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Cape Town airports set for billions in investment to boost air travel and tourism



By Staff Writer

CAPE Town's aviation sector is preparing for a massive expansion, with billions of rands earmarked for airport upgrades and new infrastructure to meet growing international travel demand.

The Airports Company South Africa (Acsa) has committed more than R21.7 billion to upgrade Cape Town International Airport and other major airports nationwide, with extensive renovations at Cape Town's main airport scheduled to run from 2026 to 2029. This represents the largest infrastructure investment since the 2010 FIFA World Cup, underscoring Acsa's commitment to operational excellence and global competitiveness.

Meanwhile, the proposed R8 billion Cape Winelands Airport (CWA) is awaiting environmental approval. Project developers are hopeful that the environmental decision will come through approximately at the end of October. If given the green light by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, construction is set to break ground by end-2025, with operations starting in 2028.

Rising passenger demand and cargo growth

The investment comes as Cape Town continues to see a strong recovery in air travel and international tourism post-pandemic, with Cape Town International Airport recording an 8% increase in domestic travel and a 5%

rise in international arrivals, while cargo volumes have grown by a massive 56%.

Earlier data showed:

- Cape Town International Airport recorded 51,000 landings in 2025, a 13.3% increase compared to pre-pandemic levels in 2019.
- In July alone, 59,945 tourists arrived via the airport, a 32.2% jump from the 2019 figure of 45,350, according to StatsSA.

Comprehensive airport upgrades

Acsa CEO Nompumelelo Mpfu announced that the upgrades will include:

- R388 million for extending the domestic departure lounge and gates.
- R1 billion for upgrading the domestic arrivals terminal and realigning the main runway.
- Construction of a new runway and expansion of both domestic and international terminals.

Mpfu admitted that travellers have not been receiving the service levels they deserve, citing Acsa's pandemic-era decision to pause capital expenditure as a reason for current capacity constraints.

Following a series of infrastructure issues at OR Tambo International and Cape Town International airports, Acsa has earmarked

R14 billion for maintenance, refurbishment and infrastructure replacement.

Calls for an open skies policy

While infrastructure upgrades are critical, local leaders are also calling for broader policy reform to strengthen the aviation sector. James Vos, City of Cape Town's Mayoral Committee Member for Economic Growth, has urged the government to adopt an open skies policy, which would allow more airlines access to airports.

According to Vos, an open skies policy removes restrictions on air routes, capacity, pricing and market access, ultimately enabling airlines to operate more freely and competitively, with benefits including increased connectivity, lower airfares and more opportunities for businesses.

Growing air connectivity

Vos also highlighted the success of Air Access, an air-route development initiative housed within Wesgro, which just celebrated its 10th anniversary. International seat capacity for the 2025/26 IATA winter season is set to climb 11%, placing capacity 38% above 2019 levels.

During the peak international season from November to March, Cape Town will be directly connected by:

- 24 airlines
- 30 destinations
- 35 routes
- 228 weekly flights

Wesgro CEO Wrenelle Stander noted that ten years ago, Cape Town's skies looked very different, with long-haul connections being limited, highlighting the dramatic transformation in the city's global connectivity.

Economic impact and job creation

The upgrades are expected to enhance intra-African connectivity while supporting economic growth by creating jobs and boosting tourism. The aviation boom is already translating into tangible economic benefits for the Western Cape region.

Port of Cape Town earns global recognition amid setbacks



By Staff Writer

BAD weather, equipment failure, and shortages were blamed for "reduced productivity" at the Port of Cape Town for the year ending March 2025. This was despite the World Bank noting its improvements.

This decline followed hopes that a change in leadership - with the appointment of Michelle Phillips as Transnet Group CEO on 1 March 2024 - would turn things around at the rail and port monopoly.

Instead, the Cape Town Container Terminal (CTCT) achieved 28 container moves per working hour, below the target of 32 moves per hour.

The Port of Cape Town was not alone in underperforming, as the Port of Durban also failed to meet its targets. Transnet said that "imports, exports, and transshipments fell short of the budget by 3.5%, 4.4%, and 26.8% respectively."

Transnet Port Terminals handled 4,092-million Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit (TEU) containers, falling short of its annual budget target by 7%. The company said this reflected ongoing operational and market challenges.

It added that its Durban and Cape Town ports experienced operational challenges, including equipment shortages, logistical inefficiencies, and weather-related disruptions such as extreme weather and strong winds, which caused delays.

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WCIS 2025 could transform South Africa's business landscape

By Adrian Ephraim

When the Western Cape Investment Summit convenes at Cape Town's International Convention Centre from 5-7 November 2025, the headlines will likely focus on the province's ambitious R200 billion investment target. But beneath the surface of this premier investment showcase lies something potentially more transformative: a deliberate effort to bridge the gap between South Africa's small and medium enterprises and the capital they desperately need to scale.

The SME reality check

Small and medium enterprises form the backbone of South Africa's economy, yet they remain chronically underserved by traditional investment channels. Dr Ivan Meyer, the Western Cape's Minister of Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism, acknowledges this reality with refreshing candour: "Not many of them have the skills to develop bankable projects," he admits, identifying a fundamental challenge that has long plagued the sector.

This skills gap extends beyond technical capabilities. When Meyer explains what investors scrutinise, the standards are demanding: "Any potential investor wants to know, this place where I am investing, are these places well run? Do they practise good governance? Is it a reliable municipality? Is there water? Is there sanitation? Is there electricity?"

What sets this summit apart is its systematic approach to SME integration. Meyer outlines a comprehensive support framework that extends far beyond traditional networking: "They will receive assistance with the sharpening of their preparation of the proposals, because not many of them have the skills to develop bankable projects."

The province's approach recognises that successful investment matching requires active facilitation: "We will also be doing curated matchmaking, linking their businesses to potential investors." This isn't a one-off event either. As Meyer explains: "We will also do some stuff before the Summit, during the Summit and after the Summit with these

small enterprises to follow up on certain leads."

The support extends to regulatory challenges that often overwhelm smaller businesses: "We will also be all in the ease of doing business, because they are also sometimes complaining about that it's difficult to do business. So we have a unit that will assist them with ease of doing business here in the Western Cape."

The infrastructure advantage

The Western Cape's value proposition rests heavily on infrastructure capabilities. Meyer is emphatic about this foundation: "One way to attract investment is to have proper infrastructure. So that is some of the stuff that we have... we built the best infrastructure investment here in the Western Cape, the best road infrastructure. We do proper maintenance."

Energy security features prominently in the province's strategy. Meyer's ambition is clear: "I want to see a Western Cape where there's no load-shedding." The province is making concrete progress. "We have already

procured 743 megawatt green and alternative energy in our system. We currently use 4 000 megawatts from Eskom, with plans to reach 5,700 megawatts with alternative energy capacity."

Beyond tokenism

The summit's approach to rural inclusion demonstrates genuine commitment rather than token gestures. Meyer describes a proactive strategy: "Earlier this year, in May, I called all the municipalities... So I gave that platform for municipalities to say across the province, please prepare your own investment proposals, which we can then include in our deal book."

This approach recognises the economic imperative of balanced development: "We want to see economic investment also in rural areas... we cannot just simply have a situation that people migrate out of the rural areas into the cities."

His long-term vision is ambitious yet specific: "I want to see that we get about 600,000 new jobs by the year 2035" and "I want to see that we reach a 3%



Dr Ivan Meyer, the Western Cape's Minister of Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism

GDP growth as a result of the growth for job strategy."

The trust factor

Ultimately, Meyer's pitch to investors centres on institutional reliability: "The message that I want them to know is that their investment is safe because there's a capable government at work."

He emphasises the comprehensive support ecosystem: "Their investment will get the support from the Western Cape government through WestGrove, through the Western Cape government, through the city of Cape Town."

HINO demonstrates its support for new energy vehicles

"ONE of the hot issues worldwide in the automotive business continues to be the drive towards new energy vehicles. Hino is committed to taking a multipath approach for its trucks, with the choice of a power unit which will best suit the opera-

tors' needs," explained Itumeleng Segage, General Manager of Hino South Africa. He was addressing attendees at Hino South Africa's media briefing held at the Gazoo Racing headquarters at Zwartkops Raceway, near Pretoria, recently.

"The company is continuing with the development of internal combustion diesel engines, while offering diesel-electric hybrids as well as battery electric trucks and vans in certain markets. Hino is also in the process of developing hydrogen as an emission-free power source and is investigating this in global trials using this fuel. Zero-emission green hydrogen is an ideal energy source for long-haul trucks operating out of depots which can be equipped with the necessary refuelling systems.

"As previously shared, here in South Africa, we are trialling 38 Hino 300 diesel-electric hybrid models with operators on a non-ownership basis. Fuel consump-



tion with this type of power unit is showing savings of up to 20%. Normally, the initial purchase price of such alternative technology would be high, but because it is a trial, Hino South Africa is subsidising the acquisition cost."

"Fuel consumption with this type of power unit is showing savings of up to 20%."

Hino SA, in partnership with KINTO, Toyota's mobility brand, will provide selected customers with a low-risk, affordable and all-inclusive leasing solution for selected customers over a four to five-year period.

"The Hino 300 Hy-

brid is well-suited for urban operations, and we will be closely tracking the performance of these vehicles while they are in use here. We have appointed five dedicated dealers in the regions where the Hino Hybrids will operate to

look after the maintenance and servicing of these trucks during the trialling period."

Segage went on to say that Hino SA was also using the media event to showcase one of the Hino battery electric vans that are already operating in

certain international markets.

"We will be using the Duto Z EV walk-through van as a display and demonstration unit, showcasing another of Hino's alternative transport solutions and to assess local interest. It has a roomy body with a one-ton carrying capacity and is well-suited to final-mile deliveries in urban areas, with a driving range of 150 km," added the Hino SA General Manager.

The Hino Duto Z EV is fitted with a 40 kWh lithium-ion battery located beneath the floor, which can be recharged to full in eight hours using a normal 5 W domestic power socket or in less than one hour using a 50 kW quick charger.

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Port of Cape Town earns global recognition amid setbacks



BAD weather, equipment failure, and shortages were blamed for “reduced productivity” at the Port of Cape Town for the year ending March 2025. This was despite the World Bank noting its improvements.

as the Port of Durban also failed to meet its targets. Transnet said that “imports, exports, and transshipments fell short of the budget by 3.5%, 4.4%, and 26.8% respectively.”

Transnet Port Terminals handled 4,092-mil-

formance, the World Bank’s Container Port Performance Index (CPPI) report for 2020 to 2024 noted that the Port of Cape Town improved its score by nearly 240 points between 2023 and 2024, one of the strongest gains globally.

The CPPI report said Cape Town had invested in new cranes and equipment, upgraded warehousing capacity, and introduced innovative measures. These include hydraulic shore-tension units and a predictive wind model, developed with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), to mitigate weather-related disruptions.

The report also pointed out that a helicopter piloting service had been launched to improve ship access during periods of high swells.

In spite of these improvements, the report noted that the Red Sea crisis placed “new demands on capacity and operational efficiency” on ports on the Cape of Good Hope route, at a time when many ports

worldwide experienced deteriorating performance.

Aside from the Red Sea crisis, weather, and equipment issues, other ports in Africa were also starting to take market share. Transnet pointed out that there was increased competition from transshipment hubs in neighbouring countries.

Though the Port of Cape Town failed to achieve its performance targets, Transnet said it was committed to improving its performance. “Transnet will continue to develop capacity at the CTCT, targeting regional and European trade. This will include landside capacity and rail and truck staging,” it said.

The company said it was looking at developing various near-port terminals, including a potential cold storage-enabled container and refrigerated container facility at Belcon, its inland container terminal located about 24km from the Port of Cape Town. This possible development, along with a rail shuttle service to CTCT, would support port decongestion.

Aside from these developments, Transnet has also increased the number of cranes and employees deployed at the CTCT to mitigate the negative impact of recent windy weather conditions affecting terminal operations.

South Africa’s Q2 growth hides fragile economy

By Chris Hattingsh

SOUTH Africa’s economy showed a modest rebound in Q2 2025, with GDP rising 0.8% quarter-on-quarter, following sluggish 0.1% growth in Q1. This was the strongest quarterly performance since 2023. However, on an annual basis, growth remains subdued at 0.6%, barely above the 0.5% recorded in 2024.

The recovery was driven largely by the mining and quarrying sector, which expanded 3.7% after a 4.1% contraction in Q1, supported by higher output of platinum group metals, gold, and chromium ore. Increased household spending, boosted by recent interest rate cuts, also added momentum.

Yet the rebound highlights South Africa’s ongoing growth dilemma: the economy remains heavily dependent on temporary lifts from commodity cycles and consumer spending rather than on long-term structural improvements. Without reforms, growth will continue to struggle to reach even 1% in 2025. If progress is made at Eskom and Transnet, growth could edge higher, but in the absence of wider reforms, gains are likely to be minimal.

Economists stress that unlocking stronger growth requires action on several fronts: fixing Eskom’s unreliable energy supply, modernising Transnet’s ports and rail systems, ensuring greater policy certainty for investors, and improving labour flexibility and skills training. Together, these reforms could raise growth to 3–4% sustainably, and in the long term potentially above 5% — a sharp contrast to the current baseline of around 1%.

A key concern is the continued weakness of gross fixed capital formation (GFCF), which measures investment



in factories, machines, and infrastructure as a share of GDP. The global average is 26%, but South Africa lags at just 15%. In Q2, fixed investment fell by a further 1.4%, the third consecutive quarterly decline. This not only reflects low investor confidence but also restricts the economy’s capacity to grow.

“Economists stress that unlocking stronger growth requires action on several fronts...”

UN Trade & Development’s Global Trade Update for September 2025 highlights that “trade policy uncertainty has become a major source of global instability.” As measured by both the World Policy Uncertainty and World Trade Uncertainty indices, “uncertainty has soared to record levels.”

The Update points out that increased uncertainty will impact on the global economy in the form of slower growth and higher costs, with companies forced to “carry excess inventory, hedge against losses and reconfigure supply chains,” thereby “raising costs and discouraging in-

vestment.” Secondly, “sudden shifts unsettle exchange rates and weaken investor confidence, capital flows and credit conditions.” And thirdly in the form of an erosion of trust; global cooperation is made more difficult because “weaker rules and unilateral actions fuel retaliation.”

While daunting and intimidating, this context of increased global uncertainty presents South Africa with the ideal opportunity to get its domestic structural reforms moving quickly, and to get its business environment house in order. International markets and investors are not going to cease looking for new opportunities, but it is up to South Africa’s government to make the political and policy decisions that would convince those investors and companies to deploy substantial amounts of capital in the country.

The bottom line: while Q2 delivered the strongest quarterly growth in nearly two years, South Africa’s economy remains on fragile footing. Without decisive reforms, particularly in energy, logistics, and investment policy, the country risks continued underperformance — and the opportunity to shift to a higher-growth path will remain out of reach.

“Transnet will continue to develop capacity at the CTCT, targeting regional and European trade. This will include landside capacity and rail and truck staging,” it said.

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Instead, the Cape Town Container Terminal (CTCT) achieved 28 container moves per working hour, below the target of 32 moves per hour.

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lion Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit (TEU) containers, falling short of its annual budget target by 7%. The company said this reflected ongoing operational and market challenges.

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Despite the poor per-



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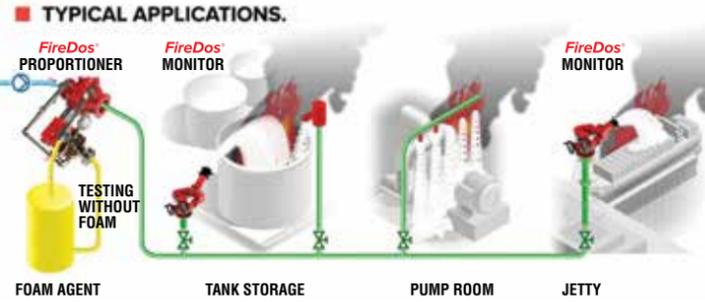
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Industrial Rental Equipment – Rand-Air Cape Town Hub



Rand-Air's Cape Town depot.

By Diane Silcock

WHEN it comes to specialised industrial rental equipment – from generators and air compressors to steam boilers, dryers, pumps or chillers – Rand-Air sets the benchmark in South Africa. The Cape Town depot, which has been operational since Rand-Air

is no longer the customer's responsibility nor a hassle. We follow a strict maintenance schedule and should a breakdown occur, this is swiftly dealt with to keep production downtime to a minimum, for instance," says Bailey.

At the helm of the Cape Town depot is its highly capable and characterful area manager, Ashley Bailey. He has risen through the ranks of his 18-year tenure with the company, from internal and external sales, to his current role, which he has held for the past year.

Bailey's passion for the business is evident

fundamental to our success," says Bailey. "Alongside this, we offer best-in-class Atlas Copco industrial equipment which position us well to continue expanding our customer base in the Western Cape."

Rand-Air not only rents out and maintains air compressors, as the name implies, it supplies a diverse range of products under the banner of power, flow, air, and temperature.

Chiller rentals: A practical and cost saving alternative for winemakers

With the abundance of wineries in the Western Cape, the company is well positioned to offer chiller rentals to the wineries during the harvest season. Rental is a more cost-effective alternative to purchasing equipment that would otherwise stand idle in the off-season.

"When customers choose rental, they quickly see the feasibility of rental versus purchasing," notes Bailey. "Companies need to recognise that buying new equipment not only involves a significant capital outlay, but also ongoing costs for maintenance, parts, and the manpower to manage it."

"Hiring equipment from Rand-Air is all inclusive, hence maintaining the equipment

is no longer the customer's responsibility nor a hassle. We follow a strict maintenance schedule and should a breakdown occur, this is swiftly dealt with to keep production downtime to a minimum, for instance," says Bailey.

Key sectors and market presence

Rand-Air is strengthening its presence in the Western Cape, with the Cape Town depot serving vital sectors such as food and beverage, wineries, and breweries—all reliant on generators, steam boilers, chillers, air compressors, and pumps. The company's pump rental division is gaining momentum following Atlas Copco's acquisition of Integrated Pump Rental, opening doors to new markets.

"Hiring equipment from Rand-Air is all inclusive, hence maintaining the equipment is no longer the customer's responsibility nor a hassle."

"In summer, demand for generators peaks with regional events, while our renewable energy involvement recently saw the supply of 12 dryers and two chillers for a major project," says Bailey. "We are also expanding into steam boilers, a new focus area already showing strong uptake."

"What keeps our customers happy," he concludes, "is the reliability of our equipment, the consistency of our service, our availability, and the strong relationships we continue to build. This positions our Cape Town depot as a strategic hub, delivering innovative, dependable, and customer-focused rental solutions across the region."

Bestmed unveils 2026 benefits with stronger preventative care and competitive contributions



Leo Dlamini, CEO and Principal Officer.

BESTMED Medical Scheme has announced its 2026 benefits, reinforcing its focus on sustainability, affordability, and member-first healthcare under its Personally Yours promise.

Despite economic pressures, Bestmed is the only top open medical scheme in South Africa to achieve six consecutive years of positive membership growth. Over the past five years, principal membership has risen 28.1%, with a sustainable claims ratio of 86.1% (YTD July 2025) and a 13.83% increase in net contribution income.

"Healthcare inflation remains one of the biggest challenges facing households," said Leo Dlamini, CEO and Principal Officer. "Our responsibility is clear: to safeguard the depth of our benefits while keeping contributions competitive. For 2026, we're not only protecting existing benefits but adding new preventative care benefits too."

Expanded preventative benefits

From 2026, Bestmed will introduce:

- Colon cancer screening (faecal occult test) on all options.
- HIV rapid test on all options.
- Prostate-specific antigen (PSA) screening from age 45 (previously 50), expanded to Beat1 and Rhythm1.
- Intrauterine device (IUD) covers an added female contraceptive benefit.

These will be funded from the Scheme's risk pool, not members' day-to-day benefits. "Preventative interven-

tions save lives and reduce costs long-term," added Dlamini.

Other 2026 enhancements include:

- Higher take-home medicine benefit (R700, up from R450).
- Cover for adenoidectomy (with tonsillectomy) on Rhythm1.

up 43% of claims, followed by medicines and specialists (16% each). Breast and prostate cancers remain the most prevalent.

Dlamini noted rising trends in hospital stays, diagnostic testing, and mental health services, adding: "Our figures reflect the reality of increasing complexity in members' healthcare needs."

"Preventative interventions save lives and reduce costs long-term," added Dlamini.

- Increased limits for cochlear implants and bone-anchored hearing aids on Beat4 and Pace options.
- Shoulder prostheses funded from a combined knee/shoulder benefit.
- Expanded breast reduction cover on Pace3 and Pace4, with an R100 000 benefit.

Meeting rising healthcare needs

In 2024, Bestmed processed 33.9 million claims, paying out R7.8 billion. From January to July 2025, claims reached R5 billion. Hospital costs made

Sustainable growth and affordability

Bestmed will implement an average weighted contribution increase of 6.8% in 2026, with some options rising as little as 5.1%.

"Our members entrust us with both their health and financial well-being," concluded Dlamini. "We remain focused on sustainable growth, enhanced benefits, and delivering the Personally Yours experience that sets us apart."

Disclaimer: Benefits and contributions are subject to Council for Medical Schemes approval.



Ashley Bailey, Area Manager for Rand-Air's Cape Town depot.

established its head office in Johannesburg 50 years ago, has cultivated a distinct culture that defines its operation.

Industrial rental equipment: Cape Town depot a strategic hub

Rand-Air forms part of Atlas Copco's global Speciality Rental divi-

in his hands-on leadership style, working closely with his team to ensure customers across the Western and Northern Cape receive not only top-quality rental equipment but also exceptional service and support.

"In Cape Town, we take great pride in our strong customer relationship culture – it's

Your home for specialised rental solutions

Click here to read more



www.randair.com



SA's R1 trillion energy bet: Why CFOs can't wait until 2030



By Staff Writer

SOUTH Africa's energy system stands at a crossroads - but the decision window is narrowing. While the country remains one of the world's top coal users, with over 80% of electricity still generated from coal-fired plants, three forces are converging: rising carbon taxes from 2026, R1 trillion in Just Energy Transition financing, and grid infrastructure that can't keep pace with renewable demand.

The question for business leaders is no longer whether to transition, but how quickly to move before carbon costs escalate and first-mover advantages disappear.

The current carbon profile

Electricity is South Africa's single largest source of energy-related emissions, producing 58% of the country's CO₂. For businesses, this translates into direct exposure: at the current carbon tax rate of R190 per tonne (rising from 2026), a company fleet of 100 conventional vehicles generates roughly R87,400 in annual carbon liability. Electric vehicles could cut that exposure in half.

The catch is infrastructure. Charging an EV on a standard outlet can take 10 hours

for just 50 miles or 80 kilometres of range. A level 2 charger, requiring a 240-volt upgrade, shortens charge time to an hour for 30-40 kilometres of travel. For companies considering EV fleets, installation planning is as important as the purchase itself.

Progress and bottlenecks

Energy experts suggest that South Africa's policy environment has improved, but execution lags. The Electricity Regulation Amendment Act of 2024 has set the legal foundation to establish a competitive power market and welcome an independent system operator.

According to Zaeem Soofie, the Head of Energy and ESG at Fairbridges Wertheim Becker, "Poor execution, if anything, is a greater risk. First, in respect of grid capacity and access. The pipeline of generation (mainly renewables) is strong, but transmission remains the bottleneck. Eskom/NTCSA's latest public plan calls for ~14,500 km of new lines and 210 transformers in the 2024-2033 window, with around R112 billion over the first five years - a scale-up that is underway but still catching up with demand."

For business leaders, Soofie's warning is str-

ategic: renewable capacity is available, but grid access isn't guaranteed. Companies banking on power purchase agreements or wheeling arrangements should pressure-test their timelines against NTCSA's infrastructure rollout schedule.

Without this backbone, renewables cannot scale fast enough to replace coal and meet the rising demand.

Opportunities in the Just Energy Transition

South Africa's Just Energy Transition Investment Plan (JET-IP) targets more than R1 trillion in financing by 2027, supported by international pledges of \$13.8 billion, which translates into opportunities. Businesses may benefit from build-out, coal site repurposing and localisation of supply chains.

Energy experts also note that transition finance works best when paired with people-first planning that reskills workers, supports small businesses and ensures tax bases in mining towns do not collapse. Done right, these measures align decarbonisation with economic growth.

Corporate strategy and carbon pricing

The carbon tax, set at R190 per tonne of CO₂ emissions in 2024, will

steepen from 2026. This pricing mechanism gives companies a financial incentive to switch to renewables and efficiency measures. CFOs can now frame decarbonisation as an internal rate of return instead of a compliance cost. The strategic question executives must ask is how quickly to embed low-carbon operations before costs climb.

The road to 2030

South Africa's challenge is synchronising three moving parts with the expanding grid, securing capital and building social trust to evolve the energy network. Coal will not disappear overnight, but a managed decline is already underway. Renewable capacity is rising, supported by private-sector procurement and household solar installation. EV adoption remains slow, but is expected to accelerate as charging infrastructure expands and fleet owners respond to tightening emission rules.

This decade offers companies risk and opportunity. Aligning with the Just Energy Transition unlocks financing, improves investor confidence and positions firms competitively in an increasingly carbon-conscious global market.

Transitioning to a renewable future

The energy transition hinges on delicate political, climate, finance and governance balances. These forces shape how, where and when companies invest in decarbonisation and renewable infrastructure. For executives, navigating this complexity with foresight will define industry competitiveness, resilience and alignment with a low-carbon economy by 2030.

How South Africa's transformer manufacturing industry can fill a gaping local and national infrastructure gap

By Mervyn Naidoo,
Group CEO of
ACTOM



SOUTH Africa's energy transition, as well as similar efforts by other countries around the world, is accelerating the demand for power transformers, as nations upgrade and expand their power grids to meet rising energy needs.

However, this worldwide shift toward renewable energy is exposing a critical infrastructure gap: a severe shortage of transformers. As countries race to expand generation capacity and decarbonise their grids, the demand for transformers, essential for transmission and distribution, has surged beyond current global supply capabilities.

Unlike legacy fossil fuel plants, renewable sources such as solar and wind are often geographically dispersed, located far from existing grid infrastructure. This mismatch has created an urgent need for new transmission lines and substations, driving up demand for transformers at a pace manufacturers are struggling to meet.

Factory slowdowns, supply chain bottlenecks and procurement delays during the recent COVID-19 pandemic have left manufacturers with limited capacity to ramp up production. The result is a global constraint that continues to ripple across infrastructure planning and execution.

Delaying grid upgrade

As a result, transformer shortages are delaying grid upgrades, stalling renewable energy project rollouts and deterring investment in new generation capacity. Without the ability to connect new plants to national grids, energy security and decarbonisation goals are at risk.

However, the global shortage of trans-

formers is also a consequence of systemic uncertainty in infrastructure demand and fragmented procurement practices. While energy transition goals and transmission development plans signal long-term need, the absence of firm, bankable orders have stifled investment in manufacturing capacity.

Procurement cycles in South Africa and other markets have often been ad hoc and reactive, leading to uncertainty in multi-year demand. This lack of visibility hinders manufacturers, particularly in transformer production, where high overheads require consistent throughput. Without sustained loading, factories struggle with under-recoveries, idle resources and financial strain.

Yet, the global transformer shortage presents a strategic opening for South African manufacturers. As international markets face long lead times - up to four years in Europe - and constrained supply, South Africa can position itself as a reliable alternative, especially if local firms can commit to competitive delivery windows of 12 to 18 months. Additionally, government could introduce aggressive export incentive programmes, similar to those implemented by many foreign countries. These initiatives could help mitigate the impact of U.S. tariffs, positioning South Africa as an attractive and competitive source for transformers in the global market.

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Opportunity to re-enter global supply chains

This presents a chance to re-enter global supply chains with agility. South Africa's industrial base and engineering expertise position it well, but unlocking this opportunity also needs coordinated action, such as policy support for bankable capacity expansion, procurement reform for demand visibility and targeted skills development to meet global standards.

Strategic procurement is crucial for reducing transformer lead times and enhancing grid reliability. By transitioning from

reactive to proactive planning, manufacturers can stock critical components in advance, shortening production timelines and enabling quicker delivery. This approach turns procurement into a strategic enabler rather than just a cost centre.

Localisation enhances these benefits by enabling quicker repairs for transformers and components. With local manufacturing, repair turnaround times are reduced, avoiding lengthy overseas shipping times and costs. Shipping a failed large transformer to an international factory of origin and returning it to South Africa can cost as much as R40m per transformer. Localisation enables minimised downtime and ensures continuity of supply.

Beyond logistics and cost, local manufacturing allows for better monitoring and support by domestic technical teams, improving product reliability and availability. This creates a more responsive energy infrastructure. In contrast, imported products often lack local servicing, leading to delays and increased risks for operators.

Rise in protectionism around the globe

The global economic landscape is shifting, with nations increasingly prioritising domestic economic participation. This rise in protectionism signals a clear message that countries are recalibrating to secure their own industrial futures. South Africa must respond with equal strategic intent.

With rising tariffs threatening our export competitiveness, particularly in sectors like transformer manufacturing, we face the risk of job losses and economic contraction. The solution lies in leveraging these shifts to build a resilient, self-sustaining industrial base.

Ultimately, we must embrace an "SA Inc" mindset, and more broadly, an "Africa Inc" vision. By investing in local supply chains, maximising domestic procurement and building regional manufacturing ecosystems, we can unlock economic growth, create jobs and reduce dependency on volatile global markets.

Powering Africa's industrial leap at the 2026 Manufacturing Indaba

OVER 600 million Africans still lack access to electricity, yet the continent's industrial potential remains immense. The 2026 Manufacturing Indaba will tackle this challenge head-on, convening leaders to explore how reliable energy can drive Africa's industrial and digital growth.

Event Details:

Dates: 14-15 July 2026

Venue: Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg

The Indaba will feature high-level discussions with policymakers, industry leaders, and innovators on strategies to scale industrial capacity, create jobs, and boost sustainable manufacturing. Delegates will engage with cutting-edge energy and infrastructure technologies,

while investors and trade partners identify opportunities to accelerate industrial development across the continent.

A key focus will be the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), a game-changer in uniting Africa's markets. By reducing tariffs and trade barriers, AfCFTA aims to increase intra-African trade by over 50%

by 2025 and add an estimated \$450 billion to the continent's GDP by 2035. It also promotes regional value chains and harmonized trade policies to attract global investment.

More than just a conference, the 2026 Manufacturing Indaba is a catalyst for a new era of African industrialisation - driven by innovation, collaboration, and shared prosperity.

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



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Dachser South Africa's Supply Chain Safety Guide

IN the intricate world of logistics, transporting dangerous goods poses unique challenges that demand specialised expertise and rigorous safety measures. These goods - ranging from chemicals to batteries and fertilisers - require careful handling to protect people, property, and the environment.

Dachser South Africa has built extensive experience in this space, with Managing Director Detlev Duve stressing the company's unwavering focus on safety and compliance. "Our priority is to ensure that all dangerous goods are transported safely and efficiently without compromising on quality or safety," he says.

Transporting hazardous materials requires navigating a maze of regulations, safety risks, and logistical hurdles. Key considerations include:

- **Regulatory compliance:** Companies must meet stringent international and local rules, including the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code and IATA Dangerous Goods Regulations.
- **Packaging and handling:** Specialised packaging prevents leaks, spills, and damage, while trained personnel mitigate risks.
- **Complex supply chains:** Many shipments require multi-modal transport across road, air, and sea, demanding careful coordination.
- **Specialised training:** Staff undergo regular training to remain prepared for emergencies.
- **Technology:** Real-time tracking enhances visibility, security, and efficiency.
- **Emergency preparedness:** Robust response plans and partnerships with local authorities ensure swift action when needed.

Dachser South Africa's operations are fully aligned with global frameworks such as IMDG and IATA standards. Its teams oversee every stage of transport—from labelling and packaging to leveraging advanced tracking systems - backed by state-of-the-art infrastructure and vehicles designed for hazardous cargo.

"Goods such as fertilisers and batteries require specialised

knowledge and infrastructure to ensure their safe and efficient transport," Duve explains.

For fertilisers, Dachser often manages complex multi-modal routes to remote agricultural areas, balancing timing with strict safety and environmental standards.

Lithium batteries, on the other hand, present fire and explosion risks that demand strict compliance.

As Duve highlights, "Proper packaging is crucial for safety, requiring lithium batteries to be packed in strong, rigid outer packaging to resist damage. Packages must also

feature specific labels to identify the battery type and associated risks. "Safety relies on clear communication and proper handling."

In addition to robust internal protocols, Dachser South Africa maintains comprehensive emergency response plans and collaborates closely

with local authorities to ensure rapid action in case of an incident. Its combination of expertise, technology, and infrastructure enables the safe and compliant movement of dangerous goods, reinforcing its position as a trusted logistics partner in South Africa and beyond.



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Logistics leaders break down silos in historic industry collaboration

By Adrian Ephraim

SOUTH Africa's logistics sector is undergoing a fundamental shift as industry players and government agencies work together to address the inefficiencies that have plagued the country's supply chains for decades.

The Southern African Association of Freight Forwarders (SAAFF) has spearheaded what industry insiders are calling the most comprehensive stakeholder engagement initiative the sector has ever seen.

The collaborative forum brings together a diverse group of logistics stakeholders, including freight forwarders, clearing agents, and critical government agencies such as SARS, ITAC (International Trade Administration Commission), NRCS (National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications), SAHPRA (South African Health Products Regulatory Authority), and the Border Management Authority (BMA).

Addressing the R300 billion problem

Logistics costs in South Africa are among the highest globally, representing about 12% of GDP compared to the international benchmark of 8-10%. This translates to an estimated R300 billion annual burden on the economy, costs that are ultimately passed on to consumers and undermine the country's competitiveness in global markets.

The initiative comes at a critical juncture for South African trade. Global supply chains remain under pressure from geopolitical tensions, trade disputes, and the lingering effects of pandemic-era disruptions. Meanwhile, the country's own logistics infrastructure has been hampered by state capture legacy issues, infrastructure degradation, and regulatory fragmentation.

"In over 15 years of working with freight logistics entities, this is the first time we have gathered in a space free from the pressures of transactions," said Donovan Mitchell, manager at ITAC. "Misunderstandings have been clarified, myths debunked, and a fresh path mapped forward."



Dr. Juanita Maree, SAAFF CEO.

The Relay Race analogy

Modern logistics operations involve between 10 and 40 different role players in a single transaction, with 10 to 17 distinct processes required for any cargo movement. Industry leaders compare this complexity to a relay race where timing and coordination are everything, or an orchestra where each instrument must contribute to the final harmony.

This complexity has historically created friction points throughout the supply chain, with different stakeholders operating in isolation and often at cross-purposes. The SAAFF initiative aims to create a better understanding and alignment between these various players.

"There is something powerful about coming together with shared purpose," explained Devlyn Naidoo, SAAFF Executive for SARS and Other Government Agencies, who heads the project. "It helps dissolve procedural friction points in the supply chain and is crucial to enabling the recovery of the logistics network after years of disruption."

A breakthrough engagement

The workshops have generated significant enthusiasm within the logistics community, with participants describing them as a breakthrough in stakeholder engagement. The sessions have moved beyond typical transactional interactions to focus on systemic improvements and policy reform opportunities.

For freight forwarders and clearing agents, who serve as crucial intermediaries in South Africa's trade flows, the initiative offers an

opportunity to directly influence regulatory processes and operational procedures that affect their daily operations. These businesses handle billions of rands worth of imports and exports annually, making their efficiency critical to the broader economy's performance.

The success of the initial sessions has prompted plans for expanded engagement, with SAAFF positioning the initiative as part of a broader programme to promote cohesion, compliance, and collaboration across the logistics value chain.

"The strength of any association lies in its ability to serve its members through collaboration with key stakeholders and enablers," said Dr. Juanita Maree, SAAFF CEO. "When trade flows efficiently, it drives jobs, economic growth and prosperity. Relationships are our currency – built on trust, consultation, and a shared vision."

The initiative represents a significant step toward addressing one of South Africa's most persistent economic challenges. With global trade patterns continuing to evolve and new technologies reshaping logistics operations, the country's ability to create a more efficient, coordinated approach to freight movement could prove crucial to its economic recovery and long-term competitiveness.

The logistics sector employs over 600 000 people directly and supports millions more jobs throughout the economy. Improvements in sector efficiency could therefore have far-reaching impacts on employment, consumer prices, and South Africa's attractiveness as a trade and investment destination.

Engineers must be put back at the centre of infrastructure decisions, says IMESA

AS South Africa marks Transport Month, the Institute of Municipal Engineering of Southern Africa (IMESA) is calling for urgent reform in how infrastructure decisions are made. The organisation warns that many failures in transport and public works stem from one critical issue: engineers are being excluded from procurement and planning processes.

"At the municipal level, tender evaluation and bid adjudication committees – which are responsible for awarding billions of rands in infrastructure contracts – are still dominated by non-technical officials," IMESA asserts. "This has become a systemic issue we've been sounding the alarm on for years."

According to IMESA president Geoff Tooley, the consequences are now too severe to ignore. "Tenders are routinely awarded to contractors who lack the technical capacity to deliver. Decisions are often based on the lowest price, not on whether the bidder can actually build what's required."

"Tenders are routinely awarded to contractors who lack the technical capacity to deliver. Decisions are often based on the lowest price, not on whether the bidder can actually build what's required."

A crisis of quality and accountability

The 2023/24 Auditor-General's report confirmed the scale of the crisis. Municipal infrastructure projects across South Africa are plagued by delays, cost overruns, and quality issues. In almost every case, these

problems can be traced back to poor contractor selection and a lack of proper technical due diligence – areas where engineers are specifically trained to advise. One stark example is the Modderfontein bridge in Gauteng, which has been in disrepair since 2021. Despite a contractor being paid in full by the Johannesburg Roads Agency, only half the work was completed, leaving motorists to endure years of congestion. A new contractor has since been appointed, but the incident illustrates how poor procurement undermines service delivery.

Transport infrastructure: More than roads and bridges

First launched in October 2005, Transport Month was created to raise awareness of the role of transport in the economy. IMESA stresses that infrastructure is not only about bridges and highways but also about supporting local economies, enabling the flow of goods, and connecting communities.

"To be safe, depend-

able and lasting, infrastructure must have engineers involved from the outset – from planning right through to procurement and delivery," says Tooley.

Legal and ethical risks

The current practice of sidelining engineers also creates legal and



IMESA president Geoff Tooley.

ethical risks. Under the Engineering Profession Act (46 of 2000), engineers registered with the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) are legally required to uphold standards that protect the public.

This includes rejecting unsafe work or improperly scoped projects. When engineers are excluded from procurement – or their advice is ignored – it forces them into a professional conflict.

"Municipal engineers' standard role includes evaluating whether budgets match real-world construction costs, and whether bidders have the necessary track record," Tooley explains. "These assessments are submitted to bid evaluation committees. But too often, engineers' recommendations are ignored, particularly when we advise against awarding a tender. That is not only reckless – it wastes public money."

A call for reform

This Transport Month,

IMESA is urging municipalities and national departments to:

- Ensure registered engineers are part of all tender evaluation and adjudication committees.
- Make technical recommendations binding, not optional.
- Recognise that engineers' professional mandate already carries legal authority.

"When engineers are involved early, projects are more likely to be delivered on time, on budget, and with long-term sustainability," Tooley says. "That means safer communities, stronger service delivery, and more resilient economies."

"The current approach is not working. If South Africa is serious about building infrastructure that lasts, engineers must be at the decision-making table from day one. Anything less is a risk we simply cannot afford."

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ABB drives rail modernisation and EV growth in South Africa

SOUTH Africa's transport systems are at a crossroads. On one hand, electric vehicle (EV) adoption is accelerating; on the other, passenger and freight rail infrastructure requires urgent modernisation.

"Both sectors depend on the same core infrastructure – power, connectivity, digital enablement, safety and regulatory compliance. Without strong foundations in these areas, neither EV adoption nor rail modernisation can deliver on their full promise," says Veron Maharaj, Product Marketing Specialist at ABB.

At the 2025 Southern African Railways Association (SARA) conference, regional ministers and rail CEOs emphasised the need for rail modernisation, electrification, hybrid traction, and climate-resilient rail systems. Stronger regulatory frameworks and private-sector participation were also identified as critical to shifting freight from road to rail and driving regional economic integration.

SARA promotes rail across the SADC region, harmonising regulation, coordinating corridors and advocating for infrastructure investment. Its push for rail electrification has direct implications for national grid planning and the rollout of EV charging, particularly at depots, stations and logistics hubs. Integrating charging infrastructure into modernised stations and corridors can benefit both last-mile EV fleets and public transport.

ABB's work in Africa positions it at the heart of this transition. The company supplies compliant, lightweight, safety-critical components for rolling stock, meeting global fire and smoke standards essential for passenger safety. It also provides electrification, station automation, monitoring, and control systems that improve reliability and reduce downtime across passenger and freight services.

Upgrading older rail assets and retrofitting legacy systems remain a priority for South African operators such as PRASA, Gautrain and Transnet. ABB supports OEMs, panel builders and workshops in enhancing performance, safety and ef-

iciency. In parallel, ABB's technologies in EV charging infrastructure and power systems are helping build smarter electrification for cities, industry, and public transport networks.

Challenges remain: underinvestment in rail, policy gaps, and uneven rollout of charging infrastructure continue to slow progress. "If we improve accessibility and affordability in our rail and EV systems, adoption will follow. Investments in infrastructure not only reduce costs for freight and industry but also make sustainable mobility more accessible to the public," says Maharaj.

ABB showcased solutions at Smarter Mobility Africa (1-2 October 2025), a platform for policymakers, technology leaders and industry to collaborate on cleaner, more resilient transport. With momentum building, South Africa could, within five years, achieve more reliable and electrified rail, expanded EV charging, and integrated transport planning that makes seamless, sustainable mobility a reality. ABB Electrification is committed to being part of that change.

Brady RFID Solutions: Engineering durability and compliance for rail industry challenges

AS rail operators face mounting pressure to improve asset management, reduce maintenance costs, and meet stringent safety regulations, RFID technology has emerged as a critical enabler of digital transformation. Cape Business News spoke to Brady RFID Solutions about its latest rail industry solutions and how it maintains high safety standards.

Brady answers some pertinent questions:

Q. Can you describe specific material and adhesive technologies used in your labels / RFID tags that ensure durability over the expected lifecycle of rail components? Also, what accelerated testing or field data do you have to back up claims of longevity in those harsh conditions?"

A. Brady can customise the RFID label construction (face materials, adhesives and RFID inlays) according to the customer's needs and specifications.

We have an extensive range of highly resistant materials (PET, PP, PA, PI, Vinyl etc.) that can be chosen as the required face materi-

als for the RFID label. Also, we have different strong adhesives (permanent acrylic, rubber-based etc.) that can be applied according to the application surface. With the good knowledge of materials and combining the RFID inlays, we can create the high-performance RFID label construction for different harsh conditions, such as resistance to chemicals, UV, water, extreme heat and cold etc.

Our lab can also perform the necessary accelerated testing, such as the weatherability test, UV light resistance test, humidity and temperature resistance test, chemicals testing, physical testing (peel adhesion test, abrasion test etc).

Q. How do Brady's RFID solutions (tags, fixed & handheld readers) integrate with existing rail asset management systems or IoT platforms? What standards/communication protocols are supported? Is there support for remote/wireless data capture (eg. from tags on moving rolling stock), and how is tag readability ensured in complex environments with metal, interference, etc.?"



A typical RFID label construction.

A. We support MQTT(s), HTTP(s) protocols as a standard. On the wireless side, we can support WLAN and LTE in selected areas. Readability is ensured with a correct label and correct antenna placement.

Q. Maintenance and safety inspections are critical. How do your printing/identification/software tools support the traceability of components (for example, identifying and tracking cable harnesses, brackets, fasteners) across multiple inspection cycles? Is there functionality for verification (eg. reading/auditing RFID or barcode data), condition-based maintenance, or integrating identification with

maintenance schedules?

A. Every RFID tag has its own unique identity. This enables tracking the usage of the assets. RFID tag is also passive, so if it is not mechanically broken, then its lifetime is not limited. Every reading can be tracked, and additional information can be added.

Q. The rail sector is heavily regulated. Which international or regional standards do Brady's products comply with for use in rail applications (e.g., EN, DIN, ISO, railway safety norms)? How do you ensure that labeling (e.g. safety signs, ratings, nameplates) meets requirements for visibility, retro reflectivity, flame resist-

ance, etc.? Also, what is your approach to quality assurance and certifications for these products?

A. Brady manufactures quality identification solutions worldwide and takes into account all relevant regulations and standards, including the European Union's CE-label.

More specifically, our Lab is testing and securing compliance of selected materials with the following standards:

- NF F00-608:1995
- EN 50343:2014 + A1:2017
- EN 5545-2:2020 + A1:2023
- DIN VDE 0472-815:1989-03
- BS 7870-3.22:2011



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How e-Commerce is reshaping South Africa's storage landscape

THE warehousing industry in South Africa is entering a golden era, with the market projected to reach \$22.1 billion by 2030 as digital commerce and changing consumer behaviour fundamen-

grow at a compound annual growth rate of 7.3% between 2025 and 2030, significantly outpacing traditional economic growth forecasts. This expansion is being driven primarily by the explosive growth

The e-commerce effect

The digital shopping boom has created new pressures on South Africa's warehouse infrastructure. Online grocery shoppers now represent 53% of the customer base, accelerating demand for urban micro-fulfilment centres that can deliver fresh products quickly to metropolitan consumers.

"The traditional warehouse model of large, remote facilities is being disrupted," say industry observers tracking the sector. "We're seeing a shift towards smaller, strategically located urban nodes that can serve



seamless integration with e-commerce platforms.

The adoption of digital tools positions South Africa favourably in the African context, though the country faces growing competition from technology-driven logistics hubs in Kenya and other regional markets.

The convergence of e-commerce growth, infrastructure investment, and technology adoption suggests South Africa's warehousing sector is at an inflection point. Third-party logistics providers are expanding capacity, while property developers eye industrial real estate opportunities.

The last-mile delivery segment alone is expected to exceed \$2.3 billion by 2030, creating ripple effects throughout the supply chain and driving continued demand for strategically located warehouse space.

For logistics executives and property investors, the message is clear: the traditional warehouse is evolving into something more dynamic, urban, and technology-enabled - and the companies that adapt fastest will capture the growth ahead.

"We're seeing a shift towards smaller, strategically located urban nodes that can serve the last-mile delivery requirement."

tally alter the country's logistics landscape.

According to recent market analysis, the sector is expected to

of online retail, which reached R71 billion in 2024 - a striking 29% year-on-year increase.

the last-mile delivery requirement."

Recent data shows that warehouse occupancy across Africa hit 83% in the first half of 2025, with e-commerce serving as the primary demand driver. This high occupancy rate signals tight supply and suggests significant opportunities for new warehouse development.

metre facility in East London, both targeting high-growth sectors including healthcare, life sciences, retail, and renewable energy.

The broader freight and logistics market, currently valued at approximately \$14.7 billion, is expected to reach \$19.9 billion by 2030, growing at 6.24% annually. This growth is being supported by infrastructure modernisation efforts and improved connectivity to ports and airports.

South Africa surpassed \$1 billion in 2024 and is forecast to grow at 9.36% annually through 2030 - faster than general warehousing.

This growth reflects changing consumer preferences for fresh food delivery and the expanding pharmaceutical sector's need for temperature-sensitive storage solutions.

Technology as differentiator

Modern warehouse operators are leveraging technology to gain a competitive advantage. Fully integrated, paperless warehouse management systems are becoming standard, allowing real-time inventory tracking and

Infrastructure investment accelerates

Logistics providers are responding with significant capital deployment. Recent facility openings include a 3,000 square metre warehouse in Samrand near Pretoria and a 2,000 square

Cold chain opportunities

A particularly promising segment is temperature-controlled storage. The warehousing and cold chain market in



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Storage Systems: The Backbone of South Africa's E-Commerce Boom

South Africa's e-commerce sector is on an unprecedented growth trajectory. In 2025, online shopping is projected to exceed R130 billion, edging close to 10% of total retail sales. Behind every click of "buy now" lies a complex, high-pressure operation: warehouses and fulfilment centres working tirelessly to meet increasingly ambitious delivery expectations. At the core of this evolution are smart, adaptable storage systems.

MOBILE RACKING

Mobile racking further optimises floor space, opening only the aisles needed at any given moment. Layered on top of these physical solutions, WMS software acts as the warehouse's "control tower," providing real-time inventory tracking, directing staff, optimising picking routes, and minimising errors. Advanced robotics and automated storage and retrieval systems (AS/RS) further reduce reliance on manual labour, increasing throughput and reliability.



Why E-Commerce Storage Works Differently

Unlike traditional warehouses, which handle bulk shipments to retail stores, e-commerce facilities operate on a different rhythm. They pick and pack individual items – a T-shirt here, a charger there, a loaf of bread for home delivery. This creates unique challenges: a vast product variety, unpredictable spikes during promotions, same-day or even one-hour delivery pressures, and high volumes of returns. Storage systems must therefore be flexible, compact, and optimized for speed.

Image source: www.freepik.com



CHOOSING THE RIGHT STORAGE SOLUTION

Choosing the right storage solution requires careful consideration of product type, order volumes, space efficiency, flexibility, and labour optimisation. The payoff is clear: faster fulfilment, reduced errors, improved safety, and significant cost savings. In a country grappling with load-shedding and high operational costs, efficient storage is not just a competitive advantage – it is a business imperative.

South Africa is leading the way on the continent, piloting innovative fulfilment models for groceries and apparel, and setting benchmarks in dense urban distribution. As other African nations scale their e-commerce operations, they are increasingly looking south for guidance and expertise.

BARPRO'S ROLE

In this transformation, companies like Barpro Storage SA are partnering with businesses to deliver scalable, practical storage solutions – from pallet racking to automated systems. These innovations ensure that South African e-commerce businesses not only meet consumer expectations but also lay the groundwork for a robust, continent-wide digital retail ecosystem.

CONCLUSION

The future of African e-commerce will be built on smart, efficient storage systems. As South Africa demonstrates, investing in intelligent infrastructure is not just about moving products – it's about moving the entire market forward.

For more information feel free to contact:

Barpro Storage SA (Pty) Ltd

info@barpro.co.za | CPT – 021 5529190 | JHB – 011 392 1702 | DBN – 031 942 3200

The distinction between warehouses and fulfilment centres is crucial. Warehouses focus on bulk storage, receiving pallets and shipping them in large batches. Fulfilment centres, by contrast, prioritise speed and accuracy, storing products in accessible configurations to support rapid picking, packing, and shipping of individual orders. Increasingly, e-commerce facilities operate as hybrids, combining bulk storage with fast fulfilment. Tools such as carton flow racks, mobile racking,

multi-tier case-picking mezzanines, and warehouse management systems (WMS) enable facilities to function seamlessly in both roles.

Modern e-commerce storage systems blend physical infrastructure with technology. **Pallet racks** and **multi-tier mezzanines** maximise vertical space, while **carton flow and gravity-feed systems** ensure fast-moving stock is always accessible.



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VEGABAR pressure transmitters ensure reliable measurement

IN the petrochemical and speciality chemical sectors, reliable pressure measurement is essential for maintaining process efficiency and product quality. This becomes even more critical in remote African processing plants, where

equipment must withstand dramatic swings between hot days and cold nights.

One petrochemical plant faced this challenge at a critical pressure measuring point located in a hazardous area. Temperatures varied from

+20°C to +200°C, and pressures fluctuated between 1.5 and 200 kPa absolute. The measurement was vital to an automated process, where even minor inaccuracies affected both energy use and product quality.

Why traditional systems struggle

The plant initially relied on a conventional differential pressure setup with an oil-filled capillary. But in hot climates, these systems are prone to failure. Daily temperature changes cause the oil to expand and contract, resulting in measurement drift. Over time, high process temperatures and vacuum conditions force the oil to outgas, creating bubbles that destabilise readings. These issues not only undermine reliability but also contribute to downtime and higher costs.

The VEGA solution

To resolve this, the plant adopted VEGA's electronic differential pressure system, powered by two VEGABAR Series 80 transmitters. This eliminated the weaknesses of capillaries and provided stable, accurate measurements essential for safe and efficient process control.

For this application, the VEGABAR 83 was chosen. Capable of handling pressures from 0–25 mbar up to 1,000 bar and process temperatures as high as +400°C, the device is designed for extremes. Its METEC® measuring cell technology withstands thermal shock, vacuum, and rapid environmental changes, while resisting temperature-related drift. Unlike traditional sensors, the METEC® cell uses no elastomers and incorporates self-compensating materials for long-term stability. Another advantage was its compact installation. The VEGABAR 83 required only 1½-inch process connections instead of the usual 3-inch fittings, saving costs, simplifying installation, and reducing the equipment footprint.

A practical fit for Africa

In sub-Saharan Africa, where plants regularly face severe temperature shifts and challenging operating conditions, VEGA's electronic differential pressure system offers a reliable, future-proof solution. Its straightforward integration and smart software make setup simple, with no need for complex fittings.

Impressed by the consistency and repeatability of results, the plant's engineers now plan to roll out the system across other critical measuring points - demonstrating how robust technology can directly improve productivity, safety, and cost efficiency in demanding industries.

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Key role players in the pharmaceutical industry gathered at the AC Hotel in Cape Town for the Automation in Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Conference held on 10 September 2025. The event was hosted by NJC and ABB.



Powering South Africa's pharma automation future

When NJC became the first system integrator to implement ABB's 800xA automation system in South Africa's pharmaceutical sector in 2012, it achieved more than a technological milestone it laid the groundwork for a reputation defined by trust and technical excellence. That pioneering project established NJC as the preferred local partner for some of the world's most exacting pharmaceutical manufacturers.

"The 800xA System installation was a defining moment for our business," says CEO Sarane Richard-Coombes. "It not only deepened our partnership with ABB but also expanded our expertise in batch management, MES integration, regulatory traceability, and lifecycle support all essential to delivering world-class DCS solutions."

FROM GLOBAL TECHNOLOGY TO LOCAL IMPACT

As an ABB Authorised Value Provider, NJC enjoys privileged access to some of the world's most advanced automation and digitalisation tools, including Batch Suite, Manufacturing Operations Management (MOM/MES), and digital twins.

For Sarane Richard-Coombes, the value lies in turning these platforms into practical outcomes for local industry. "NJC leverages ABB's Batch Suite and System 800xA to deliver CFR-21 compliant, traceable batch control for pharma clients" he explains.

"MES/MOM integration provides real-time visibility across production, quality, and maintenance, enabling faster, data-driven decisions. Digital twins and analytics help detect process drift early, improving yields and reducing waste."

In a country where agility, cost control, and regulatory pressure collide daily, those benefits are more than incremental. They are decisive. "In effect, these technologies don't just represent 'nice-to-haves' – they deliver measurable improvements in quality, consistency, cost-of-nonconformance, speed to market, and compliance for local pharmaceutical manufacturers," he says.

BUILDING COMPLIANCE INTO THE CORE

With the pharmaceutical sector facing ever-stricter requirements - from GMP validation to FDA CFR 21 Part 11 compliance – NJC has developed a philosophy of designing systems that are "audit-ready by design."

"We combine ABB's CFR 21 Part 11-ready platforms with strict GMP validation practices to deliver systems that are audit-ready by design," Richard-Coombes notes. Secure electronic records, digital signatures, audit trails, and full traceability are all standard. "MES/MOM integration and digital validation keep operations agile, efficient, and cost-effective for clients like Adcock Ingram, GSK, and Johnson & Johnson."

This approach has already paid dividends. A recent project saw NJC migrate pharmaceutical clients away from Excel-based batch reports – long a weak point in compliance – into web-based SSRS reporting. "The shift improved data integrity, traceability, and audit readiness, reducing the risks of manual errors," he says. "It also gave clients real-time visibility and faster decision-making. Centralised reporting cut compliance costs while simplifying validation and change control."

For Sarane Richard-Coombes, it's proof of NJC's commitment to continuous improvement. "This shows NJC's commitment to continuous improvement and future-proofing operations in pharma."

LESSONS FROM OTHER INDUSTRIES

Though pharmaceuticals dominate NJC's portfolio, the company also has deep experience in metals, pulp & paper, food & beverage, and water. Sarane Richard-Coombes argues that this cross-sector expertise strengthens NJC's ability to anticipate what's next for pharma.

"These experiences sharpen our ability to design robust, scalable, and resilient systems – lessons we bring into pharma projects to manage complexity, variation and scale," he says. "They force us to innovate around uptime, continuity, precision and cost control, which are also critical in pharma. Cross-sector exposure also gives us foresight: we witness earlier regulatory, sustainability or technology shifts in non-pharma industries and can proactively adapt in pharma."

The result? NJC doesn't just react to challenges – it anticipates them.

PREPARING FOR THE NEXT WAVE

Looking to the future, Richard-Coombes sees the next great leap in pharma manufacturing coming from data, intelligence, and people.

"We aim to help pharma clients stay ahead of regulatory, environmental, and operational change by embedding technology in their core operations – not as add-ons but as enablers of agility, quality, and sustainability," he says.

That means adopting predictive analytics to detect problems before they occur, AI to accelerate decision-making, and connected worker solutions to empower human operators with better data, guidance, and safety.

It's a vision that builds on NJC's 25-year history of innovation – and one that will likely keep the Durban-headquartered systems integrator at the forefront of South Africa's pharmaceutical manufacturing landscape for years to come.

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The best of both – hybrid DCS for an evolving industrial landscape



By Johan Potgieter,
Cluster Industrial
Software Lead at
Schneider Electric

TODAY'S industrial automation continues to evolve at a blistering speed which means traditional Distributed

Control Systems (DCS) have to keep up to ensure continuous integration into modern, digital infrastructure.

DCS' very nature is to multitask, therefore, controlling and coordinating complex processes within industrial

settings. But what if the growth of industrial automation becomes an insurmountable challenge?

DCS' multitasking can only go so far; it needs to modernise in order to juggle, if you will, protocol compatibility, legacy infrastructure, cybersecurity, and human factors. The solution, a hybrid approach which allows DCS to evolve as the industrial landscape grows.

In essence, a hybrid DCS combines traditional industrial automation technologies with modern digital tools like cloud connectivity, edge computing, and Ethernet-based protocols, to manage and optimise complex industrial processes.

It allows legacy systems to coexist with newer technologies, improving flexibility,

visibility, and operational efficiency without full system replacement.

Challenges abound

But in order to realise a world or rather an industrial world built on hybrid DCS it is important to take a realistic look at some of the most pertinent challenges it faces:

- Protocol Complexity and Latency Risk - Integrating legacy fieldbus protocols like Foundation Fieldbus, PROFIBUS, and Modbus with modern Ethernet-based standards such as EtherNet/IP and PROFINET introduces latency through gateway solutions. In time-sensitive environments like chemical processing, even a 10–15

millisecond delay can jeopardise control loops and compromise product integrity.

- Legacy infrastructure - Long-standing systems continue to deliver dependable performance and reflect years of process refinement. Wholesale replacement poses significant risks, particularly in safety-critical sectors. Digital twins offer a simulation bridge but depend on detailed documentation, often missing in older setups.
- Cybersecurity - the move from isolated networks to cloud-connected systems has expanded the cybersecurity threat landscape. Remote access and edge computing introduce new vulnerabilities, requiring layered defence strategies.

"...in order to realise a world or rather an industrial world built on hybrid DCS it is important to take a realistic look at some of the most pertinent challenges it faces..."

- Edge Computing and Incremental Integration - edge devices enable local optimisation and reduce network load, but complicate failover and resource planning. Integration must account for network topology and reliability.
- Software-defined networking (SDN) capabilities could simplify network management by providing centralised control over distributed networking resources.
- Advances in industrial IoT devices may reduce protocol translation requirements through improved native connectivity options.
- Container-based deployment models might enable more flexible application deployment across hybrid infrastructure. However, these technologies must mature sufficiently to meet industrial reliability and security requirements.
- AI and ML capabilities will likely play increasing roles in managing hybrid system complexity. Predictive maintenance algorithms could identify potential integration issues before they impact operations.

Establishing effective hybrid DCS

Considering the above, how can DCS becoming truly hybrid without tripping over the above, very pertinent challenges? For one, the most effective hybrid DCS deployments typically adopt incremental integration strategies rather than attempting wholesale system replacements.

This allows organisations to address specific integration challenges systematically while maintaining operational continuity and preserving safety-critical functions.

Successful projects also often begin with pilot implementations that demonstrate value while identifying potential issues.

Safety is also paramount, particularly as systems become more complex. Here, organisations must demonstrate that hybrid architectures maintain or improve safety performance compared to legacy systems.

This, for example, requires a comprehensive hazard analysis that considers both technological and human factors.

Future technical debt can also be avoided by proper architectural planning, mitigating complicated future expansion efforts. This means organisations must balance immediate integration needs with long-term strategic objectives, which could mean accepting some redundancy in the short term to preserve flexibility for future enhancements.

Technologies that help

There's no doubt that emerging technologies offer potential pathways toward more manageable hybrid architectures:

Traditional intrusion detection must evolve to recognise industrial traffic, while zero-trust models need adaptation for real-time control.

- Regulatory and Compliance Pressure - hybrid architectures must comply with both legacy safety standards and emerging cybersecurity mandates like the IEC (International Electrotechnical Commission Standard) 61508 NERC CIP (North American Electric Reliability Corporation Critical Infrastructure Protection) must coexist with newer regulations such as the EU's NIS (Network and Information Security) Directive.
- Timing and data harmonisation challenges - precise timing is vital in industrial control, yet hybrid systems introduce latency and jitter that threaten synchronisation. Applications like power protection and motion control require microsecond-level coordination, which cloud, and edge integration can disrupt.

Harmonising data across systems with differing formats and algorithms requires robust mapping and metadata strategies.

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Spectiv seeks SA distributors for smoke beam detectors



Mark Tibbenham, Spectiv Commercial Director.

SPECTIV, a UK-based innovator in fire and smoke detection technology, is actively seeking experienced distributors and partners to bring its cutting-edge technology to businesses across Africa and the Middle East.

The company recently launched its latest range of linear smoke beam detectors in the Asia-Pacific region to great success. The range has been designed to enhance fire detection in expansive commercial premises such as factories, warehouses, airport terminals, shopping malls, museums, churches, and buildings with large ceiling voids.

ments where traditional point detectors may be ineffective. Both models are UL 268 7th Edition certified.

Call for distributors in South Africa

Mark Tibbenham, Spectiv's Commercial Director says, "Production of our UL-certified detectors is running at full capacity to keep pace with strong demand and a growing order book, with sales and now repeat sales primarily in the Asia Pacific region."

"We would very much like to engage with a South African partner and distributors to launch and promote our innova-

Key features of the G8NB Series

- **Wide coverage:** The G8NB-50 covers up to 50 metres, while the G8NB-100 extends up to 100 metres, ensuring optimal fire detection across large open spaces.
- **Simple and cost-effective installation:** Unlike electronic alignment systems, Spectiv's innovative mechanical alignment simplifies installation while reducing costs.
- **Versatile integration:** These detectors seamlessly integrate with conventional fire alarm panels or analogue addressable systems through interface input modules.
- **Customisable alarm settings:** Four selectable alarm threshold levels (25%, 35%, 50% and 75%) allow for tailored sensitivity based on environmental conditions.
- **Enhanced safety alerts:** Latching and non-latching alarm outputs with volt-free contacts ensure clear, timely fire and fault notifications.

Seasoned leadership team

Behind Spectiv's innovative approach is a leadership team with decades of experience in global fire and security markets:

- Peter Harries (MD): Former director at Texecom Ltd. and Optex Europe Ltd., with extensive expertise in managing international security and life safety businesses.
- Mark Tibbenham (Commercial Director): An electrical and electronics engineer with a strong background in developing and selling infrared sensing devices worldwide.
- Malcolm Gatenby (Sales Director): A seasoned profes-

sional in fire safety sales, with a deep network in the Middle East and African markets.

A commitment to safety and innovation

Spectiv's innovative approach to fire detec-

tion ensures businesses can protect lives and assets with confidence. By offering a cost-effective and efficient alternative to traditional smoke detectors, the company is setting a new standard in fire safety technology.

About Spectiv

Spectiv is a UK-based company specialising in the design, manufacturing, and distribution of high-quality fire and smoke detection equipment. With a focus on affordability and efficiency, Spectiv aims to

enhance fire safety in commercial buildings worldwide.

For partnership opportunities or more information about Spectiv's fire detection solutions, contact Mark Tibbenham at mark@spectiv.co.uk, www.spectiv.co.uk



Spectiv Sales Director, Malcolm Gatenby, at the recent Fire and Security India Expo (FSIE) 2025, showing their newest G8NB optical beam smoke detector (UL 268 7th Ed).

Introducing the UL certified linear smoke beam detector series

Spectiv's flagship product line, the G8NB series, consists of two models—the G8NB-50 and G8NB-100—designed to detect smoke in high-ceiling environ-

ments where traditional point detectors may be ineffective. Both models are UL 268 7th Edition certified. Once we have this in place, along with stock available, fire/security installers will be able to purchase directly from our officially appointed distributors."

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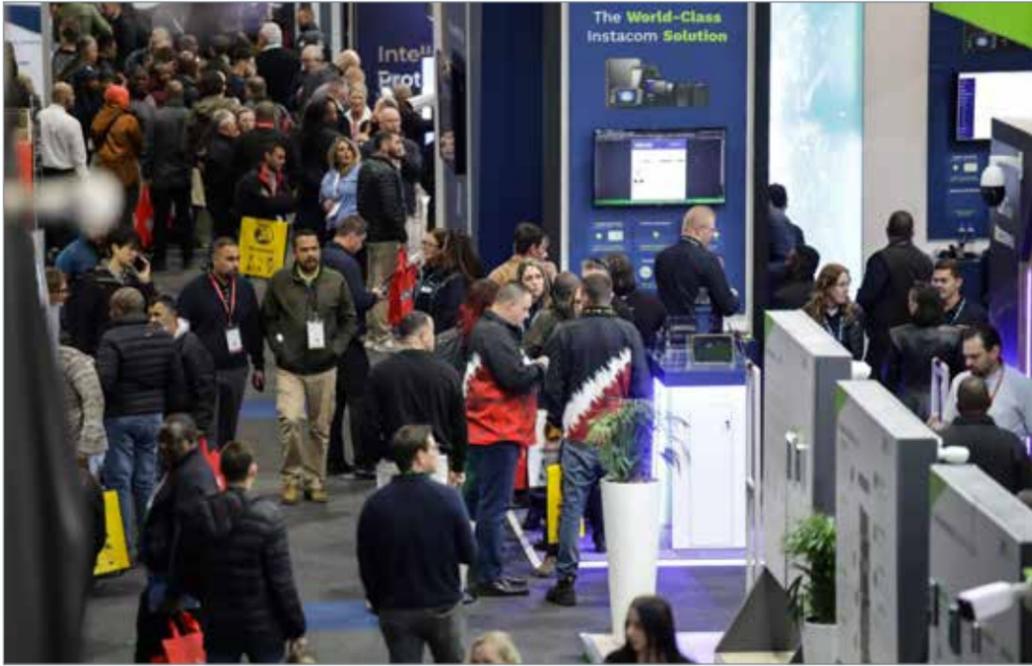
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Western Cape businesses - your must-visit event in October



Networking will help visitors to find the right security, safety, fire, and FM solutions at the four-shows Cape Town event in October.

CAPE TOWN'S rise as Africa's innovation capital has transformed the way businesses, institutions, and property owners think about their facilities.

With one of the continent's largest open-ac-

cess fibre networks, a thriving tech ecosystem, and a highly skilled talent pool, the city offers fertile ground for adopting advanced facilities management solutions, security products and services, and safety of-

ferings that enhance efficiency, safety, and sustainability.

The four-shows Cape Town event, taking place from 21 to 23 October 2025 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre

(CTICC), is your opportunity to explore these solutions first-hand.

A city built for smart, sustainable facilities

The Western Cape's business and public

spaces are embracing technologies and practices that align with global standards for environmental responsibility and operational excellence. From AI-driven building management systems to renewable energy integration, facilities in the region are evolving to meet user expectations for comfort, connectivity, and sustainability.

At the four-show Cape Town event, visitors will have access to a wide spectrum of products and services — from advanced surveillance and access control technologies to occupational health and safety solutions covering the full workplace spectrum, to fire detection, suppression, and evacuation systems tailored for local risks. Alongside this, visitors will find tools that support smarter operations — including energy-saving options, water-use efficiency, and digital platforms that help integrate safety,

security, and building management.

"The event is designed to give building managers, estate operators, and Western Cape businesses practical, end-to-end solutions for protecting people, property, and productivity," says Mark Anderson, Portfolio Director at Montgomery Group Africa.

Four shows, one powerful platform

"By co-locating these respected industrial trade shows, we create a multi-sector showcase that reflects how security, safety, and fire prevention are interconnected for modern facilities. This co-location means you can explore cross-disciplinary solutions in a single visit — whether that's integrating fire detection into your building automation system or ensuring your occupational safety measures complement your energy efficiency strategy.

Why this matters for your organisation

Cape Town's connectivity, innovation hubs, and collaborative business environment make it the ideal setting to source future-focused solutions. Events like this enable you to connect with suppliers who are not only aware of the latest technology, but who understand how to tailor it for the Western Cape's unique market conditions.

"Whether you're managing a corporate headquarters, healthcare facility, educational institution, or hospitality venue, the four-shows Cape Town event offers the insights, contacts, and solutions to help you optimise your operations. It's where innovation meets practicality, and where ideas turn into results. Visit www.securex.co.za to find out more or register to attend for free," says Anderson.

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SEW-EURODRIVE drives innovation at automotive plant with MOVIGEAR® installation



MOVIGEAR® with DDI cabling enables seamless condition monitoring and real-time performance tracking for optimised operational efficiency.

A MAJOR automotive manufacturer in Gauteng has improved operational efficiency, safety, and energy performance with SEW-EURODRIVE's advanced MOVIGEAR® mechatronic drive system, installed in its newly expanded buffering zone. The project involved 150 MOVIGEAR® units driving conveyors in a high-density storage area. According to Willem Strydom, Electronics Business Development Manager at SEW-EURODRIVE, the customer aimed to standardise equipment

These objectives were achieved using only two MOVIGEAR® variants, eliminating the need for up to 30 conventional motor types and significantly reducing inventory complexity. Each MOVIGEAR® unit integrates a servomotor, gearbox, and electronics into a compact system that provides decentralised control with onboard communication and safety features. The setup removes the need for traditional control panels, connecting all units via hybrid cabling in a dai-

SEW-EURODRIVE collaborated closely with the conveyor system OEM, offering design input and on-site support during installation and commissioning. The units, proven in industries such as food and beverage, have operated reliably since January 2025. The project's second phase introduced condition monitoring through MOVIGEAR®'s digital data interface, enabling real-time tracking of vibration and temperature. This creates a digital twin of each unit for predictive maintenance, helping prevent failures and extend service life. Featuring IE5 ultra-premium efficiency motors, the system delivers energy savings of over 38% compared to conventional motors and offers IP69K protection for demanding environments. By engaging from design to optimisation, SEW-EURODRIVE delivered a fully integrated, future-ready solution that supports the manufacturer's goals for productivity, safety, and sustainability.



Willem Strydom, Electronics Business Development Manager at SEW-EURODRIVE.

to simplify stockholding and maintenance while meeting strict safety and performance standards.

sy-chain configuration to a compact PLC—reducing installation time and infrastructure costs.

Brutes compressed air, gas, and power solutions across Africa

FOR more than 30 years, Brutes has positioned itself as a trusted provider of mission-critical solutions in compressed air, industrial and medical gas installations, and power generation. Serving industries as diverse as mining, engineering, healthcare, and manufacturing, the company has built a reputation for reliability, innovation, and service excellence.

Comprehensive solutions for industry

Brutes' service offering is built on three core pillars:

- **Compressed air:** From small-scale portable units to large on-site compressors, Brutes delivers tailored compressed air solutions designed to meet the demands of businesses of all sizes.
- **Gas installations:**

Specialising in both industrial and medical gases, the company provides full pipeline installation and maintenance, ensuring safety and quality at every step.

- **Power generators:** As a respected supplier of power systems, Brutes offers a broad spectrum of energy services, including customised generator solutions for clients across the continent.

As an authorised distributor of Atlas Copco, a global leader in industrial equipment, Brutes ensures its customers benefit from world-class products backed by local expertise.

A strategic approach to service

With branches strategically located across South Africa and be-

yond, Brutes minimises downtime and ensures fast, effective response times. This geographic reach, combined with highly trained customer-focused teams, allows the company to support its clients wherever operations may take them - from remote mining projects to high-tech medical facilities.

Serving Africa's industrial backbone

Brutes operates across a wide footprint that includes South Africa, Namibia, Tanzania, Ghana, the DRC, Angola, and more. The company's expertise has been instrumental in projects ranging from hospital oxygen installations to energy supply for industrial plants. This adaptability underpins its ability to serve as a reliable partner to businesses navigating complex operational challenges.

Built on trust and quality

At the heart of Brutes' success is its unwavering commitment to quality and customer satisfaction. By continuously investing in new technologies and maintaining strict standards in design, installation, and support, the company ensures clients can focus on productivity while Brutes secures the infrastructure powering their operations.

"When quality, reliability, and efficiency are non-negotiable, Brutes stands ready to deliver," says Managing Director Christo Bruwer.

With its deep experience, extensive footprint, and partnerships with global leaders, Brutes is set to remain a vital player in Africa's industrial landscape - powering growth, safety, and sustainability for years to come.



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Power on: First dealer in power technique network to plug into electric fleet



A CUSTOMER in South Africa's Northern Cape, seeking a plug-and-play compressed air solution with no installation required, has prompted one of Atlas Copco Power Technique's dealers to order four T900 E-Air mobile electric compressors. Some units will be deployed underground to power tough mining operations.

Atlas Copco, globally recognised for its

reliable diesel air compressors, has developed the E-Air range of mobile electric compressors in response to the industry's demand for efficiency and sustainability. The line-up includes the T400, T500 and T900 fixed-speed models.

"While diesel compressors remain the backbone of mining and industry, electric machines are rapidly gaining ground as a cleaner, quieter and

more energy-efficient alternative," says Riaan Burke, AIP Sales Engineer at Atlas Copco Power Technique. "There's a growing appeal to an electric compressor elegantly clad in yellow."

The E-Air range mirrors the durability and performance of Atlas Copco's diesel units but offers significant advantages: lower energy use, reduced carbon footprint, quieter operation and minimal maintenance. With no installation needed, the units can simply be plugged into a power source, and modulating control removes the need for a receiver. "These units represent a step forward in technology and performance, lowering the total cost of ownership while enabling sustainable operations," Burke adds.

Designed for reliability in demanding, dust-

heavy environments, the E-Air compressors are ideal for mining, tunnelling, urban sites, confined spaces and indoor facilities. Compact and emission-free, they provide dependable compressed air wherever grid power is available.

"Our goal is not just to meet today's needs but to equip customers with solutions that address future challenges," says Burke. He also highlights the role of the dealer network: "Dealers are vital partners, strategically close to customers to ensure fast delivery, reliable service and maximum productivity."

Delivery of the four T900 E-Air compressors is scheduled for end-March/early April 2025, reinforcing Power Technique's commitment to equipping customers with advanced, efficient solutions for challenging environments.

FLS Field Services: Maximising plant performance through expert on-site support

WITH a network of skilled engineers, technicians and artisans, FLS provides expert on-site support to ensure optimal plant performance.

According to Mikhail Kirienko, Head of Field Services for Europe, Middle East & Africa at FLS, the strength of the company's site services lies in the trust customers place in its technical teams. "By staying close to our customers, we build strong relationships that allow us to identify challenges early and implement effective solutions," he says.

FLS's regional field service teams operate across South Africa, Germany, Italy, Serbia, Saudi Arabia, Ghana, Mauritania and Zambia. Their focus is on

maximising equipment availability and mineral recovery while reducing the total cost of ownership. Beyond maintenance and repairs, FLS conducts regular assessments benchmarked against OEM standards to keep equipment in peak condition.

"The delivery and commissioning of equipment is just the beginning of our relationship with customers," says Kirienko. "Through proactive maintenance, upgrades and optimisation, we ensure continuous operation and improved performance."

Effective maintenance also depends on accurate condition monitoring and access to the right spare parts. Drawing on global expertise, FLS helps cus-

tomers design maintenance strategies that minimise downtime and support process optimisation for greater profitability and sustainability.

Safety and sustainability are integral to FLS's operations. All engineers and technicians comply with strict safety protocols and certified standards, while service models promote energy and water efficiency across the flowsheet.

Recognising that every site has unique needs, FLS offers flexible service models—from remote support and once-off visits to shutdown maintenance and full service-level agreements—ensuring customers always have the right level of support for long-term plant performance.



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RVD - designed for harsh environments. RVD offers both fixed and variable speed compressors.

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Vaughan introduces Small Tank Mixing (STM) system – for chemical, energy and wastewater industries

Compact solution delivers complete tank mixing with reduced energy demand and simplified maintenance.



VAUGHAN Company, represented in Southern Africa by Monitor Pumps & Systems, has announced the launch of its new Small Tank Mixing (STM) system, a compact and durable solution developed for the chemical, petrochemical, energy and wastewater sectors. Drawing on the company's extensive experience in large tank mixing, the STM system has been specifically designed for tanks up to 12 metres in diameter.

The STM system combines efficiency with reliability, offering complete vertical and horizontal mixing through its innovative hydraulic nozzle design. Its targeted nozzle velocities improve production cycles while

cutting energy use, and aimable jet streams prevent solids from settling – ensuring tanks remain cleaner with no process downtime.

“The Vaughan Small Tank Mixing system is a significant step forward for customers who need efficient, low-maintenance mixing in more compact installations,” said a spokesperson for Monitor Pumps & Systems. “With all moving parts located outside of the tank, and the new adjustable composite nozzles, the STM provides reliability, ease of servicing and long-term durability.”

Key features and benefits:

- **Complete tank mixing** with vertical and horizontal blending

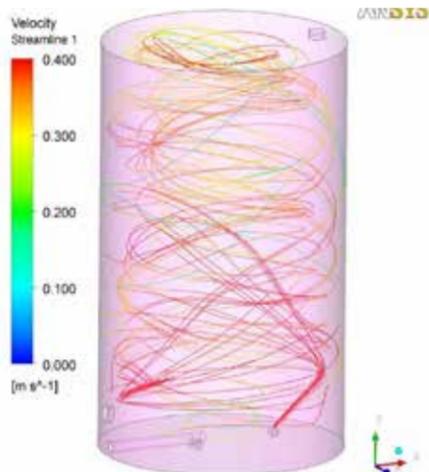
- **Energy savings** through efficient hydraulic processes that reduce motor load
- **Externally mounted nozzles** requiring only small access ports, reducing tank stress
- **No internal moving parts**, keeping contaminants away from high-performance components
- **Simple maintenance**, with lightweight, corrosion and abrasion resistant nozzles
- **Aimable nozzles**, adjustable via hand-wheel without confined space entry

The system can be powered by either Vaughan's Triton Screw Centrifugal Pump for gentle, low-shear blending, or by its Chopper Pump for handling larger solids and tougher applications.

To ensure maximum performance for each application, Vaughan employs advanced Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) modelling. By simulating sludge rheology and material properties, the company is able to precisely design pump and nozzle configurations, extending equipment life while eliminating costly trial-and-error adjustments.

With the introduction of the STM system, Vaughan Company has expanded its portfolio of tank mixing technologies, delivering a compact, high-performance solution for industries requiring consistent, energy-efficient and easily maintained mixing systems.

For more information, email wim@monitorpumps.co.za, www.monitorspray.co.za



Rising demand for submersible dewatering pumps drives growth in IPR

IPR (Integrated Pump Rental), a leading specialist in dewatering and dredging solutions, is experiencing strong growth in demand for its submersible pumps across Southern Africa. The surge is driven by expanding mining operations, infrastructure upgrades, and the need for reliable water management in both surface and underground applications.

As part of Atlas Cop-

co's Speciality Rental Division, IPR supplies a full range of electric submersible pumps, including the Atlas Copco WEDA dewatering, sludge, and heavy-duty slurry models. Engineered for demanding environments such as sump and open-pit dewatering, slurry transfer, and general water movement, these pumps are valued for their efficiency, durability, and portability.

The WEDA L series stands out for handling highly abrasive slurries with high solids content, thanks to agitators and specially designed impellers. These robust units perform where conventional pumps often fail, including in settling ponds and dredging operations.

IPR offers both rental and purchase options across its pump fleet, providing customers with flexibility to man-

age costs and project timelines. Supported by expert technical teams and comprehensive maintenance services, IPR ensures optimal pump performance.

With sustained demand and ongoing investment in high-performance equipment backed by global OEM partnerships, IPR continues to strengthen its position as a trusted leader in tailored dewatering solutions.

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How to select the right pumping solution for efficiency, reliability and lower lifecycle costs



By Darryl Macdougall,
Managing Director,
Verder Pumps South
Africa

FROM purification of cobalt, transferring of slurry and lime dosing, to pumping liquid or concentrated products, the pump and piping solutions installed throughout are often the backbone network of numerous industrial and manufacturing applications - and what keeps the material (or product) flowing throughout the entire processing operation.

Achieving perfect results every time requires a well-engineered pumping system that is designed to deliver a smooth, reliable flow for all circumstances.

A poorly designed pumping system can, for instance, lead to high consumption of power and premature

wear or failure of components in the system, as this is not isolated to the pump itself and can impact on instrumentation, piping, valves and ancillary equipment too. Possibly the worst-case scenario being a complete plant stoppage.

Additionally, excessive breakdowns will increase the risk to personnel as emergency repairs will have to be carried out over and above routine planned maintenance. It should also be noted that any of these possible scenarios are guaranteed to increase labour costs and inventory of spare parts, leading to production costs being driven up.

Not uncommon in the pump industry is the neglect of interrogating the total cost of ownership prior to making a purchasing decision, but rather making a purchas-

ing decision on price alone. The purchase price of a pump is generally not greater than 15% of the total cost of ownership when considering all the cost drivers associated with transporting materials (or product) in pumping systems over the lifetime of the pumping equipment.

Selecting the right pump for the application is the first step to a well-engineered pumping system, and the pump should be selected based on the following considerations:

- Chemical compatibility of materials of pump construction to the product being pumped
- The pump design or technology should be suitable for the product being transported
- Suitable pump design for the duty cycle required
- The pump itself and the system design must allow for efficient operation - that the pump is selected to operate at the best efficiency point on the performance curve
- All pipe work is often designed to consider appropriate fluid velocities

to help minimise head losses due to friction and turbulence.

- Power supply is adequately sized, and correct switch gear is utilised
- The correct valves are in the system - and in the correct positions

Understanding the intricate and technical details and implications of selecting the right pumping solutions for specific use applications can be challenging, however, it is an important purchase decision as maintaining production and efficiency largely depends on the longevity of the equipment. Lower lifecycle costs of the equipment translates into higher productivity and efficiency, cost savings and even return on investment/profit ratios in the long run. And, by providing all the necessary qualifying information upfront offers added assurance that the pump manufacturer will be able to supply the right solutions that are long-lasting, cost-effective and energy efficient - because they are 100% fit-for-purpose for the application.

KSB Pumps and Valves appoints first female field service specialist



Craig Hawkins has been a guiding light in Osedza's decision to become a field service specialist

FROM the shop floor to the global arena has been a sharp learning curve for Osedza Tshifhango, who recently became the first female field service specialist within the worldwide operations of KSB Pumps and Valves, a company employing over 16 000 people globally.

Field service has long been a male-dominated space, requiring long shifts, extensive travel, and the physical and technical stamina to repair complex pump systems under pressure. These challenges, however, were exactly what attracted Osedza, a qualified artisan and former bench technician, to the role. Known for handling complex builds and delivering reliable results, she was soon identified as a strong candidate for

field service.

"From the beginning, I wanted to prove myself through my work. If men can do it, there's no reason I can't," Osedza says. "It's not an easy role, especially with a family, but if I want to grow, I have to take the challenges in my stride."

Former field service manager Craig Hawkins, who mentored her, says she displayed all the qualities needed: "She was always dedicated, eager to learn, and a step ahead. Knowledge is power, and she never stopped pushing herself."

The role demanded serious consideration: strenuous hands-on labour, heavy lifting, technical tasks, overnight work, and extensive travel. After discussing it with her family, Osedza accepted the challenge.

Thriving under pressure

A year in, she has excelled under demanding conditions, working 24-hour shifts and even over Christmas to bring critical pumps back online. While some clients were initially surprised to see a woman on-site, they were quickly reassured by her competence. "Feedback has been incredible," says Hawkins. "Customers are gobsmacked to see a woman matching the guys skill for skill. Respect soon follows."

Balancing her career with raising two children, Osedza says her family's support keeps her motivated. "My children are proud of what I do, and that motivates me a lot," she says. Her appointment paves the way for more women to take on field service roles at KSB in South Africa and beyond, proving that pump maintenance demands skill, not stereotypes.

She holds an N6 certificate in electrical engineering, an N4 in mechanical engineering, and boiler-making qualifications. She continues to grow her expertise through the KSB Academy, which offers more than 400 modules across mechanical, electrical, and instrumentation fields.

Future ambitions

Looking ahead, Osedza aims to become a manager and possibly run a depot or department. "The more you learn, the more confident you are on-site. There are days you're exhausted, but when the equipment runs again and the customer is satisfied, it's worth it," she says.

Hawkins believes her ambitions are achievable: "She's already shown the ethic and leadership required. With her quiet determination and hard work, she has what it takes."

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Water Mist technology gains momentum at record-breaking IWMA conference

THE International Water Mist Association (IWMA) conference in Manchester has marked a new milestone for the industry, drawing record attendance and underscoring the growing global interest in water mist technology as a viable alternative in fire protection.

Held on 24–25 September, the 24th edition of the conference welcomed nearly 180 delegates from over 25 countries. Notably, the event saw its highest-ever number of first-time participants, with particularly strong representation from Asia and the Americas. This shift highlights the expanding reach of water mist solutions beyond Europe, where the technology has traditionally seen stronger adoption.

"...water mist is increasingly valued within fire services for its efficiency and adaptability."

The conference programme balanced fundamental knowledge with practical case studies, giving delegates a broad perspective on current and emerging applications of water mist systems. Sir Ken Knight, former UK Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser, opened the event by outlining how water mist is increasingly valued within fire services for its efficiency and adaptability.

Delegates also heard real-world examples of water mist applications in diverse settings, from the protection of cultural landmarks such as Notre Dame Cathedral to the rollout of the recently enforced EN 14972 standard in the UK. These case studies reinforced the versatility of the technology across both heritage and modern infrastructure.

The IWMA used the conference to introduce a series of new resources aimed at supporting stakeholders and strengthening industry standards. These included The Water Mist Guide, a reference tool explaining the fundamentals of how water mist works and how it can be effectively applied; an updated Standard Matrix, clarifying applicable fire test protocols for system

approvals; and Mist-conceptions, an initiative designed to counter misinformation with evidence-based insights.

"The response this year has been overwhelming," said IWMA President Max

Lakkonen. "The high number of attendees and sponsors clearly demonstrates the strong momentum of our industry and the increasing recognition of water mist as a sustainable, efficient, and safe fire protection

technology." As awareness of fire safety and sustainability grows globally, industry experts predict that water mist — already valued for its reduced water consumption and minimal environmental impact

— will play an increasingly central role in both commercial and industrial fire protection strategies. The Manchester conference has made it clear: water mist is moving from niche solution to mainstream adoption.



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KSB's CORAChrom pumps: Ultimate solution for African boreholes



KSB Pumps and Valves has launched the CORAChrom stainless-steel submersible pump range, designed for deep borehole use and other demanding freshwater and saline pumping applications.

KSB Pumps and Valves has launched a rugged stainless-steel submersible pump range designed for deep borehole use and other demanding freshwater and saline pumping applications.

The new CORAChrom pumps are a game-changer for African conditions with all wetted components, including the diffusers, being fabricated from corrosion-resistant high-grade AISI 304 stainless steel or a choice of stainless steel or engineered polymer impellers, depending on the environment. This ensures the longest possible operational life even in mineral-rich or aggressive groundwater.

According to KSB Pumps and Valves area manager, Hugo du Plessis, the CORAChrom series is available in 100 mm (4") and 150 mm (6") multistage centrifugal variants and is tailored to cope with the kind of variable borehole conditions and challenging water chemistry commonly encountered in South Africa and across the continent. This includes high iron or salt content, variable water tables and unreliable electricity supply, especially in rural areas.

Unlike traditional cast iron or bronze pumps that may degrade or clog over time, the new KSB CORAChrom submersible pumps use investment-cast stainless steel for key components such

as the suction housing and non-return valve. The range also features integrated intermediate bearings and a coun-



KSB Pumps and Valves area manager, Hugo du Plessis.

ter-thrust ring to support axial loads and extend bearing life and further enhance reliability.

The pump's lightweight modular design allows it to be installed vertically, horizontally or inclined, which makes it adaptable to a variety of borehole and tank installations. What really makes the CORAChrom unique is its wide power compatibility. It can operate on both single and three-phase AC power and is also available in DC solar-ready options, which are proving especially valuable in off-grid or energy-constrained areas.

"Our CORAChrom pumps are capable of delivering flow rates of up

to 12 m³/h (200 litres per minute), with maximum heads of 638 m at 50 Hz (2900 rpm) or 780 m at 60 Hz (3500 rpm). Motors are available up to 22 kW, depending on model and application. This is tested and certified in our global manufacturing sites, where each pump undergoes rigorous hydraulic testing under ISO 9906 Grade 3B standards, verifying its real-world efficiency," says Hugo.

KSB CORAChrom series is already gaining traction across multiple sectors with successful deployments in:

- Borehole-based irrigation for farms and smallholdings
- Garden and nursery watering systems

- Domestic water supply in rural or peri-urban housing developments
- Dewatering and groundwater management in construction and mining
- Pressure boosting and cooling water systems in commercial and industrial buildings

Du Plessis notes that in drought-prone areas such as the Northern Cape, Karoo and North West, where boreholes may be drilled to depths exceeding 500 m and access to reliable electricity remains a challenge, the solar-ready DC models have proven to be game changers.

"These pumps deliver excellent output per watt-peak (Wp), even in low-light conditions, which makes them ideal for solar applications. It's part of KSB's commitment to sustainable water access and long-term value for our customers," he says.

As with all KSB products, the CORAChrom range is backed by KSB's extensive South African sales and service network, with expert support and technical backup available through its nationwide branches and distributors.

AWS Water Stewardship Framework: Tackling SA's infrastructure challenges

WHILE it is encouraging to see more South African companies embracing water stewardship as an approach to water scarcity and climate variability, they are often hindered by poor infrastructure.

"We commonly encounter issues such as ageing and poorly maintained infrastructure, inadequate wastewater treatment systems and ineffective stormwater management," said Kivana Singh, a hydrologist at SRK Consulting (South Africa). "We also find that there are often outdated or insufficient monitoring systems, limited stakeholder engagement in infrastructure planning, and a lack of dirty water containment."

The result can be significant water losses and deteriorating water quality, noted Singh. Water losses can arise from leaking pipes, faulty valves and ageing supply systems that are prone to inefficiencies. Water quality deterioration is often driven by failing sewer infrastructure, overloaded or poorly maintained treatment systems, and inadequate containment of pollutants.

"Water shortages pose a growing risk to businesses as their supply requirements will not be prioritised over residential users in a crisis," she noted.

AWS certification

These infrastructure-related challenges can make it more difficult for companies to achieve certification in terms of the Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS) standards. The



international AWS standard is a globally applicable framework for major water users to understand their water use and impacts, and to work towards sustainable water management within their catchments.

However, the AWS framework provides practical guidance on addressing infrastructure challenges, she argued. By better understanding their water use, companies can pursue a holistic approach to water management.

Engaging stakeholders

"The AWS standard guides companies in critical areas such as stakeholder engagement in infrastructure planning and development, which is often overlooked," she explained. "Without collaboration among authorities, communities and other water users, opportunities for shared knowledge and coordinated action can be missed – limiting the potential for efficient, cost-effective and sustainable solutions."

The global standard helps organisations manage water sustainably at both site and

catchment levels. Built on principles of continuous improvement, it focuses on five key outcomes: good water governance; sustainable water balance; good water quality status; healthy ecosystems and biodiversity; and safe access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).

Monitoring quantity and quality

"Reliable monitoring of infrastructure is also a critical gap," she said. "Without accurate, real-time information on water quantity and quality, it becomes difficult to make informed decisions or to demonstrate compliance with specific AWS criteria. This often stems from outdated or insufficient metering and limited automation."

The AWS standard guides organisations in addressing infrastructure gaps, enhancing stormwater control and implementing pollution prevention measures. She explained that the SRK Consulting (SA) team of AWS-credentialed specialists draw on their diverse technical backgrounds to support clients on their water stewardship

journey.

"SRK helps organisations align their water management practices with water stewardship principles," she said, "to



Kivana Singh, a hydrologist at SRK Consulting (South Africa).

achieve meaningful improvements both within their operations and across the catchments they rely on."

Note: This article represents the author's opinion and is not published on behalf of the Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS). The author holds an AWS Professional Credential, and the article helps fulfil their Continuing Contribution Units requirements. For more information about AWS or the AWS Professional Credentialing Program, please visit <https://a4ws.org/>

Does SA have the skills to back up water sector investment?

THE African Union-AIP Water Investment Summit 2025, held in Cape Town in August, secured USD 10 billion in investment commitments for the continent. Yet water infrastructure spend must be matched by investment in skills and professionalisation, says Dr Lester Goldman, CEO of the Water Institute of Southern Africa (WISA).

"Without the right skills, infrastructure investment becomes an exercise in futility," he

warns.

Days before the summit, President Ramaphosa opened the new System 5A Water Purification Plant at Rand Water's Zuikerbosch Station in Vereeniging.

The plant adds 600 million litres of potable water daily - enough for 2.4 million people. But Goldman stresses that infrastructure must be supported by human capacity: leadership, management, and technical expertise, all operating in a dependency chain.

Leaders in the sector

are often not water experts but depend on the technical proficiency of process controllers and engineers. Regulation 3630, gazetted in June 2023, requires that water services works be supervised by at least a Class V process controller registered with WISA and committed to continuous professional development.

However, many municipalities have resisted compliance, citing budget constraints or fear of not meeting standards.

Goldman calls this short-sighted: "Maintaining skills costs less than repairing broken infrastructure. Professionalisation is a career enhancer, not an obstacle."

Regulation 3630 aims to boost accountability, transparency, and performance. "Water investment is welcome, but people are just as critical as pipes and plants," Goldman concludes, urging municipalities to engage WISA to secure South Africa's water future.

Specifications and features

Key features and benefits

- Flow rate: Up to 12 m³/h (200 l/min)
- Maximum head: Up to 780 m (60 Hz)
- Motor capacity: Up to 22 kW
- Power options: Single-/three-phase AC and solar DC
- Efficiency: ISO 9906 Grade 3B; BEE-rated
- Applications: Borehole abstraction, solar irrigation, industrial dewatering, building pressure boosting
- Pump type: Multistage centrifugal, fully submersible
- Installation: Vertical, horizontal or inclined

Veolia's comprehensive approach to complete water cycle management



Thierry Witkowicz, CEO of Veolia Southern Africa

AS water scarcity continues to pose significant challenges across Southern Africa, Veolia has established itself as a pioneer in comprehensive water management, delivering solutions that extend far beyond conventional service models.

CEO Thierry Witkowicz articulates how the company is revolutionising the sector through water treatment solutions that take into account decarbonization objectives, notably producing green energy from water itself. Nowadays, treatment plants must be energy self-sufficient or even produce energy for some. "Managing the entire water cycle means that Veolia provides services, from natural resources such as rivers, dams, seas or lakes, to discharge into the environment after use," explains Mr Witkowicz.

This global methodology encompasses pumping, networks, drinking water production facilities, treatment plants, energy production stations and water reuse stations.

Veolia's particularity lies in the emphasis placed on a holistic approach where the entirety of what Mr Witkowicz calls the "short water cycle" is taken into account in order to protect the resource, produce decarbonised energy and restore natural environments. "This global approach distinguishes Veolia

from its competitors because most companies generally specialise in specific areas: studies only, or construction, or operation in the industrial or municipal market, but rarely like Veolia across the entire chain, including financing, which is a key point today!", he observes.

Integrated utility solutions for industrial clients

For industries including mining and manufacturing, Veolia has developed a distinctive multi-utility approach. Rather than addressing water requirements in isolation, the company integrates water, solid waste, and energy solutions to establish economic sustainability.

"If you focus solely on water solutions, you require the industry to increase expenditure to compensate for services," Witkowicz explains. "However, when we begin with energy optimisation and our experience demonstrates we can achieve over 10% energy savings, these cost reductions can be reinvested into water system improvements."

This integrated methodology extends to waste management, where organic waste from food and beverage companies is combined with water treatment sludge to generate biogas. "Our objective is to achieve zero

liquid discharge, which represents an excellent target pursued by numerous industries worldwide, alongside zero CO2 emissions," states Witkowicz.

Digital transformation in water management

Veolia has entered digital innovation by establishing its own digital factory, which develops new applications using all the data generated by operators, equipment, and monitoring systems. Specific tools also enable operators worldwide to connect. "An operator in Durban, an operator in Overstrand, where we manage a large-scale project, or an operator in Windhoek, Namibia, can now collaborate with operators facing similar challenges and discuss solutions with their colleagues around the world," explains Witkowicz.

Thanks to all the data collected, more than one million per day for a typical water system, it is possible to achieve real savings. "For example, in the future, thanks to digital technology, in case of a leak in the water network, sensors will automatically send an immediate notification to operators precisely locating the leak, indicate the process to follow, and instantly inform all affected consumers, whereas today everything is done manually, which involves many different departments and takes much more time. The digital revolution is not just an IT project, it's a modernisation project where teams must be trained and organised differently," he explains.

Innovative projects throughout the region

Veolia operates three pioneering contracts

across Southern Africa. In Windhoek, the company has implemented the world's first direct potable reuse system, processing sewage to produce drinking water. "We collect sewage, treat it comprehensively, and introduce the potable water into the distribution network," Witkowicz notes.

In Durban, Veolia has established an innovative model where industries pay directly for treated wastewater, while in Hermanus (Overstrand), Veolia manages all water infrastructure except the network.

Regarding future developments, Witkowicz identifies the most significant transformation in contractual approaches. "Innovation flourishes when comprehensive solutions are implemented," he emphasises. "An all-One approach means one company assumes complete responsibility. Key performance indicators are established, but everything is included from maintenance, repairs, upgrades, renewal and ongoing operations."

Thierry Witkowicz's guidance to organisations pursuing water resilience is unambiguous: "Water should not be considered in isolation. Organisations must simultaneously address water, waste, and energy management. This integrated approach generates substantial cost savings."

As Southern Africa confronts escalating water challenges, Veolia's integrated methodology provides a comprehensive framework for sustainable water management that simultaneously addresses economic, environmental, and operational requirements.

Talbot and Sovereign set new global benchmark in industrial water recovery



TALBOT, in partnership with Sovereign Foods, one of South Africa's largest poultry producers, commissioned a water recovery and treatment facility in 2024 that delivers recovery levels exceeding international benchmarks for the food processing industry.

The plant, based in Kariega, Eastern Cape, is designed to recover 1.3 million litres per day (MLD) of potable water from 1.75 MLD of wastewater generated by factory operations. By combining its own IP and operational expertise with input from global leaders in water recovery, Talbot was able to push the boundaries of industrial water recovery.

Grahame Thompson, Director at Talbot, noted, "The plant was designed to recover 72.5% of the wastewater generated by Sovereign's processing activities. So far in 2025, we've recovered around 270 million litres of potable water, exceeding design expectations."

International partners have praised the project's quality. Sander Heijs of Cyprio BV re-

marked that this level of water reuse is rare, even in European poultry facilities, adding that it is truly a state-of-the-art facility.

This project responds directly to ongoing water challenges in South Africa, particularly in drought-prone regions like Kariega. It also eases pressure on municipal systems by reducing reliance on municipal water supply. The recovered water meets SANS 241 standards as well as removing key contaminants of emerging concern (CECs) and other non-listed pollutants. This supports compliance, operational continuity, and well-being of the consumers.

Technologies used include dissolved air flotation (DAF), membrane bioreactor (MBR), reverse osmosis (RO) and advanced oxidation (AOP). The facility was financed, designed, built and is currently fully managed by Talbot, with real-time performance tracked through its proprietary SaaS platform – TalbotAnalytics.

Blaine Nell, Group Commercial Manager at Sovereign, shared: "We now stand as one of

the largest contributors to water sustainability in the Eastern Cape. Choosing Talbot as our partner on the journey was the right decision."

This project achieves significant environmental impact while also delivering clear financial value. Talbot is one of the few companies that consistently translates water savings into financial metrics. By aligning environmental benefits with financial performance, Talbot gives decision-makers clear insight into the return on investment, setting a new standard for sustainability projects.

As water scarcity worsens across the country and globally, industries need to assess their water use, recovery potential, and long-term risk. Projects like this prove that water reuse is not only technically and financially feasible, but increasingly necessary.

With over 35 years' experience in industrial water solutions, Talbot can help businesses activate the transition to sustainable water to secure their water future.

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Cheap pipes come at a high cost

THE Southern African Plastic Pipe Manufacturers Association (SAPPMA) is urging engineers, municipalities, contractors and procurement officers to take greater care when sourcing plastic piping systems.

With infrastructure designed to last decades, the wrong

choice of pipe can derail entire projects.

“There is a growing trend by some manufacturers to offer pipes at a reduced price by bypassing material requirements,” warns Jan Venter, CEO of SAPPMA. “These pipes may look the same, but unless they carry

the SAPPMA logo, they don’t comply with quality and safety standards and won’t deliver the 50+ year lifespan of a properly manufactured system. Ultimately, it’s the end-user who pays through premature failures, costly repairs and reputational damage.”

The SAPPMA mark as a guarantee of quality

Pipes bearing the SAPPMA logo are manufactured to international standards and undergo independent audits and regular inspections. For buyers, this logo is a visible guarantee of quality, reliability and peace of

mind.

“When you insist on the SAPPMA mark, you’re protecting your investment and safeguarding communities that depend on reliable water, gas and sewage networks,” says Venter.

What to include in RFQs

SAPPMA recommends that every Request for Quotation (RFQ) for plastic piping systems include requirements for:

- ISO 9001 certification or approved quality management plans with recent audit reports
- Compliance with the correct SANS product standards
- Evidence of virgin raw materials only
- Full batch traceability from raw material to final pipe
- Independent laboratory test results for each supplied batch
- Proof of valid SAPPMA membership and the latest audit report

Checks on delivery

On delivery, pipes should:

- Be clearly marked with the certification body’s logo and the SAPPMA mark
- Match specified dimensions for diameter and wall thickness
- Be free from visible defects such as cracks, gouges or missing seals

Red flags

Buyers should be wary of unrealistically low tender prices, which often signal cost-cutting measures, and manufacturers who refuse to allow unannounced factory inspections.

Quality pays off

Infrastructure is a long-term investment. While inferior pipes may seem cheaper upfront, their premature failure quickly erases any savings.

“With SAPPMA-certified pipes, you know you are getting products that will perform safely and reliably for decades. Without that assurance, you’re gambling with your project, your budget and your reputation,” Venter concludes.

For more information, visit www.sappma.co.za

ADVICE TO PURCHASER OF PLASTIC PIPING SYSTEMS

When procuring plastic piping systems, purchasers are advised to ensure that all products and manufacturers meet the highest quality and compliance standards to ensure the product meets the design life requirements. The following considerations and requirements are recommended and to be stated in any RFQ (request for quotation).



MANUFACTURER TO SUPPLY THE FOLLOWING:

- ISO 9001 QMS (Quality Management System) Certificate or Quality Management Plan of the production facility with a copy of the latest Quality Audit Reports to be submitted throughout the supply period
- Product Certification (e.g. SANS ISO 4427-2 if HDPE, SANS 966-1 if uPVC, etc.)
- Raw material Certification (e.g. SANS ISO 4427-1 if HDPE)
- Certificate of analysis (COA) of polymers used
- Certificate of conformance (COC) of products
- Undertaking not to use any bought-in recycled material
- Laboratory test results, in accordance to the certification bodies’ Specific Permit Conditions (SPC), for each supplied pipe batch shall be submitted
- Full traceability of the pipe Batch Number to the raw material used
- SAPPMA Membership Certificate with a copy of the latest SAPPMA Audit Reports throughout the supply period



ALL PRODUCTS TO BE INSPECTED ON DELIVERY AND THE FOLLOWING CHECKED FOR COMPLIANCE:

- Pipe to be marked in accordance with the relevant standards, with the logo of the certification body and SAPPMA clearly visible.
- Pipe to be inspected for dimensions (OD, wall thickness and ovality) and damage (scratches, gouges, cracks, missing rubbers, etc.)



THE FOLLOWING SHOULD ALSO HAVE AN IMPACT ON YOUR CHOICE OF SUPPLIER:

- Is the manufacturer open to unannounced inspections during production?
- Is the quoted price realistic in terms of current polymer prices? (Beware of tenders where the selling price in R/kg is suspiciously low)

THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES AND INDUSTRIES CAN QUALIFY FOR A SAPPMA MEMBERSHIP:

- Pipe & fittings manufacturers
- Consultants
- Municipalities
- Contractors & Installers
- Raw material suppliers
- Construction companies
- Water Boards
- Individuals

SAPPMA
southern african plastic pipe manufacturers association

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BevZero leads non-alcoholic wine boom in South Africa



The BevZero Paarl team with their de-alcoholisation equipment in the background.

By Diane Silcock

THE no/low alcohol market globally is on an upward trajectory with volumes forecast to expand at a CAGR of +4% between 2024 and 2028, with no-alcohol driving this with a +7% volume CAGR. This is

"In South Africa, globally we are rated as one of the top producers of non-alcohol and de-alcoholised wines because of the excellent wine selection available to us, as well as our choice of wine as the base product."

according to IWSR's No/Low Alcohol Strategic Study, which also states that 'the no-alcohol category alone is expected to deliver incremental growth of US\$4bn+ by 2028'.

It's not surprising, therefore, that BevZero

ro, a Paarl-based operation specialising in de-alcoholisation and alcohol reduction, is experiencing a greater demand for their services.

With over 30 years of experience globally, BevZero employs advanced vacuum distillation technologies and processes that remove

with offices in South Africa and Spain, pioneered the use of Very Low Temperature Distillation (VLTD) as a tool for winemakers.

Gustav Fouché, MD of BevZero South Africa, says, "In South Africa, globally we are rated as one of the top producers of non-alcohol and de-alcoholised wines because of the excellent wine selection available to us, as well as our choice of wine as the base product. We choose more high-end wines, compared to other global wine regions, for instance, so our starting product is high end, and this results in a better final product. Our aim is to mimic an existing wine thereby giving our customers a non-alcoholic or de-alcoholised counterpart as well."

Focusing on wine and cider, BevZero South Africa serves winemakers, distillers and non-alcoholic bev-

erage producers in this fast-growing sector. Their expertise ranges from de-alcoholisation (down to below 0.5% alcohol by volume (ABV) to below 0.05% ABV), to alcohol reduction, cross flow filtration, flavour management, and product development.

The latest research by YouGov, an international online research data and analytics technology group, shows a growing demand for non-alcoholic alternatives particularly among younger adults.

Fouché says that they have definitely noticed less traditional wine drinkers, and the younger adult generations' shift towards de-alcoholised and alcohol-free beverages has a lot to do with them being more health-conscious. Drinking low or alcohol-free beverages is also more socially acceptable as it's no longer stigmatised.

BevZero has been successful in helping winemakers to be ahead of the curve. Due to their advanced technology and international experience, as demand peaked for low/alcohol-free beverages, they were very quickly able to assist local winemakers in introducing quality products onto the market to compete with the international products. This was around 2017/2018 even prior to the COVID pandemic.

"The sector is growing exponentially, especially in terms of alcohol-free wines and even wine-based drinks. And what's evolved significantly in our industry, is the product development side," says Fouché. "In particular, we work with an already de-alcoholised wine product to improve it even further. Our team has expertise in winemaking, distillation, food science and beverage development, which gives us a unique understanding of how to make exceptional innovative beverages to meet the growing trends of the market."

Manual or automatic tank cleaning – which is better?

THE shift towards automated tank cleaning is becoming increasingly critical in today's industrial landscape. This article offers insight into how automation not only surpasses manual cleaning in efficiency and effectiveness, but also aligns with the pressing need for sustainability and safety in operations.

Monitor Engineering (sole agent for Spraying Systems Co. USA) has for over 75 years been helping its customers to keep their tanks clean.

Manual vs automatic tank cleaning

Whether dealing with chemicals, food and beverage processing remnants, or other industrial by-products, ensuring tanks are thoroughly cleaned is crucial for operational success.

"With an automatic tank cleaner, such as a rotating spray ball, total coverage of the tank is achieved, with minimal water use."

Traditional manual cleaning methods often fall short due to variability and inefficiency and can also pose safety risks for workers if they need to enter tanks to clean them. From reducing labour costs to enhancing sustainability, automated systems offer a compelling alternative for the future of tank cleaning.

Green cleaning: How tank cleaning choices affect the environment

Tank cleaning is a water intensive process and overuse can accumulate into thousands of gallons wasted annually. With an automatic tank cleaner, such as a



rotating spray ball, total coverage of the tank is achieved, with minimal water use. The following section explores how the different methods of tank cleaning align with sustainability goals, focusing on water and energy usage, chemical use, and waste management.

Water and energy usage

Automatic tank cleaning systems are significantly more efficient in terms of water and energy conservation. Recently, a chemical manufacturer implemented TankJet® nozzles in their cleaning process. This switch led to a 65% reduction in water usage and halved their cleaning time.

Similarly, food processing plants have seen substantial savings in water and energy with automated tank cleaning. Key benefits include more efficient use of cleaning fluids, consistent and safer cleaning processes, and a notable decrease in maintenance and downtime. Automated systems offer reliability and repeatability, crucial for maintaining high hygiene standards in the food industry.

Chemical use and waste management

Manual cleaning often requires large amounts of chemicals, which poses environmental risks and raises concerns about worker safety. Automated systems, however, can be precisely calibrated to use the exact amount of

chemicals needed for effective cleaning thereby reducing the volume of chemicals used and the amount of hazardous waste generated.

Moreover, the wastewater from tank cleaning processes must be treated before disposal. Automated systems result in less contaminated wastewater. This is crucial in complying with increasingly stringent environmental regulations.

Why automate your tank cleaning operations?

- Better and more consistent cleaning results
- Increased production time
- Reduced energy consumption
- Reduced cleaning fluid consumption
- Reduced manual labour

What's the verdict?

Automatic systems stand out for their efficiency and resource conservation, offering consistent and thorough cleaning that aligns with the growing focus on sustainability. The initial investment in these systems is often balanced by long-term savings in labour, resources, and operational downtime.

To find out more about automatic tank cleaning options, contact Monitor Engineering for a no charge site audit.

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90
YEARS
YOUNG

Cape Bag Group Looks to the Future with Pride and Purpose

The **Cape Bag Group**, one of South Africa's most established packaging manufacturers and distributors, is celebrating a rare milestone: 90 years in business.

Founded on June 20, 1935, by the Seidel family, the business began with a simple trade, repairing and reselling hessian sacks collected from ships in Cape Town harbour. From that humble beginning, Cape Bag Group has grown into a multi-division entity comprising Cape Bag, Cape Bulk Bags, Cape Twines & Packaging, and Elshamar, employing over 300 people and offering more than 800 products.

Today, the group services key industries such as agriculture, mining, milling, chemicals, fishing, and retail, supplying industrial packaging, twines, and ropes across Southern Africa. While each company plays a unique role, they are united by a single mission: to serve the market with consistency, innovation, and trust.

"Our vertical integration into manufacturing has been a game-changer," says Group MD Rob Uys, who leads the business today. "It gave us more control, better speed, and a platform for continuous innovation."

But Cape Bag Group's success isn't only about systems it's about people. The group has earned a reputation for extraordinary staff loyalty. More than 25 employees have served over 20 years, and Paul Alperstein, Sales Director at Cape Twines & Packaging, is in his 43rd year with the company. "We've built more than a workforce we've built a family," Uys says.

To mark its 90-year milestone, Cape Bag Group hosted internal celebrations across all factories, recognising every staff member's contribution. "This company doesn't run without them," Uys adds.

Looking ahead, the Group continues to invest in technology, manufacturing, and infrastructure, while Elshamar manages its expanding property footprint across the Western Cape. A robust international sourcing network and integrated group-wide systems keep the business agile, even as it scales.

"We're not afraid of change," says Uys. "We're curious, and we move fast when our customers need us to."

That ability to adapt has kept Cape Bag Group relevant across generations. But at its core, the group remains grounded in values that haven't changed since 1935: trust, respect, and a commitment to getting the job done right.



Rob Uys, Group MD

To long-time clients and new partners alike, Cape Bag Group offers something rare in today's business landscape: a 90-year track record backed by a future-focused mindset. "We're not just a supplier says Uys. "We're a trusted partner and we plan to keep it that way for the next 90 years."



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SA agriculture rebounds with strong growth prospects

By Adrian Ephraim

SOUTH Africa's agricultural sector is telling a story of remarkable resilience in 2025, transforming from the devastating drought conditions of last year into what one expert describes as "an excellent year" for farming across the country.

"We are coming from a very difficult season if you are thinking about 2024," explains agricultural economist Wandile Sihlobo, Chief Economist of the Agricultural Business Chamber of South Africa (Agbiz).

The El Niño weather phenomenon brought below-normal rainfall, culminating in February drought conditions that crippled crop production across the region. "Our maize production last year was down 21%, but across Southern Africa, that was the reality. Zimbabwe lost 60% of its crops, Zambia lost half of its crop."

From drought to recovery

The turnaround has been dramatic. South Africa has shifted from El Niño to La Niña weather patterns, bringing above-normal rainfall and setting the stage for agricultural recovery. "We started with a very strong Q1," Sihlobo notes, though he acknowledges the sector's inherent volatility due to its dependence on natural conditions.

The recovery story, however, came with its own complications. "The season is late by a month and a half," Sihlobo explains, describing how extended rainfall patterns disrupted traditional harvesting schedules. "Normally you would want rain to stop in February,

in March, so that the crops dry up and then from May onwards you can harvest. But now we received rain until the end of April."

This timing shift meant crops that would typically be delivered in the second quarter appeared later, contributing to more modest growth figures despite the underlying strength of the harvest.

Battling disease challenges

While weather conditions improved, the livestock sector faced different hurdles. Animal diseases, particularly foot-and-mouth disease and avian influenza, have created ongoing challenges. "Generally, the animal diseases, as you know, are not unique to South Africa," Sihlobo observes, pointing to similar struggles in the EU, Brazil, and the United States.

"We do have weaknesses in our biosecurity controls, but we have the right people working on it, so it's not a concern," he explains, emphasising the need for improved surveillance systems and faster registration of new vaccines. The frequency of these diseases has increased notably, with Sihlobo noting that "before 2014, the animal diseases were not occurring at the speed that they are occurring now."

Export success story

Despite global trade tensions and tariff concerns, South Africa's agricultural exports have shown surprising strength. "If you look at South Africa's agricultural exports in the second quarter to the United States, they were up by 26%," Sihlobo reports, crediting strategic front-loading during policy uncer-

tainty periods.

More significantly, improved port efficiencies have transformed the export landscape. "We are much more encouraged by the performance of the ports and the efficiencies in South Africa," he says, noting collaborative efforts between Transnet and private sector partners. The result has been tangible: agricultural exports reached impressive levels, with citrus growers and others no longer complaining about port delays.

Sihlobo challenges common perceptions about South Africa's market development efforts. "I typically hear people saying South Africa is not doing anything to open markets," he says, before providing context that tells a different story. The country's agricultural exports have grown from around \$2 billion in 2000 to nearly \$14 billion in 2024.

However, he acknowledges that momentum slowed after 2012. "We need to regain the energy of the early 2000s of opening as many export markets as we can," Sihlobo argues, identifying key targets including China, India, and Saudi Arabia, which "spend over \$26 billion buying food from the world. We want to be part of that".

Looking forward with optimism

Despite the challenges, Sihlobo maintains an optimistic outlook. "I remain very optimistic for this year, but also for the next decade," he states, citing the sector's potential for substantial growth and job creation.

The path forward requires addressing key structural issues: releasing government land with title deeds, improving rural infrastructure,

tackling stock theft ("100 cattle are stolen in South Africa every day"), and expanding vaccine manufacturing capabilities.

"We are struggling with three problems in South Africa – unemployment, low growth, and poverty," Sihlobo concludes. "Anything

we do must resolve that." For South Africa's agricultural sector, the combination of favourable weather, improved logistics, and strategic market development means the foundations are being laid for sustained growth in the years ahead.





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HELUKABEL solutions for the future of automation

THE automation of production processes is a global trend, seen across industries like automotive manufacturing, food production, and logistics.

This shift is driven by the desire for increased productivity, consistent high quality, and the flexibility to handle small batch sizes.

The backbone of these automated systems lies in the intelligent, digital interconnection of numerous processors, sensors, drives, and controls.

At the heart of this network are the cables and wires, which are indispensable for reliably transmitting the power and data

required by all system components.

Meeting the demands of a challenging environment

Industrial automation presents a uniquely challenging environment for connection technologies. Cables and wires must be en-

gineered to withstand a complex array of stresses.

Depending on the application, they may need to be resistant to high temperatures, aggressive chemicals, oil, or continuous mechanical stresses such as bending and torsion. They must also be suitable for use in confined spaces and

capable of supporting increasingly higher data transmission rates.

The rise of trends like digitalisation and Industry 4.0 is making automation a key technology. As factories become more automated, the demand is greater than ever for components, including cables, wires and accessories,

that can withstand high mechanical and dynamic stresses while maintaining speed, accuracy, and reliability. This continuous drive towards automation not only boosts profitability but also protects people from dangerous or physically demanding work, all while maintaining a

consistently high level of quality.

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HELUKABEL stands as a leading global partner in providing connection technology for this demanding field. With decades of experience, we offer a comprehensive product portfolio tailored for automation, including:

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- Innovative, space-saving hybrid cables that efficiently combine power and data transmission into a single cable

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Our global logistics network ensures high product availability and short delivery times, making us a reliable partner with a strong commitment to service. We also focus on meeting the highest standards for transmitting signals and energy, which positions us as an ideal partner for the next generation of industrial automation.

"With decades of experience, we offer a comprehensive product portfolio tailored for automation..."

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Cape Boiler & Heater pioneers South Africa's first installation of the Autoflame Mini Mk9

HISTORY was made recently in South Africa's industrial heating sector as the very first Autoflame Mini Mk9, proudly supplied by Combustion Technology, was successfully installed and commissioned on a THERMAX Thermal Oil Heater newly manufactured by Cape Boiler & Heater. This milestone marks a new era in precision combustion management, bringing cutting-edge technology to local industries for the first time.

Smarter. Safer. Cleaner. More efficient

- Up to 15% fuel savings than conventional systems
- Even lower emissions & greener combustion
- Smart diagnostics = Preventative and easier maintenance

Cape Boiler & Heater: A legacy of excellence

Founded in 1967, Cape Boiler & Heater Co. has been a trusted name in South African industrial heating for over 50 years. A family run business, now under the guidance of the third generation, the company continues to uphold a legacy of quality, innovation, and customer satisfaction. Known for their THERMAX Thermal Oil Heaters, STEAMATIC Rapid Steam Boilers, FLOMAX Hot Water Boilers, and bespoke industrial heating solutions, Cape Boiler & Heater offers comprehensive turnkey services including design, project management, installation, maintenance, and training.

Unique solution: The THERMAX THERMAL OIL HEATER & AUTOFLAME MINI MK9

For this landmark project, Cape Boiler & Heater supplied and commissioned a THERMAX Thermal Oil Heater equipped with the Autoflame Mini Mk9 Advanced Micro Modulation (MM) system. This cutting-edge technology provides:

- **Micro Modulation Control:** Continuously adjusts fuel and air to match real-time demand, ensuring stable operation across the entire load range.
- **Instant UV O₂ Trim with Feedback:** Patented UV scanners provide precision oxygen control, automatically optimising

combustion for maximum efficiency and safety, in real time.

- **Industry-Leading Turndown Ratios:** Up to 4:1 on liquid fuels and 10:1 on gaseous fuels, maintaining tight fuel-to-air ratio control and reducing emissions.
- The THERMAX Thermal Oil Heaters themselves are a marvel of engineering, designed specifically for reliability, efficiency, and safety in industrial environments. Built with a downward-fired, four-pass design and premium-grade materials, the vertical orientation allows stress-free expansion of the heater during operation, while the air-cooled outer shell preheats combustion air and protects against hot gases. Every unit undergoes rigorous factory testing to ensure seamless installation and commissioning on site. Combined with the Autoflame Mini Mk9, the THERMAX heaters deliver unmatched performance, precise temperature control, and significant energy savings, making them ideal for industries seeking high-efficiency thermal solutions tailored to South African conditions.

The Autoflame UV Trim Scanner, a revolutionary technology unique to the Mini Mk9, allows "Air-Fuel Ratio Trimming At the Speed of Light™", ensuring the burner always fires safely and efficiently. This patented system is compatible with a wide range of fuels including natural gas, diesel, heavy fuel oil, and biofuels.

Combustion technology: SA's exclusive partner

Combustion Technology, also a family-run business operating for nearly 40 years, proudly supplies Autoflame products in South Africa and Mauritius. With expertise in supply and installation of boilers and burners, 24/7 Boiler Management, boiler rentals, maintenance, project management, and spare parts, they bring international combustion management technology to local industries. Their flagship product, Aut-

oflame, is globally recognised for digital combustion management, supported by international Tech Centres that offer supply, advanced training, and member support.

A powerful partnership

The collaboration between Cape Boiler & Heater and Combustion Technology represents a powerhouse of knowledge and innovation. Both family-run businesses bring decades of experience and expertise to the table,

delivering bespoke, results-driven solutions for boiler plants across South Africa. Together, they are setting a new standard in industrial heating, ensuring clients benefit from enhanced fuel efficiency, lower emissions, and safer operation.

Looking to the future

Both Managing Directors, Sebastian Kellerman (Cape Boiler & Heater) and Grant Renecke (Combustion Technology), agree: every boiler and burner should be fitted with

Autoflame Controls. Their combined dedication ensures customers receive optimised boiler solutions, tailored advice, and exceptional service, helping clients save significantly on fuel and operational costs while extending the lifespan of their plants and equipment.

For more information or to discuss your own boiler and combustion management needs, contact: Cape Boiler & Heater: +27 21 511-6652 | admin@capeboiler.co.za | www.capeboiler.co.za



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The Autoflame Mini Mk9 is proudly sponsored in South Africa by Combustion Technology (exclusive distributors of Autoflame in South Africa & Mauritius), in partnership with Cape Boiler & Heater, trusted leaders in industrial heating.

Allmech: Excellent after-sales service for boilers beyond SA's borders



NO matter where a boiler is situated, maintenance is important, not only to keep equipment up and running reliably, but also to maximise its lifespan and to ensure employee safety. This is why Allmech, a leading South African manufacturer of boilers and supplier of water treatment components, ensures it can assist its customers around the world with all their boiler service needs, from Mauritius to Zambia, Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, Kenya, Botswana, Ghana, Uganda and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Lionel Maasdorp, MD at Allmech, says that providing reliable after-sales service has been one of the keys to the company's longevity (Allmech is celebrating 30 years in business in 2025). "We like to think our products are reliable and easy to manage on a day-to-day basis," he says. "We try to save our customers money where possible and to always give good service."

The company offers its full-service backup offering to all customers, local and international alike. "We perform annual and 36-monthly services for clients with electrode boilers. We offer monthly or three-monthly water treatment services to our outlying customers too, whereby we visit their site and test the water feeding the softener, the feed tank water and the boiler water, as well as doing

routine checking of the softener and chemical dosing pumps.

"Some clients prefer to courier a sample of the respective water samples to us to check so that they can save some costs. We then use the sample to complete a comprehensive report to provide to the customer," Maasdorp explains.

Building long-term customer relationships

The Allmech team prides itself on being a one-stop shop for customers and works hard to meet their every need.

"We ensure our product is reliable and make spares available via courier for our customers," says Maasdorp. "Our service technicians have many years of experience and know our products well, enabling them to resolve almost all issues on site as we carry some spares with us. There have been a few instances where we have had to supply the client with a spare of sorts after the service. Here we usually show the client how to install the parts while on site or via a video conference call as the advancements in technology have made things easier in that respect."

Theo Boshoff, senior boiler technician at Allmech, says that the company recently completed the commissioning of a new shell at a client in Ghana and is currently servicing a boiler in Mo-

zambique, with a second boiler at another Mozambican company due for an annual inspection soon. "We have a boiler service scheduled for two boilers at one of our sites in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for later this month," he adds. "Each site is unique, with applications ranging from animal feed manufacturing to animal meat processing. Our boilers are used for everything from mines to the reverse osmosis plants used for the bottling of water."

He says that Allmech tries to prioritise services to ensure all companies remain within the statutory requirements of a boiler service every three years. "With the water services we offer, we are also able to provide certain customers with test kits (depending on their needs), which allows them to do their own analysis and to complete their reports themselves. Then we help to analyse their results and make suggestions where necessary," he says.

Maasdorp says that while the bulk of Allmech's customers are based in South Africa, many international enquiries come through the company's website or via referrals and word of mouth. "We are also referred to end users by some of the authorised inspection authorities who perform boiler inspections to assist their clients in keeping their boilers clean," he says. "To us, that's a mark that we're doing something right and we work hard to protect our reputation in the marketplace, both locally and further abroad."

Allmech was founded in 1995 and has grown over two decades to become one of South Africa's leading boiler manufacturers and suppliers to the water treatment industry. Allmech offers a comprehensive range of electrical, gas and oil-fired boilers with water treatment to suit.

Maximising boiler efficiency and environmental benefits with specialised lubrication

WHEN ash-producing fuels burn, combustion by-products accumulate on boiler heating surfaces – including tube banks, walls, screens, superheaters, reheaters and economisers. This buildup creates an insulating barrier that forces boilers to work harder, consuming more fuel and generating higher emissions to achieve the same output. Clean heating surfaces help boilers function more efficiently and reduce a power-producing facility's environmental footprint.

"Getting the most out of critical boiler-cleaning equipment like soot blowers requires proper lubrication," says Gavin Ford, National Marketing Manager at Lubrication Engineers (LE) South Africa. Soot blowers are used to keep combustion particles from sticking to boiler tube tanks. They can be retractable or rotary and help to clean heating surfaces of boilers fired with ash-producing fuels. Several soot blowers are usually found on each level of the boiler tower. In addition to soot blowers, many boilers have cleaning

elements like retractable systems and water wall deslaggers to remove heavier slag deposits that accumulate on heating surfaces; air heater cleaners to keep air preheater surfaces clean for optimal heat transfer and combustion efficiency; and gunblowers and furnace probes that target specific problem areas where manual cleaning isn't feasible.

Specialised lubrication for extreme environments

However, given the extreme operating environment, lubricating soot blowers and other boiler-cleaning machinery requires specialist products. These equipment components need to function reliably in temperatures that would cause many lubricants to burn, melt or congeal, which could potentially lead to equipment failure, unplanned downtime, and a negative environmental impact.

"LE has specifically designed a range of lubrication products for high-temperature, critical applications," says Ford. "For example, LE's 1250 Almasol



High Temperature Lubricant is ideal for travelling carriage gearbox steam blowing in retractable soot-blowers, while our 1275 Almaplex Industrial Lubricant is the best solution for linkage fittings in air heater cleaners."

The complexity of boiler-cleaning lubrication requirements means that selecting the right products is key for both equipment performance and environmental outcomes. Ford says that consulting with experts is an important aspect of getting the lubrication selection for these components right. "We advise speaking to a lubrication technician to find out about the best product for the specific boiler-cleaning application, which will ultimately protect boilers and keep them operating at their best for as long as possible."

Critical equipment for environmental benefits

The environmental benefits of correctly caring for boiler-cleaning equipment extend beyond just equipment reliability. Properly lubricated boiler-cleaning systems maintain consistent cleaning effectiveness, which in turn improves fuel efficiency. They also reduce unplanned maintenance that requires emergency equipment operation, all of which extends equipment service life, saves on running costs and reduces replacement waste.

This technical approach means that maintenance teams can achieve optimal boiler efficiency while meeting their environmental performance requirements, making specialised lubrication an essential part of responsible power generation.

Choosing the right thermal carrier key to optimise performance – AES

THE choice of thermal carrier is critical to achieving efficient and safe manufacturing, says Dennis Williams, Commercial Director at Associated Energy Services (AES). Historically, steam—often coal-fired—has been the dominant thermal carrier in South African industry. However, Williams notes that many facilities are now reassessing their systems in

search of improved efficiency, quality, and sustainability.

"Companies need to ask whether steam is still the right fit for every process, or if alternatives such as thermal oil, hot water, or gas could offer better results," he says.

Steam remains a popular choice due to its controllability, safety, and non-toxic nature. It can be generated across a range of pressures,

providing precise temperature control and minimising risks like product contamination or fire.

For lower temperature needs (120–150°C), pressurised hot water is more efficient and widely used in breweries and cleaning systems. In contrast, thermal oil is preferred in applications requiring higher temperatures, such as textile heat treatment, while

gas and hot air systems are common in paper and food processing industries.

Williams advises companies to evaluate their energy systems holistically, integrating different thermal processes where appropriate. "It's not about paying less—it's about maximising value, performance, and sustainability across the production cycle," he concludes.

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THE NEXT GENERATION

Internships, Skills & Development Programmes

Engineering joint venture brings national skills development strategy to life

THROUGH the GIBB and Knight Piésold Joint Venture (GKP JV), appointed for the water conveyance infrastructure component of Phase 1 of the uMkhomazi Water Project (uMWP-1), the two firms have joined forces to ensure young candidate engineers, geologists, and environmental scientists gain the mentorship and experience required for professional registration in their fields.

The initiative forms part of the Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority's (TCTA) uMWP-1 – a major water infrastructure project in KwaZulu-Natal designed to augment the uMgeni Water Supply System (MWSS) by transferring water via a tunnel and pipeline from the new Smithfield Dam on the uMkhomazi River.

According to Skills Development Manager Phumie Mayongo, the TCTA required the GKP JV to implement a skills development programme aligned with South Africa's National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) III and the Construction Industry Development Board's B.U.I.L.D. Programme. Both initiatives emphasise developing technical and professional capacity, particularly among young black South Africans, while mandating that large infrastructure projects allocate funding toward skills and enterprise development.

"The programme includes recruitment, mentorship, and facilitation of candidates' professional registration with bodies such as the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) and the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP)," says Mayongo.

Launched in July 2025, the programme provides graduates with mentorship and on-site experience critical to their long-term career prospects. GKP JV Project Manager, Francis Gibbons, notes that while the project



focuses primarily on civil engineering, it also involves significant environmental and geotechnical work. "Wherever opportunities existed to place candidates in specialist areas, we've done so," he says.

Gibbons adds that professional registration requires at least three years of practical experience under the guidance of a mentor. "Our main goal is to help candidates achieve professional status, but we also hope to retain top performers within GIBB and Knight Piésold. Leadership in both firms recognised that beyond compliance, this initiative adds real value to the industry and to society."

He commended Mayongo's role in driving the process forward and the TCTA's foresight in requiring a dedicated Skills Development Manager. "We provide the mentorship and training, but the candidates must take ownership of their growth. We can support them, but their motivation and discipline are what will ultimately determine success."

GIBB bridge professional engineer and mentor, Raeesa Khan, says professional registration typically takes four to five years and demands "patience, resilience, and hard work." She adds: "Candidates must be willing to fail, learn, and try again. Asking questions, conducting research, and problem-solving are essential parts of the journey."

Knight Piésold mentor, Darren Pillay, highlights communication and safety as vital skills for emerging engineers. "Mastering professional communication is key. Just as important is developing a risk-averse mindset to ensure health and safety standards are upheld during both design and construction."

Through initiatives like this, the GKP JV is not only delivering critical water infrastructure but also helping to build South Africa's next generation of engineering and scientific professionals.

Micro-credentialing: Redefining how graduates break into new careers

WITH rapid shifts in the job market becoming commonplace, graduate professionals have to be more resilient than ever to ensure they stay ahead of trends and keep their careers on an upward trajectory. This has given rise to the phenomenon of micro-credentialing, which allows swift, affordable upskilling, an education expert says.

"Micro-credentialing is revolutionising how individuals break into new careers, offering flexible, targeted learning to acquire in-demand skills. Unlike traditional degrees, these shorter, focused courses or certifications allow professionals to upskill quickly in areas that are in high demand," says Dingaane Moropane, Deputy Dean: Academics at The IIE's Rosebank College.

For career changers, micro-credentials bridge the gap between current expertise and new opportunities, enabling rapid entry into emerging and high-growth fields without having to take a 3-year break to pursue fulltime studies. And as industries evolve, the micro-credentialing model empowers employees to stay competitive and to pivot with confidence, he explains.

The three main reasons people seek to upskill in the current environment, include:

- Pursuing greater fulfilment: Especially mid-career, many professionals seek roles that better align with personal interests or values, promising greater job satisfaction over routine or unfulfilling work.
- Economic opportunities: Shifting to high-demand fields offers better pay, and greater stability and growth potential, especially in rapidly evolving industries and those facing job cuts.
- Adapting to change: Technological advancements or job market shifts, like

automation, push workers to reskill and transition into emerging or more secure careers.

"Micro-credentialing enables professionals to pivot into high-growth industries, or higher growth roles within their existing industry, with agility and precision. As industries evolve and new opportunities arise, micro-credentialing is proving to be a vital resource for career changers seeking relevance, flexibility, and opportunity at speed," says Moropane.

Obtaining complementary skills through micro-credentialing means students can gain entry into a new field within a few months or a year. Additionally, these shorter programmes are found in most fields, including tech, finance and accounting, law, education, and marketing, enabling pivots to brand new fields.

Examples of transitional qualifications, which allow graduates to broaden their field of expertise outside of their first degree, to encompass high-demand skills, include:

Postgraduate Diploma in Digital Business: Prepares graduates with digital skills across finance, HR, and marketing.

Postgraduate Diploma in Management: Ensures students gain a deep understanding of management theory and practice.

Postgraduate Diploma in Business Leadership: Equips managers with leadership and business management skills across multiple disciplines.

Postgraduate Diploma in Data Analytics: Provides training in Big Data, AI, ML, Data Visualisation, and Statistics.

"For those transitioning to new roles, micro-credentials bridge the gap between current expertise and the demands of emerging fields. The Future of Jobs report 2025 under-



Dingaane Moropane, Deputy Dean: Academics at The IIE's Rosebank College.

scores the value of micro-credentials for job seekers aiming to differentiate themselves in competitive markets," notes Moropane.

An added benefit of pursuing a micro-credentialing approach, is that they are stackable, allowing professional students to accumulate expertise over time, creating a robust skill set tailored to their career goals.

"This flexibility is ideal for professionals juggling work, family, and education. Micro-credentialing is reshaping how professionals navigate career transitions. By providing a fast, more affordable, and targeted approach to skill acquisition, it empowers workers to adapt to change and remain resilient, pursue fulfilling roles, and capitalise on economic opportunities," says Moropane.

"Micro-credentials are not merely a trend but a cornerstone of a future-ready job market, enabling individuals to pivot with confidence and stay ahead in an ever-changing professional landscape."

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Why we've got integrity so wrong when it comes to KPIs

By Chantelle Botha



EVERY employment contract is a promise of value exchange: you bring expertise, the company brings remuneration. We often define integrity as doing the right thing when no one's watching, but in business, integrity is how you show up and deliver on your promise every day after signing that contract.

When companies set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), they're not imposing arbitrary targets. They're creating a covenant: your individual expertise in exchange for the organisation's collective sustainability. The question isn't whether KPIs matter, but whether we truly understand what we commit to when we accept them.

The sacred contract beyond remuneration

Agreeing to KPIs is more than a commitment to personal pay. It's a pledge that your expertise will fuel the company's survival and success – and by extension, the livelihoods of colleagues and communities who depend on it.

This is where integrity becomes a busi-

ness imperative. Your performance impacts not just your career, but your colleague's job security, your company's growth, and its long-term sustainability. Integrity is about recognising this sacred contract and choosing to honour it, not because someone is monitoring, but because it's who you are.

Integrity as an Identity

Integrity is wholeness. It means being honest when you're struggling, communicating early, and seeking solutions instead of hiding until it's too late. It means being the same person in the boardroom and the bedroom – one who owns both problems and solutions.

Professionals driven by integrity don't shift blame. They ask: What do I need to learn or do differently to deliver on my commitment?

Integrity isn't about perfection; it's about authentic accountability. Some of the most powerful moments of leadership begin with, "I'm not where I need to be, but here's my plan to get there."

Integrity, ultimately, is an identity.

The ripple effect of individual integrity

Companies don't fail because KPIs are unrealistic. They fail when people stop keeping their promises to one another.

When one person embraces KPI integrity – delivering consistently, communicating openly, solving problems proactively – the entire team lifts. But when someone repeatedly misses targets without accountability, trust erodes, workloads shift unfairly, and everyone's security is threatened.

Integrity is therefore a collective responsibility built on individual choices. Your personal commitment gives others permis-

sion to expect excellence of themselves.

The foundation of integrity

True integrity starts long before KPIs. Self-aware professionals seek roles aligned with their purpose and perform with a deep understanding of why their metrics matter. That alignment unlocks creativity and innovation that drives entire companies forward.

I've seen sales professionals who not only hit targets but mentor teammates. Operations managers who streamline processes so others can excel. Leaders who cultivate cultures of integrity where excellence becomes second nature.

It all begins with one person's commitment to wholeness.

Integrity births authenticity

When KPI performance flows from integrity, it isn't forced – it's sustainable. You're not chasing numbers out of fear; you're delivering excellence because it aligns with who you are.

This authenticity shows up in client relationships, team dynamics, and innovation. Customers sense when they're dealing with someone operating from integrity rather than desperation. Teams thrive when everyone is committed to keeping their word.

Your daily choice

Every morning, you face a decision: Will you be the person you portrayed in your interview, or will you excuse why you can't deliver?

Integrity isn't about being flawless. It's about being honest, accountable, and committed to growth when you fall short. It's remembering that your word

is your bond – the very foundation upon which organisations are built.

In a world full of excuses and blame-shifting, the professional who consistently delivers on their promises doesn't just meet KPIs. They become indispensable.

Because ultimately, KPIs are more than metrics – they are a reflection of who we are in a world that desperately needs people of integrity.

Chantelle Botha is known globally as The Catalyst – an Identity Architect who integrates integrity from the bedroom to the boardroom. As founder of Phoenix and author of Phoenix Rising, she challenges leadership paradigms through her (se)X-Factor framework. Her transformational style has made her a sought-after speaker who doesn't just inspire – she ignites.

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Opinion piece: Simplicity, scalability, and sustainability – SaaS energy management for small business

By Thabang Byl, Buildings Segment Lead at Schneider Electric



RETAIL and franchising are fast-paced; a world where margins are tight and expectations sky-high. For those small-format retail outlets and franchise stores which operate in this space, think convenience branches, fast-food chains, and mini supermarkets, expenditure matters a lot.

Electricity bills are right at the top, and stretching kilowatts is paramount. However, efficient energy management is not always within reach of smaller businesses, and unfortunately, those technologies that enable it are reserved

for larger organisations, with budgets to match.

The good news is that there are now Building Management Systems (BMS) and Energy Management Systems (EMS) available as Software-as-a-Service (SaaS), designed to truly mitigate the need for costly infrastructure upgrades and additional capital outlay, like onsite technical teams. Importantly, it allows retailers and franchises to make their power consumption go that one kilowatt further.

Upfront costs? Not anymore

Historically, deploying building and energy management solutions meant installing servers, LAN networks, and dedicated IT racks. It was complex, expensive, and simply not viable for a small shop. With SaaS, there's no need; it's affordable, scalable, and importantly, painless.

Furthermore, the shift from capital expenditure (Capex) to operational expenditure (Opex) makes these solutions more accessible to outlets operating under tighter budgets. Subscription-based pricing removes the financial burden of large upfront investments while delivering measurable returns from day one.

SaaS also mitigates the need for on-site technical teams; an overhead that very few smaller businesses can afford. For example, automated scheduling ensures systems operate only when needed, and cloud-based diagnostics help identify inefficien-

cies before they become costly problems.

Visibility and management enhanced

One of the standout features of these BMS and EMS SaaS offerings is its multi-site visibility. For example, franchisees managing multiple branches can compare energy performance across locations in real time. This benchmarking capability helps identify underperforming stores, replicate best practices from top performers, and improve budgeting accuracy.

Importantly, these systems aren't just for new builds. They are retrofit-friendly and vendor-agnostic, meaning they can be integrated into existing infrastructure without overhauling everything.

Indeed, many small outlets might have some systems in place. The intention is not to rip and replace. Whether it's older HVAC units or IoT sensors from different brands, the platform adapts.

Meeting ESG goals

Apart from the energy savings, SaaS platforms are also powerful tools for achieving sustainability goals; a major plus point for franchisees. Reduced consumption supports lower emissions, while easy-to-access data enhances ESG reporting.

Furthermore, by making green operations more achievable and demonstrable, franchisees

gain more than cost savings; they build trust with increasingly eco-conscious consumers.

SaaS platforms undoubtedly provide small retailer and franchises with the means to get a handle on their energy consumption whilst improving operations at the same time. Whichever way you look at it, SaaS reduces complexity, offers faster ROI and scales according to a small business' unique needs.

It is providing smaller operators with the same digital tools and advantages that the big players have, without the headache.

Schneider Electric EcoStruxure Building Activate, designed for small and midsize buildings, enables energy and asset management without the need for heavy upfront investment in hardware or software licensing.

Users pay a recurring subscription fee, making it more accessible and cost-effective, especially for sectors like retail, hospitality, healthcare, education, and offices.

Key features include:

- Vendor-agnostic and IoT-powered platform
- Integrates HVAC, lighting, refrigeration, and more
- Offers real-time utility monitoring, automation, and sustainability insights
- Accessible via web and mobile interfaces
- Enables simple retrofitting for existing buildings



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