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# South Africa needs R319-billion to fund Green Hydrogen plans

South Africa has ambitious Green Hydrogen goals but the government still needs to specify how it is going to fund it.

By Larry Claasen

**G**REEN Hydrogen has been touted as an environmentally friendly energy alternative to fossil fuels, as it does not produce greenhouse gases. However, if South Africa wants to be a major international player, it will have to invest R319-billion by 2027.

Green Hydrogen is the process of creating hydrogen by using renewable electricity as a power source to electrolyse water, and it is seen as an opportunity to develop their economies by many developing countries, such as South Africa and Namibia.

The idea is to create hydrogen as a green replacement for fossil fuels and then export it to countries looking to decarbonise their economies.

Namibia is particularly ambitious, as it aims to produce 10-million to 12-million tons per annum of hydrogen equivalent by 2050.

For its part, the South African government is backing Green Hydrogen projects, like the 5000MW one at Boegoebaai in the Northern Cape and the 850MW project at the Saldanha Bay Industrial Development Zone (IDZ).

According to the government’s Green Hydrogen Commercialisation Strategy (GHCS), it could add 3,6% to GDP by 2050 and create 370 000 jobs.

## EU boost and incentives not enough

The European Union (EU) is supporting the development of Green Hydrogen in Africa, as can be seen in its pledge of R628-million to support the sector in South Africa.

Aside from this funding, the government is also providing support like grants to fund 5% of feasibility studies and a reduction in corporate income tax if a project is based in a Special Economic Zone (SEZ).

Despite this support from the EU and the incentives on offer, a research report



The proposed Port of Boegoebaai that will export Hydrogen. Image NCEDA

by Norwegian consultancy group Rystad Energy said the country will have to invest substantially more if it wants to see the sector get off the ground.

“The current incentives seem relatively insignificant, and the grants are mostly expected to fund early-stage feasibility studies for a domestic green hydrogen industry. The grants are not intended for capital investments but will support research and analysis to determine the viability of green hydrogen projects, laying the groundwork for future developments and investments in the sector.”

According to South Africa’s Green Hydrogen Commercialisation Strategy, R319-billion will need to be invested in the sector by 2027.

Rystad Energy says it’s clear that the Green Hydrogen sector in South Africa will need offshore funders to get off the ground.

For its part, the commercialisation strategy didn’t spell out specifically where the funding will come from.

“The broad principles of traditional project finance are likely to still be applied, necessitating collaboration by government, international development finance institutions, multilateral financing agencies, local commercial lenders and private sector investors.”

## High risk. Uncertain reward

The Rystad Energy report also noted that the majority of the Green Hydrogen projects in South Africa are in the concept phase and are considered “high-risk.”

Boegoebaai, for example, is undergoing a feasibility study and will need the construction of a deepwater port to water port capabilities to facilitate the export of hydrogen and ammonia to international markets.

Aside from the uncertainty around funding, the risk is also compounded by the lack of offtake agreements between producers and buyers that outline the sale and purchase of a specific amount of future production is also an issue.

If offtake agreements are reached, they could be used as a way to incentivise funders to invest in these projects.

## Maths not mathing

Aside from issues around financing, the business model for Green Hydrogen has also been questioned.

Craig Morkel, CEO of iKapa Energy says a Green Hydrogen pilot project run

Continued on P2

# EU’s carbon tax could pose a ‘pronounced’ risk for some sectors of the Western Cape’s economy



The Berlaymont building in Brussels, Belgium, which houses the headquarters of the European Commission, the executive branch of the European Union. Image: Sébastien Bertrand.

By Larry Claasen

**T**HE European Union’s (EU) move to decarbonise its economy could have far reaching implications for some sectors of the Western Cape.

The EU’s Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), which is a pricing tool for the greenhouse gases emitted during the production for certain goods imported into the trade bloc, was adopted on 17 May 2023 and will come into effect on 1 January 2026.

Karen Bosman, Head: advocacy & advisory at Wesgro says the iron and steel, as well as aluminium and hydrogen sectors face risks that are “particularly pronounced.”

The total value of iron and steel exports subject to the CBAM and destined for the EU reached R1,62-billion in 2022. As a result, a considerable 21,86% of the Western Cape’s iron and steel sector exports faced potential losses due to the implications of the EU CBAM in that year.”

The EU has consistently held a pivotal position as a key market for the Western Cape’s aluminium exports, accounting for approximately 8,50%

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South Africa needs R319-billion to fund Green Hydrogen plans

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in Saldanha Bay found the cost difficult to justify. “I can tell you that we designed a green hydrogen facility, including those components — renewable energy, electrolyser, and desalination facility — and the numbers don’t stack up.” Morkel, a member of the South African Oil and Gas Alliance (SAOGA), says the other members he has

spoken to are also not keen on investing in it. “The feedback that we’re getting from SAOGA members is that [green] hydrogen is not viable at this stage.” Morkel says that though its members were not excited about Green Hydrogen, it did not mean they were not open to it. “We’re not against hydrogen; it’s just that hydrogen will have to

bide its time.” **Subsidies needed** Bruce Douglas Young, senior lecturer at Africa Energy Leadership Centre, University of the Witwatersrand, and Craig McGregor, associate professor in Mechanical and Mechatronic Engineering and director of the Solar Thermal Energy Research Group, Stellenbosch

University, also highlighted the cost issue in an article in The Conversation. “Green hydrogen production is expensive, costing between \$5 and \$8 (R89-R143) per kilogram – around five times the cost of hydrogen derived from fossil fuels. It is also three to five times more expensive than oil.” Morkel says for Green Hydrogen to

get off the ground, it will need considerable state support. “The numbers don’t stack up without contract for difference — a contract that pays the difference in the settlement price between the open and closing trades — in other words, subsidies from governments. It will remain competitively, uncompetitively priced to the admittedly dirtier alternatives.”

EU’s carbon tax could pose a ‘pronounced’ risk for some sectors of the Western Cape’s economy

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of global aluminium exports in 2023. “In 2023, approximately R52,2-million worth of aluminium exports were subject to the EU CBAM policy and destined for the EU, translating to a potential risk exposure of around 5.27% with a potential impact of -0,01% on nominal GDP.”

“We know that the UK is also set to implement a CBAM, and there are indications that various other jurisdictions will follow suit. Countries are considering how best to respond to the EU and other potential CBAMs, and how this will play out is yet to be seen.” Though the impact of CBAM could be far reaching for some local businesses, Bosman says this is a misconception.

to be imposed on all products. This is not the case. At least not in the near term.” Bosman says the BAM only applies to certain products imported into the EU from non-EU countries and is directly linked to the European Emissions Trade System (EU ETS). “Initially it will apply only to a limited number of carbon-intensive product categories, including cement, iron and steel, aluminium, fertilisers, electricity, and hydrogen.”

expanded in scope over time. “It will always be linked to the EU ETS, and will therefore not apply to products beyond the ambit of the EU ETS. The EU ETS is also set to expand, but at this point not to all products.” Another misconception is that the CBAM is the only regulatory tool in the EU Green Deal “tool kit.”

enforce emissions reduction and due diligence across global supply chains at corporate level, and include, for example, the EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and the EU Corporate Supply Chain Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD),” says Bosman

More carbon taxes on the way

The EU is not the only trade bloc/country considering implementing carbon border taxes and tariffs.

**Not all products** “There is a perception that CBAMs are going

to be imposed on all products. This is not the case. At least not in the near term.” Bosman says the BAM only applies to certain products imported into the EU from non-EU countries and is directly linked to the European Emissions Trade System (EU ETS). “Initially it will apply only to a limited number of carbon-intensive product categories, including cement, iron and steel, aluminium, fertilisers, electricity, and hydrogen.”

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TNPA pilots usage of cleaner fuels on its tugboat fleet

By Larry Claasen

TRANSNET National Ports Authority (TNPA) has published

a Request for Information (RFI) for a strategic pilot project to use green and cleaner fuels for its selected diesel-operated tugboat fleet.

The audit said there was also a need for TNPA to reduce its carbon footprint related to its marine fleet predominantly from diesel consumption and promote its Desired End State (DES) objectives of smart ports and a cleaner/sustainable environment.

Upon the success of the retrofitting pilot phase, the tugboats will be restored to optimal operational performance and efficiency, enabling them to service the ports using improved fuel and sustainable environmental impact.

respond to the Ports Authority’s objectives of operating an environmentally sustainable port system,” said TNPA acting chief executive, Phyllis Difeto.

The project aligns with Transnet’s commitment to bolster South Africa’s just transition journey to a low carbon-economy focused on cleaner, renewable and green fuels.

The RFI has invited interested parties to submit proposals for the technical assessment on the diesel tugboats.

The refit will be on 10 of TNPA’s tugboats that are over 35 years old, which are all based in Durban, East London, Cape Town and Saldanha Bay. The oldest one is Marcus, which was built in 1976 and based in Saldanha Bay, and the youngest is the Duban based Umvot, which was built in 1983.

Uncertainty over supply

The RFI said another reason why it wanted to refit the tugs was concerns over whether it will be able to source fuel to power them.

TNPA noted in the RFI: “In the South African context of the global decarbonisation drive, TNPA is the key gatekeeper of the ocean-land interface in terms of marine traffic and cargo movements at a national scale.

The scope of work includes information regarding assessing the condition of the existing tugboats, evaluating components such as the diesel engines and inspecting the mechanical and structural compartments for potential new components or modifications.

“The plans to retrofit TNPA’s tugboat fleet with low-to-no carbon fuel is a significant step towards decarbonising shipping and reducing the carbon footprint of our marine craft.”

“Global oil’s longer-term outlook is uncertain because of challenges from alternative fuels and the automotive industry. Oil use for transportation is expected to go into a decline by 2026-2030, while oil’s role as a key ingredient in plastics and other chemicals will continue to drive global consumption.”

**Energy costs** According to an internal energy audit conducted by TNPA, it was found there was a “strong need to stabilise energy costs and availability into the future.”

This initiative is a pilot project to retrofit existing tugboats to utilise alternative fuels including Liquefied Natural Gas, Biodiesel, Hydrogen and

“This project stems from TNPA’s energy mix initiatives, which

A briefing on the RFI took place on 6 November 2024, and the closing date is 29 November 2024.



# Flexible and sturdy extinguishing technology on land and at sea

*Fighting fires from a safe distance, regardless of water levels and weather conditions.*



WHEN loading and unloading vessels, there is the risk of leaking fuel or liquid natural gas becoming an ignition source. Adaptation to the surrounding conditions will ensure successful fire protection for jetties and freight ships.

Weather and water level changes must be considered, requiring the fire extinguishing system to be versatile and reliable.

Assets that need to be protected are:

- Flammable liquids, such as fuel and liquid natural gas
- Loading arms and pump manifolds
- Engine rooms and freight goods

Generally, it is distinguished between extinguishing technology that is installed on shore, i.e., for jetty protection, and extinguishing technology that is mounted on freight ships.

## On shore: Automatic and pinpointed extinguishing at maximum reach

Firefighting monitors that are installed for the protection of jetties must be extremely sturdy. All FireDos monitors are made of a high-grade seawater-resistant aluminum alloy.

Their water/media-exposed parts are designed to handle pressures of up to 16 bar and bearings are lubricated for life. In addition, seals with reduced friction resistance require only low operating force, even after long down-times.

Firefighting monitors are normally installed on towers, enabling efficient firefighting even under headwind conditions and protecting them from rising water levels.

FireDos monitors are designed for ex-

tinguishing agent flow rates from 500 l/min up to 60 000 l/min. Thanks to the flow-optimised Oval Flat Design, the pressure loss is very low, enabling the monitors to achieve maximum reach. Along with the integration into automated fire extinguishing, this extended reach makes the remote-controlled FireDos monitors fit for pinpointed fire extinguishing from a safe distance.

## On-board solutions: Quick firefighting with foam

On-deck monitors are mainly intended to discharge low-expansion foam.

Monitors are normally located along the central line of the deck to fight a fire as fast as possible and to keep it from spreading. Doing so, a 25% dimensioning safety is recommended. The monitor should be

dimensioned and positioned in a way to reach a distant target at 75% of its maximum reach and flow rate under windless conditions.

## Proportioners for fire-fighting with foam

Fires in the jetty area may require extinguishing with water or foam. Stationary proportioners are installed in the sprinkler control room to supply the foam for extinguishing.

On freight ships or oil tankers, stationary proportioners for fire-fighting with foam are used both on deck and inside the vessel. Also there, the units should be placed at a sufficient distance from the risk area.

FireDos proportioners are suitable for all foam agent types, including high-viscosity foam agents. These units are extremely reliable thanks to their purely mechanical product concept.

The eco-friendly testing of the proportioning rate without generating premix or extinguishing foam also enables savings as there are no cleaning costs for disposing of premix or extinguishing foam.

*DoseTech Fire is the authorised FireDos partner in South Africa and is backed by a team with extensive knowledge in dosing technology.*

# What the 2024 MTBPS reveals about the GNU's fiscal trajectory

*A cold reality check in the Medium Term Budget Policy Statement*

By Chris Hattingh

THE recently presented 2024 Medium Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS) by Finance Minister Enoch Godongwana paints a sobering picture of South Africa's fiscal outlook.

As a national budget often mirrors the health of a country's economy, this MTBPS reflects South Africa's precarious economic situation.

With growth expectations pared back and debt projections rising, the MTBPS has dampened the wave of optimism that initially followed the establishment of the Government of National Unity (GNU).

If the government maintains the debt targets set by the National Treasury, it could reinforce fiscal credibility. However, whether all GNU partners are prepared for the tough political choices required to boost growth remains an open question.

## A downgraded growth forecast

In the MTBPS, the National Treasury has taken a more cautious approach to GDP growth, lowering its 2024 forecast from the February Budget's 1,3% to 1,1%. For the 2025–2027 period, growth is expected to average only 1,8%.

On the other hand, the debt-to-GDP ratio forecast has worsened. In February, treasury projected a 2024/25 debt-to-GDP ratio of 74,1%, but the latest update raises this to 74,7%. A peak of 75,5% is now anticipated in 2025/26, with a slight decline projected from 2026/27. Currently, 22 cents of every rand collected by the government goes towards debt servicing.

## Budget shortfall due to lower revenue

On the revenue front, estimated tax revenue



for 2024/25 has fallen by R22,3-billion since the February Budget forecast, contributing to a widened deficit, now expected to reach 5%, up from the initial 4,5% projection.

Compounding fiscal pressures are ambitious government spending initiatives such as National Health Insurance, a Basic Income Grant, public sector wages, and ongoing financial support for struggling state-owned enterprises (SOEs) like Transnet.

For now, treasury is resisting additional bailouts for SOEs. However, should Transnet's performance not improve, further financial support may become inevitable.

## Fiscal challenges at the municipal level

As the next Local Government Elections approach, many South African municipalities face severe financial constraints.

Ratepayers are under immense pressure, and those municipalities that manage to meet their commitments to entities like Eskom are likely to see revenue growth constrained in the short-to-medium term.

National government assistance is also unlikely to increase in the near future, meaning that provincial budgets and local gov-

ernment services are likely to feel the strain.

## Anchoring inflation expectations amidst declining inflation

With annual consumer inflation down to 3,8% in September—the fourth consecutive monthly decline—the Finance Minister's remarks on “anchoring inflation expectations” are noteworthy. South African Reserve Bank Governor Lesetja Kganyago has suggested lowering the Bank's inflation target to a fixed 3%, down from the current target range of 3% to 6%. Treasury's openness to exploring this shift with the Reserve Bank could indicate a new approach to inflation control.

## Debt servicing burden

Given the huge amount spent on servicing debt, reducing this debt load is crucial. But this is easier said than done, as achieving meaningful economic progress is contingent on the government making tough political, policy, and legislative decisions.

This initial budget under the GNU lays a foundation, but mini boosts alone won't sustain South Africa's economic recovery. The key to long-term success lies in sustained efforts and difficult choices to turn recent market optimism into tangible economic gains.

# Jobs Connect boosts Cape Town's SMMEs

THE City's Mayoral Committee Member for Economic Growth, Alderman James Vos, has spent time engaging with businesses that have benefited from Jobs Connect, gaining insights into how the programme is helping them find the right skills to grow and succeed.

Jobs Connect, Cape Town's leading workforce development programme, continues to be a game-changer – not only for job seekers, but also for the city's small, medium and micro-en-

terprises (SMMEs).

SMMEs are critical to South Africa's economy, accounting for 80% of the workforce and generating over R5-trillion in turnover, according to the recent FinScopeMSME SA 2024 Survey.

“For Cape Town's SMMEs, finding the right skills is essential for growth. With Jobs Connect, I'm proud that we can bridge the gap between work-seekers and businesses who need the right talent to succeed,” said Vos.

Optix, a Woodstock-based fleet logistics company with 400 employees, is a stand-out example of how the programme is helping local businesses.

Within two months of posting their requirements on Jobs Connect, Optix received over 1 600 applications, shortlisted 100 and hired more than 30 Cape Town residents.

“Finding the right staff has always been a challenge for us, but Jobs Connect transformed our recruitment process.

They not only simplified the search, but delivered candidates who truly fit our business needs. Their support made staffing smoother and more efficient, allowing us to focus on growth,” said AJ Prolius, senior operations manager at Optix.

From large companies like Mr Price to smaller enterprises like CTP Cartons & Labels, a manufacturing group in Epping, over 400 businesses have benefited from Jobs Connect.

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Measuring of labyrinth seals on a turbine rotor.

# Scope for private steam turbines to feed grid, says WEG Africa

STEAM turbines represent mission critical equipment for a range of industries from sugar and paper to steel and petrochemicals, but there is now greater opportunity among these sectors to generate more energy to sell into the national grid. Traditionally, companies using steam turbines have usually consumed all the energy they produce in their processes – with a range of benefits such as supply reliability and cost savings. As the country struggles to keep up with power demand, however, there are more opportunities for the private sector to produce excess electricity for sale into the grid.

According to Alastair Gerrard, executive energy systems at WEG Africa, this trend is already advanced in Brazil – the home of holding company WEG. Many steam turbine users in Brazil have capitalised on these opportunities by increasing their boiler efficiency.

“While it may be common in South Africa’s sugar industry, for example, to use medium pressure boilers, the Brazilian market uses high pressure boilers up to 140 bar – and gain significant efficiencies with these higher pressures,” says Gerrard.

“This allows these sugar producers and other users to upgrade their facilities and considerably augment their revenues through the sale of electricity, while also paying off their capital investments much quicker.”

He points to the government’s strategic direction in establishing the National Transmission Company of South Africa, a key step in transforming the country’s electricity industry. This will open doors for more private companies to ‘export’ excess electricity into the grid, helping to stabilise supply and strengthen the foundation for economic growth.

“This has been successfully achieved in countries like Brazil, and it is exciting to see that we are making progress on this journey in South Africa,” he says.

“We believe that WEG Africa has an important role to play in this endeavour – through our long experience in this field and our full service offering for steam turbine users.”

Cobus van Eeden, WEG turbine services manager at WEG Africa, highlights that the company offers customers a turnkey capability. It sizes steam turbine solutions according to the specific operating parameters of the customer’s application, and supplies a bespoke thermal power system. The service also includes installing the machines, commissioning and ongoing after-sales servicing and maintenance.

“As an OEM of steam turbines, gearboxes and generators, we can even help customers to assess their current equipment – whether these are WEG products or from other OEMs – and provide strategic options and recommendations,” says van Eeden.

“In addition to our depth of engineering expertise for repairing such equipment, we can also analyse the potential for enhancing operational efficiency and increasing power output capability of the equipment.”

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# Scania chooses RGM Cranes for major expansion

SCANIA is enhancing its presence in Southern Africa with a new state-of-the-art facility in Aeron. To support their high production requirements, Scania South Africa has placed an order with RGM Cranes for a range of overhead cranes to be installed by mid January 2025.

Scania's decision to invest in this new facility stems from their significant growth in the region. Christian Håkansson, head of production at Scania South Africa explains, "Scania is doing exceptionally well in South Africa. Our production volume has increased significantly over the past seven to eight years, and we have outgrown our current plant. This new facility is necessary to meet the increasing demand."

RGM Cranes, a trusted partner of Scania South Africa, was chosen for this critical project due to their proven track record and expertise in the motor industry.

**A strong relationship**

"We have an existing relationship with RGM Cranes in that they have consistently supported us with servicing our cranes, load testing and lifting tackle inspection. Their ability to deliver quality brands and meet tight deadlines made them the ideal choice for this project," adds Cornelius Viljoen, workshop manager at Scania.

Several factors contributed to Scania selecting RGM Cranes as their supplier.

"We have a strong relationship with RGM Cranes and have had very productive discussions about development," says Håkansson.

"We did explore the market and received quotes from several companies. Ultimately, we believed that RGM Cranes could meet our tight timeline and deliver the quality we need."

Viljoen elaborates, "During a site visit to RGM Cranes' facility, we were highly impressed by their operational structure, extensive stockholding, and technical expertise. The RGM Cranes team have been involved from the planning stages, providing invaluable input and guidance. Their organised approach, availability of spare parts, and deep knowledge stood out compared to other suppliers."

**Heavy-duty lifting requirements**

The new order from Scania South Africa includes a variety of cranes designed to handle heavy-duty lifting

requirements essential for assembling bus and truck chassis. The order comprises eight 125 kg jib cranes with Planeta Pitch hoist units, four 1,2-ton single girder cranes, one 1,6-ton single girder crane, two 3,2-ton single girder cranes, and four 5-ton single girder cranes.

The cranes will feature top-of-the-range equipment from Planeta and Guralp, ensuring

they meet the high European quality standards that Scania demands.

"Scania is known for its premium truck offering, and we require premium equipment to support our production," states Viljoen. "While there are cheaper options available, we need the reliability and quality that RGM Cranes and their equipment provide."

One of the stand-

out features of the new cranes is the Guralp hoist units, which come with a crane monitoring system. This advanced system offers real-time feedback on crane operations, enabling Scania to maintain optimal performance and safety standards. The monitoring unit tracks various parameters such as motion, load limits, and operational hours, allowing for precise

maintenance scheduling and reducing the risk of downtime.

RGM Cranes will also install the necessary DSL system to power these advanced cranes, ensuring seamless integration into Scania's production processes.

"The cranes are a necessity for our operations," Viljoen emphasises. "They facilitate the assembly of our trucks and buses,

handling engines, axles, and even entire chassis."

Scania's new and improved facility in Aeron, is set to become their operational hub for southern Africa, and beyond, and represents a significant investment in the region's industrial capabilities.

With the support of RGM Cranes, Scania is poised to enhance its production efficiency

and meet the growing demand for its premium vehicles.

As this project progresses, the partnership between Scania South Africa and RGM Cranes continues to exemplify the synergy between premium products and reliable support, driving both companies towards a prosperous future in the southern African market.

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# Right to Repair expands service plan rules beyond vehicles

By Larry Claasen

RIGHT to Repair (R2R) South Africa is broadening its campaign beyond the automotive aftermarket to include stationary agricultural equipment, generators, and other machinery.

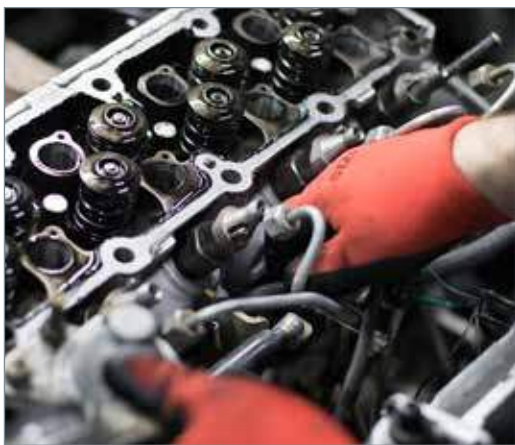
R2R believes that the principles of fairness and openness that they have long advocated for in the automotive sector should be applied to other industries that also require maintenance and service contracts.

R2R has been campaigning for a more open automotive aftermarket for years. It argues that service plans which force vehicle owners to use OEM-aligned dealers and parts, while voiding warranties if they don't, are unfair to independent service providers.

Many such plans restrict consumer choice, preventing independent service providers from competing on an equal footing with OEMs, which ultimately increases costs for vehicle owners.

## Guidelines open the way for independent providers

In 2021, R2R scored a major victory when the Competition Commission released its Guidelines for Competition in the SA Automotive Aftermarket, which allow independent service providers to service vehicles without voiding warranties. This opened the door



for greater competition and provided consumers with more options.

R2R CEO Kate Elliot says the guidelines are not limited to vehicles but also extend to other equipment that comes with service and maintenance plans.

"The guidelines also cover commercial vehicles, motorbikes and agricultural equipment that can be driven."

"We believe that it would be a natural progression to extend to other equipment that is serviced and maintained in a similar way to vehicles, such as stationary agricultural equipment, generators and other machinery." Elliot points out that aside from vehicles, the guidelines also cover commercial vehicles, motorbikes and agricultural equipment that can be driven.

"The guidelines cover any and all vehi-

cles that are designed to be driven on the road."

## Slow uptake by consumers

Though the guidelines have been in effect since 2021, consumers have yet to fully grasp that they are not required to service their vehicles at authorised dealerships. "We are working very hard to convey this, and the general public's understanding is starting to shift. These things take time, but with our continued efforts to get the message out there, I believe we will get to a place where the average consumer has at least a basic understanding of their rights in terms of the guidelines," says Elliot.

## Biggest misconceptions

Elliot says the most common misconceptions consumers have are that service plans are compulsory and that all independent service providers are untrustworthy "backyard mechanics." She also says there is also a mistaken view

that non-OEM parts are unsafe.

"This is totally nonsensical as OEMs do not build their own parts. All OEM branded parts are built by a company subcontracted by the OEM to develop parts subject to its requirements."

She adds: "The companies then also sell these parts to the public, and these parts are precisely the same as the parts that came with your car. The only difference is that these parts don't carry the car company's logo."

Though she notes that there are grey and pirated parts out there - which are not safe and should be avoided - paying for a vehicle manufacturer's logo only benefits the brand's profit margin.

Though she notes that there are grey and pirated parts out there - which are not safe and should be avoided - paying for a vehicle manufacturer's logo only benefits the brand's profit margin.

## Mixed response from OEMs

From what she has seen, there has been a mixed response from OEMs to the guidelines.

"Some have amended their service plans; some are attempting to ignore the guidelines altogether, and we of course, and are reporting these OEMs to the commission."

Some dealer workshops, however, see the guidelines as an opportunity and are advertising that they are now able to service all brands.

# VOIS improves operations for South Africa's municipalities and SOEs

By Larry Claasen

VOIS, a software management platform, has quietly been transforming how state institutions like municipalities and state-owned enterprises (SOEs) have been improving how they deal with the public.

VOIS is the brainchild of the German based HSH Soft- und Hardware Vertriebs GmbH, which was looking for a way to improve government services to the public.

Around 15 years ago it came up with the concept of bringing together various competitors to co-develop on a shared management operating system.

Today the VOIS community has 15 software manufacturers participating, which collectively have captured 75% of the German market by population.

## German technology

Aside from Germany, the VOIS platform has found traction in South Africa, with about a dozen municipalities and SOEs using it.

VOIS sales manager Michael Fouche says the platform is being used to improve the services of municipalities by allowing the public access to services over their phones and via web portals.

He gives the example of how the pro-

cess of applying to the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), which gives work opportunities to semi-skilled people, has been simplified.

Previously, people had to fill in a form, and then they had to get all of the necessary documentation, go to the municipality, hand it in, and then have an interview.

With VOIS there is no need to get the form or visit a municipal office as the process is now automated.

## Automated advantages

Besides improving services for the public, it also improves the municipality's internal operations.

Fouche says if the municipality wants to employ people in the EPWP from a specific ward and who fit a certain age group, it can automatically compile a list of candidates with VOIS.

"It's an automated process, so nobody has got to go and say, where's my spreadsheets, and get stuff, and it takes days to generate the list. Now it takes seconds to generate the list."

This automation also helps in areas like compiling reports.

"If you need the report every day, VOIS will automatically generate a report every day with graphs. It makes it very nice and transparent."

VOIS also ensures

that there is an audit trail of all activity on the platform. This will not only help with oversight, but also provides transparency for the people using it, by tracking their request.

"If they contacted the municipality, they can't say they didn't get their request."

Fouche says another advantage VOIS provides is that an organisation's internal rules and legislation on data security can be implemented on the platform to control who has access.

## Automatic checks

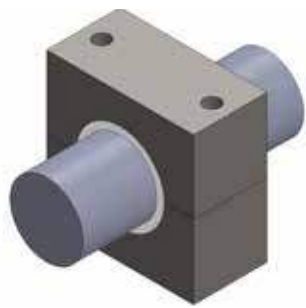
Municipalities and SOEs have used VOIS to deal with a wide range of functions like allocating homes and managing their supply chain.

It can for instance exclude politically connected people and favour those who have been waiting for a home for a long time on a social housing waiting list.

In helping to run a supply chain, it can flag directors who are prohibited from doing business with the organisation and check if they have the correct permit and licences.

Other advantages VOIS has is that its bandwidth light, can operate offline and can be integrated into other IT platforms. Any system that out utilises APIs can access VOIS through its API gateway.

# Engineering company anticipates orders for movie prop platforms in 2025



The bearing assembly for the movie prop platform

A provider of engineering services in the hydraulic and pneumatic industry anticipates new orders in 2025 for movie prop platforms that use low-coefficient-of-friction Vesconite bushings.

It hopes to produce several platforms in 2025, which will add

to the number of platforms that it has produced since its first foray into the movie industry in May 2005.

These platforms are engineered to handle heavy movie props, some of which weigh up to 40 tons. Using hydraulic technology and control systems, the platforms are capable of

tilting props from side to side by 10 degrees, providing the necessary movement for realistic and dynamic cinematic effects.

Each platform is equipped with several Vesconite bushings, laid out in a configuration to suit the movement required for each specific application.

These bushings are mounted on a 100 mm steel shaft and ensure the smooth motion of the system.

While the hydraulic system supplier to the movie industry cannot divulge specific details about the movie props due to confidentiality agreements within the film industry, it is

known that the engineering firm supplies several production companies in Cape Town, South Africa.

"Vesconite Bearings is proud to be part of creative solutions for movie props that are often highly memorable components in films," says Vesconite Bearings' Nadia Swart.



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# Valves demand in Western Cape met by EMVAfrica's ENERGYValves



An EMVAfrica technician working on a butterfly valve to ensure the flow is regulated of abrasive slurries and to control the discharge of tailing.

By Diane Silcock

THE recent expansion of EMVAfrica's Cape Town operation entailed the relocation of its ENERGYValves division to a larger facility, alongside the metals division. This move effectively doubled ENERGYValves' operational capacity and stockholding, positioning it ideally to capitalise on the growing demand for valves in the region.

ENERGYValves is supporting Cape Town's big industries like petrochemicals, marine, water engineering, agri-food processing, the wine industry and renewable energy sectors, with innovative valve technologies.

Located on the same premises as EMVAfrica's stainless steel metals business, the two divisions work hand in hand, especially when it comes to large scale projects, offering a complete one stop solution that includes high quality products sourced from reputable and highly certified manufacturers.

EMVAfrica Cape Town branch manager Justin Orwin says, "People working on big projects or even medium to small sized projects, want a solution. They don't necessarily want 10 different suppliers. We can supply valves from small scale requirements, right up to the largest water treatment plants and desalination plants which are multi hundred-million-rand projects. At the same time, we can source the piping and the flanges, so it really becomes convenient for customers to be able to deal with us across multiple product groups."

## Anti-corrosion valve solutions for coastal industries

ENERGYValves is ideally placed in Cape Town to address the corrosion issues experienced by companies on the coastline. "Stainless steel valves form the bulk of our range," says Cameron Du Plessis, Cape Town valves sales manager. "As a solutions provider, with 32 years of experience supplying the industry, our

customers depend on us to solve challenges, such as supplying super duplex valves for corrosive environments. We offer two to three options and if a valve does not fall within our range, our global network of suppliers equips us to source the appropriate solution for our customers."

## Valves that ensure safety in high stress environments

In demanding environments such as petrochemical or where there is high temperature, valve safety is crucial as people's lives are at stake should a valve fail. ENERGYValves therefore takes very seriously the sourcing of their products and the specifications. "We do an enormous amount of work when quoting a customer as we aren't just presenting a product and a price, it's a solution, which means the job will get done efficiently, and at the right price, to ensure the highest level of safety," says Orwin.

## Collaboration is key

Orwin emphasises that collaboration is vital and that service, really is collaboration. "We work together with everybody who walks through our door, who phones us or who emails us." With an intellectual understanding of the market, and having been in business for over 30 years, ENERGYValves willingly offers their advice and imparts their knowledge.

The division offers a personalised service, carrying out onsite inspections of valves inline to understand the requirement, what may need repairing or replacing, and once determined, to undertake the work as quickly as possible. Due to valves and actuators being high spec and very complex, customers look for solutions rather than merely the supply of a valve or actuator.

"We have a 360 degree approach to problem solving. Stock is king, but by offering the complete solution, makes the customer's job easier. With all our valves, from the smallest fitting or valve to the biggest, even with the pipes and fittings, everything is traceable," concludes Du Plessis.



EnergyValves' butterfly valves and pneumatic actuators.

# QR Fox revolutionises QR codes with smart, scalable solutions

QR Fox says its tech platform is transforming QR codes into dynamic, customisable tools, built with an advanced QR engine that ensures maximum readability on all devices, from high-end iPhones to entry-level Androids.

By prioritising seamless access and an inclusive user experience, QR Fox says it is redefining the potential of QR codes for modern marketing.

## Advanced technology for universal accessibility

QR engine has been fine-tuned to work across all devices, ensuring even entry-level smartphones can scan codes effortlessly.

"This is about creating rich, accessible experiences for everyone, regardless of their device," explains Cam Naidoo, co-founder of QR Fox.

## Beyond the basics: customisable QR codes

QR Fox says it offers unique features that turn QR codes into vibrant, brand-aligned visuals. Users can transform images and videos into QR codes, using them as part of a brand's identity. From product shots to teaser videos, QR Fox makes QR codes visually engaging and highly versatile.

"QR Fox turns any image or video into a QR code – this is QR tech that's exciting, visual, and incredibly versatile," Naidoo adds.

"We're enabling brands to connect with audiences across both physical and digital channels."

## Data-driven insights with real-time tracking

For marketers, QR Fox offers analytics and tracking capabilities. The platform's dashboard provides real-time insights into scan locations, device



types, and customer behaviours, enabling marketers to make data-driven decisions. Unlike other platforms, QR Fox tracks previously challenging data types, such as event sharing and contact scanning, and integrates with Google Analytics, Google Tag Manager, and popular CRM systems for a seamless experience.

## Pioneering the future of QR codes

QR Fox says it is pushing the boundaries of what QR codes can achieve, turning them

into robust marketing tools that connect physical and digital touchpoints.

With features like geo-location-based content and Dynamic QR Codes offering multiple destinations, QR Fox empowers brands to harness the full potential of QR technology.

"With QR Fox, you're getting more than just a functional tool. It's smart, customisable, and packed with the insights marketers need to stay ahead," Naidoo says.

"It's time to move beyond traditional QR codes and unlock their full potential."

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# PHOENIX CONTACT SOUTH AFRICA – 55 YEARS STRONG IN CONNECTION TECHNOLOGY – 100 YEARS STRONG GLOBALLY

**PHOENIX Contact South Africa** – a leader in the field of connection technology – is a 55-year-old wholly-owned subsidiary of the Phoenix Contact global group which in 2023 reached its 100-year milestone.



*General manager for Phoenix Contact South Africa, Carl Kleynhans.*

General manager, Carl Kleynhans, of Phoenix Contact South Africa says, “We pride ourselves on having our own physical presence in the country versus appointing agents. We offer our customers high quality durable products, joint project management, assistance in programming, consultation during installation and start-up processes, customer education, training and technical support.”

Globally, the company is passionate about technology and fully committed towards ESG goals. Phoenix Contact is among the top five percent of companies awarded gold medal status for their sustainability performance by the independent analysts at Ecovadis. In 2023, Phoenix Contact’s key measures included investments in renewable energies, resource conservation measures, and diversity initiatives.

Kleynhans expresses, “Our very purpose is ‘together we are creating a sustainable world based on our passion for technology and innovation’. Locally, we have taken steps to reduce our carbon emissions by investing in a solar solution at our head office in Randburg which has drastically reduced our reliance on carbon-based generated energy. This substantiates and embraces our commitment on a path to continuously reduce our carbon footprint.”

## EMPOWERING THE ALL ELECTRIC SOCIETY

According to Kleynhans, their technologies are key to realising the All Electric Society through their solutions for electrification, networking and automation. “The increasing electrification, networking and automation of sectors, goes hand in hand with the growing dependency on reliable green sustainable power supply solutions.

“Through the efficient monitoring and management of these sustainable power supplies, we not only measure and manage these resources, but also communicate this information via digital and automated processes, to better inform and hone industries and societies for the future and wholistic power usage. Even more importantly, we cannot do it alone, so it will only be achieved through strong collaboration with our customers, partners and end users,” Kleynhans asserts.

## CHARGING TECHNOLOGY FOR SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

Along with clean power generation, e-mobility is a key element paving the way to the All Electric Society. Phoenix Contact has specialised in e-mobility charging technology since 2013 and is a world leader in high power charging for both AC and DC charge stations and power storage. The company offers a full range of charging sockets for all types of vehicles, both commercial and industrial, along with all the various charging plugs, cables and products to support the charging infrastructure.

“A space we are particularly interested in,” says Kleynhans, “is the industrial e-mobility arena like mining, as the uptake in South Africa we believe will be relatively quicker. By the end of 2024, we will have installed the first charging station at our site in Randburg thereby showcasing our own technology.

“We pride ourselves on working with the best partners in the market and being best in class in our space as well as being an easy company to work with. Recently we received our first BBBEE rating, and although we still have a way to go, we have started the journey,” concludes Kleynhans.

## PHOENIX CONTACT’S LATEST INNOVATIONS CAPTIVATE ELECTRA MINING VISITORS

**THIS past year has seen Phoenix Contact** launch a variety of new products onto the market, with Electra Mining being the ideal platform for the company to showcase its latest technology.

New innovations on display included a power supply with a built-in multi-channel circuit breaker for cabinet protection of vital electronic components, surge protection units for both three-phase and single-phase protection, as well as a new range of very slim ex-rated signal conditioners, energy meters, and accessories.

Kevin Preston, group manager IMA & IE at Phoenix Contact South Africa, says, “We always find the exhibition valuable to not only connect with our existing customers, but also to meet with prospective new customers. The feedback we received has always been very positive, and this year a lot of interest was shown in our e-mobility charge station and related products.”

### INNOVATIVE, COST-EFFECTIVE TECHNOLOGIES FOR THE MINING INDUSTRY

Preston relates how Phoenix Contact has always been successful in the mining sector, providing several cost-effective solutions which include water management and pump control, vehicle monitoring, power monitoring and telemetry systems.

Examples of applications include: the implementation of a number of solutions for the control of pumps on trailing and settlement dams in the Gold, Platinum and Manganese mines, throughout southern Africa; the supply of automated UPS systems for the distribution of power in the stopes for all the electronic monitoring equipment; and in the open-cast mining arena, it has supplied various telemetry systems for monitoring the energy supply to the drag lines and monitoring the stability of the mined walls.

### SMART MINING: HOW DIGITALISATION IS IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY

“Through the close integration between Information Technology (IT) and the Operational Technology (OT) worlds,” says Preston, “more and more processes are being automated and monitored. This allows for a more streamline approach and accessibility to production information. The digitalisation of the information is revolutionary and gives

a real-time window for management to access and improve the operation and running of various plants and machinery.”

### PROVIDING PRODUCTS AND SOLUTIONS ACROSS MANY DIFFERENT INDUSTRIES

Phoenix Contact has not only found success in mining but in many other sectors of industry, and one of their recent success stories is their growth from sales out of their ‘valued added solution centre’ where the business tripled over a four-year period. These are additional services that they offer to their customers with various custom-built solutions, which otherwise would require additional labour and costing.

Some of the new products the company has launched onto the market over the past year are:

- The new 3-phase TRIO POWER power supplies with an integrated multi-channel device protection feature.
- A lightning current arrester for DC grids for industrial applications up to 1 000 V DC.
- Multifunctional DC circuit breakers for protecting, monitoring, and switching DC loads.
- Current measuring transducers with web-based management, intuitive configuration and precise measurement.
- DC energy meters with calibration approval, designed for charging infrastructure.
- Industrial Wi-Fi 6 modules, the latest generation of WLAN.
- An Ethernet APL switch for the process industry.
- Managed switches for stringent requirements for use in critical infrastructures.
- Terminal blocks with Push-X technology for effortless and fast wiring.
- ArcZero series DC connectors for safe connection and disconnection under load.
- THERMOMARK E.300 DOUBLE thermal transfer printers for single and double-sided marking.



*Kevin Preston, group manager IMA & IE at Phoenix Contact South Africa.*





# Monitor Pumps & Systems' Läckeby Roto-Sieve: revolutionising sustainable wastewater filtration



THE Läckeby Roto-Sieve drum screen from Monitor Pumps & Systems, is revolutionising the wastewater and filtration industries by providing an efficient, reliable, and sustainable solution for solid-liquid separation. As industries and municipalities face growing demands for advanced filtration technology, the Roto-Sieve offers a standout approach to addressing operational challenges and environmental concerns, combining high efficiency with low maintenance.

## Advanced wastewater treatment

Wastewater treatment facilities are increasingly required to manage larger volumes while complying with stringent environmental standards. The Roto-Sieve addresses these needs through its innovative design—a rotating perforated drum that efficiently separates solids from wastewater.

This system captures even small particles, reducing the strain on downstream processes like biological or chemical treatment, thereby lowering operational costs and improving plant efficiency.

The Roto-Sieve adapts to varying flow rates and solid loads without sacrificing performance, making it suitable for both municipal and industrial applications. Its versatility enables it to handle diverse waste

streams, such as organic waste from food processing or mixed effluents in municipal plants.

## Filtration market innovation

In the filtration sector, the Roto-Sieve plays a critical role in enhancing the longevity and efficiency of filtration systems. By reducing clogging and wear on equipment, it extends the lifespan of filtra-

## Sustainability and environmental impact

The Läckeby Roto-Sieve is designed to minimise environmental impact. Its energy-efficient operation and low water usage align with the increasing emphasis on environmentally responsible water management. By removing solids early in the treatment process, the Roto-Sieve reduces the need for chemicals in second-

cant costs or regulatory issues, the Roto-Sieve's reliability is a major advantage. With fewer mechanical parts prone to wear, it offers long-term durability, reducing the frequency of repairs or replacements and ensuring consistent performance.

## Future of wastewater and filtration

The wastewater and filtration markets are undergoing significant changes, driven by the need for more sustainable, efficient, and cost-effective solutions. The Läckeby Roto-Sieve drum screen is at the forefront of these changes, offering a scalable and adaptable solution for various applications, from small municipal plants to large industrial operations.



tion systems and minimises maintenance needs. The demand for technologies that optimise energy and water use is rising, and the Roto-Sieve's low energy consumption and self-cleaning design meet these expectations.

The drum screen's low water usage for cleaning contributes to the growing market focus on sustainability and cost-effectiveness, making it an appealing option for industries seeking to reduce operational labour and downtime.

ary processes, further decreasing the environmental footprint of wastewater treatment.

## Cost efficiency and reliability

The Roto-Sieve's durable design, combined with minimal maintenance needs, significantly lowers operational costs over time. It's easy to install and integrates seamlessly into existing treatment setups, requiring minimal modifications.

In industries where unplanned downtime can lead to signifi-

As the focus on water conservation, regulatory compliance, and operational efficiency intensifies, the Roto-Sieve will continue to play a pivotal role in advancing wastewater treatment and filtration technologies. Its ability to meet current demands while being prepared for future challenges makes it a smart, long-term investment in water management.

For more information - [www.monitorpumps.co.za](http://www.monitorpumps.co.za), [wim@monitorpumps.co.za](mailto:wim@monitorpumps.co.za)

# OneDayOnly is proving itself to be a launchpad for upcoming businesses



By Larry Claasen

ONEDAYONLY.CO.ZA has come a long way since its founders, Christian Oberhofer and Maurits Vermeulen, formed the business in a garage 14 years ago. Today, the daily deal site handles 250 to 350 deals per day and employs over 300 staff members across three different locations.

The platform has transformed into a substantial operation that stands out from traditional e-commerce sites. Unlike most platforms, OneDayOnly.co.za offers deals that are limited in quantity and available for just 24 hours, creating urgency and exclusivity for shoppers.

## A platform for emerging businesses

One key to OneDayOnly's success is its strong relationship with suppliers, many of which are small businesses that have never sold online before. The platform provides these emerging businesses with an opportunity to test their products on a large scale. With a newsletter reaching 3,5-million subscribers, OneDayOnly offers suppliers access to a vast audience that can significantly boost product visibility.

Kate Barnes, business development manager at OneDayOnly.co.za, explains that while selling on the platform is a valuable

opportunity, it requires careful planning. Prospective suppliers must understand stock requirements and know how to present their products effectively to ensure a smooth onboarding process. "When small businesses come to us, they've never worked on an e-commerce platform. We certainly hold their hands and ensure they've got all the correct information. They can set up their business properly through our business," Barnes says.

## Success stories

The platform has helped many startups grow into successful businesses. For example, The Harvest Table, a producer of collagen powder, and Sleep Monk, a mattress provider launched during the COVID-19 pandemic, have both found success through OneDayOnly.

Sleep Monk founder, Thabo Serame, shares how OneDayOnly helped his business grow during the pandemic.

"Having started my business during the pandemic, just as the e-commerce boom was beginning, people were still sceptical about shopping online. OneDayOnly.co.za gave us the backing we needed to build trust and significantly expand our market," says Serame.

By leveraging OneDayOnly's extensive social media reach and customer database,

Sleep Monk gained the exposure it desperately needed to thrive.

## Only quality products allowed

When it comes to selling goods on OneDayOnly.co.za, however, the site is picky about what it sells. Barnes says the site is not a marketplace but rather a "highly curated platform."

This means that when a prospective supplier wants to sell something through the site, it ensures that the quality is up to scratch.

"You know, the quality is great. It's one of the things we like to pride ourselves on. We encourage suppliers to make sure that their quality is consistent when they send us products."

## Assisting with promotion

The platform also works with suppliers to shape the promotional material.

"As a platform, the customer shops with their eyes. So we have to make sure that when they're scrolling through the page, a deal really stands out to them."

Barnes says businesses might not have a good description of the product. However, it has teams that are excellent at analysing the product and understanding what features stand out and would be a selling point for customers.

"We've also got great copywriters who will add a nice description."



## LACKEBY ROTO-SIEVE® DRUM SCREENS

WHEN HIGH PERFORMANCE, SIMPLICITY AND LOW COSTS ARE THE PRIORITIES

Lackeby Roto-Sieve® drum screen is an internally fed, self-cleaning, inclined drum screen. The drum screen can be used in many industrial and wastewater treatment applications where high-efficient particle separation is needed. The self-cleaning design performs excellently in many different applications and ensures low maintenance costs. With over 5,500 units installed worldwide, the Lackeby Roto-Sieve® drum screen is well known to be unmatched in quality, function and reliability.



DEMONSTRATION VIDEO  
Lackeby RS36 Roto-Sieve®  
Drum Screen installation at  
potato chips manufacturer  
150m3/h



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# Hytec Engineering and Power Team collaborate on innovative water tank project



*Hytec Engineering & PT water tank project.*

HYTEC Engineering and Power Team, part of the Bosch Rexroth Africa Group, have collaborated on an innovative water tank project featuring advanced engineering and a specialised synchronised lifting system.

Commissioned by the water tank manufacturer, Power Team and Hytec Engineering produced a mobile lifting system. This mobility allows the lifting system to be transported and used across multiple locations.

After two months of work, the lifting system was successfully used to lift a massive 30-metre-diameter water tank, weighing

85 tons and capable of storing up to five million litres of water.

Led by project manager Neil Griezel, Power Team designed the lifting system and manufactured the power pack, incorporating components from Hydraulic and Automation Warehouse (HAW), another Group company, and HATZ's OEM diesel engines. Hytec Engineering supplied the hydraulic cylinders, contributing to the lifting system's overall functionality.

The advanced lifting system features a diesel engine-driven power pack, a distribution manifold trolley, and 42 hydraulic cylinders

linked with 84 hoses, each spanning 22m long. The lifting system spans roughly 1,8 km of hydraulic hose, enabling it to lift the tank with remarkable precision.

Commenting on the project, Griezel stated, "In general, synchronised lifting systems can be challenging and we usually do not synchronise more than five cylinders at a time. Getting to synchronise 42 cylinders was an extremely tough challenge. With the limitation of mobility, there was no chance of the system being controlled by electronics, so some unique thinking was required, but we suc-

cessfully overcame the challenge".

The next lift that will take place is for a 40m diameter tank, which will weigh close to 200 tons and was designed with a lifting capability of 250 tons.

Aftersales service will be provided by Hytec Engineering and Power Team and will include cylinder or power pack repairs. HATZ will manage engine repairs through Hytec Engineering and Power Team.

## About Bosch Rexroth Africa

Bosch Rexroth Africa, also known as Bosch Rexroth South Africa Group of Companies, is the continent's leader in hydraulics, pneumatics and automation. The Group comprises seven specialist companies: Bosch Rexroth South Africa, Hytec South Africa, Tectra Automation, Hytec Fluid Technology, Hydraulic & Automation Warehouse, Hytec Engineering and Bosch Rexroth Africa Development.

# Private sector set to benefit from National Transmission Company South Africa's R112-billion expansion plans



By Larry Claasen

THE newly created National Transmission Company South Africa (NTCSA) expansion plans is set to be a boon for the private sector, as the power transmission which has been spun out of Eskom, plans to spend R112-billion on expanding its network over the next five years.

The opening up of the local electricity market has seen the arrival of Independent Power Producers (IPP). But as the bulk of the solar IPPs are in Northern Cape, where there is scant grid capacity, NTCSA has plans to build transmission capacity that will connect the IPPs to Gauteng.

Local businesses are expected to benefit from this expansion, as NTCSA only plans to build a portion of the expanded grid, and have 80% to 90% of the build programme executed by private sector entities.

"We are overseeing and coordinating the project details, but much of the physical work will be handled by local contractors," says Leslie Naidoo, head of network planning at NTCSA.

This will see it need the services of civil, electrical, and line construction services.

The expansion presents a robust pipeline of contracts for the private sector, spanning

from large transformers to line construction.

NTCSA will for example need more than 200 large transformers which are "large critical components" supplied to it over the next 10 years.

## NTCSA needs large transformers

The problem for the group is that there was only one supplier of the Class 3B transformers in the country, but a fire at SGB-SMIT POWER MATLA's Pretoria West plant in 2021 has seen it struggle to secure the equipment it needs.

Naidoo says to ensure it gets these transformers, it is working closely with the Department of Trade Industry and Competition to bring on board external contractors that were pre-approved.

Aside from this measure, it was using the expansion plan to also build up local manufacturing capacity in the country.

"We've done a detailed analysis to understand the capacity of OEM's within the confines of the country," says Naidoo.

NTCSA is giving priority to local suppliers but if it's required it will bring on board international contractors.

## Building capacity

Naidoo also noted that NTCSA has created an incubation programme

at its training facility in Midrand to develop specialised skills and build a local contractor base capable of meeting the demands of transmission projects.

"Our aim is to nurture companies that understand the technical requirements of transmission work, so they're ready to take on these contracts," he says.

The initiative has already produced its first successful graduates, contributing to local skills development and capacity building.

Naidoo expressed optimism about the support the company has received, not only from private investors but also from government entities, including the National Energy Crisis Committee. This backing has enabled the NTCSA to fast-track processes, such as servitude acquisition and environmental impact assessments, to ensure projects can proceed as planned.

One of the biggest challenges NTCSA has to deal with is servitude acquisitions, as construction can only begin once it has rights to build on the land.

"The construction is the easy part. It's securing the servitudes and then once those are done, it's only after the servitudes are secured, that we get a good indication of when we can start."

# Plastics improve machine performance and reliability - igus

ENGINEERED plastics from German polymer manufacturer igus continue to revolutionise mechanical systems across various industries worldwide with a pledge to "Improve what moves" by replacing moving steel components with polymer equivalents.

The igus range of polymer bearings, spindles and energy chain cable management systems have revolutionised machines in the lifting, agricultural, manufacturing and a host of other industries and is steadily being introduced to machines in other industries to improve performance and longevity.

igus South Africa MD Ian Hewat says its range is known for their lightweight, durability and lubrication-free operation and have become indispensable in improving machine efficiency, reliability and longevity.

From complex robotic systems to heavy-duty industrial machinery, the benefits of motion plastics by igus are vast and diverse and offer significant advantages in design and performance.

"One of the standout features of our motion plastics is the tribological self-lubricating properties, which eliminate the need for external lubrication. This not only reduces maintenance costs but also prevents environmental contamination caused by leaking oils or greases. In industries like food processing or pharmaceuticals, where hygiene is paramount, these components offer an invaluable advantage by ensuring clean and oil-free operations."

Hewat adds: "Our bearings, linear guides and bushings provide smooth and frictionless motion without the need for continuous maintenance, translating to reduced downtime and extended machine lifespan. They are also designed to withstand the most demanding environments such as extreme temperatures, chemicals, dirt or high levels of moisture. Here they perform reliably under stress and unlike traditional metal parts, which can corrode, seize or wear down in these conditions, igus polymers are resistant

to corrosion and wear, making them ideal for use in outdoor equipment or in areas with high exposure to the elements. For machines in industries like agriculture, mining, and construction, the robust nature of igus motion plastics ensures uninterrupted operation even in the harshest conditions.

"In industries such as automotive, aerospace and logistics, reducing the overall weight of components directly leads to improved energy consumption, faster operation speeds and lower operational costs. In robotic systems, for example, using lightweight polymer bearings and gears improves the speed and precision of movements while decreasing the energy required to drive the motors. The reduction in mass not only increases efficiency but also reduces wear on other components of the machine, further extending its overall lifespan," says Hewat.

He explains that in addition to these components igus is also synonymous cable carriers designed to guide and

protect cables, hoses and other conduits in constantly moving machinery. Its Echain carriers are engineered to ensure smooth, uninterrupted operation by preventing cables from twisting, tangling or wearing out due to continuous motion.

"Unlike traditional systems like festoons, cable reels or drag chains, which often have limitations in terms of movement range and can result in cable damage or failure, the igus e-chains provide flexible movement with minimal wear."

They offer several advantages over these older systems, including greater design flexibility, lower maintenance requirements and improved longevity for cables.

E-chains are extensively used in industries like robotics, automation and material handling. Moreover, they eliminate the need for cumbersome, space-consuming cable loops seen in festoons or the mechanical limitations of cable reels, resulting in more compact, efficient, and reliable machine designs.



# Unlocking South Africa's potential as a regional energy exporter

By Jenna Harris, MD,  
Apollo Africa

THE energy landscape in South Africa is undergoing a seismic shift, which presents challenges and remarkable opportunities for our country and the Southern African region.

The recent launch of the National Transmission Company of South Africa (NTCSA) and the unbundling of Eskom's transmission business, mark the start of an energy transformation that could position South Africa as a major energy exporter within the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP).

The creation of the NTCSA represents a critical energy sector reform, providing open, fair, and transparent access to the national grid for both public and private energy producers.

This will enhance efficiency within the electricity sector and foster competition in a future electricity market.

But perhaps more importantly, it opens the door to new opportunities for South Africa to export energy across borders, generating significant economic benefits and strengthening regional energy security.

South Africa is uniquely positioned to become the "power basket" for Southern Africa, exporting electricity to neighbouring countries while earning valuable foreign exchange.

Our nation boasts a relatively stable investment environment, with banks and private sector investors increasingly willing to back new energy projects.

By leveraging these favourable investment conditions, South Africa can rapidly expand its generation capacity, whether through wind, solar, or other forms of renewable energy.

We're already connected to the Southern African Power Pool, which facilitates energy trading between countries in the region.

## A regional power ecosystem

The NTCSA's mandate to establish a transparent trading platform and an independent Transmission System Operator (TSO) will be crucial in realising this vision.

The transition to a competitive electricity market will not only attract more participants but also create a more dynamic and

resilient energy system across the region.

The larger the number of players in the market, the more effectively we can balance supply and demand, ensuring that power is available when and where it is needed most.

## A call for collaboration

To realise this vision, we need to rethink Eskom's role. Rather than trying to protect its monopoly on energy generation and transmission, Eskom should focus on building and maintaining a

world-class grid that can accommodate multiple energy producers and facilitate cross-border energy trade.

By working together, government, private sector, and regional partners can create a more resilient and sustainable

energy system that benefits everyone.

The benefits are clear: by becoming a key energy exporter within the Southern African Power Pool, South Africa can boost its economy, strengthen regional ties, and help secure a more

sustainable energy future for all.

We finally have a proper chance to seize this opportunity and together, build a brighter, more energy-secure future for South Africa and the Southern African region.



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# Much more to choose in local range of SEW-EURO-DRIVE planetary units

AS SEW-EURO-DRIVE in South Africa actively extends its offerings to customers, the SEW PPK and SEW P2.e industrial gearbox ranges are good examples of solutions that are well suited to the local business environment.

“Being part of a well-established global business, we are drawing increasingly from the group’s production plants in various parts of the world,” says Jonathan McKey, national sales and marketing Manager at SEW-EURODRIVE.

“This approach allows us to select products that have been tried and tested in sectors relevant to our own, and under operating conditions that are closely comparable.”

McKey highlights that this strategy is opening up a much larger range of choices for customers in South Africa and the rest of the continent, as the company ‘closes the loop’ by adding new offerings to complement its successful portfolio.

A valuable recent

addition has been the SEW PPK planetary gearbox range, originally designed and produced by SEW-EURODRIVE in Brazil – with their world class sugar industry as a key user.

“The depth of research and development capability with the group allowed Brazil to develop the SEW PPK concept, to give their sugar mills access to a low torque solution which complies with SEW-EURODRIVE’s stringent global standards and specifications,” he says.

“Later, engineers in Germany additionally developed the SEW P2.e series for larger applications.”

Both the SEW PPK and the SEW P2.e ranges are now available to customers in South Africa and Africa, allowing SEW-EURODRIVE to further augment its planetary offerings. He reiterates that planetary gear units are particularly valuable for those applications that require a compact solution in



SEW-EURODRIVE’s range of planetary gearbox solutions.

conditions where space is constrained, while also demanding high torque and low speed outputs.

“Our SEW PPK range is well suited to southern hemisphere markets, delivering 2 to 18 kNm of torque with a ratio range from 65 to 10,700:1,” he says. “The ratio can be further reduced by the addition of a primary reducer before the planetary head, to reach ratios up to 10,650:1 – for

a much lower speed capability.”

Developed as the ‘big brother’ to the SEW PPK options, the SEW P2.e series encompasses higher torque ratings from 2 to 124 kNm with ratios from 15,2:1 to 332:1. McKey explains that the SEW P2.e was developed with all the benefits of the SEW PPK, but with a broader spectrum of diversity in its speed – up to 100

rpm – as well as in ratio and torque. While most planetary gearboxes have a three-stage design, the SEW P2.e can also be supplied in a two-stage model.

“What is exciting for local customers is that we have now brought a complementary range of both the SEW PPK and SEW P2.e to this market – giving a wide selection that will suit many new applications,” he says.

“This allows us to compete well with other planetary manufacturers, as we can now offer customers most of the capabilities of other brands – all within our SEW-EURODRIVE stable.”

This means that customers can spend less time searching across different OEMs for a solution that will meet their specific needs, he emphasises. Instead, they are likely to find what they need within the expanded SEW-EURODRIVE brand offering.

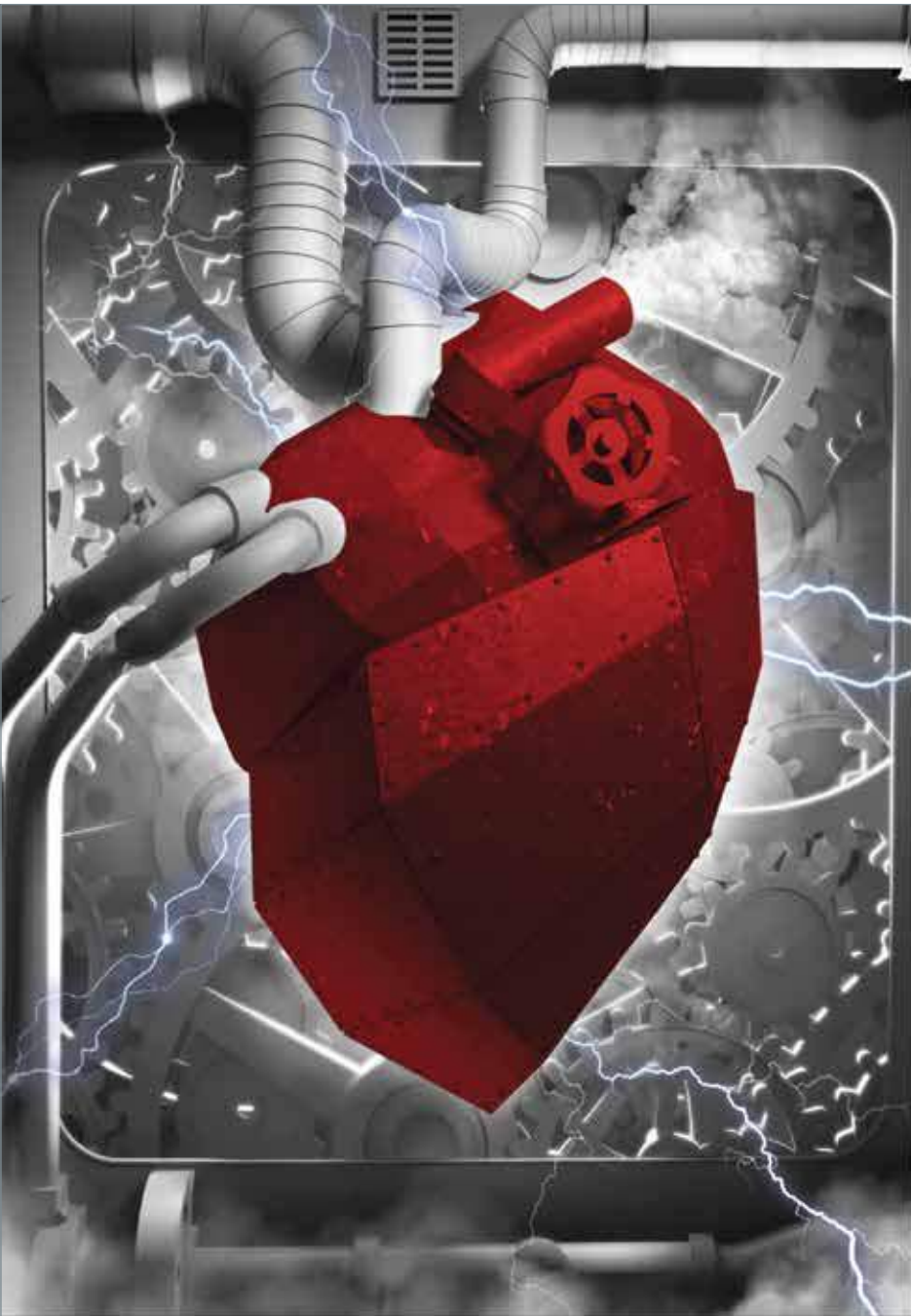
“We are the only manufacturer who allows for direct electric motor coupling to a planetary gearbox; this is unique to our SEW P2.e solution,” he points out. “Our units also accommodate radial labyrinth solutions, which many competitors do not. This provides an extra layer of protection for the sealing systems on the output shaft – a valuable feature in corrosive and dusty environments like mining.”

For customers wanting

to upgrade from previous P-series models of planetary gearboxes to the new SEW P2.e, SEW-EURODRIVE has been careful to retain the same critical dimensions. Greg Lewis, SEW-EURODRIVE Sales Manager, says this allows customers to migrate seamlessly without altering their existing infrastructure. Lewis points out that the SEW P2.e is one of the only planetaries available with a cooling solution, positioned between the planetary and the motor.

“This gives us thermal ratings that are far superior to competitors,” he says. “By adding a fan on the input side to further cool the gearbox, we can considerably enhance its thermal capabilities.”

Lewis notes that, while the SEW P2.e units have directly mounted motors, the SEW PPK offers different options for coupling existing motors using our adaptors – the AD adaptor with input shaft or the AMS adaptor for the flange mounted motor.



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# ACTOM on track to supply high-voltage equipment to Seriti Green's flagship 900MW wind farm project

ACTOM High Voltage Equipment is currently in the process of manufacturing 400kV and 132kV High Voltage Primary equipment for the Ummibila Emoyeni wind farm project, located between Bethal and Morgenzon, in Mpumalanga.

Once completed, the Ummibila Emoyeni 900MW hybrid renewable energy facility will be the largest facility of its kind in South Africa. Work is currently underway on phase 1 of the project, which will see 155MW commissioned by late 2025 or early 2026.

The project is being developed by Seriti Green, the climate-change-mitigating subsidiary of coal mining company Seriti Resources.

The wind farm forms part of an agreement that will see clean power wheeled through the national grid to meet the carbon neutrality aspirations of Seriti Resources.

ACTOM High Voltage equipment divisional CEO Casbah Zwane says the company is supplying high-voltage circuit breakers, disconnectors, instrument transformers, and line traps to the wind farm.

## Grid connection

"We are on track with the manufacturing of the equipment for phase 1 of the project, which is set to be completed by Q2 2025. Our scope of work is to supply high-voltage equipment that will be used for the grid connection of the wind farm. This is for both the ESKOM Main Transmission Substation where the wind farm eventually connects to and the ESKOM Distribution Substation which is used for switching purposes. We are essentially supplying most of the outdoor transmission, and distribution equipment," says Zwane.

Once the project is completed, Seriti Resources will utilise 75% of the wind farm's output power to supply its coal mines. The company has yet to decide how the remaining 25% will be used. It is understood, however, that this amount of electricity could power up to about 265 000 South African households.

By switching to renewables, the project is also set to significantly cut Seriti Resources' carbon footprint.

"As ACTOM, we are very proud to be associated with this project, given its environmental significance and the fact that it is likely to have a positive impact on climate change. We are equally proud of the fact that it is a very important project in

terms of South Africa's clean energy transition," says Zwane.

He notes that by supplying equipment to the wind farm project, ACTOM is able to showcase its capabilities not only in South Africa but also beyond the country's borders.

## Engineering and technical skills

"The project enables ACTOM to expose its capabilities to the global markets, in terms of both our engineering and technical skills, and to demonstrate that we have the

means and resources to supply projects of this scale. I expect that it will open other avenues for us going forward," says Zwane.

"We look forward to supporting Seriti and its stakeholders in phases of this project as it ramps up to

900MW. It is an excellent achievement for us to be part of this value chain and project that supports local manufacturing and supply."

Zwane adds that ACTOM will provide support for the wind farm beyond the life of the current project, in

the form of after-sales support and technical support, which will be provided promptly and efficiently.

This is due to all the necessary skills and components being in-country and thus in close proximity to the project.

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- Primary and secondary injection testing.
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## Makro launches exclusive Jack Daniels Collection ahead of Festive Season



MASSMART powered by Walmart is keenly focused on bringing customers great products from around the world, at the best possible prices.

Ahead of the release of this year's festive liquor catalogue, Makro has launched its exclusive Jack Daniels Privé Single Barrel Select 2024 Collection.

**"Less than 1% of the whiskey produced by Jack Daniels receives the Single Barrel Select distinction..."**

The collection consists of three distinctive whiskeys which have been uniquely crafted for Makro customers, with the added personal touch of Makro spirits buyer Kristin Dry, following her visit to the Jack Daniels Distillery in Lynchburg, Tennessee earlier this year.

During the visit, Kristin personally selected the taste profiles for this limited-edition collection which has tasting notes comparable to malt whiskey, Irish whiskey, blended whiskey and Bourbon.

Commenting on the local relevance of the collection, Kristin says, "South African consumers are primarily driven by brand familiarity. As a buyer, I love opportunities to partner with the distilleries of these leading brands, to develop unique exclusive blends for our customers. When Jack Daniels suggested this project, I couldn't wait to meet with their distillery experts in Tennessee."

"Less than 1% of the whiskey produced by Jack Daniels receives the Single Barrel Select distinction, and so we are incredibly grateful that they invited Makro to partner in developing such a rare collection."

The barrels in which the whiskey matures typically come from the upper floors of the ageing house where they are exposed to higher changes in temperature, which result in the whiskeys having a deeper amber colour and more variable flavour.

This variability in flavour enabled Kristin and the Jack Daniels whiskey makers to curate the distinct taste profiles namely, 'Flavourful and Balanced,' 'Sweet and Forward' and 'Full Bodied and Robust.'

Jack Daniels Privé Single Barrel Select 2024 Collection is available in-store and online at Makro.co.za for R679 per bottle. As an added bonus, the first 200 customers to purchase the full Privé Single Barrel Select 2024 Collection will receive a free Jack Daniels limited-edition wooden bottle glorifier to showcase the collection in their homes.

## SPAR's private label provides a buffer as South Africans continue to face cost-of-living crisis

By Judith Gale,  
National Head of  
Marketing at Encore at  
The SPAR Group

AS South Africans continue to face economic strains, the repercussions of global events are felt deeply in household budgets across the country.

The ongoing cost of living crisis, exacerbated by the 2022 Ukraine conflict and its ripple effects on global food prices, has left many vulnerable groups struggling to afford essentials.

South Africa, despite its self-sufficiency in food production for domestic use, remains vulnerable to international grain price fluctuations dictated by global supply-demand dynamics, particularly from major producers like Russia and Ukraine.

This has significantly affected the affordability of staple foods, especially for vulnerable populations, with the effects typically lasting 12 to 18 months.

While food inflation has moderated to mid-single digits from a peak of 14% in April 2023, the substantial increase of 475 basis points in interest rates between November 2021 and May 2023 has squeezed consumers' disposable incomes.

Despite a recent 25 basis point rate cut, the relief has been insufficient to alleviate financial burdens effectively. Looking ahead,

although further rate cuts may be forthcoming, economists caution that household finances will require time to recover fully from the prolonged cost-of-living crisis.

The Reserve Bank's approach will be cautious, closely monitoring economic indicators and inflation trends as it navigates future rate adjustments. However, stimulating consumer spending, which drives about two-thirds of South Africa's GDP, will require more than just monetary policy adjustments. In response to these challenges,

The SPAR Group has made substantial investments in its manufacturing and private label product lines. This strategic shift not only supports affordability for the consumer but also aligns with broader sustainability goals and market adaptability.

SPAR's private label products, which include ranges from convenience foods to liquor and pharmaceuticals, have grown significantly, bolstering its position in the market. Following the acquisition of Encore, SPAR has

expanded and tiered its private label offerings, anticipating continued growth ahead of its wholesale business.

Euromonitor data indicates a 30% growth in private labels since 2020, with SPAR's private label products now constituting approximately 24% of its core grocery turnover in Southern Africa, projected to rise to 28% by 2030.

This growth underscores SPAR's commitment to offering competitive pricing and quality control through its private label lines, supporting local suppliers and enhancing consumer choice. By sourcing from over 200 suppliers, many of them Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) across South Africa, SPAR ensures fresh, quality supplies while maintaining agility in responding to market demands.

This flexibility contrasts with national brands constrained by rigid supply chains, allowing SPAR to capitalise on emerging consumer trends and growth opportunities.

NielsenIQ reports

that private label products now represent 24% of total basket value sales in South Africa, underscoring their significant role in consumer preferences and market dynamics. SPAR's strategy includes expanding its footprint and enhancing its Rural Hub initiatives, such as in Limpopo, where it supports local farmers through skills development and product marketing under its Freshline and Country Value labels.

Looking forward, the SPAR Group remains committed to empowering independent entrepreneurs and creating value within local communities, emphasising sustainable business practices over value extraction in rural areas. While South Africa navigates ongoing economic challenges stemming from global food price volatility and interest rate fluctuations, SPAR's strategic focus on private label expansion and community-centric initiatives positions it to mitigate consumer hardships and foster long-term economic resilience.



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# Libstar to exit its non-food business and push into exports and food service

By Larry Claasen

LIBSTAR's exit from its non-food businesses will see it eventually see it becoming solely a focused food company. Libstar, a producer and distributor of consumer packaged goods announced its strategic change at its results presentation.

In a response from Libstar to CBN's questions on the shift, its CEO Charl de Villiers says the move will allow the group to focus more on its food businesses.

"Our core offering has always been food and as part of our new strategic direction, we have repositioned our portfolio to focus on value-added food categories. This reduces complexity, improves our execution capabilities and reinforces our status as a low-cost producer of quality food brands."

The new strategy will see it exit its Chet Chemicals business. It has already closed its Franschoek-based Chamonix Spring Water.

## A more focused group

De Villiers says Libstar is simplifying its portfolio composition and operating model to a core offering of value-added food categories.

"Our ambition is to grow the two super-categories of perishable products and ambient products sustainably and profitably by continuing to participate in and enter new attractive sub-categories."

"Our ambition is to grow the two super-categories of perishable products and ambient products sustainably and profitably by continuing to participate in and enter new attractive sub-categories."

De Villiers adds: "As an example, our market-leading dairy brand, Lancewood, will shortly launch a range of value-added natural cheese slices to further expand its existing hard-cheese, soft-cheese and yoghurt offerings."

It will also increase its participation in what it calls "attractive and under-represented



CEO Charl de Villiers.

"...our market-leading dairy brand, Lancewood, will shortly launch a range of value-added natural cheese slices to further expand its existing hard-cheese, soft-cheese and yoghurt offerings."

channels" within its portfolio, namely exports and food service.

Libstar is best known for being the maker of inhouse food brands for major retailers such as Crystal Valley for Shoprite Checkers.

The group also has its own brands like Lancewood, Cape Herb & Spice, and Goldcrest; and distributes Tabasco Sauce and Robertson's Spices.

In addition, it also exports to 50 countries

herb and spice brand has experienced an impressive 50% growth in export markets this year alone with the UK overtaking South Africa as the brand's biggest market.

The launch of the Cape Herb & Spice brand in the UK came by chance, when the wife of a UK distributor sampled it while on holiday in South Africa five years ago.

This eventually led to it being sold through the online retailer Ocado, as well as the shelves of Asda, Morrisons, Sainsbury's, and now Tesco UK with a Tesco Ireland launch coming in a few months.

## Difficult to get onto UK shelves

Cape Herb & Spice sales and marketing executive Shelley Barnard points out that getting onto a UK retailer is a big achievement.

"The UK's super-market shelves are famously difficult to get onto and we are very excited to have secured this opportunity to introduce five of our most popular products to Tesco customers."

## A lucky break

The new strategy can also be seen in its Cape Herb & Spice brand now being sold in 500 Tesco stores across the UK.

The demand has been so good, the

# Integrated Air Solutions expands SA's compressed air offerings

By Diane Silcock

INTEGRATED Air Solutions is on an upward growth trajectory having expanded its compressed air product offering in South Africa over the past few years. The company added two renowned global brands — FS-Elliott and ABC Compressors — to its well established ELGi Equipments portfolio.

In 2021, Integrated Air Solutions secured the exclusive distributorship in South Africa for the FS-Elliott range of air compressors. FS-Elliott is a global leader in the engineering and manufacturing of oil-free, centrifugal compressors ideal for meeting the needs for very large quantities of air required by major manufacturing plants.

This was followed by an agreement signed in 2023 with ABC Compressors, a world leader specialising in high pressure compressors for the plastic bottle polyethylene terephthalate (PET) market.

## Comprehensive range from ELGi Equipments

Integrated Air Solutions has a long association with global air compressor manufacturer ELGi Equipments Limited which manufactures electric-driven and portable diesel-driven air compressors, offering extensive oil-flooded and oil-free ranges.

Integrated Air Solutions' managing director Wayne Jacobs says,



Integrated Air Solutions recently exhibited at the Electra Mining show.

"Partnering exclusively with these prestigious international companies enables us to meet the sales and service needs of our customers across Southern Africa. We not only sell new equipment, we also stock and sell spare parts, arrange the service work, and provide an aftermarket service which includes rebuilds and full overhauls on older equipment. In addition, we have a rental department that hires out equipment that we sell, on a short-, medium- or long-term basis typically for sand-blasting, painting and refurbishing."

## Integrated Air Solutions meets every compressed air need, large or small

With its extended range, the company more than adequately meets the compressed air needs of customers from very

small one-man manufacturing companies, all the way through to large multinationals. It services multiple industries including food and beverage, construction, mining, pharmaceuticals, oil and gas, to name a few.

Jacobs says that the company prides itself in offering solutions and flexibility to customers and not just selling a standard product out of the box. An example is where they repackaged a compressor to specifically suit their customer's size and space requirement.

Integrated Air Solutions has the equipment and the know-how to meet the needs of customers regardless of how little or how much air is needed, the quality of air required, or whether it needs to be dry, clean or oil-free. For the food and beverage and wine industries, they have compressors that will provide

100% oil-free air without any contamination thus ensuring the product quality to the end user is what it should be.

## Partnering with Tier 1 companies for energy efficiency and lowest cost of ownership

When it comes to sustainability, Jacobs provides the assurance that Integrated Air Solutions only aligns itself with Tier 1 companies that take sustainability and carbon footprint seriously. Similarly, they focus on energy efficiency, lowest cost of ownership and ensure products are long lasting.

"Our customers can rely on us to provide high quality, reliable equipment that can be serviced, for which parts are available, and with the peace of mind that they are getting 20 years' plus service out of their compressor," concludes Jacobs.



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# Westfalia Fruit appoints Chris Bush as group CEO



Westfalia Fruit Group CEO Chris Bush.

THE board of Hans Merensky Holdings (HMH) and Westfalia Fruit Group (Westfalia) has appointed Chris Bush to the post of Group CEO, effective 28 October, 2024.

Bush will take over from acting group CEO Rian du Toit who returns to his role as Group CFO.

Chris Bush, a graduate of Manchester Business School and INSEAD, is a highly experienced international CEO with almost 40 years of experience, working across grocery retail.

He has led vastly complex multinational organisations, driving both growth and turn-around across various geographies.

He has a strong track record in leading people and operations, at scale.

Most recently he was Divisional CEO of DFI Retail Group, South East Asia (formerly Dairy Farm Group), directing DFI Retail's 1 500 stores across seven countries.

Prior to joining DFI Retail Group, Chris worked at Tesco Plc for 32 years, leading large scale businesses in Asia, culminating in his position as the UK MD. Throughout his career, Chris has lived and worked in Europe, the US and Asia.

Announcing the appointment, HMH and Westfalia Fruit Group Chairman Dr. Khotso Mokhele said: "After an extensive global search process, the Board is delighted to welcome Mr. Bush as our new Group Chief Executive. Chris is a seasoned CEO with exceptional strategic capabilities, proven operational effectiveness, and strong experience in retail, as well as working across a breadth of different countries and cultures."

Chris Bush said: "I am both honoured and delighted to be joining an organisation that is so clearly dedicated to innovation, product quality and sustainability. I am inspired by the company's stated mission to lead the way in addressing climate change by following in the footsteps of the company's founder, Dr. Hans Merensky, to do good and contribute to a better planet for future generations."

Mr. Bush concluded: "I am excited to meet our talented team, our customers, communities and stakeholders around the world to listen and learn how together we can maximise our growth potential and build sustainable, long term success."

# Toyota Material Handling drives technology in agriculture industry



AGRICULTURE is much more than an economic pillar for countries around the world. It is the lifeblood of communities, shaping futures and sustaining livelihoods across nations. It intertwines with the social and economic fabric of societies, offering both sustenance and security for millions.

emphasises the importance of leveraging advanced technologies to drive sustainability and operational efficiency in agriculture.

"Technologies such as Toyota Material Handling's fork vibration dampeners and hydraulic accumulators are crucial in reducing product damage and maintenance

imises wear and tear and lowers energy consumption.

"This efficient management of hydraulic power not only enhances forklift performance, but also leads to a more reliable, durable machine. Reduced strain on the hydraulic system results in lower energy consumption, decreased maintenance needs and an extended equipment lifespan," adds Pheiffer.

"Technologies such as Toyota Material Handling's fork vibration dampeners and hydraulic accumulators are crucial in reducing product damage and maintenance costs."

When agriculture flourishes, so do the people it supports: families are nourished, children grow healthier, and communities thrive. Conversely, when the sector struggles, the impact extends far beyond the fields.

Insights reveal a troubling reality, with South Africa wasting 10-million tons of food annually, equivalent to one-third of its total production. This significant waste exacerbates food insecurity and underscores the urgent need to enhance food availability, sustainability, and efficiency in the agricultural sector, all while being environmentally conscious.

For over 40 years, Toyota Material Handling has been at the forefront of agricultural innovation, committed to transforming the sector by offering cutting-edge equipment solutions from prominent global manufacturers.

Claude Pheiffer, Cape Town new sales manager for Toyota Material Handling, a division of CFAO SA,

costs. These innovations not only help farmers enhance their operational efficiency, but also contribute to more sustainable agricultural practices by minimising food waste and reducing environmental impact," Pheiffer explains.

Developed by Toyota Industries Corporation (TICO), the fork vibration dampeners function as shock absorbers for forklifts, reducing the impact of bumps and vibrations. This is critical for protecting sensitive agricultural products such as fruit and vegetables.

By mitigating the risk of bruising and damage during transport, the fork vibration dampener helps preserve produce quality and reduces financial losses associated with downgraded or wasted goods.

The hydraulic accumulator, on the other hand, optimises the hydraulic system's efficiency by storing and releasing hydraulic energy as needed, smoothing out hydraulic flow during operation. This reduces strain on the forklift's hydraulic system, min-

Given the significant environmental impact of food waste, Toyota Material Handling's technologies are pivotal in supporting sustainability efforts within the agricultural sector. These innovations conserve resources and reduce the environmental footprint of farming operations. Efficient material handling fosters a more sustainable food supply chain, aligning with broader sustainability goals.

Moreover, Toyota Material Handling's advanced technologies boost financial and operational efficiency for farmers, particularly in fruit farming. By minimising product damage, these solutions help farmers avoid costs and increase revenue through higher-quality produce.

"Toyota Material Handling is at the forefront of supporting South African agriculture with cutting-edge technologies. By utilising advanced technologies such as these, farmers can operate more effectively and economically, allowing them to focus on improving productivity while supporting their environmental commitments," concludes Pheiffer.

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# PepsiCo employees step up to fight hunger with FoodForward South Africa partnership



THE PepsiCo Foundation, the philanthropic arm of global food and beverage leader PepsiCo, has donated four million meals, valued at approximately R1 855 508 (US\$105 000), to FoodForward South Africa for vulnerable communities across the country. This contribution is the result of PepsiCo's annual six-week global employee step challenge called Move for Good, powered by the PepsiCo Foundation.

"It is believed that over 25% of South African households face concerns in accessing food."

The challenge mobilises PepsiCo's over 300 000 associates to take steps throughout the campaign to activate a donation aimed at addressing hunger and food insecurity across the globe. For 2024, PepsiCo employees surpassed the collective global target of eight billion steps by achieving nine billion steps, with South Africa as the beneficiary country for the donation this year.

Food insecurity in South Africa is a real

challenge, with an estimated 15% of the population, or approximately nine million people, experiencing hunger in 2023. It is believed that over 25% of South African households face concerns in accessing food. This was outlined in the recent General Household Survey by Stats SA.

Each year the Move for Good campaign encourages PepsiCo employees to engage in physical activity, knowing that all their efforts will support their personal wellbeing and contribute to a worthy charitable cause. People could choose any activity they enjoy, from walking and cycling to yoga

and swimming, with all movement converted into "steps".

"We are thrilled to be donating four million meals to FoodForward South Africa on behalf of this year's global PepsiCo Move for Good campaign. We believe that FoodForward South Africa's dedication to addressing food insecurity aligns perfectly with our PepsiCo Foundation mission to create positive change in the communities where we operate," says Deven-dri Adari, PepsiCo Foundation's South Africa Lead.

"In South Africa, food insecurity has reached alarming levels, particularly among children," says Andy

Du Plessis, the managing director of FoodForward South Africa. "The support from the PepsiCo Foundation, through the global Move for Good campaign, will make a tangible difference in the lives of countless individuals and families struggling with hunger," he adds.

"Every step taken during the Move for Good challenge translated into a tangible contribution towards fighting hunger. It's a powerful example of how collective action can create a meaningful impact. The partnership between the PepsiCo Foundation and FoodForward South Africa reflects a shared commitment to addressing food insecurity sustainably. This is driven by the FoodForward South Africa model, which focuses on redistributing edible surplus food, thereby minimising food waste while maximising the impact on communities in need," says Riaan Heyl, CEO of PepsiCo South Africa.

"Together, we can take meaningful steps to combat hunger and create a brighter future for all," concludes Du Plessis.



# Industrial nozzles from Lechler serve every industry

IN practically every industry, in almost every production environment, where cleaning, rinsing, cooling, drying, lubricating or sanitising is required, an industrial nozzle can be found. Lechler Germany, represented in South Africa by Industrial Nozzles & Systems, is the oldest nozzle manufacturer in the world, and has been designing and manufacturing nozzles for this purpose for over 140 years.

With a diverse standard range of over 40 000 nozzles, a customer's exact requirement for precision-engineered nozzles can be met. Owner of Industrial Nozzles & Systems, Steve Smith, talks about the latest technology: "Designing nozzles in today's world is quite different, as computational fluid dynamics (CFD) have radically changed the way engineers are able to design more efficient nozzle technology. CFD data analysis gives us unique insights into what it takes to create highly efficient and complex spray systems, ensuring the best options for a customer's business and their applications."

**Innovative industrial nozzles for every industry need**

Some of the latest innovations from Lechler include MeshClean, a high impact tank cleaner suitable for medium to large tanks, which offers a high degree of effectiveness due to the powerful solid stream nozzles. Driven by the flow rate, the controlled rotation creates a mesh pattern which can also be used at high pressure.

A further new product is the PopUp Clean nozzle (Series 5P5) which was developed for cleaning the lower side of agitators. It is installed flush in the

bottom of a tank and is ideal for confined spaces. The PopUp Clean is particularly interesting for applications in the food and beverage industry, as well as in the chemical and pharmaceutical industries due to the ATEX approval, thereby making it suitable for use in explosive areas.

**HygienicFit adapter not just hygienic but secure too**

Lechler's HygienicFit adapter has been cleverly designed to fit onto the supply pipe of the tank cleaning nozzle. It creates a completely hygienic thread area which eliminates the ingress of product, thereby reducing the potential of bacteria in the thread connection. Moreover, it has a long-lasting secure fit unlike the slip-on type connections that are common in the food and beverage industry.

**Covering all areas of the production environment**

Smith explains how their company covers the three different areas of the typical production environment, and this is particularly pertinent to the food and beverage industry. There is the raw materials phase, followed by the processing phase and the third element being packaging. In all these areas, nozzles are required extensively for numerous purposes, whether it be for raw material preparation, cleaning of storage tanks, sanitising filling machinery/bottles/cans in the production area, chilling/cooling and rinsing filled products, to the drying thereof.

Industrial Nozzles & Systems has a long relationship with Lechler having represented them in South Africa for over 20 years; the first six years region-



*PopUp Clean Nozzle Series 5P5 showing the application field*



*MeshClean Series 5T2 / 5T3 for tank cleaning.*



*An exemplary representation of the MeshClean spray pattern.*

ally, thereafter nationally. Where Lechler has global preferred nozzle supplier agreements with large original equipment manufacturers (OEM's), Industrial Nozzles & Systems supports the Southern African branches and offices of these OEM's.



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## Allmech demineralisation plant assists food factory in improving water quality



DEMINERALISATION plants are installed to remove dissolved solids (total dissolved solids or TDS) and mineral ions from feedwater and process streams.

The typical use of ion exchange is to offer near-total removal of ionic mineral contaminants. When a vegetable oil extraction plant in Gauteng decided to investigate using borehole water to supply its boilers to cut down on municipal water costs, a demineralisation plant was the best option to reduce the high TDS to avoid extra boiler blow-downs being required.

Allmech, a leading South African manufacturer of boilers and supplier of water treatment components, was called in to install the demineralisation plant.

The customer then decided to use the water to supply the entire factory instead of just the boiler. Allmech was able to change some parameters on the demineralisation plant to get closer to this requirement.

JP Thyse, technical manager at Allmech, explains that the quality

of the boiler make-up water determines the boiler operating efficiency.

"With this customer request, we designed a demineralisation plant using our new in-house PLC design, which allows customisable programming of various inputs. It also offers alarm functionality to flag when water quality isn't up to standard, which ensures the water is not needlessly dumped through backwashing and alerts the user to potential issues," he says.

The second key consideration for Allmech was which control valve would be best suited for this application.

"The Runxin control valves are demand-initiated controllers that allow an efficient regeneration cycle to be completed within the cation and anion vessels," says Thyse. "Once the treated water quality reaches the set point, the system will do a few checks and should the water remain outside specification, the plant will go into a regeneration cycle."

Thyse says the cation vessel will regenerate

first with the following sequence: backwash; acid draw and slow rinse; fast rinse; and return to service.

"Once the cation unit has completed the regeneration cycle, the anion vessel will start its regeneration following the same sequence," he says.

Once the anion unit has completed the regeneration cycle, the plant returns to service mode and is ready to provide treated water. Should the water quality not be within specification after the regeneration process, the unit will rinse and reassess the output quality.

If the water is still not within the required specification, a second regeneration will be initiated.

"I designed the plant making use of 48x72 FRP vessels with Runxin F77A3 Softener automatic control valves," says Thyse.

"During the initial installation and commissioning, issues arose as the initial mineral water analysis changed. Investigations were carried out, tests were conducted and adjustments were made to the initial plant design, reducing the TDS and increasing the pH. We changed both the hydrochloric acid for the cation resin and the sodium hydroxide for the anion resin solution."

Thyse says Allmech initially tried different chemical ratios to regenerate the resins to help reduce backwash time to bring down the pH quicker for the treated water.

"But this didn't work because it only reduced the amount of treated water that the plant could supply," he says.

"The borehole water quality had changed drastically over the last year and halved the capacity of what the plant could produce from the original design specs."

## AES technology combined with control systems aids boiler efficiency and safety

CONTROL systems, together with AES's Remote Monitoring System (RMS) play a vital role in ensuring the safe and smooth operation of boilers. This is according to Dennis Williams, Commercial Director of Associated Energy Services (AES), a leading operations and maintenance service provider to the steam and boiler sector.

Although these systems operate independently, they combine to provide important technical and operational insights. Control systems ensure stable operation within dynamic systems and direct activities. AES's RMS is a user interface that records, transmits and stores data from boilers for user analysis.

"It is easy to forget that the generation and use of steam from a boiler – a pressure vessel – is a potentially dangerous activity and that suitable care, skill and caution should be exercised.

AES has over 25 years' operations and maintenance experience, as well as ISO certifications covering occupational health and safety (OHS) and the environment. However, this should be a space where we are consistently mindful of new challenges to ensure complacency does not set in," Williams advises.



AES centralised operations using remote monitoring systems (RMS)

The same goes for downtime: "Every input can have an impact on operations, so data is key - from the change in flue gas temperature to the variations in fan current draw. After an incident, the aim is to understand the root cause and prevent it from recurring," he points out.

### Steam pressure management

AES utilises its RMS on nearly all client sites. Each user has a unique steam demand profile, which is determined by the client's particular operations.

Williams points out that RMS enables clients to get a full view of operations: "Unlike electricity, which is supplied instantaneously - allowing for very effective load following

- there is an inherent delay in steam flow. A mismatch in steam demand versus supply manifests in a change in the steam system pressure. If less steam is generated and supplied than is demanded by the production process, then the steam pressure will drop.

"A better control system with advanced control philosophy will allow the boiler system to react quicker and with better combustion - and therefore supply the steam timeously, maintaining steam pressure while also achieving efficient use of fuel," he explains.

If multiple boilers work together to meet the site steam demand, a strategy is needed to co-ordinate these, forming a balanced system.

Although control sys-

tems are required for every boiler - and manual intervention can be impractical, unsafe and illegal - the complexity and sophistication of control systems varies.

When steam demand fluctuates massively - and if fuel is highly variable and there are frequent equipment changes - a sophisticated control system allows the boiler to better manage that. Examples are food production facilities with multiple operating lines, beverage production facilities and batch manufacturing.

"Control is about minimising the variation between ideal operating parameters (percentage excess air, fuel delivery rate, feedwater temperature and flow) and the actual operating parameters achieved under operational loads. This 'delta' variance is essentially a measure of how far away from ideal operating conditions the boiler is. Inefficiencies need to be minimised to maximise stability of steam pressure and optimise combustion to minimise emissions," Williams explains.

"We strongly recommend that all manufacturers maximise the use of control systems and remote monitoring system technology, as fuel costs, emissions controls and other pressures all benefit from better control, even on stable steam loads," he concludes.



AES site-based instrumentation

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## Balancell unveils R150-million Gigafactory to fuel South Africa's battery market



By Larry Claasen

BALANCELL, a pioneer in energy storage technology, officially opened its advanced Gigafactory in Ndabeni, Cape Town.

This significant investment was celebrated with a ribbon-cutting ceremony led by Deputy Minister of Trade, Industry, and Competition, Andrew Whitfield, who praised the R150-million investment as a step forward for both South African industry and global competitiveness.

Balancell, which designs and manufactures lithium ferro-phosphate smart batteries, aims to elevate its technology to meet global demand, particularly as industries push for more sustainable energy solutions.

The Gigafactory, designed to produce up to 1.7GWh per year, features four production lines and is geared for further expansion, potentially scaling up to 3GWh annually.

At the event, Whitfield highlighted the strategic importance of the new facility, which aligns with government goals to bolster local manufacturing and job creation.

"Balancell's investment is not only a boost for local industry, but it demonstrates the innovative and entrepreneurial spirit of South African businesses. This factory will drive growth and create new jobs, helping build a more resilient economy," Whitfield said.

### Leading innovation with local roots

Balancell's batteries components are locally produced, except for the fuel cells, says Dr. Ian de Vries, who founded the group in 2013.

Since then, Balancell has grown from

a team of three to an operation employing 75 direct staff, nearly 70% of whom are from previously disadvantaged backgrounds. The company has also generated around 1 500 indirect jobs through its supply chain.

De Vries, a longtime advocate for affordable, sustainable energy, views the Gigafactory as a launchpad for further expansion.

"We're just getting started," he said, adding that the new facility will support Balancell's entrance into the European market, with plans to open a final assembly plant in Portugal within the year.

Balancell's batteries are known for their durability and safety,

and engineered to withstand harsh environments, with applications ranging from electric forklifts to refrigerated trucks and mining equipment.

A unique feature of Balancell batteries is their modular design, which allows for individual components to be replaced rather than the entire unit, extending the product's lifespan and reducing waste.

### European standards

One of the company's latest initiatives is to meet the European Digital Battery Passport standards, ensuring full traceability and recyclability across the supply chain. Balancell's batteries also connect

to the cloud for remote diagnostics, providing continuous monitoring of battery health and performance. This capability has been crucial for industrial clients, enabling early detection of issues and reducing costly downtime.

### Expanding global reach with homegrown talent

Recognised by the Financial Times as Africa's fastest-growing manufacturing business in 2024, Balancell is positioning itself for global competitiveness.

Andrew McPherson, an investor and advisor to the company, cited Balancell's commitment to quality and safety as key drivers for his investment.

"This team has incredible talent, high standards, and a clear vision for where they're headed."

With uninterrupted views of Cape Town's iconic Table Mountain, the Ndabeni facility stands as a symbol of South Africa's potential in the green energy market. Through continued innovation, local job creation, and global expansion, Balancell is set to play a major role in shaping the future of sustainable energy solutions.

## The vital role of earth leakage protection in industrial safety - Newelec

THE safety of industrial operations is paramount, requiring effective measures to prevent electrical faults and hazards.

Earth leakage protection systems are essential in detecting and mitigating electrical leakages, and maintaining a safe environment.

NewElec's GA-Plus Relay and CT offer advanced features that enhance reliability and protection for critical equipment, such as fan motors and pumps.

While traditional safety methods are crucial, they can be significantly improved with the automated and proactive approach of earth leakage protection systems.

Real-world case studies demonstrate the effectiveness of these systems in improving

safety and operational efficiency, particularly in challenging applications like slurry pump protection. Integrating overload protection with earth leakage protection provides a comprehensive safety solution, ensuring equipment does not exceed safe operational limits.

Practical safety tips and adherence to industry standards further enhance the safety and compliance in your operations.

### About NewElec

NewElec is a privately owned company that designs and manufactures a wide range of superior electronic motor protection relays with passion and dedication for both local and International markets.

For more information about NewElec's Earth Leakage Protection solutions and their applications in the industry, visit: [www.newelec.co.za](http://www.newelec.co.za)



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# Component sales are up at crane company Condra

CONDRA managing director Marc Kleiner says pre-assembled components sold to other manufacturers now account for 12% to 15% of annual revenue. Some 70% of these are sold into South Africa, the rest to export markets.

“We’ve sold end-carriages and other components into England and Spain where the big European crane brands dominate,” Kleiner said, explaining that customers use Condra components to lower input costs and simplify manu-

facturing processes. “It saves them the time and trouble of transacting and liaising with many different suppliers, enabling a better focus. We see pre-assembled components as a major growth opportunity despite the high cost

of electricity and raw materials here in South Africa,” he said. Kleiner pointed to Condra’s factory in Bulgaria, which he said is actively pursuing additional opportunities across Europe as it drives component sales into that continent.

He said that there are also opportunities in the Americas. Last month, Condra took an order for a hoist unit from Santiago-based Mantex, a machinery company in Santiago, Chile. Sales through Canadian agents remain steady.

All Condra components are available on short lead times direct from the company’s main factory in Germiston, a 22 000 m<sup>2</sup> site with an under-roof area of 8 000 m<sup>2</sup>. Some 200 different constituent parts are stocked there, ready for assembly into completed components ahead of rigorous testing and despatch.

Local manufacture accounts for about 90% of these components, with Condra itself accounting for some 30 percent of the volume. Ropes and electric motors come from Germany, and hook forgings from Spain and Italy.

“We focus on adaptability and robust design,” said Kleiner. “Long production runs keep our prices competitive. Lead times are usually shorter than those of rival firms because of large inventories.”

The majority of Condra’s component sales comprise hoists, end-carriages and cable loop (festoon) systems. There are also crabs, bottom blocks and enclosed conductors. Drives come with single, dual or variable speeds. Bogies are available with wheel diameters from 125 mm to 630 mm. Hoists capacities go all the way up to 500 tons.

Component assemblies can be tailored to customer specification. All of them carry a 12-month guarantee.

Condra has a pedigree going back to 1966, when the company was founded as a consultancy and drawing office with general engineering capabilities. Crane manufacture began five years later in 1971.

Today, the company is an acknowledged leader throughout sub-Saharan Africa in robust and enduring overhead and high-lift cranes, portal cranes and jib cranes.

There are factories in Johannesburg and Cape Town, with a third facility in Dryanovo, Bulgaria.

## THESE MACHINES HAVE BEEN ENGINEERED TO ENDURE

Condra cranes and hoists are without equal in their quality, performance, reliability and overall lifetime cost. Operating data and the experience gathered from installations around the globe are today incorporated in all Condra products, the endurance of which has been proven in highly corrosive and abrasive environments, and under wide extremes of temperature, humidity and altitude. Technical support, service and spare parts delivery are guaranteed worldwide.



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# Revolutionise power management with the astute smart power indicator - CBi

AS of September 2024, privately owned rooftop solar capacity in South Africa has exceeded 6 GW. With such a substantial investment, it is more important than ever to ensure its protection and longevity.

During a power outage, users often need to manually switch off high-consumption appliances like geysers, pool pumps, and heaters to conserve battery power and protect solar installations from overloading.

This process can be time-consuming and requires constant monitoring, especially during critical incidents such as cable faults. When users are not home, it becomes impossible to manage these appliances, leading to unnecessary battery drain.

This not only reduces the available power for essential devices but also shortens the overall life expectancy of the batteries. Over time, this can result in increased costs and reduced efficiency of solar and backup systems. In response to this rapid growth in rooftop solar installations and the need for smart management of solar systems, CBi-electric: low voltage has expanded on its already very popular and reliable Astute Range by launching the new CBi-electric Astute Smart Power Indicator (ASPI) - a cutting-edge device designed to enhance load management and home automation. With Wi-Fi and Bluetooth enabled connectivity, the ASPI offers real-time home automation of electrical systems.

## Notifications when needed

By using the CBI Home App, users can view the status of their Eskom supply or alternative power sources and receive instant notifications when the power goes off.

This functionality provides seamless integration with other Astute devices, allowing users to automate the control of non-essential or high-consumption loads like geysers, pool pumps, and heaters during outages.

The ASPI's advanced features not only offer convenience but also protect your power systems. Through user-defined automations, the device prevents power inverters from overloading and ensures optimal battery usage by using the existing installation of Astute Devices, such as Astute Smart Controllers (ASC), Isolators (ASI) and Plugs (ASP), to switch off non-essential loads during power interruptions.

## Ideal for residential, commercial, agricultural

The system also minimises the risks of high inrush currents when power is restored, by managing the switch-on process with time delays. Ideal for residential, commercial,

agricultural, and light industrial applications, the ASPI brings next-level automation and IoT control to any environment.

The ASPI is designed for those looking to take control of their energy usage and automate their home or business

with ease. Whether managing power consumption during a power outage or safeguarding power inverters and batteries from overload, the ASPI provides a comprehensive solution.

Its simple installation and integration with the

CBi Home App make it a user-friendly option for anyone seeking efficient power management without the hassle of manual intervention.

Contact CBi-electric for more information or visit <http://www.cbi-lowvoltage.com/>



## TRANSFORM OUTAGES INTO OPPORTUNITIES WITH SMART POWER CONTROL!

### Introducing the CBI Astute Smart Power Indicator (ASPI) – redefining smart power management and automation for a more efficient future!

- Identify the source of power supply, whether municipal or alternative
- Use existing Astute Devices, such as Astute Smart Controllers (ASC), Isolators (ASI), and Plugs (ASP), to switch off non-essential loads, protecting batteries and preventing overloads
- Real-time notifications whenever the grid or alternative power goes off



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## Senseca HD 48 & HD 49's high-accuracy temperature and humidity transmitters for industrial use



Senseca - HD 48 and HD 49.

"OUR Senseca HD 48 and HD 49 passive or active transmitters that measure temperature, relative humidity and dew point temperature are one of our leading sellers in South Africa due to their cost effectiveness, high-accuracy measurement and reliability", said Senseca South Africa MD, Jan Grobler.

"Both series of transmitters are designed for temperature and humidity control in conditioning and ventilation applications (HVAC/BEMS) across sectors such as blow drying plant, industrial and specialised processing plant, pharmacy, museums, clean rooms, ventilation ducts, industrial and civil sectors, greenhouses, auditoria and high density farms and offer a factory calibrated transmitter, meaning that no other further adjustments are required," said Grobler.

### HD48 Transmitter

The HD48 Series transmitter is an active transmitter and accepts both direct and 24Vac alternating power supplies. They have a standard (4-20 mA) or voltage (0 - 10V) outputs or a

serial RS485 output. It has screw type terminal block electrical connections, a standard PBT and 10 µm stainless steel grid protection (P8) and a TV probe working temperature of between -20°C - + 80°C. It is Electronic Protection Class IP66.

Various accessories are available including the ability to attach the probe to a duct, which can be utilised with the HD9008.31 flange, a 3/8th inch universal bi-conical connection or a PG16 metal cable gland. Its 4-digit optional display shows the measured parameters in a continual or sequential mode.

The HD 48 Series with RS485 output allows several instruments to be connected to form a network. The instruments are connected in a sequence through a shielded cable with twisted pair for signals and a third for wire for the ground.

### HD 49 Transmitter

The HD49 Series transmitter is a passive transmitter and suitable to be inserted in a 4 - 20 mA current loop. The HD49 has a 12 - 40 Vdc electrical connection. It has a stainless steel 10 µm fil-

ter to protect the sensor against dust and particles and is also classified as Electronic Protection Class IP66.

Various HD 49 models include:

- horizontal probe for duct mounting (TO),
- vertical probe for wall mounting (TV),
- probe with 2 or 5 m cable (TC),
- fixed contact Pt100 probe for solar panel (TFP)

For the TO and TC versions, two probe temperature ranges are possible: Standard -20 - +80°C and Extended -40 - 150°C. The temperature range of the thin film 1/3 DIN Pt100 probe for solar panels is -40 - +85°C.

HD49 transmitters are also available with an LCD display and have an electronic working temperature of -20 - +60°C.

Both series of transmitters measure relative humidity with a well proven temperature compensated capacitive sensor that assures precise and reliable measurements over the course of time. These are available in two probe temperature ranges comprising Standard - 20°C - + 80°C and Extended - 40°C - +150°C for the most critical applications. "Senseca is recognised as a leader in the provision of high quality measurement instrumentation."

The HD 48 and 49 are extremely lightweight transmitters that offer the high accuracy and precision that industry requires. They deliver a cost effective and competitive lifespan without any compromise on design and performance," said Grobler.

## Turck's IIoT and service platform TAS is Product of the Year in the Software & IT category

TURCK, which is known for its hardware expertise, has won the "Product of the Year 2024" in the "Software & IT" award given by the technical journal Computer & Automation.

The recognition comes from readers of Computer & Automation, one of the industry's top technical publications, underscoring the impact of Turck's Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT) and service platform, Turck Automation Suite (TAS).

The award, voted by industry practitioners rather than a jury, highlights a shift within Turck.

Traditionally celebrated for hardware solutions, the company's foray into software with TAS has resonated with professionals seeking efficient, networked automation. "This award isn't just another accolade,"



Turck's said in a statement.

"It's a validation from those who use these tools daily, confirming we're on the right path with digital transformation."

The award was given for TAS device management within industrial Ethernet networks, equipping users with batch functionalities that streamline repetitive tasks.

Firmware updates,

IP configurations, and Codesys program management—once a cumbersome process done on each device—can now be executed across multiple devices simultaneously.

This time-saving approach extends to RFID tools and IO-Link functions, providing features like the IODD Configurator and the Radar Monitor for advanced monitoring and configuration.

Since launching TAS just over a year ago, Turck has regularly enhanced the platform and is now gearing up to roll out the TAS Cloud module, further expanding its capabilities.

This ongoing evolution aligns with Turck's commitment to the IIoT landscape, marking its transition from a hardware stalwart to a forward-thinking force in digital automation.

## Softing launches the CableMaster PoE Ethernet cable tester

SOFTING IT Networks, a leader in Ethernet cable certification, speed performance testing and infrastructure testing, has extended its tester portfolio to include CableMaster PoE, a dedicated power over Ethernet (PoE) cable tester.

CableMaster PoE extends the CableMaster Series, which includes CableMaster FO fiber optic power meter, CableMaster 210 basic wiremapper and CableMaster VFL

fiber visual fault locator. As toolbox testers, the CableMaster Series is designed to provide the basic Ethernet cable testers all technicians should have on their truck or in their toolbox.

CableMaster PoE uniquely provides load testing for PoE power sources.

The Ethernet cable tester includes wiremaps, integrated length measurement, a tone generator and PoE identification. It also tests PoE up to Class

8 or 90 watts (PoE++) and tests PoE load, briefly applying a load to the port of the PoE power source to determine if the source is powered.

Another feature is the ability to supply power to the end device. With a 3.5-inch color screen and graphical user interface, CableMaster PoE delivers easy-to-understand test results in real time, enabling efficient and thorough PoE testing.

"It's uncommon for a

PoE tester in this price range to apply a load to a PoE power source," says Deane Horn, director of marketing at Softing IT Networks.

"If you are testing PoE for your office, customers or industrial facility, you want to be thorough and confident. Thanks to its compact design and wide range of functions, CableMaster PoE is the ideal tool for technicians and installers to quickly and easily identify and resolve PoE problems."

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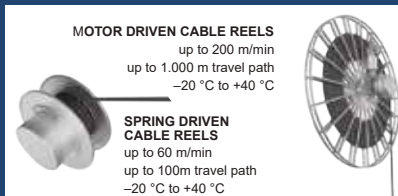
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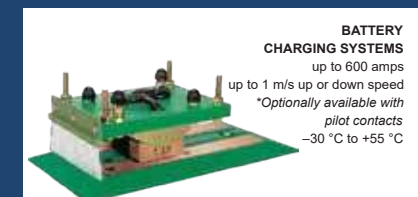
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## Efficiencies at Port of Cape Town costs apple and pear farmers R26 000 per hectare



*Dr Ivan Meyer inspects Tru-Cape apples and pears that are packed and ready to be distributed to local retailers.*

THERE is still room for improvement when it comes to improving operations at the Port of Cape Town (PoCT), said Western Cape Minister of Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism, Dr Ivan Meyer.

"While we recognise that the Port of Cape Town (PoCT) management is implementing a terminal turn-around strategy, the worryingly slow pace at which it is happening remains a deep concern and has direct cost implications for the agricultural sector in the Western Cape," said van Meyer, following his visit to Two-a-Day (TAD) in Grabouw.

TAD, previously known as Elgin Fruit Packers Co-operative Limited, is one of Africa's leading fruit-growing, packing, and marketing companies. It comprises more than 50

farms and 3 300 hectares. Total production, including processing, equates to over 200 000 tonnes per annum.

During the visit, Attie van Zyl, managing director of TAD, highlighted that the estimated total cost of inefficiencies at the PoCT to the Western Cape apple and pear industry was R999-million annually.

"Our apple and pear growers are directly impacted. The total estimated cost of a dysfunctional port per hectare for our farmers is R26 000 per hectare."

"While this figure is deeply worrying, it does not show the full extent of the loss to the agriculture sector because we are not calculating the opportunities lost of growing into new markets. We are not seen as a reliable supplier to the international market because we cannot

guarantee delivery," said Premier Alan Winde.

Glen Steyn, the Western Cape Department of Economic Development and Tourism's project manager for logistics development, said the department has been working closely with the management team of Transnet Port Authority and Transnet Port Terminals in the Western Region.

"We appreciate our constructive engagement with Transnet Ports Authority. Our conversations include the impact of logistics on the national and provincial economies. A digital logistics planning platform is being developed with Transnet and other agencies in the container logistics chain that should assist in reducing bottlenecks and their disruptive effect on cargo movement," added Glen Steyn.

Meyer said, "The Western Cape Government's Growth for Jobs strategy sets out our ambitious plan to grow the Western Cape economy by 5% annually by 2035. We aim to triple the value of the province's exports of goods and services (inclusive tourism) by 2035 to R450-billion. To achieve this, we need an efficient port. Productivity at the PoCT must significantly improve in the lead-up to the upcoming fruit export season if we are to achieve this goal."

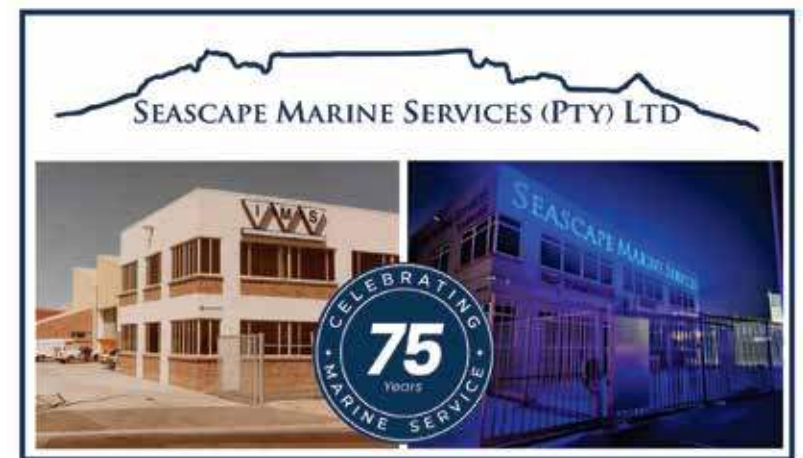
## Major milestone for power and propulsion provider - Seascope

WITH a history dating back to 1949, Seascope Marine Services is celebrating a 75-year milestone, marking a journey of resilience and adaptation that saw the company develop from origins within Industrial Machinery Supplies (IMS), with MAN Diesel Engines as a key partner.

Now, as the local distributor for Yanmar and other international brands including Hamilton Jet, Kohler Generators, Zipwake, Cox diesel outboards, Hal-yard, Neander D'Torque, Exalto, Flexofold and Eliche Radice, Seascope has built a reputation within the power and propulsion space.

Seascope's brands have propelled their success within both the leisure as well as commercial boat market and, director, James De Jong attributes their own accomplishments to the achievements of the boat building sector.

Drawing on their long track record in servicing the industry, Seascope



holds significant stock to minimise engine downtime for clients.

He also emphasises the importance of their long association with Yanmar.

"Seascope took on the Yanmar agency in 1983 to support the demand in the leisure boat market," he says, adding that the company benefits from Yanmar's continuous research and development. "We are extremely fortunate to work with them."

With over 110 years' experience in engine technology Yanmar

recently launched the electric E-Saildrive range, which provides a seamless transition to electric power through a straight forward installation platform.

This product launch aligns with Yanmar's 2050 Green Challenge to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions in their business activities and achieve a net zero impact by circulating resources.

"We are seeing the fruits of this initiative through Yanmar's electric propulsion program, hybrid systems, HVO as an alternative fuel and

hydrogen fuel cell technology testing," says De Jong who looks forward to introducing these to the local boating market to provide greener propulsion solutions.

For De Jong, who has been at the forefront of Seascope's growth over the last two decades, it is this mix of brands, people and service that has underscored their success – and which is destined to see Seascope continue to provide an important value proposition for many more milestones going forward.

## Training centre celebrates milestone with plans for future growth

*Training centre celebrates milestone with plans for future growth*

CAPITALISING on their 21-year milestone anniversary, the South African Maritime Training Academy has initiated a process to work collaboratively with industry stakeholders to develop plans for future growth and expansion.

"We are excited to mark this milestone that celebrates the development of high-quality maritime education and simulation training for South African and SADC region seafarers and offshore workers," says Pieter Coetzer, Commercial Manager at SAMTRA.

The Simon's Town-based training centre

has seen steady growth in student enrolment since 2018 and, apart from 2020 during the pandemic, has continued to increase student numbers year-on-year.

Coetzer believes that several factors are influencing this growth. "There is a growing demand for seafarers from South Africa and Africa sparked by the COVID pandemic as well as the ongoing situation in Eastern Europe and the Middle East," he explains.

Coetzer adds that SAMTRA's course offerings have also evolved to meet the needs of the industry,

and they now provide long term STCW programmes for officer training as well as training of super yacht crew.

"Our aim has also been to answer the call from national government and meet the objectives of the Comprehensive Maritime Transport Policy (CMTTP) by facilitating growth within the Maritime Education, Training and Development sector," he says. "Our 26 public universities can only absorb around 25% of matriculants, leaving a gap for TVET and the private sector to play a major role in providing tertiary education."

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We at Seascope Marine Services extend our heartfelt thanks to our loyal customers, partners, suppliers, and the dedicated individuals who make up our team. Your unwavering commitment to our mission and vision has been essential to our success. We also recognize and appreciate those who came before us, whose invaluable contributions have played a key role in helping us reach this significant milestone.

Together, we look forward to continuing our journey of growth, innovation, and success.

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## Revealing the genuine value of filtration - Hydrasales

*Eliminating a gram of dirt results in remarkable savings.*

THE life and reliability of hydraulic systems are greatly affected by the presence of particulate contamination in the lubricant.

Only 10 grams of particulate matter are needed to elevate the contamination level of 10 000l of perfectly clean hydraulic fluid to an ISO 4406 value of 19/17/14—the minimum acceptable standard in hydraulic and lube systems. It's a stark reminder of how a tiny amount of contamination can have significant consequences.

However, in the face of potential contamination, there is hope. The cleaner the fluid, the more reliable the system or process, and the longer the lifespan of its components.

Contamination monitoring of hydraulic fluids is the simplest and most cost-effective monitoring technique available and should rightfully take its place as a front-line technique in any maintenance regime.

By staying vigilant and proactive in monitoring contamination levels, maintenance teams can mitigate risks, enhance system reliability, and

extend the lifespan of critical components, ultimately reducing the likelihood of costly downtime or breakdowns.

Including oil condition monitoring in your maintenance program is paramount. Hydrasales specialises in products tailored to both fixed and portable needs. On-line measurement means that you are seeing the true and real time behaviour of the system, whereas off-line sampling is exposed to a number of variables prior to the fluid passing through the Particle Counter.

Think of it like this: just as you've got to spend money to make money, sometimes you've got to spend upfront to save big down the line. Benja-

min Franklin had it right when he said, "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance."

In the realm of industrial or mobile equipment maintenance, it's all about making the case for proactive investment over reactive fixes. Sure, it might seem easier to deal with problems as they arise, but that's a bit like waiting for a heart attack before you start taking care of your health.

So, let's delve into the crux of the matter: why does eliminating the smallest particle of dirt or contaminants hold such significance?

Firstly, there's the matter of preventative measures. Identifying the sources of contami-

nants - whether dirt, coal dust, or other particulates - and implementing strategies to block or negate their ingress into the system is paramount.

Basic system inspections, which reveal possible areas of dirt infiltration like a leaking rod seal, a damaged tank lid gasket, or a loose filler cap, can result in significant savings when compared to the potential consequences of uncontrolled contamination.

Having taken the initial step towards eliminating contamination, the question arises: is it sufficient? This is where Hydrasales steps in to help. Hydrasales Contamination and Filtration specialist, Chris Banks says, "Leveraging our expertise, we can assist systems engineers in upgrading filtration systems or procuring the appropriate filtration components tailored to your equipment's needs."

He continued: "Sometimes, what appears to be a modest investment, like enhancing the filler breather, can prove pivotal in preserving oil cleanliness."



## SafeGauge solutions from Booyco Electronics enhance safety for heavy equipment operators

THE strategic partnership between Booyco Electronics, a leader in proximity detection systems and safety solutions, and SafeGauge offers owners and operators of large mining, construction, forestry, agriculture and earthmoving equipment access to advanced wireless diagnostic tools designed to enhance safety and operational efficiency.

SafeGauge technology is renowned for enabling remote monitoring and testing of critical systems on heavy machinery without exposing workers to the dangerous conditions typically associated with live testing and equipment maintenance.

Louis Venter, area sales manager at Booyco Electronics, says that by allowing artisans to conduct tests and gather real-time data remotely, SafeGauge eliminates

the need for workers to be in close proximity (line of fire) to large machines during potentially hazardous procedures.

This innovation significantly reduces the risk of injury, creating a safer work environment across operations.

The SafeGauge range of equipment includes various specialised tools designed for different measurement needs. The PT (Pressure Transducer) Series is used to measure pressures in hydraulic and pneumatic systems, while the DI (Dial Indicator) Series is designed for measuring clearance, tolerance and wear on machine components.

The TM (Tacho Meter) Series measures fan speeds and other rotating components, the LD (Laser Displacement) Series tracks wear on moving parts and the

PR (Push Rod) Series is used to measure displacement between two fixed points.

Venter explains that all data collected by these tools can be processed through the Multitool Pro, which allows for real-time generation of reports and graphs.

"With its built-in cloud connectivity, the system makes it easy to export or share data instantly, streamlining operations and improving decision-making efficiency," he adds.

Through Booyco Electronics' distribution of SafeGauge in Southern Africa, local operations now have access to this world class safety and efficiency solution, helping companies meet stringent safety standards and drive operational excellence in even the most demanding environments," Venter concludes.

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THE NEXT GENERATION

Internships, Skills & Development Programmes

Schneider Electric opens its first Regional Services Training Centre in the country for partners, end users and employees

SCHNEIDER Electric, has unveiled its first regional Services Training Centre in South Africa, aimed at providing its customers, partners and employees with a single point of access to the company's vast array of training options and resources.

The training centre was officially opened by Suleyman Aydemir, vice president, services, Middle East and Africa at Schneider Electric, who stated that Schneider Electric's investment in the training centre was part of its broader investment in Anglophone Africa which include South Africa, Kenya and Nigeria.

The Services Training Centre was unveiled during Schneider Electric's Services Innovation Talk, which was held at the company's head office in Midrand, Johannesburg and attended by valued partners and customers.

Aydemir noted that the Services Training Centre aims to provide customers, partners and engineers with a single point of access to the vast array of training options and resources available, covering Schneider Electric solutions and industry-focused courses.

"There is an urgent need to develop skills to adopt new technologies, drive modernisation, enhance performance, minimise downtime and comply with evolving industry safety regulations," he added.

"Training is critical to career enhancement and forms a key foundation of a positive employee experience, attracting and retaining people when we're facing a significant skills gap challenge," said Aydemir.

He added that the centre is positioned to add greater elements of safety, quality and reliability to the assets and installations of Schneider Electric's partners and customers, revealing that the scope of the training facility will be expanded based on demand.

"Importantly, if our customers or partners identify any other needs or additional training that we should be conducting, we would love to receive this feedback. We will continue to grow the training centre and the value proposition that we bring to the country," he said.

Aydemir noted that Africa has the youngest population in the world, with about 60% of sub-Saharan Africa being under 30. "We need to keep investing in our youth to bring meaningful impact to South Africa and other African countries, with the biggest impact being achieved through training and the development of professional skills."

The following training equipment forms part of the Service Training Centre, which covers various Schneider Electric business units, such as:

- Power Systems
- RM6 Ring Main Unit
- MasterPact MTZ circuit breaker
- PremSeT switchgear
- MCSaT Active medium voltage (MV) switchgear
- Dry Type - Cast resin transformer
- Industrial Automation
- Automation and Control products (including M340 & M580 PLC)
- Secure Power



Suleyman Aydemir, vice president, services, Middle East and Africa at Schneider Electric.

- Galaxy PW 2nd Gen industrial three-phase UPS
- Easy UPS three-phase modular

"Launching this training centre has been a tremendous effort by multiple people. It serves not only Schneider Electric but also our community, our partners and our end users. It drives the impact of Ubuntu and the company as a whole," Ravishka Jairam, the services operations director concluded.

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- Compressors | Gensets | Plant Equipment
- Fire Technology & Solutions
- Materials Handling Logistics & Supply Chain
- Occupational Health & Safety | PPE
- Power Generation | Power Solutions
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Right culture takes safety performance in mining to next level



Underpinning the Murray & Roberts Cementation safety culture are the standards and systems which remain an important foundation.

IN the mining sector's ongoing quest for zero harm, Murray & Roberts Cementation has shown that a culture of safety is critical to meeting this target – over and above the progress made in safety systems and technologies.

In its own safety journey, the company has made great strides, according to Trevor Schultz, risk executive at Murray & Roberts Cementation. Among the key indicators of its success is that it has been fatality-free for almost a decade, a real accolade in the traditionally high-risk field of shaft sinking and mine development.

"It has been a journey that started long before 2015, when we reviewed the systems and processes, customising them to suit our business needs," says Schultz.

"Working closely with our Training Academy at Bentley Park, we also developed a new approach that would foster a culture of safety among our people – from their very first days in training."

"An important shift in the mining sec-

tor has been to appreciate employees not only for their hands (to work) and their ears (to listen), but for their minds and hearts – which really drive safe behaviour," says Chamberlain. "Systems and rules are important, but they don't provide the vocabulary to show that management really cares about the safety of every employee."

A caring culture is reinforced every day by the interaction between management and staff, he argues. This forms part of the company's Visible Felt Leadership initiative, which ensures managers engage with their teams on a regular basis.

Underpinning the safety culture are the standards and systems, which remain an important foundation for safety at Murray & Roberts Cementation, says Schultz.

Comprehensive checks and balances are in place, including self-assessments for supervisors and managers, which help to determine the effectiveness of training in the workplace. Benchmarking against the highest standards, Murray & Roberts Cementation is certified in terms of ISO 9000, ISO 14000 and ISO 45000 in its internal systems and corporate governance.

Technology also has a role to play in supporting the safety culture, explains Chamberlain, especially in removing people from the 'contact area' where most safety hazards are found.

"We work to engineer the risk out of

every working situation, which usually involves the use of equipment instead of manual labour," he explains. "Equally, the solution may be to revise the methodology or the working cycle – as this affects the way the employee behaves."

Schultz points to a range of engineering technologies that Murray & Roberts Cementation has adapted and applied to improve safety. Lasers have been employed to continuously monitor clearances in some vertical shaft projects, so that winder speeds can be reduced where the clearance reaches limitations.

"We have extended the pre-sink automated tipping hook and kibble auto alignment to the main sink which removes the human interaction during tipping," he continues.

"The monitoring of our stage zone kibble winder slack rope has also been updated, by allowing continued monitoring during crosshead arresting. Electrical actuators are now being used where possible, instead of the noisier air and hydraulic system."

Murray & Roberts Cementation is also an early adopter of technology that can improve safety, such as Proximity Detection Systems (PDS). In the early 2000s, the company saw the value of this emerging field of electronics, and was one of the first local companies to trial it on its trackless mining machinery.

"We were able to prove the efficacy of this technology, and quickly progressed to standardise PDS as a minimum requirement on our machines," he says. "This was years before it was made mandatory, which required all qualifying mines to install this equipment."



# Cape Town’s commitment to recycling: how plastic waste comes full circle

By Hugh Tyrrell

THE City of Cape Town is taking significant strides in plastics recycling through the establishment of its materials recovery facilities (MRFs), and initiatives aimed at reducing plastic waste and promoting a circular economy.

The City’s MRF in Kraaifontein has been operational for years, efficiently sorting plastic and other recyclables by type and directing them back into the recycling industry.

Expanding on this effort, the City is developing a new multi-million-rand MRF at Coastal Park landfill near Muizenberg. This facility will act as a central sorting hub, supporting the City’s Think Twice programme, which will soon serve an additional 27 000 households from Constantia to Wynberg.

**New plastic processing plant boosts local recycling industry**

These ongoing efforts in recycling infrastructure have inspired private sector investment, most notably with the launch of a R300-million polyethylene terephthalate (PET) plastic processing plant in Cape Town. Opened in September, this facility processes used PET bottles, such as those used for water and soft drinks, recycling them into new products for similar uses. By

keeping PET plastics in circulation, Cape Town’s recycling initiatives contribute to reducing plastic waste while also supporting sustainable industry practices.

**Think Twice programme expands to more households**

In addition to MRFs, Cape Town’s Think Twice recycling programme provides a free, weekly door-to-door collection service for recyclable materials, including plastics, to nearly 180 000 households. Established over a decade ago, the programme is one of the most comprehensive of its kind in South Africa, setting a national standard for accessible recycling services and contributing significantly to local waste recovery.

**Award-winning innovation in plastic recycling**

Cape Town’s efforts in plastic recycling were celebrated at a recent awards event hosted by the South African Plastics Recycling Organisation (SAPRO), which recognised innovative products made from recycled plastic.

The top prize went to a 100% recycled polypropylene bleach bottle, illustrating how even common items can have a substantial impact on sustainability. The product, manufactured from over 200 tons of recycled plastic, is now on store shelves at



major retailers like Shoprite and Checkers, highlighting the potential of recycled materials in everyday products.

**Creating demand for recycled content**

The SAPRO awards underscore the importance of recycled content in the marketplace, encouraging brands and retailers to embrace recycled materials in their products. This creates a “demand-pull” effect, leading to increased recovery, collection, and processing of plastic waste. By fostering this demand, Cape Town’s initiatives support the circular economy and generate employment along the recycling value chain.

**Addressing plastic pollution with the South African Plastic Pact**

With nearly half a million tons of plastic waste polluting South Africa’s environment annually, the South African Plastic Pact—coordinated by GreenCape—plays a key role in the transition to a circular economy. This voluntary pact brings together business, government, and nonprofit members to reduce plastic pollution through sustainable packaging practices.

**Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and PRO support**

Producer Responsibility Organisations (PROs) such as PETCO and Polyco, funded by EPR levies, also contribute to recycling by recovering plastic waste and re-integrating it into the value chain. Under EPR, manufacturers pay an annual levy to the PROs, based on the volume of new packaging they produce, helping fund these critical recovery efforts.

Together, these initiatives show how Cape Town’s commitment to recycling drives environmental and economic benefits, demonstrating the power of a circular economy to make a sustainable difference.

*This column explores issues and opportunities in the circular economy. Your comments and suggestions are welcome: mail hugh@greenedge.co.za*

# Finance minister’s focus on infrastructure spend

By Tessa Brewis, director in the banking, finance & projects sector; Deepesh Desai, Associate in the corporate & commercial law sector and Azola Ndongeni, candidate attorney at Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr

WITH load-shedding seemingly under control for the present, securing access to water and sanitation services for South Africans appears to be the next looming issue.

**"Water infrastructure developers and contractors can anticipate numerous long-term opportunities to provide services to municipalities..."**

Finance Minister Enoch Gonyongwana’s focus on infrastructure reform echoed this sentiment in his latest Mid Term Budget Policy Statement this week, as he noted that growth-enhancing infrastructure would form one of the four key pillars of Treasury’s strategy. He further noted that dedicated capacity would be allocated to the Department of Water and Sanitation’s Water Partnerships Office.

Gauteng’s bulk water supply crisis and fast approaching “Day Zero” have been attributed to high water withdrawals by municipalities, largely caused by leaks due

to failing municipal infrastructure.

The results of the General Household Survey 2023 published by Stats SA show that about 13% of households in South Africa do not have access to on-site or off-site piped water, and about 16% of households do not have access to sanitation services.

The municipalities that are responsible for rendering such services often lack the financial stability and the necessary expertise and capacity to do so effectively.

**BRICS Bank funding to fuel water infrastructure development**

At the end of August 2024, the New Development Bank, as established by the founding BRICS nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), approved a loan of \$1-billion (approximately R17,86-billion) to South Africa, for the enhancement of the South African infrastructure sector.

It is anticipated that these funds will be used to fund large national level bulk water infrastructure projects and to address infrastructure funding gaps not covered by the Municipal Infrastructure Grant programme. This will be a significant contribution towards developing much needed water and sanitation infrastructure in South Africa.

Water infrastructure developers and contractors can anticipate numerous long-term opportunities to provide services to municipalities and to partner with the state to undertake the development and expansion of various water and sanitation infrastructure projects.

**PPPs an effective way to deliver water infrastructure**

One of the ways to address the lack of capacity, insufficient expertise and limited resources of municipalities to deliver water infrastructure, is to promote public-private partnerships (PPPs), where the private sector brings upfront capital, technical skills and experience and collaborates with the government.

In his speech, the Finance Minister announced that the proposed amendments to Treasury Regulations 16 (issued pursuant to the Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1996) would be finalised by November for implementation in 2025/26 and the Municipal Public Private Partnership Regulations (issued pursuant to the Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003) will be finalised by June 2025.

These draft amendments are aimed at promoting PPPs in South Africa and attracting more private sector investment by streamlining the PPP processes, including in respect of procurement, management of PPP contracts, and institutional relationships across a PPP process. His statements in the MTBPS this week around making a concerted effort to increase the pool of funders to diversify public infrastructure financing through new mechanisms and instruments reinforce this commitment to realising goals through private sector collaboration.

South Africa’s new Government of National Unity has adopted a business-friendly strategy and has identified



Tessa Brewis, director in the banking, finance & projects sector, Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr.

infrastructure, including water and sanitation, as a strategic area for private sector participation.

Collaboration between business and Government, with the support of institutions such as the New Development Bank, are essential for addressing South Africa’s water crisis. The private sector will have to consider all factors at play to ensure that while they benefit from participating in such projects, they also plan for the risks that may arise.



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