schools programme that encourages impoverished schools to collect metal packaging in their neighbourhoods and surrounding areas, rewarding the winning schools with cash prizes that can be used for much-needed school upgrades and the winning grades who participated in the collection efforts with treats, as well as a supporter of the Miss Earth SA foundation who visits schools to promote the message, "Waste stops with me".

Measuring Performance

MetPac-SA employs a robust system of quarterly declarations from its members to track material placed on the market. This data, coupled with insights from partner networks, enables MetPac-SA to evaluate its performance against government-mandated recycling targets accurately. With a keen focus

on transparency and accountability, MetPac-SA drives continuous improvement in recycling outcomes.

Future Outlook

Looking ahead, MetPac-SA remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing metal packaging recycling efforts and contributing to a more sustainable circular economy. By increasing local recycled content in aluminium beverage cans and expanding collection and recycling infrastructure nationwide, MetPac-SA aims to drive lasting change. Moreover, the rollout of waste picker payment systems underscores MetPac-SA's dedication to fostering inclusive and equitable recycling practices, empowering communities and driving positive social impact.

For more information, visit www.metpacsa.org.za



Shaping Tomorrow

Sustainable and Responsible
Metal Packaging Solutions



MetPac-SA is dedicated to leading the way in creating a sustainable future by focusing on metal packaging. As the registered Producer Responsibility Organisation (PRO) with the Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment, we take our sustainability pledge seriously. Here's how we're doing our part:

- EPR Compliance:** We offer our members support by taking on part of their Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) related obligations. This ensures compliance with regulatory requirements and makes things easier for them.
- Recycle & Reuse:** We aim to reduce waste management and encourage the recycling and re-use of metal packaging across the industry. This conserves resources and reduces the environmental impact.
- Stakeholder Acceptance:** We collaborate with stakeholders, including the South African Government and the metal industry, to devise solutions that are both sustainable and acceptable in their form and operation.

www.metpacsa.org.za


Coca-Cola launches Wozzaah. Its African inspired new flavour

COCA-COLA has dropped its newest creation, Coca-Cola® Wozzaah, which it says is a "symphony of flavours inspired by the beating heart of African culture."

Through digital experiences, coupled by the refreshing taste of Coca-Cola® Wozzaah, fans will be transported through the continent of Africa, experiencing the electrifying flavours and expressive culture of each unique country.

Coca-Cola® Wozzaah is crafted to embody the pulsating rhythm and dynamic energy of Africa. The new flavour provides the Coca-Cola® taste, remixed with vibrant, tropical flavours inspired by Africa.

The design of each can of Coca-Cola® Wozzaah boasts contemporary typography and bursts of vivid colour that captures the dynamic rhythm of African culture, infused with the heightened expression of the continent's boundless creativity. Coca-Cola® Wozzaah pays tribute to the energy of the continent, recognising the influence Africa has across all aspects of culture around the world.

To celebrate this cultural resonance, Coca-Cola® Wozzaah invites fans to join in the vibrancy and immerse themselves in a series of exhilarating physical and

digital experiences.

These experiences will be brought to life through dynamic collaborations with trailblazing artists who embody a profound connection to the essence of Africa's creativity, igniting a cultural renaissance that resonates with fans worldwide. As the ambassador of this new Coca-Cola® Creation, Coca-Cola is partnering with global music sensation Uncle Waffles, who will play a pivotal role in bringing Coca-Cola® Wozzaah to life. Renowned for her electrifying performances and unwavering commitment to celebrating African culture, Uncle Waffles promises to infuse the Coca-Cola® Wozzaah experience with unparalleled energy and celebrations that can be connected to fans across the world.

"We are thrilled to introduce Coca-Cola® Wozzaah, a new Coca-Cola® Creation that not only celebrates the rich tapestry of African culture but also embodies the spirit of innovation and creativity," said Silke Bucker, senior director, Coca-Cola Category Lead, Africa.

"Partnering with Uncle Waffles adds an authentic touch to this exciting launch, and we can't wait to see how her dynamic presence will elevate the Coca-Cola®

Wozzaah experience, creating unforgettable moments for our consumers worldwide."

Accessible through the Creations Hub, Coca-Cola® Creations is inviting fans to experience its interactive online experience that amps up African creativity through artists reshaping the global music scene.

Hosted by Uncle Waffles, each channel features audiovisual elements inspired by distinct spaces within South Africa, Morocco, Algeria, and Nigeria. Fans will be able to digitally explore the unique interactive experience and engage with social elements including customisable Snapchat lenses. "The latest Coca-Cola® Creation celebrates the vibrancy and influence of Africa, immersing consumers in the limitless energy of the continent," said Oana Vlad, senior director, global strategy at The Coca-Cola Company.

"This latest expression and collaboration with incredible African artists, designers and voices is what Coca-Cola® Creations is all about – creating 'Real Magic' for our fans through cultural connections."

Coca-Cola® Wozzaah is available to purchase for a limited time only in select markets including South Africa, Nigeria, Algeria, and Morocco.

Namaqua Wines chooses SIG as preferred carton packaging supplies

NAMAQUA Wines, one of the largest wine producers in the Southern Hemisphere, has chosen to partner with SIG as its preferred carton packaging supplier for its low alcohol wine selection.

This is the first time the Namaqua company has invested in its own filling machine for aseptic carton packs, having previously used a co-packer to fill its wines.

Located on the west coast of South Africa, and with a passion for producing exceptional wines, Namaqua Wines is a pioneer in the country's wine industry, with a focus on sustainability and innovation.

The company has opted for a SIG Slimline

Aseptic filling machine and has already started filling its wide range of low alcohol wines into SIG SlimlineBloc 1 000ml carton packs.

Namaqua is convinced that with this modern and fresh product and packaging concept, it will help to meet growing consumer demands and also boost its business.

Gabor Rapolthy, head of marketing and analytics at Namaqua Wines: "By investing for the first time in our very own filling technology for aseptic carton packs, we aim to set the course for further growth, starting with our low alcohol wine range. We've been producing wines for more than 75 years and have the fastest growing wine brand in

South Africa for the past two years with our Raindance brand. Our close partnership with SIG will help us to continue our robust growth, increase production volume, and expand our presence in the South African market even further."

South Africa is renowned for wine production and Namaqua Wines has established itself as an outstanding brand that consistently delivers exquisite wines.

By utilising its expertise in winemaking and working with local winemakers, Namaqua ensures its wines reflect the unique richness and characteristics of the region. Its winery offers a diverse portfolio, catering to a wide range of tastes and usage occasions.

According to Namaqua Wines, they produce almost one in six litres of wine in South Africa.

Abdelghany Eladib, president and GM India, Middle East and Africa at SIG says: "SIG has been established in South Africa for many decades and this new investment

by Namaqua Wines is another step forward for us in the country. As a leading supplier of carton packaging for wine in South Africa, we're looking forward to growing our partnership with Namaqua, starting with its low alcohol wine selection."

Over the last year alone, Namaqua has received awards for its Shiraz, Pinotage, Sauvignon Blanc, Red Muscadell and Hanepoot Jerepigo wines – including awards from Gilbert & Gilbert, Veritas, and Platter.

PVC as packaging material: safe, responsible, recyclable

POLYVINYL chloride (PVC) is considered to be the most versatile thermoplastic and has established itself as an essential material in the packaging industry.

Its applications range from flexible films that preserve food to rigid films that secure medicinal products, as well as security packaging for high-value and corrosive items like batteries. The unique properties of PVC offer numerous benefits, making it a preferred choice for a variety of packaging needs.

Preserving Food and Medicine

Flexible PVC films are widely used in the food industry due to their excellent barrier properties. They prevent contamination and extend the shelf life of perishable items by protecting them from moisture, oxygen, and other environmental factors. This not only helps in reducing food waste, but also ensures that consumers receive fresh and safe products.

In the pharmaceutical sector, rigid PVC films play a critical

role in maintaining the integrity of medicinal products. These films provide a robust barrier against external contaminants and are capable of withstanding harsh storage conditions.

As a result, medicines remain effective and safe for use over extended periods. Polyvinyl chloride does not pose a hazard to human health or the environment. It is approved for food and pharmaceutical contact, and also used in a broad spectrum of essential and beneficial applications, including delivery of life-saving fluids intravenously in healthcare settings globally.

Security Packaging for High-Value Items

PVC is also a material of choice for security packaging, particularly for items that are high-value or corrosive. For instance, batteries are often packaged using PVC to prevent damage and ensure safe handling.

The durability and strength of PVC provide a protective shield that mitigates the risk of leaks and other forms of damage, ensuring that the product remains intact and functional.

Recycling and Sustainability

One of the standout features of PVC is its recyclability. Globally, more than 1.5-million tons of PVC are recycled annually. The recycling process for PVC is well-established, with all rigid PVC packaging being sorted and collected alongside construction materials and pre-consumer manufacturing scrap. Flexible PVC packaging can also be recycled, provided it is not contaminated with hazardous biological materials.

In South Africa, the Southern African Vinyls Association (SAVA) plays a pivotal role in PVC packaging waste management. Registered with the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), SAVA has achieved an impressive recycling and collection rate of 13 % for the year ending 31 December 2023. This achievement

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The majority of PVC packaging is in flexible films that preserve food and rigid films that preserve medicine, as well as in security packaging to protect high-value and corrosive items such as batteries from damage. More than 1.5 million tonnes of PVC is recycled annually around the globe. As the a registered PRO for PVC packaging waste in South Africa, SAVA achieved a collection and recycling rate of more than 13 % this for the year ending 31 December 2023.

WWW.SAVINYLS.CO.ZA

Plastics: An unsung hero in environmental protection



AS global awareness about the environment reaches its peak during June when World Environment Day and World Ocean Day are celebrated, it is crucial to highlight the

often-overlooked benefits of plastics in protecting our planet. Though plastics have faced significant criticism, the plastics industry worldwide, and particularly in South

Africa, is diligently working to address environmental concerns and showcase the eco-friendly potential of plastics. Over the past few years, Plastics SA (the umbrella body representing the South African plastics industry), has continually been at the forefront of various environmental initiatives. These include providing training to municipal waste managers and waste pickers, supporting river catchment projects and clean-ups held around the country on beaches, rivers, and in communities. “All our sustainability and education efforts are part of a broader strategy to enhance recycling rates and promote the circular economy,” explains Douw Steyn, sustainability director at Plastics SA. One of the key advantages of plastics is their lightweight nature, which significantly reduces transportation carbon emissions compared to heavier materials. This characteristic helps to lower the overall carbon footprint of products, making plastics a more environmentally-friendly option for packaging and other applications. Furthermore, plastics’ durability and versatility enable the creation of products that can replace more resource-intensive materials, thus conserving natural resources. “Extensive research has proven time and again that in most cases plastics have a lower carbon footprint than many other packaging materials. It is, however, essential to ensure that plastics are recycled to support a circular economy and are

diverted from landfill. By doing so, we not only mitigate the environmental impact of plastic waste but also harness the numerous benefits that plastics offer,” says Steyn. In South Africa, some of Plastics SA’s initiatives that are making a tangible difference include:

- **Training and Empowerment:** By providing essential training to municipal waste managers and waste pickers, Plastics SA is enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of recycling operations. This not only supports job creation but also ensures that more plastic waste is diverted from landfills.
- **River Catchment Projects:** These projects aim to reduce plastic pollution in waterways, protecting aquatic ecosystems and ensuring cleaner water sources for communities.
- **Community Clean-ups:** Organising clean-ups on beaches, rivers, and in local communities helps to directly tackle litter and raise awareness about the importance of proper waste disposal. These efforts contribute to a cleaner environment and promote a sense of community responsibility.

Plant-based fork adds on to Nestlé’s innovative packaging accessories



NESTLÉ has introduced a limited-edition plant-based fork for Maggi cup noodles in India. Nestlé food science and packaging experts at their R&D centre in India collaborated with a local startup to develop a two-piece edible fork made from wheat flour and salt. The two ingredients, coupled with a proprietary fork design and manufacturing process, ensure the desired functionality while maintaining the nutritional values and taste of the noodles. Redesigning accessories like straws, cups, or cutlery is an integral part of Nestlé’s commitment to eliminate or reduce the use of plastics in packaging. This comes in addition to simplifying packaging materials, scaling reusable and refillable systems wherever possible, and exploring alternative packaging materials for different product categories. Gerhard Niederreiter, head of Nestlé’s Institute of Packaging Sciences, says: “At Nestlé, we continuously explore different types of alternative sustainable packaging solutions that ensure food safety, consumer experience, and product taste and quality. In this case, our packaging experts developed a unique alternative fork that built on our scientific expertise across different kinds of food-grade packaging materials and shapes.”

Antonia Wanner, Group Nestlé head of ESG strategy and deployment explains. “Reducing packaging and designing packaging for recycling are both key pillars to Nestlé’s sustainability commitments. Our teams are constantly exploring novel materials and cutting-edge technologies for packaging solutions that are convenient, protect the food inside, and are good for the planet.” In addition, Nestlé packaging experts in R&D Nutrition and China are piloting a patented paper scoop for adult milk powders in China. Thanks to the flat foldable scoop alongside a metal cap, the use of plastic could be completely avoided in this packaging design. By 2021, Nestlé had already replaced 4,5-billion plastic straws globally with paper straws. Since then, Nestlé R&D teams are continuing to drive innovation with recyclable straws to identify alternative solutions or improve the functionalities of existing paper straws. The Nestlé Institute of Packaging Sciences has also focused significant efforts in developing new paper cups. This includes researching non-plastic coatings for paper cups that can resist hot beverages. Earlier in 2023, Maggi also launched foldable, compostable forks in India which was jointly developed in collaboration with Nestlé’s Institute of Packaging Sciences, Kaneka India Pvt. Ltd., and Nestlé India R&D. The introduction of the foldable, compostable forks could result in annualised plastic reduction of approximately 35 metric tons. Commenting on the test launch of the edible forks, Rajat Jain, director for foods, Nestlé India, said: “At Nestlé, it is our continuous endeavour to discover ways to build a better future for our consumers and the planet. The launch of edible fork in Cuppa noodles marks a significant milestone in our commitment towards environmental responsibility while pioneering consumer-centric initiatives.” Jain adds: “This innovation is a testament of our global R&D capabilities showcased in the use of cutting edge-technology to develop first-of-its-kind two-piece fork design. We are confident that this launch will also set a strong precedent for greater greener solutions.”

The plastics industry taking action

reduce reuse recycle

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The success of these projects is due to the dedicated support of and collaboration with our Industry partners such as the raw material producers, converters, recyclers, producer responsibility organisations, brand owners, retailers, the packaging industry, Government, Non-Government Organisations and volunteers.

Plastics|SA
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For more information about Plastics SA’s initiatives, visit www.plasticsinfo.co.za

Revolutionary solutions for recycling expanded polystyrene in South African agricultural and nursery industries



Impact: By responsibly recycling the polystyrene used in South Africa, APIA significantly reduces environmental waste, promoting a circular economy and contributing to the country's sustainability goals.

According to APIA spokesperson, Adri Spangenberg, "We are thrilled to announce these innovative solutions for recycling expanded polystyrene in the agricultural sector. By addressing contamination issues and establishing an effective collection network, we are turning a potential waste problem into a valuable resource. We urge all stakeholders in the agricultural and nursery industries to join us in this crucial initiative to ensure a sustainable future for South Africa."

APIA is dedicated to promoting sustainable practices in the polystyrene industry. Through innovative solutions and collaborative efforts, APIA aims to enhance recycling rates and develop robust end markets for recycled materials.

For more information, please contact Adri Spangenberg: adri@apia.africa

THE African Polystyrene Industry Alliance (APIA) is proud to announce groundbreaking initiatives for the recycling of expanded polystyrene (EPS) used in the agricultural and nursery industry.

These innovative approaches address the critical need to recycle polystyrene used for seedling trays and other applications across South Africa, ensuring that no material goes to waste.

Expanded polystyrene has long been a staple in the agricultural sector for its lightweight and insulating properties.

Despite its widespread use, the challenge has always been to effectively recycle the material due to logistical and contamination concerns. However, APIA is having significant success

in tackling these issues head-on.

Key Highlights of these Initiatives:

- **Overcoming Contamination Issues:** Unlike other materials, EPS can be recycled even when contaminated with soil. This simplifies the recycling process and encourages widespread participation among farmers and nurseries.
- **Reverse Logistics and Collection Network:** APIA has established a robust reverse logistics system and a comprehensive network of collectors. This ensures efficient collection and transportation of used EPS from farms and nurseries to recycling facilities.

- **Demand for Recycled EPS:** The demand for recycled EPS is being driven by developing end markets. EPS is currently being reprocessed into lightweight concrete products, among other applications, showcasing its versatility and value in various industries.
- **Educational Outreach and Call to Action:** APIA emphasises the importance of educating the agricultural community about the benefits and processes of recycling EPS. Farmers and nursery operators are encouraged to participate in this initiative by segregating and returning their used EPS for recycling.
- **Environmental**

AES: A 'paper trail' of successful energy optimisation in South Africa's pulp and paper sector



THERMAL energy plays a pivotal role in both the preparation of raw materials – and the pressing and drying of the fibre layers – which ultimately forms the 3,8-million tons of paper products produced in South Africa each year.

According to Dennis Williams, commercial director at Associated Energy Services (AES), one of South Africa's leading operations and maintenance service providers to the steam and boiler sector, the R50-billion local pulp and paper industry faces exciting opportunities – but also some obstacles – as it seeks to boost competitiveness and contain costs.

"The sector has seen a lot of realignment in recent years. This includes the sale or closure of the less profitable pulp and paper plants – while the older ones are struggling to compete against more agile producers, which have already invested in newer technology," Williams advises.

AES has worked with companies that process virgin and recycled paper, as well as everything from printing paper to cardboard, packaging and tissue. Williams points out that there is plenty of 'low hanging fruit' which can be harvested to improve production costs, efficiencies and boost producers' bottom lines.

"With paper machines working at incredibly high speeds, processing hundreds of metres of paper or tissue per minute, steam usage needs to be accurately controlled, but also efficiently generated. A good quality, reliable steam supply not only

minimises the risk of product not meeting specifications, but also ensures that machines do not have to slow down, adding to production costs."

'Out of the box' sustainability

As it plays such a central role, energy is one of the largest input costs. Nevertheless, until now, many companies have invested in developing their production facilities and capabilities, rather than in steam generation efficiencies and optimisation. However, as a key energy user and environmental impactor – the paper and pulp sector needs to look more closely at sustainability, Williams maintains.

"The first step is resource conservation. Whether it is a kilolitre of water, a ton of coal or a gigajoule of gas, if less could be used – with the same outcome – that is a substantial 'win'.

Primary facilities are also analysing how they can utilise bark or timber residues – or by-products from their process – to create energy – and many have innovative boiler plants. Efficient boiler operation is always a plus and will reduce emissions,"

he explains.

In the South Durban Basin, for example, the close relationship between profitability and pollution control is very evident.

Another successful project for AES started with a steam plant at a packaging producer in Gauteng in 2007. Significant improvements in efficiency, steam supply quality and a boiler control system upgrade paved the way for AES to take over two steam plants at corrugated paper operations in the Western Cape and Kwa-Zulu-Natal. Ultimately, AES has operated five sites for this client.

Sustainability: a new page

AES has conducted many technology assessments in pursuit of sustainability in the pulp and paper sector. One such assessment examined the potential of using a by-product from the tissue production process – which was previously going to the local landfill as a fuel source.

"It is very high in moisture but includes fibre, so has energy value. Together with the manufacturer and a company from India, we examined this as a potential fuel source."

Ardagh Group recognised as leading ESG performer by Morningstar Sustainalytics

ARDAGH Group has been recognised as a leading ESG performer by Morningstar Sustainalytics, a renowned research and analytics firm.

Ardagh achieved an improved score, reinforcing its commitment to sustainable business practices and highlights Ardagh's effective management of material ESG issues.

Susan Doyle-Kelly, social sustainability and non-financial reporting director, commented on the achievement: "We are delighted that our sustainability efforts are being recognised and to receive strong ESG ratings from leading third-party providers, particularly from Morningstar Sustainalytics, is hugely encouraging. This rating



reflects our ongoing dedication to delivering best-in-class ESG performance for all our stakeholders."

In May 2024 Ardagh Group received an ESG Risk Rating of 10,8 and was assessed by Morningstar Sustainalytics to be at low risk of experiencing material financial impacts from ESG factors. In no event, the rating shall

be construed as investment advice or expert opinion as defined by the applicable legislation.

Morningstar Sustainalytics, is a leading ESG research, ratings and data firm that supports investors around the world with the development and implementation of responsible investment strategies. Sustainalytics works

with hundreds of the world's leading asset managers and pension funds who incorporate ESG and corporate governance information and assessments into their investment processes. The firm also works with hundreds of companies and their financial intermediaries to help them consider sustainability in policies, practices and capital projects.

Ardagh Group is a global supplier of sustainable, infinitely recyclable, metal and glass packaging for brand owners around the world.

It operates 62 metal and glass production facilities in 16 countries, employing approximately 20 000 people with sales of approximately \$9,4-billion.

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New branding secures authenticity of linatex premium rubber

In the quest to distinguish its Linatex® premium rubber from substandard imitations in the market, Weir Minerals has implemented a significant branding enhancement which is set to provide customers with an explicit identifier of the original product.

TO reinforce the authenticity of its Linatex® premium rubber and protect its customers from inferior counterfeits, Weir Minerals has introduced new branding to its red iconic rubber recognised globally for its unrivalled wear life and lower total cost of ownership.

Exclusively manufactured by Weir Minerals for the past 100 years, Linatex® premium rubber has become the benchmark in protecting equipment against erosive damage. Over the years, copycats have tried to imitate Linatex® with substandard red rubber. To a regular consumer, it may seem like a bargain to buy the pirated product at an incredible price. However, it incurs massive adverse effects on almost every aspect of their operations.

Boitumelo Zimba, rubber product manager at Weir Minerals Africa, says the distinctive red colour has traditionally been the major identifier of the Linatex® brand. Unfortunately, in recent years, there has been a marked influx of counterfeits that are made in the same red colour, which is confusing for unsuspecting end-users who may not be able to differentiate between the original Linatex® rubber and



Boitumelo Zimba, rubber product manager at Weir Minerals Africa.

the pirated product.

"Customers across the world are aware of the value that Linatex rubber brings to their operations," says Zimba. "It is only when that expected value is not achieved that they realise they have been sold inferior red rubber products under the Linatex name."

To secure the authenticity of the brand, all Linatex® premium rubber is now branded with four rows of black Linatex® logos strategically placed along the length of the rubber roll. Extensive test-

ing has confirmed that the black ink does not affect the unparalleled abrasion resistant properties of the rubber that has been the industry's first line of defence against abrasion for a century.

The introduction of this new branding will enable customers to instantly, visually, verify the authenticity of their rubber products. The presence of the black Linatex® logos will be a guarantee of superior quality and performance.

Linatex® premium rubber is made from

95% natural latex using a unique liquid-phase process patented in 1923. Remarkably, its formulation and manufacturing process have remained unchanged for a century, with Weir Minerals Malaysia proudly serving as the sole manufacturer of Linatex® premium rubber in the world.

In contrast, says Zimba, most of these counterfeit products are produced in unregulated conditions that make use of low quality materials. During manufacturing of these products, there is no guarantee that the rubber goes through mandatory quality checks to ensure superior quality and performance.

"With Linatex premium rubber, quality is guaranteed through our single-source manufacturing process. Where necessary, we can also provide certification to indicate the authenticity of the product, especially when it is sold through our authorised resellers. However, the new branding will be extremely visible, allowing customers to easily identify that the product they are buying is indeed Linatex premium rubber," concludes Zimba.

For more information contact: www.minerals.weir

Electric injection moulding machines benefit from new NSK ball screws

NSK is introducing its advanced HTF-SRM series, a high-speed, heat-resistant version of its ball screws for high-load drive applications.

This innovative new product is ideal for electric injection moulding machines tasked with manufacturing high-cycle, thin-wall products in short cycle times.

The HTF-SRM ball screw achieves the industry's highest levels of speed and heat resistance thanks to the application of NSK's newly developed 'RM Recirculation System' and heat-resistant materials and parts.

Electric injection moulding machines require high-cycle performance to improve productivity and meet growing requests for plastic products, a demand that stems from increasing global population levels and rising living standards in emerging economies. They also need the ability to mould thin-wall parts to reduce the consumption of plastic and ease the planet's environmental burden in line with the UN's SDGs (Social Development Goals) and carbon-neutral initiatives.

Against this backdrop, there is demand for electric injection moulding machines that feature high-load ball screws to facili-



tate both elevated cycle speeds and thin-wall moulding.

However, high cycle means faster operating speeds, which in turn require countermeasures to deal with the associated heat generation.

NSK has overcome this challenge with its SRM (Smooth Return Metal coupling) recirculation system. One of the technical challenges associated with higher speeds is the elevated impact force of ball recirculation, resulting in damage to recirculation components and the ball-screw shaft. NSK found the solution by applying its digital-twin technology to optimise the recirculation path.

The resulting SRM Recirculation System offers smooth ball recirculation and improved heat resistance, breaking through the limits of conventional plastics. Sup-

porting this innovation is the use of heat-resistant materials for the ball screws seals and resin components.

Thanks to these advances, the permissible d-n value (shaft diameter x rotation speed) is 200 000, a 40% improvement over NSK's conventional high-speed HTF-SRC ball screws.

Furthermore, the maximum operating temperature is 90°C and the momentary maximum temperature is 100°C, both of which are 20°C higher than NSK's conventional products.

Importantly, the external dimensions of the screw and nut are the same as those of the HTF-SRC ball screw, delivering an interchangeable design that eliminates the need for any modifications to the injection moulding machine when upgrading.

South African Plastics industry attends INC-4 discussions in Ottawa, Canada

THE Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) recently concluded its fourth session in Ottawa, Canada as part of a global effort to develop a legally binding agreement on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. INC-4 brought together over 4 500 delegates representing 170 member states and over 480 observer organisations (including business, academia and civil society), marking the largest INC gathering to date. Previous meetings took place in Uruguay, France and Kenya

and the fifth and final meeting is scheduled to take place in Busan, South Korea from 25 November to 1 December 2024.

Anton Hanekom, executive director of Plastics SA, represented the South African plastics industry in the discussions as an observer delegate, supported by the Chemical and Allied Industries' Association (CAIA). Their participation aligned with the call by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for the private sector to become actively involved in the discus-

sions in order to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goal 17.

Lively discussions on a number of topics included placing caps on virgin production, boosting recycled content, enhancing waste collection, phasing out certain substances and international trade. Throughout the INC-4 process, representatives of the plastics industry aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the plastics value chain and its role in combating plastic pollution by sharing critical information and data in line with the goal of ending

plastic pollution globally, including in the marine environment.

Plastics SA supported the view held by Global Partners for Plastics Circularity, who underscored demand-side solutions, such as boosting recycled content and enhancing waste collection.

Other topics that were high on the agenda included chemicals of concern and alternative plastics. Proposals were made by five different countries to phase out the use of five substances used in packaging by 2030, whilst

many states advocated for equal risk reduction standards across all types of plastics throughout their lifecycle. The trans-boundary shipment and trade of plastic waste between countries was also discussed.

"We believe that a multi-stakeholder approach, grounded in science and data, is essential for achieving meaningful and sustainable progress in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals," says Hanekom.

As these discussions continue, Plastics SA reaffirms its dedication to contributing

constructively to the global effort to combat plastic pollution, stop plastics leakage and achieve a more sustainable future. "Modern life would be impossible without plastics. It is short-sighted and irresponsible to push for outright bans without taking into consideration each country's socio-economic needs and unique challenges. It was clear from the emotive talks and appeals to ban plastics, that many of these advocates are misinformed about plastics, the ingredients that are used to produce them and the huge progress

we as an industry have made over the last two decades to create products that are safe, sustainable, responsible and recyclable. All parties need to evaluate the proposals with prudence and carefully consider the full lifecycle of plastics and their alternatives, as well as the broader supply chain impacts. The same goes for proposals that were made for dedicated programmes of work that focus on sectors with significant waste generation, short lifespans, or close environmental contact," Hanekom concludes.

THE NEXT GENERATION
Internships, Skills & Development Programmes

Damen Shipyards Cape Town (DSCT)
showcases its impact on SA’s maritime
industry at 2024 Oceans Economy
Conference and Expo

DAMEN Shipyards Cape Town (DSCT) underscored its commitment to security, job creation, and skills development in South Africa’s maritime sector at the 2024 Oceans Economy Conference and Expo.

The premier two-day industry event held in Cape Town on May 22nd and 23rd, brought together key figures from the commercial and defence maritime industries to discuss logistics, shipping, offshore oil and gas, fisheries, tourism, and maritime defence and security.

The event serves as the ultimate platform for showcasing cutting-edge technologies, innovative solutions, and the latest advancements in the oceans economy sector.

As a key supplier to the South African Navy, DSCT has delivered three state-of-the-art Multi-Mission Inshore Patrol Vessels (MMIPV’s) under Project Biro.

Sefale Montsi, director of DSCT and HR and transformation manager, Eva Moloi, delivered impactful speeches at the event, highlighting the advancements and opportunities within Project Biro and the broader skills development and sustainable job creation at DSCT. “I was honoured to speak at the 2024 Oceans Economy Conference and Expo,” says Montsi, “where I had the opportunity to share DSCT’s significant advancements through Project Biro and showcase how our work has impacted South Africa’s maritime industry and helped to drive sustainable economic growth.”

The three MMIPV’s built by DSCT in partnership with local suppliers, are

designed to enhance South Africa’s maritime security capabilities. The first MMIPV, SAS King Sekhukhune, was delivered in May 2022, followed by SAS King Shaka in October 2023, and the third vessel in March 2024.

“DSCT remains dedicated to enhancing South Africa’s maritime security and fostering sustainable economic growth through continued partnerships and local industry support,” says Montsi. “Project Biro has always been more than a maritime initiative; it has made significant contributions to job creation and the development of small and medium-sized enterprises in South Africa.”

Since 2018 the project has supported over 1 000 direct jobs and engaged nearly 4 000 individuals indirectly with a total of 848 local vendors having contributed to the manufacture of the MMIPV’s.

DSCT’s commitment to skills development was evident in Moloi’s presentation on their Training Centre which was established to address the skills gap in South Africa’s maritime industry. Offering apprenticeships and partnerships with educational institutions, DSCT provides comprehensive training in various trades, including welding, boiler making, electrical work, and more. These initiatives ensure a steady supply of skilled workers to sustain and grow South Africa’s shipbuilding capabilities.

“Speaking at the conference was an opportunity to highlight the critical importance of skills development in



the maritime industry,” says Moloi. “At Damen Shipyards Cape Town, we are dedicated to bridging the skills gap by providing comprehensive training programmes that not only empower individuals but also strengthen the overall capacity of our local shipbuilding sector.”

DSCT’s participation in the 2024 Oceans Economy Conference and Expo highlighted the company’s substantial contributions to South Africa’s maritime security, economic growth, and skills development through Project Biro and its robust training programmes.

“This event underscored the vital role of collaboration and innovation in driving the future of the oceans economy and we were honoured to take part,” Moloi concludes.

Vodacom launches 2025 Early Careers
opportunities to empower young talent
in STEM

VODACOM has opened applications to its Early Careers programmes for the 2025 intake. The initiative is part of Vodacom’s commitment to supporting youth development in South Africa, whilst creating an inclusive digital society by nurturing emerging talent in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) through employment and education opportunities.

“As Vodacom celebrates connecting South Africans over the past three decades, we are also looking towards the future and how we can continue to use our capabilities in building an inclusive digital society. Supporting digital skills development and diversity in STEM is critical to this ambition, especially among our youth, who face an evolving employment landscape dependent on digital technology. Our Early Career programmes provide life-changing opportunities that empower young people to pave a path in a digital world,” says Njabulo Mashigo, human resources director of Vodacom South Africa.

The Early Careers opportunities include the Discover Graduate Programme, which is designed for future leaders and offers graduates a holistic experience of working at Vodacom, such as mentorship, coaching, and on-the-job training, all while earning a full salary. After two years, participants can transition into a destination role within the organisation.

The Vodacom Early Careers Internship Programme also provides valuable work experience at the company through a paid 12-month fixed-term contract for graduates. Interns can explore career paths, network with professionals in STEM and develop



competencies in the digital TechCo environment. Undergraduates can apply for Vodacom’s Early Careers Academic Merit Bursary which is open to full-time first-year, second-year or third-year students who intend to study or are studying STEM fields but may lack the necessary resources to continue their education.

The following statistics from Vodacom’s Early Career Programme for the 2023/2024 financial year, proves the success of the initiative:

- ‘Code Like a Girl’: Since the programme’s launch, 2 451 high school girls have gained coding skills, increasing the total to almost 6 000 girls trained. The purpose of ‘Code Like a Girl’ is to introduce underprivileged girls to coding basics, life skills and available career paths while dismantling gender stereotypes that exist around STEM.
- Bursaries were awarded to 183 youth pursuing an academic degree, 69 of which went to students with disabilities.

- A total of 176 jobless youth were given work experience opportunities through the internship and learnership programmes with Vodacom hiring 56 of them into its permanent workforce structure.
- The flagship Discover Graduate Programme provided permanent employment to 57 graduates.

“Our Early Careers initiatives demonstrate our commitment to creating a people-centric, progressive, diverse and inclusive organisational culture, resulting in our recognition as the number one Top Employer in South Africa. Importantly, we are fulfilling our purpose to drive digital inclusion, enable sustainable socioeconomic development and contribute to a brighter future for our youth and our country,” concludes Mashigo.

Candidates can apply to Vodacom’s Early Careers programmes for 2025 at <https://www.vodacom.com/early-careers.php>.

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CAPE
Business News

Chairman:
Rudi Leitner
rudi.leitner@hypenica.com

Publisher:
Robin Dunbar
robin.dunbar@cbn.co.za

Editor:
Larry Claasen

Production Manager:
Elise Jacobs
elise.jacobs@cbn.co.za

Sales & Marketing Director:
Robin Dunbar
robin.dunbar@cbn.co.za

Sales Team:
Heather Ferreira
heather.ferreira@cbn.co.za
Shaun Austin
shaun.austin@cbn.co.za

Client Liaison Officer:
nyameka@cbn.co.za

Cape Business News Enquiries
sales@cbn.co.za

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It's the Zuma and Trump show

WELL cheers then,” said Jon the Joker gulping his lager, “and in the spirit of bonhomie, what are we toasting?” The cheerful congregation of conversationalists were, of course, celebrating the DA victory in beating off all those braggadocious pretenders. Result? More good government in the Western Cape.

“I say ‘Cheers!’ to clean water, safe roads and on-the-ball officials,” toasted Luke the Dude, “and also to the world taking a step towards sanity.” He raised his glass and quaffed, as did the rest of the local Pub & Grill, agreeing that sanity was indeed a toastworthy destination.

Except for Big Ben. “Well ...” doubted he suspiciously, “I am not sure that my idea of sanity is the same as Luke’s. Yes, the ANC was slapped down, but Zuma is back from nowhere – his MK Party handed out a hiding to all-comers in Kwazulu-Natal and trailed only the humiliated ANC and the strengthened DA nationally.”

“Me? I am thrilled to toast the DA anytime,” smiled Miss Lily brightly, “it’s a shin-

ing light of sanity. Cheers!”

“Before I ban politics from the bar,” intervened The Governor, “who needs a refill?” Most did.

“My toast includes the world,” elucidated Luke, “Not locally only, Governor, relax. Although, we might raise another glass to the Western Cape ...”

“Useless!” grinned Jon the Joker.

“Interesting thought, Lucas,” The Prof pondered. “When you say the world, do you mean the forces of fascism raising their ugly heads in Europe and, ominously, America – the Land of the Free?”

“Bull’s eye as usual Prof,” confirmed Luke. “The forces of autocratic rule. Russia of course, scheming to restore the old Soviet superpower, while fascism rules in countries like Hungary. And the unthinkable happening in the United States, where Russia contributed richly – with their expertise in internet warfare and inside information – to getting Putin’s preferred prevaricator into the White House back in 2016. And from there the Putin-Trump axis and

its ‘Maga base’ have been breaking down trust and respect for American institutions – such as the FBI, the Courts of Law, the US Congress, even the Constitution.”

“Indeed, young Lucas,” beamed The Prof. “Since returning from Moscow in 2013, where he met Putin, Trump has been scheming division between people who were once proudly united as Americans. By now, the Trump ‘base’ is talking openly about overthrowing American democracy.

“Launching with a full-page newspaper ad in 2013 to execute the Central Park Four (all later exonerated and released), Trump ranted forth – Obama’s birth certificate, Hillary Clinton’s emails, etcetera all the way to the ‘Biden crime family’ investigation in Congress (a humiliating Maga flop – all their ‘smoking-gun evidence’ led to Russian agents) and now blaming Trump’s 34-felony conviction on, of course, President Biden.

“The charges were heard in a state court – no connection to the Justice Department or Biden. But Trump and his mob just scam

OPINION

ON THE CONTRARY

The columnist is a journalist and editor based in Onrusrivier. His awards for journalistic excellence include the Mond and the Sanlam Awards.

Pieter Schoombee



louder regardless.

“Fact is: the true Trump has now been exposed. He is a convicted felon. Thus: indeed a step towards sanity. And for the many local Trump suckers, bad news: The World Population Review lists South Africa with 38 countries all banning felons from entering their borders.”\

E-mail: noag@maxitec.co.za

When cyber attackers are using AI, your defence needs to do the same

By Ivaan Captieux, Information Security Consultant at Galix



CYBER threats have become increasingly sophisticated thanks to the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), and attacks can now be executed rapidly and scaled beyond anything a human is capable of.

Add in Machine Learning (ML), and attacks can now adapt and evolve in real time, becoming more sophisticated and stealthier

than ever. Traditional security measures are simply no longer effective; we need to counter the offensive AI with the use of defensive AI.

More than that, however, we need to understand that humans remain the weakest link in any security chain, and awareness of threats and security measures is a critical component in any robust and resilient cyber defence strategy.

The human element

When it comes to social engineering, AI has changed the game for bad actors. Attackers leverage AI and ML tools to analyse social media profiles, online activity, and other publicly available information to create increasingly tailored and convincing phishing messages. This vastly increases the likelihood of success.

While AI can be used in several ways to counter this, from fully automated firewalls and policy management to segmentation, firmware updates, and more, this is not a foolproof solution. Humans are still essential links in the security chain.

Education and awareness are critical. We need to be mindful of how we share personal information and what information we place

online in the public domain to safeguard our own privacy. Regular training and awareness can help educate people on cyberattack techniques and best practices for adopting a security-driven culture.

In addition, the human element remains essential in verifying what AI tools are doing; while AI can speed processes and automate manual tasks, people provide the contextual understanding of nuance that AI struggles with.

People are also critical in ensuring that ethical considerations are taken into account when building AI models and when using and processing data. To counter today’s threats, it has become vital to create ‘human in the loop’ defence models, where AI works in tandem with human analysts to respond to threats.

Collaboration is critical

Managed Security Service Providers (MSSPs) can be an invaluable asset for businesses in providing guidance on best practices and industry standards related to AI.

This can help organisations understand the ethical implications of AI and security and develop appropriate strategies to address

ethical risk.

This includes assessing fairness and transparency in the design of both algorithms and processes. MSSPs can also assist with providing education and training, documenting and communicating processes, and implementing and managing solutions. This includes how algorithms are selected, trained, and deployed, as well as how data is collected, processed, and used for analysis.

Working with MSSPs in collaboration with regulatory bodies can help organisations align security objectives, ensure compliance, and assist in implementing ethical practices effectively.

Working together is the key to successfully implementing AI, especially when it comes to AI as part of a cyber defence strategy.

It is essential to build trust between humans and AI, invest in robust defence systems, and monitor for emerging threats, and this requires human oversight as the ultimate decision-maker.

Organisations, MSSPs, and regulatory bodies, by working together, can create collaborative ecosystems that foster the development of solutions built on trust that can enhance security posture and mitigate cyber risk effectively.

Expectations for the post-election property market

THE importance of the 2024 elections cannot be understated, with some voters waiting for over six hours just to cast their vote.

With elections behind us, all eyes are on the South African economy to see how the results will impact future stability and growth.

While remaining cautiously optimistic for how the South African property market will perform in the year ahead, Adrian Goslett, Regional Director and CEO of RE/MAX of Southern Africa, notes that persistent challenges such as high unemployment rates, high interest rates, the risk of load shedding, and political uncertainties could temper growth.

“The next two weeks are crucial for SA’s democracy and economic future. Coalition partners picked in the next few days will determine foreign and local investment sentiment

and may well determine the trajectory of the economy over the next few years,” he says.

He goes on to explain that immediately after elections, the property market may experience some short-term volatility as investors react either positively or negatively to the new political landscape.

“However, long-term stability and growth depend on the elected government’s ability to implement effective policies and make good on any pre-election promises,” Goslett notes.

Elaborating on this, he explains that owing to the uncertainty that builds around election time, many investors prefer to keep their finances liquid until the future of the economy becomes more stable.

“It is widely perceived that policy decisions tend to be more favourable leading up to an

election and can change post-election. Investors, both foreign and local, are therefore likely to wait a few months both leading up to and following an election period to see if any policy changes come into effect that might affect their return on investment,” he explains.

Unsure of how citizens will react to the election results, Goslett adds that foreign investors also tend to adopt a ‘wait and see’ approach when it comes to investing until they can be more certain of political stability in the country.

Apart from the political concerns, the South African Reserve Bank’s stance on interest rates will also play a crucial role in how the property market will perform in the months ahead.

“High interest rates make borrowing

more expensive, discouraging property purchases and investments. High inflation can erode purchasing power and affect property affordability. If risks to inflation are not managed well, then this will have a negative impact on the local housing market,” Goslett says.

“The post-election property market in South Africa will be influenced by a combination of factors and investors will, no doubt, be watching closely for signals of stability, economic growth, and clear policy directions to gauge their confidence in the market. That being said, the South African property market has proven resilient time and time again, and I remain confident in the fact that real estate will always be a safe long-term investment strategy,” Goslett concludes.