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Eskom is looking for a biogas consultant.



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A balanced path to modernising Cape Town's Container Terminal.



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PRASA makes progress with plans to build new rail link between Khayelitsha and Bellville-Strand lines

The rail utility has completed the feasibility study and the Environmental Impact Assessment for the Blue Downs Rail Link, which will connect residents in the largest residential areas in the city directly to Bellville, the second largest and most important work destination in Cape Town.



By Larry Claasen

PROGRESS is being made with plans to expand the rail network in Cape Town, which will link Belville directly to Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain.

Train station development plans ready after key studies

The Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (PRASA) according to its 2024 - 2027 corporate plan says it has completed a feasibility study and the Environmental Impact Assessment for the Blue Downs Rail Link, a proposed 9,5km rail connection between the existing Khayelitsha, and Bellville-Strand lines.

This will see the link create a connection between the Nolungile station to Kuilsriver station.

Train station development to drive urban growth

The Blue Downs Rail Link is part of a strategy that will see the rail network link residents in the largest residential areas in the city directly to Bellville, the second largest and most important work destination in Cape Town.

The development of the link means that residents will no longer need to take a train to the city centre to get a connecting train to Bellville, and be in effect the rail equivalent of the R300 highway that connects Mitchells Plain with Cape Town's northern suburbs.

"The link will service the greater Blue Downs community, and will be a fundamental component of the future metropolitan rail and transport network of Cape Town," said the plan.

The investment in the rail connection will be substantial, as it will consist of a double

line and will possibly see the addition of three to four stations.

The Blue Downs Rail Link has been in development since 2017. It was first proposed in the City of Cape Town in its Business Plan for the Assignment of Urban Rail report.

Back then the city saw the link as part of its Transit Oriented Development (TOD) strategy, which would see sustainable communities established along transit routes.

This means that aside from providing a quicker way to get to Bellville from Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain, the city can drive urban development with newly established stations acting as growth nodes.

"The aim is to develop business plans for the development and re-engineering of each of the integration zones, with the rail corridors being the backbone and using TOD as the main driver to achieve spatial transformation," said the report.

Though the Blue Downs Rail Link was first proposed eight years ago, governance issues at PRASA and numerous legislative and regulatory matters have led to delays.

The proposed line extension comes as the City of Cape Town has called for the National Government to relinquish control of the rail assets in Cape Town to it.

Train station development could save millions for commuters

The city is so committed to taking over it funded its own Rail Feasibility Study to assess the impact of such a transition. The findings of the study showed huge savings for the city's residence.

"This Rail Feasibility Study has calculated that lower income households will save as much as R932-million per year by switching their daily commute to trains, and that a functional passenger rail ser-

Continued on P2

South Africa's data centres have adapted well to the 'Energy Crisis' – Cummins

Though load shedding has had a marked impact on the economy, the country's data centres have continued to operate.



The Cummins Digital Master Control PowerCommand® DMC8000.

By Larry Claasen

SOUTH Africa's data centres' extensive backup power redundancy has meant they were not significantly impacted by load shedding, according to Cummins, a global provider of backup power solutions for the data centre industry.

Empowering data centre resilience amid south africa's load shedding

Data centres are increasingly becoming a key component of the South African economy, and if they were to lose access to power, the knock-on effect could be devastating for the economy.

Given the energy crisis in the country, such a situation could have had far-reaching consequences if not for detailed backup power plans and equipment to prevent this from happening.

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PRASA makes progress with plans to build new rail link between Khayelitsha and Bellville-Strand lines

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vice could sustain another 51 000 jobs in the metro while adding R11-billion to our local economy, said City of Cape Town Executive Mayor of Cape Town, Geordin Hill-Lewis, at the council meeting in December 2024. Though it is still unclear when, or even if, devolution will take place, Hill-Lewis said the city had signed a signed full Service Level Agreement with PRASA in which it commits to targets for improvements to rail services, and also report into a joint steering committee with the City of Cape Town. “This service level agreement – and the coordinating structure that gives life to it – will ensure the City is better able to exercise its constitutional role of integrated transport planning in the metro.” Aside from the Blue Downs Rail Link, PRASA is also considering the creation of the 20km long Motherwell Line, which will connect it to the Nelson Mandela Bay CBD and a 11km link between Daveyton to Etwatwa on the East Rand, in Gauteng.

Shoprite’s billion-rand supplier support: What businesses need to know

How Africa’s largest retailer is investing in its local supply chain and what it takes to become one.

By Larry Claasen

AFRICA’S largest fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) retailer, Shoprite’s commitment to building emerging businesses has seen it provide billions in financial and direct investment to them. Its CredX division, for example, saw it provide R10-billion in working capital funding to 110 suppliers during the 2024 financial year. The group said this facility enabled suppliers to obtain crucial working capital funding at the lowest industry rates. For the same period, 20-million was invested in Enterprise and Supplier Development (ESD) through Shoprite Next Capital and Shoprite Next Capital supported 64 Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs). In addition, Shoprite



grew its procurement spend on black-owned businesses by 7,8%, with its spending on black women-owned suppliers rising 8,5% to R18,3-billion. The retailer’s private label range Home-grown programme was also supportive of local suppliers, with it sourcing 100% of its products from South Africa and 10% of the range sourced from SMMEs that are already suppliers to the group. In the last financial year, sales in the range were up 187%. To date, the group has procured R9-million and created 36 jobs by collaborating with SMMEs on this programme.”

Shoprite’s billion-rand investment: How to become a shoprite supplier

The support Shoprite has offered has seen some businesses go from modest operations to having a national footprint. Maneli Pets, for example, went from supplying five Checkers stores in the Western Cape in 2021 to 200 stores within less than a year. It now supplies the chain nationwide. Maneli Pets founder, and Harvard-trained entrepreneur, Nhlamhla Dlamini noted that the retailer was particularly helpful when it came to helping it deal with the energy crisis. “It became clear we needed a long-term sustainable power solution. We started installing solar panels in 2018 but required funding to conclude the process. Banks are not open to those types of requests, par-

How to get into Shoprite’s supply chain: Essential steps for success

Though Shoprite offers a lot of support to prospective suppliers, getting to its supply chain is not guaranteed and it says they should consider the following steps before applying, which are:

Key requirements on how to become a shoprite supplier

Stand out from the competition - it is looking for innovative, quality, affordable and unique products that make a difference in a customer’s life. Suppliers with a strong unique selling proposition – whether through distinct products, diverse variants or flavours or creative packaging

Develop a strong business plan - A well-structured business plan should outline clear growth strategies, market posi-

“Its CredX division saw it provide R10-billion in working capital funding to 110 suppliers during the 2024 financial year.”

tioning, and financial projections. Retailers look for suppliers who demonstrate long-term viability and scalability.

Master cash flow management - Cash flow is the lifeblood of any business. While it may seem like a simple concept, it often proves more complex in daily operations. Mastering cash flow management is key to paving the way for long-term business success.

Craft a compelling pitch - Confidence in your business and products is essential when engaging with major retailers. A well-prepared pitch that highlights your brand’s strengths and potential benefits to Shoprite increases your chances of securing a partnership.

Be retail-ready - Businesses must ensure their products meet industry standards and regulatory requirements. Food suppliers, for example, must be food safety compliant. Shoprite provides guidance on achieving compliance where necessary.

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Africa's premier Organic & Natural Products Expo returns to Cape Town with enhanced SME focus



The expo is an excellent showcase for organic and natural products

THE Organic & Natural Products Expo Africa will welcome visitors to the Cape Town International Convention Centre from 28-30 March 2025 as the Western Cape's leading showcase for organic and natural products.

400 enquiries from companies wanting to exhibit at our second Cape Town show. The tremendous response reflects the remarkable growth of the sector and the increasing demand for organic and natural products," he says.

Showcase Pavilion, a concept supported by Standard Bank over the past two years, which enables corporate sponsors to facilitate the participation of a number of small businesses, giving them valuable exposure to trade buyers and consumers.

"While Standard Bank have again stepped up, we need more corporates to come to the party. A mobile network operator, a technology brand, an insurance company and more are all examples of corporates who can benefit by getting involved," adds Hickinbotham. In addition, a new subsidised trading table concept, which offers cost-effective exhibition opportunities at R4 250 (excluding VAT), will assist in making the show more accessible to emerging businesses.

"Small business is the cornerstone of job creation across South Africa. When facilitating this within a sector that is focussed on health, wellbeing and sustainability, it just feels even better," says Hickinbotham.

Strong support

The event continues to receive strong support from key industry bod-

ies. These include the South African Organic Sector Organisation, the Health Products Association, the Cosmetic Export Council of South Africa, the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC), the Western Cape Department of Economic Development, WESGRO and various international partners.

"Last year's inaugural expo in Cape Town was an outstanding success. Throughout the three days, the show floor maintained a brilliant atmosphere with consistently strong attendance," says Marc Giard of China Herb.

"What really stood out was the genuine interest visitors showed in alternative health solutions, particularly our traditional Chinese medicine offerings. The level of engagement and genuine curiosity from visitors made it a very worthwhile venture for China Herb."

"The Expo was absolutely brilliant for our business," adds Judy Malan, co-founder of Nuts About Garlic.

"We had tremendous success in making contact with potential investors who were particularly attracted to the natural qualities of our products."

Enhanced visitor experience

Visitors can expect to discover a diverse range of organic and natural products, from locally produced goods to international innovations, across a range of categories including Health, Body & Beauty, Lifestyle, Home, Food & Drink and Baby & Kids.

All exhibitors will receive 12 months free exposure on the Organic & Natural Portal (www.organicandnaturalportal.com), valued at R2500 per annum and extending their reach beyond the three-day event.

South Africa's G20 Presidency: What it means for global trade and investment

By Chris Hattingh

SOUTH AFRICA'S G20 Presidency provides the host country with numerous diplomatic, economic, and cultural opportunities. With a main summit (22-23 November in Johannesburg) preceded by numerous side conferences and engagements focused on a range of areas and sectors, South Africa's G20 Presidency offers multiple chances to make a positive impact on international diplomatic and business counterparts.

In his address to the World Economic Forum meeting in January President Cyril Ramaphosa captured South Africa's opportunity as follows: "As a leading forum for international economic cooperation, the G20 plays an important role in shaping and strengthening global architecture and governance on major international economic issues. For the first time in its history, the G20 is being hosted on the African continent following the admission of the African Union as a member of the G20."

South Africa's G20 Presidency and its impact on global trade

South Africa is now afforded these G20 opportunities, with a special focus on the new US administration that has undertaken its work with great speed. By drilling into the areas of the economic growth (investment) as well as security interests, South Africa can find overlap with what will likely be a more pragmatic, deal-making focused, America First foreign-and-trade policy on the part of the Trump administration.

Economic growth and investment under South Africa's G20 Presidency

The economic context in which South Africa hosts the G20 is as

follows. Gross fixed capital formation as a percentage of GDP is a useful leading indicator of future growth rates. The National Development Plan set SA's target at 30%. The highest point reached (since 1994) was 21.6%, in 2008/09. Apart from that, the yearly performance hovers between 12% and 15%. With lower rates of capital formation come lower rates of growth – and fewer business and job opportunities. Between 2013 and 2023 annual GDP growth averaged only 0.8%; to increase real GDP per capita (and the average citizen's quality of life) growth rates nearer 5% are needed.

How South Africa's G20 Presidency can attract foreign investment

With the national fiscus under constant debt servicing obligations, it is unlikely that South Africa can domestically spend the amounts needed for more and larger infrastructure and other capital-intensive projects. Foreign investment is an avenue that should be explored at every opportunity. Building on the positive work done over the last 7 months by the Department of Home Affairs, South Africa can show it is open to highly-skilled businesspeople. A subdued but aspirant domestic consumer market is available to international goods. And by speeding up reforms on the railway networks and ports the government can communicate its seriousness (in deed, not merely in action).

South Africa's well-developed links with the sub-Saharan African region plays to its geostrategic advantages – coupled of course the built-in global trade route that the Cape of Good Hope provides.



On the political front the ideological and policy differences within the Government of National Unity (GNU) could yet undermine South Africa's investment case, if these differences result in the GNU's fracturing. For the time being, though, South Africa presents a relatively more stable political offering than countries such as Germany, France, and South Korea, that can play to its global advantage.

A more pragmatic US foreign policy and trade footing will be more volatile and countries seeking opportunities should expect curveballs. But 'volatile' is not the same as 'uncertain' and 'unpredictable.' With the necessary data and objective, dispassionate analysis countries will be able to identify the key trends and driving forces behind seemingly irregular US foreign policy moves.

With all the above factors taken into consideration South Africa can formulate its positioning towards the US as follows: A relationship that is economically to the benefit of the US, coupled with no or relatively few geopolitical downsides for the US. Of potential investment and trade partners for the US on the African continent – and the US will always seek such opportunities, regardless of the more charged rhetoric of the day or which party holds the administration – South Africa has within its ability the choices to make a very compelling economic, security, and trade case.

"The organic and natural products sector is predominantly driven by small businesses, many of which create truly innovative products but struggle with the cost of exhibiting..."

The expo has been designed as a hybrid event that caters to trade buyers, while at the same time allowing retail sales directly to consumers. The event will showcase local and international manufacturers, suppliers, importers and exporters.

According to Warren Hickinbotham, head of sponsorship and partnerships, the 2025 edition has already attracted unprecedented interest.

"Just three weeks into the new year, we've received over

Supporting small business innovation

A key feature of the 2025 expo will be an increased focus on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

"The organic and natural products sector is predominantly driven by small businesses, many of which create truly innovative products but struggle with the cost of exhibiting," explains Hickinbotham.

To address this, the expo will once again include the SME

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BMG's power transmission components offer extended wear-life in harsh conditions



BMG's Tsubaki Titan chain combines the best features of the existing premium GT4 Winner chain, with new specifications designed to deliver the ultimate in wear performance.

BMG's Tsubaki Titan chain series offers significant improvements in wear-life, particularly in demanding applications, like abrasive and dusty conditions, such as those found in timber mills, brick works, mining and metal working, as well as in sugar and paper processing.

"Selecting the right chain for every job is critical, especially in harsh conditions where dust and abrasive particles infiltrate moving parts and significantly shorten the lifetime of standard chain. This damage results in high costs caused by downtime, production loss, replacement parts and labour," says Carlo Beukes, business unit manager, Power Transmission division, BMG.

BMG Titan chain series offers extended wear-life

"Tsubaki Titan chain, which offers previously unobtainable wear-life in harsh conditions, combines key features

of the existing premium Tsubaki GT4 Winner chain, with new specifications which have been designed to deliver extended wear performance," says Beukes.

"Advanced features for the Titan series, not only extend service life of the chain, but also reduce maintenance costs and minimise downtime. Another advantage is the reduced frequency of swapping out old chain for new, which contributes to a significant reduction in the total cost of ownership."

An important feature of Tsubaki Titan chain is the use of seamless bushes that incorporate lube grooves. These bushes, which are precision-made and perfectly cylindrical, ensure the smoothest possible operation to help minimise wear. Added to this, the specially designed lube grooves ensure oil is retained at the point of contact, where the chain needs it most. This limits the wear between pin and bush, significantly

improving the wear life.

Tsubaki Titan pins have a special surface coating that provides an extra hard, yet low-friction surface, further extending service life.

For this advanced series, the Tsubaki development team has specified corrosion-resistant, nickel-plated outer link plates, which are used in combination with black oxide inner link plates, to provide an additional layer of protection against corrosion.

Tsubaki has also incorporated its reliable ring coined technology, which overcomes the problem of typical standard slip-fit connecting links, that are usually much weaker than other links. The process of ring-coining the connecting links ensures that the chain can be specified up to its full load capacity.

All Tsubaki chain products are manufactured with special materials, coatings and lubrications and undergo an immaculate production process to ensure dimen-

sional accuracy, constant geometry, high surface quality and long service life.

BMG has a dedicated facility in Johannesburg, where special attachment chains are assembled to exact requirements and delivered in less than one week. Customers are able to specify a wide range of standard Tsubaki attachments on any suitable American (ANSI) or British (BS) chain product, of up to 50 m in length. BMG's assembly service means customers don't need to invest in expensive stock-holdings of specialised attachment chains for a particular machine.

Induction hardened Fenner sprockets for improved wear life

As an advancement to BMG's power transmission range, the company has recently improved the quality of the complete range of Fenner sprockets. The teeth of every Fenner sprocket are induction hardened during manufacture, which results in greater durability and extended service chain life.

The complete range of Tsubaki and Fenner power transmission components is available from BMG's national branch network, which offers a technical advisory and 24-hour back-up service.

For more information: www.bmgworld.net

Eskom issues tender for biogas consultant

Though there has been bad news around loadshedding starting again last month, a tender launched by Eskom on Friday 31 January might have slipped under the radar but in fact it is a massive positive step in the right direction.



The mothballed Komati power station

THOUGH there has been bad news around loadshedding starting again last month, a tender launched by Eskom on Friday 31 January might have slipped under the radar but in fact it is a massive positive step in the right direction.

Last month, the power utility issued a tender for the appointment of a biogas consultant to assist it with a potential biogas project in Mpumalanga.

Biogas is a green energy gas generated by processing organic waste through an Anaerobic Digester (AD plant). It is used worldwide in the generation of electricity, specifically in Europe where it

is spearheaded by Germany who produces up to 10% of their national grid needs through this technology.

The power utility said in its tender documents that the appointment of a consultant was to support Eskom's JET Office in developing and executing Biogas Plants in the Mpumalanga region.

In a statement regarding the tender announcement, the Southern African Biogas Industry Association (SABIA) said the project seemed to be around the mothballed Komati power station.

SABIA said such a project would be a good way to continue to employ people, who were

working at Eskom's aging fleet of coal powered power stations.

"The power station itself was the centre of controversy when Eskom mothballed it at the end of its life cycle. Eskom has since been working hard to offset the job losses and also to use the assets which are now stranded at the site. This is a very important solution for Eskom as a number of other stations around the same age are also approaching their end-of-life cycles."

Finding a use for the Komati power station could have far reaching implications for the environment in the surrounding area.

"The start of the project would be a massive effort in terms of waste identification and quantification. It makes more sense to build large scale plants. Therefore, city centres such as eMalaheni, Bethal and others close to the plant with large concentrations of organic waste would be of interest for this type of project. This would be a huge assistance to these municipalities as they have a massive challenge in managing this waste stream."

SABIA said though the issuing of the biogas consulting tender was only the beginning, it was a very positive move.

"This is Eskom's first step in this direction and has many positive potentials for South Africa, not just improving the security of our power supply, but also large benefits in terms of jobs. It would further assist with agricultural security as the by-product of the process is a high-quality organic fertiliser."

It added: "We look forward to seeing how the project goes, and SABIA salutes Eskom for this bold and positive step into the future."

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Africa Energy Indaba 2025: The platform to end load shedding and protect businesses from its impact



LOAD shedding remains one of the biggest challenges affecting African economies, businesses, and livelihoods.

As energy disruptions continue to hinder growth and productivity, the Africa Energy Indaba 2025, taking place from 4 – 6 March in Cape Town, South Africa, will serve as a critical platform for stakeholders to explore sustainable energy solutions to eliminate loadshedding and mitigate its impact on businesses.

South Africa has once again reintroduced load shedding, highlighting the ongoing instability of the country's power grid.

With businesses and households facing renewed disruptions, the urgent need for long-term, sustainable energy solutions has never been clearer.

The return of rolling blackouts serves as

a stark reminder that Africa must accelerate investment in energy infrastructure, diversification, and innovative power solutions to ensure energy security.

Across Africa, loadshedding remains a crippling challenge, severely impacting economies, industries, and daily life. Countries like Zimbabwe and Zambia continue to experience prolonged power outages due to their heavy reliance on the Kariba Dam, where fluctuating water levels have drastically reduced hydroelectric generation.

In Zimbabwe, businesses and households endure power cuts lasting up to 18 hours a day, stifling productivity and economic growth.

Zambia faces similar struggles, with industries, including mining and manufacturing, grappling with power

shortages that hinder operations and investment.

Without urgent action to diversify energy sources and strengthen grid reliability, millions across Africa will remain vulnerable to persistent electricity crises, slowing down development and regional integration.

The Africa Energy Indaba will bring together government leaders, industry experts, investors, and innovators to address energy security, unlock investment opportunities, and showcase cutting-edge technologies designed to stabilise Africa's power sector.

Why attend Africa Energy Indaba 2025?

End load shedding for good: Gain insights into the latest energy policies, private sector initiatives, and large-scale infrastruc-

ture projects aimed at securing a reliable power supply.

Protect your business from power disruptions: Discover renewable energy, battery storage, microgrids, and distributed generation solutions that can ensure business continuity and reduce dependency on unreliable grids.

Investment & policy discussions: Engage with key decision-makers, financiers, and industry leaders to explore funding models, public-private partnerships, and regulatory frameworks driving Africa's energy transformation.

Grid modernisation & private sector involvement: Learn how independent power producers (IPPs) and new-generation technologies are shaping the future of Africa's energy sector.

Future-proofing energy security: Access expert-led discussions on energy efficiency, backup power strategies, and alternative energy sources that businesses can leverage to shield themselves from the impact of power shortages.

With Africa's energy sector undergoing significant transformation, Africa Energy Indaba 2025 is the must-attend event for those looking to drive real solutions for energy security, business resilience, and economic growth.

Monitor Pumps & Systems improves filtration with Lackeby Roto-Sieve®



The Lackeby Roto-Sieve® RSS24 drum screen separates impurities from oil. Photo courtesy of TASK Environmental Engineering.

LACKEBY Roto-Sieve® drum screen is an internally fed, self-cleaning, inclined drum screen that can be used in many industrial and wastewater treatment applications where high-efficient particle separation is needed. Lackeby Products AB is represented in Southern Africa by Monitor Pumps & Systems.

A Swedish company specialising in waste disposal was in search of a solution to separate plastics and metal particles from the oil collected from oil separators, before pumping it to the oil tank for storage prior to further transportation and recycling.

Lackeby's Roto-Sieve® RSS24 septic unit was deployed to filter the floating oil. The drum screen, equipped with a 3.0mm hole perforated drum, proved highly effective in screening the impurities from the oil.

When high performance, simplicity and low costs are the priorities

Lackeby Roto-Sieve® drum screen, with its self-cleaning design, performs excellently in many different applications and ensures

low maintenance costs. Industrial applications include food and beverage processing, plastic and metal recycling, fibreglass, and biogas sludge screening.

In the water and wastewater industries, applications include primary, fine, septic and sludge screening as well as sludge thickening, reject water screening and MBR (membrane bioreactor) protection.

The Lackeby Roto-Sieve® drum screen achieves a high degree of separation due to perforated drum and pressureless separation. There is no need for upstream screening before the drum screen and there are no sealed openings or internal moving parts that can result in material passing through. The entire flow must pass through perforated holes to reach the downstream process. These features result in high capacity and a high capture rate with a small footprint.

Monitor Pumps & Systems provides cost-effective and low-maintenance solutions

The lifetime of a drum screen is normally more than 20 years and the self-cleaning

design ensures a low degree of maintenance. Few moving wear parts are accessible without cranes or any other lifting devices. The drum screen is also low on energy consumption and the low spray-water consumption assures substantial savings in water costs.

The Lackeby Roto-Sieve® drum screen has a low number of moving parts. The advanced carbon fibre polychain drive system eliminates the need for trunnion wheels. This significantly lowers required maintenance and improves reliability. No chains of any kind results in less maintenance issues and there is no need for automatic oilers. Lightweight fibreglass covers ensure easy access for full visual inspection.

With more than 5500 installations in various types of industries and wastewater treatment plants worldwide, where separation of solids from the process water is essential, the Lackeby Roto-Sieve® Drum screen has proven to be versatile and highly efficient.

For more information contact wim@monitorpumps.co.za, www.monitorpumps.co.za

Cape Town ready to help president reform policing and rail

CAPE Town Mayor Geordin Hill-Lewis says the City is ready to work with President Cyril Ramaphosa to urgently improve policing, passenger rail and more following a State of the Nation Address (SONA) full of promises for major reforms.

"We welcome the president's commit-

ment to crime-fighting partnerships between SAPS and metro's. A Memorandum of Agreement is already in place to guide policing cooperation in Cape Town, and we are already sharing valuable crime-fighting data generated by the City's safety technology investments of over

R800-million."

On passenger rail, Cape Town is set to have complete business plans in place by mid-2025 to take over the management of passenger rail services following the metro's completion of a Rail Feasibility Study last year.

"We are encouraged by the President's com-

mitment to better passenger rail infrastructure and more trains in the coming years. In Cape Town, we have a vision to massively scale up passenger numbers, new train sets, new routes, and to upgrade stations and surrounding areas with affordable housing over the next two decades."



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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.



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Explore the future of packaging at Propak Africa

JUST weeks from now, South Africa's premier trade showcase, Propak Africa, will open its doors, revealing groundbreaking innovations across packaging, printing, plastics, food processing and labelling. Taking place at the Johannesburg Expo Centre, Nasrec, from 11-14 March 2025, this triennial event has become a trusted hub for industry professionals striving to stay ahead in an ever-changing market.

The South African packaging industry is influenced by a range of factors, including competition, urbanisation, evolving consumer preferences, technological advancements, and sustainability concerns. Rising energy and raw material costs have further highlighted the need for energy-efficient, automated production lines for improving quality control, reducing waste, and minimising human error.

Plastic packaging remains central, driven by demand in the food, beverage, and phar-

maceutical markets for its durability and cost-effectiveness. However, increasing interest in recyclable and sustainable materials is pushing local suppliers to innovate, balancing industry needs with environmental priorities.

Those attending Propak Africa can look forward to an unparalleled opportunity to explore many of these new technologies and materials. From sustainable packaging and recyclability to cutting-edge smart labelling, printing, and advanced processing, attendees will find resources to elevate their operations. With South Africa's top innovators, suppliers, and thought leaders present, the event is the perfect platform for networking, collaboration, and staying ahead of the latest industry trends.

"Propak Africa, together with co-located shows Pro-Plas Expo, The GAPP Print Expo, FoodPro Expo, and Pro-Label Expo, will be more than double the size of the 2022 event. It will feature over 500

exhibitors and display thousands of new products, technologies and services," says Mark Anderson, portfolio director at Specialised Exhibitions, a division of Montgomery Group and organisers of the show.

"Automation and digitisation will take centre stage at Propak Africa, spanning packaging, plastics, printing, and processing. Exhibitors will showcase advanced machinery and materials designed to boost efficiency, sustainability, and cost-effectiveness in production."

Over the four day event, Propak Africa will also provide an opportunity for attendees to enhance their industry knowledge by attending complimentary seminars, where industry specialists will share their insights and expertise. Reflecting the show's themed days, the diverse programme will include topics such as the latest industry innovations and technologies, recyclability and sustainability, and

the recognition of local creativity and excellence, amongst others.

Complementing the seminars, the Institute of Packaging South Africa (IPSA) will host three focused half-day conferences, adding depth and expertise to Propak Africa's knowledge-sharing platform.

Visitors can opt-in to the OneMatch Business Networking Tool when registering to attend, which enables the scheduling of one-on-one meetings with suppliers they want to connect with at the show. Additionally, the new WhatsApp Concierge Service at Propak Africa provides on-demand event information and live chat functionality for quick assistance, ensuring a smoother and more efficient visitor experience.

Propak Africa 2025 is supported by The Institute of Packaging SA, Packaging SA, Plastics SA, and Printing SA.

For more information and to register to attend, visit www.propakafrika.co.za.

PPC to build a new R3-billion integrated cement plant in the Western Cape

THE leading Southern African supplier of cement and related products, PPC, has signed a memorandum of agreement with Sinoma Overseas Development Company for the construction of a new R3-billion state-of-the-art integrated cement plant in the Western Cape.

PPC and Sinoma, the leading cement equipment and engineering company in the world, entered into a strategic co-operation agreement in July 2024 to collaborate with each other to identify new projects and opportunities to improve efficiencies at PPC's operations.

The 1,5 million tons of cement per annum plant, which will replace and increase existing capacity, is planned to be constructed at one of

PPC's current sites.

The new plant will be equipped with the latest technology, including a fully dedicated solar generation system, and will enable PPC to supply the lowest carbon cement in the country.

Overall, the technology will result in substantial improvements in energy efficiency, reduced coal consumption and lower emissions per ton of cement produced.

PPC CEO, Matias Cardarelli, said, "South Africa's changing cement market dynamic urgently requires modern and cost-efficient assets, and environmentally conscious producers.

At the heart of our "Awaken the Giant" turnaround strategy is the active pursuit of strategic opportunities and projects to ensure

that we are successful in a more competitive future market context. With this new and most advanced energy and environmentally efficient plant in the country, we will be able to supply our customers with lower carbon cement at a more competitive cost"

While the feasibility studies for the plant have reached an advanced stage, over the next three months the parties will finalise the scope and final assessment of the new plant, as well as the associated turn-key engineer, procure and construct ("EPC") agreements. Subject to PPC's board approval, it is anticipated that the construction of the new plant will start in the second quarter of 2025 and will be commissioned by the end of calendar year 2026.



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SEW-EURODRIVE champions energy efficiency across sectors

SOUTH Africa's adoption of Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) mandates that all newly imported electric motors meet IE3 premium efficiency levels. SEW-EURODRIVE, however, has long been ahead of this curve, having standardised on IE3 motors more than eight years ago. The company's commitment to sustainability ensured that its customers transitioned to the advanced technology without bearing additional costs.

Willem Strydom, business development electronics manager at SEW-EURODRIVE South Africa, highlights that several industry sectors have been proactive in shifting towards energy efficiency. Rising electricity prices have driven industry to adopt IE3 motors, with SEW-EURODRIVE estimating that these motors consume 7% to 8% less energy compared to IE1 models. Strydom says that when paired with Variable Speed Drives (VSDs), energy savings can reach up to 15%.

"Energy efficiency not only reduces operational costs but also aligns with companies' decarbonisation goals," says Strydom. "As most electricity in South Africa still comes from coal, reducing consumption directly lowers carbon footprints."

SEW-EURODRIVE supports its customers by conducting on-site energy assessments and product population surveys at no cost. "These evaluations identify inefficiencies, helping companies to plan their transition to IE3 motors strategically and cost-effectively," he says.

"The data collected also provides early warnings about potential equipment failures, reducing downtime risks."

To further ease the shift, SEW-EURODRIVE advises customers to prioritise upgrades in motor classes with lower stock levels and balance replacements between larger and smaller motors for maximum impact. VSDs are often recommended to manage peak energy demands, reducing penalties and extending motor lifespans.

Looking ahead, Strydom believes MEPS will accelerate the adoption of even higher efficiency

standards, paving the way for IE4 and IE5 motors. SEW-EURODRIVE is already leading this innovation with its IE5 synchronous motors, which feature integrated permanent magnet technology and deliver up

to 50% lower energy losses compared to IE3 models.

"SEW-EURODRIVE's commitment to advancing energy efficiency is backed by our 300-strong global research and development team," he says.

"We are already pioneering IE6 technology, setting new benchmarks in sustainability and performance."

With its forward-thinking approach and robust customer support, SEW-EURODRIVE

continues to drive energy efficiency advancements in South Africa, helping industries meet sustainability and cost-saving goals.

For more, visit: www.sew-eurodrive.co.za



Harsh applications such as continuous conveyor system benefit from the energy savings achieved with SEW IE3 motors.



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WearCheck Water first with official AdBlue®/ DEF analysis accreditation



WearCheck Water's Moses Lelaka (technical manager) (right) and Lerato Hotane (quality manager) proudly display the company's ISO17025 AdBlue®/ DEF-analysis-accreditation certificate from SANAS. WearCheck Water is currently the only company Africa to achieve this accreditation.

WEARCHECK WATER - one of the condition monitoring specialist company's divisions - recently became the first laboratory in Africa to be officially ISO17025 accredited to test AdBlue®/ DEF (diesel exhaust fluid) by the South African National Accreditation Sys-

tem (SANAS).

"AdBlue®/ DEF solutions are made up to ISO 22241 standards to ensure that the mixtures are created correctly and do not harm engines..."

tem (SANAS).

This latest achievement is added to WearCheck Water's other accreditations - the company already has ISO17025:2017 accreditation for chemical and microbiological water analysis.

WearCheck Water's AdBlue®/ DEF-analysis accreditation means that the company can test AdBlue®/ DEF solutions to make sure that AdBlue® manufacturers meet the required ISO 22241 standards. This analysis service will assist AdBlue®/ DEF manufacturers and users, OEMs, fuel depots, and large-scale truckers/ fleet managers.

SANAS is the only national body in South Africa that is responsible for carrying out accreditation of various entities, including laboratory testing, the relevant section which regulates WearCheck's

additive and is not added to the fuel tank of a vehicle. AdBlue® is a colourless, non-toxic liquid that converts pollutants into gases which do not harm the environment.

AdBlue® is used in vehicles with Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) technology. It is a 32,5% solution of high-purity, synthetically manufactured urea in de-mineralised water, and is safe to use.

"Vehicles with SCR technology have a separate tank filled with AdBlue®/DEF, which is injected into the exhaust pipe, in front of the SCR catalyst, downstream of the engine. Heated in the exhaust, it decomposes into ammonia and CO₂. When the NOx from the engine exhaust reacts inside the catalyst with the ammonia, the harmful NOx molecules in the

exhaust are converted to harmless nitrogen and water, which are released from the exhaust pipe as steam.

"AdBlue®/ DEF solutions are made up to ISO 22241 standards to ensure that the mixtures are created correctly and do not harm engines," she said.

Moses Lelaka, technical manager for WearCheck Water, was instrumental in setting up and implementing the testing process, along with the company's quality manager, Lorato Hotane.

Lelaka explains, "We offer an analysis service that includes testing titrimetric (alkalinity), gravimetric (insoluble matter), colorimetric (biuret and aldehydes), as well as the ionisation (metals). After investing in a refractometer for our laboratory, we are already conducting the tests in our Johannesburg laboratory, and will be extending the service to our Cape Town laboratory soon."

Lelaka offered these tips for taking an AdBlue® sample.

"Sample containers should be made of materials compatible with urea solutions, typically high-density polyethylene (HDPE) or stainless steel, and must be sealed properly to avoid contamination."

"The sampling container must not have any previous chemical residues, and it should be rinsed with distilled or deionised water before use. The sample must be representative of the entire batch, and avoid areas with potential sediment or contamination. Open the valve, allowing the initial few litres to flow out, discarding it to remove any residual contamination from the sampling point. Fill the container, seal and label it, and store it in a cool, dry place until it is tested."

"The sample will be tested for compliance with ISO 22241 standards, checking for properties like urea concentration, alkalinity, biuret content, and other contaminants."

For more information, visit www.wearcheck.co.za, call WearCheck Water on (021) 001 2100 or email mosesl@setpoint.co.za or marketing@wearcheck.co.za

SARB greenlights Sava to launch a digital banking platform enabling SMES to thrive in the digital age



Back left: Robin van Reenen - Director Business Development, Mastercard Back right: Federico von Bary Landesmann - Co-founder, Sava Front left: Gabriel Swanepoel - Country Manager Southern Africa, Mastercard Front right: Kola Olajide - CEO, Sava

By Larry Claasen

SAVA Africa hopes its recently launched digital banking platform will enable businesses in South Africa and across the continent to scale up their operation and enter global markets.

Though Sava is not a bank, it says its financial operating system, which offers cards and mobile wallets, enhances the financial operations of a business.

A practical example would be when an SME's sales team or executives travel for work - Sava enables businesses to set smart spending guardrails that work in real-time for their cards and mobile wallets.

"Its platform leverages artificial intelligence (AI) functionality to provide real-time analytics, powering instant analysis that keeps businesses on top of their spending."

Companies can limit ride-sharing expenses to Uber at R500 per trip, and restrict hotel bookings at R3 500 per night in Johannesburg or Cape Town. and establish daily meal allowances at R750. All spending rules are customisable.

For instance, if a VP of sales travels from Johannesburg to Cape Town, their Sava card automatically adjusts to the company's preset rules for those cit-

ies while maintaining complete spend visibility.

This eliminates expense report surprises and out-of-policy spending, whilst also integrating the spend into the company's accounting system. Sava automatically generates reports and seamlessly syncs with accounting packages like Sage and Xero.

Its platform leverages artificial intelligence (AI) functionality to provide real-time analytics, powering instant analysis that keeps businesses on top of their spending.

While there are similar fintech products in the market, Sava says it differs from them in that it is the first all-in-one solution combining deposit-taking func-

"Sava recently partnered with Mastercard to leverage Sava's Payment Transaction System offering businesses in South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya and Egypt state-of-the-art expense management tools."

Kolawole Olajide and Federico von Bary Landesmann in 2022, Sava has secured client contracts to manage over R2,2-billion in 2025.

Sava recently partnered with Mastercard to leverage Sava's Payment Transaction System offering businesses in South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya and Egypt state-of-the-art expense management tools.

These include digital accounts, rule-based card issuing available in both physical and virtual cards, invoicing management, custom workflows with built-in AI functionality, and seamless accounting integrations.

SMEs account for 60% of all jobs in Africa and contribute up to half of the GDP in some countries, yet they often operate in cash-based economies and face a staggering \$330-billion financing gap, according to the World Bank.

Mastercard says this collaboration underscores its commitment to financial inclusion, aligning with its global pledge to integrate 50-million SMEs into the digital economy by 2025.

"At Mastercard, we are dedicated to har-

nessing the power of partnerships and deploying transformative technology to build a sustainable future where everyone can thrive. Our new collaboration with Sava represents an important step in our efforts to support small businesses that are key drivers of economic growth. By deploying the right, efficient technology, we continue to boost financial inclusion in Africa and enable SMMEs to reap the full benefits of the digital economy," said Dimitrios Dosis, President, EEMEA, Mastercard.

Sava CEO and founder Olajide said this partnership was a big stamp of approval for the group.

"Our collaboration with Mastercard reflects our credibility, epitomises the essence of working together to transform pioneering ideas into reality, and underscores our shared commitment to developing innovative solutions tailored to the needs of African markets. We are excited to expand the utilisation of this distinctive proposition that empowers SMMEs to manage their financial operations with greater control."

Founded by

MetPac-SA and Phoenix for the planet join forces to boost community recycling efforts



METPAC-SA - the Producer Responsibility Organisation (PRO) for South Africa's metal packaging industry - has extended its partnership with Phoenix for the Planet, a community-driven recycling initiative founded in 2021.

This collaboration builds on the success of the Trash4Treats project, an initiative spearheaded by [dot] Good, South Africa's leading cause-marketing agency, that encourages impoverished schools to collect and recycle metal packaging.

Phoenix for the Planet's vision is to contribute to saving our planet by minimising environmental impact and avoiding unnecessary resource wastage through efficient waste management, recycling, processing, and repurposing.

They were appointed as the dedicated recycling partner for the Phoenix area in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), and the partnership has since expanded to further enhance community-driven recycling efforts.

"This collaboration aims to support Phoenix for the Planet in its mission to collect recyclable materials from households, schools, and industries while fostering environmental awareness and reducing landfill waste," explains Kishan Singh, CEO of MetPac-SA.

Driving a zero-waste community

Established with the vision of creating a zero-waste community, Phoenix for the Planet has been instrumental in promoting responsible recycling habits and reducing the carbon footprint of local residents. The initiative has mobilised schools and community members to actively participate in environmental conservation efforts.

In 2022, they collaborated with 24 schools, 1000 households, 10 industries, and the Durban University of Technology university (DUT). During this year, 51 tons of recyclable waste were collected thanks to the placement of three bins for proper waste segregation, along with 1-ton bags for collecting compressed waste.

Collecting recyclables from the schools weekly or monthly (depending on the volume) allowed them to grow the collection to 62 tons in 2023 and an impressive 93 tons in 2024.

With the support of the Trash4Treats initiative driven by [dot] Good, learners at participating schools are further incentivised to participate in collection and recycling efforts through being awarded treats such as canned food and other essentials when they collect 25 or more metal cans. Schools also receive financial incentives

based on their recycling contributions, creating a win-win scenario for both environmental sustainability and community support.

Expanding Reach and Impact

The partnership with MetPac-SA and [dot] Good marks a significant milestone for Phoenix for the Planet. Founding member Clive Govender expressed enthusiasm for the collaboration, highlighting its potential to scale the initiative's impact.

"We are working towards getting 64 schools on board in the area. The purpose of this project is to create awareness among the public. So far, roughly 5% of all the recyclables we collect from the neighbourhoods is metal packaging. We aim to grow our reach in the Phoenix area and encourage more schools to join the project. By raising awareness among educators, students, and their families, we can highlight the impact of poor waste management and the benefits of recycling. MetPac-SA's funding will provide us with much-needed resources to strengthen our operations and community engagement activities," Govender says.

For more information visit www.metpacsa.org.za or <https://phoenixftp.co.za/>

Western Cape exporters can get up to R200 000 in funding – Here's how to apply



BUSINESSES based in the Western Cape looking to become exporters can get up to R200 000 in support through the Export Competitiveness Enhancement Programme (ECEP).

The programme, which is run through the Western Cape's Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDAT) has a total of R4-million available to help local businesses export for the 2024/25 financial year.

The ECEP is meant to assist businesses that are exporting but facing technical challenges to access international markets.

What you can and can't use it for

The programme is designed to provide support to exporters as it relates to market access, in the following categories:

- Product reformulation and refinement
- International packaging, labelling and printing
- International product certification and market access standards
- Product registration with relevant

international bodies in the markets

- International nutritional analysis and
- Special handling services and/or permits required to export products safely and efficiently.

The fund, however, does exclude the following:

- Operational and working capital
- Contributing to production costs or the purchase of stock
- Building any kind of infrastructure
- Projects that are already been implemented will not be considered
- Enterprises not based in the Western Cape.

The fund is geared towards businesses that are existing exporters or potential exporters, in the following sub-sectors but not limited to:

- Food
- Beverages
- Cosmetics (make-up products)
- Personal care products (oral-, skin-, and body care)
- Jewellery

- Transport equipment
- Computer, electronic and optical products
- Rubber and plastic products
- Machinery and equipment
- Wearing apparel
- Craft and furniture
- E-commerce platform listing(s)

Though there is a R200 000 cap on specific businesses, there is no such cap on organisations or intermediaries applying on behalf of companies.

Businesses which get other types of funding from the Western Cape Government will not be disqualified from getting funding from the ECEP.

Apply as soon as you can

The DEDAT points out the approval of the application is subject to budget availability and that applicants should not hesitate when it comes to applying.

"It is in the best interest of the applicant to submit funding applications as soon as possible. The allocation of funds will be at the discretion of the

department and will be based on the evaluation process and the availability of budget," it says.

The ECEP commenced in 2023 and received 104 applications from individual businesses and two sector development organisations. Transfer agreements were finalised with 11 beneficiaries to kick start their export initiatives.

These agreements focused on accessing the international markets of the US and EU with products such as fibre glass boats, wine, organic teas, alternative coffees, air diffusers and leather goods.

"The beneficiaries were mainly in the following sectors: machinery and equipment, leather goods and fashion accessories/home décor, processed food & beverages, boat building and computer, electronic and optical products," according to the DEDAT said in its 2023/24 annual report.

Those looking to apply can access the ECEP Intermediary Application on this link: <https://forms.office.com/r/5tR-4rFj5VC>

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Cooling solutions for data centres should be efficiency, reliability, and innovation - ebmpapst

DATA centres are the backbone of global communication and commerce.

Ensuring that these facilities operate seamlessly requires precise climate control, as excessive heat and humidity can damage sensitive IT

equipment. ebmpapst, specialises in providing cutting-edge fan solutions designed to optimise cooling systems for data centres while meeting the increasing demands for energy efficiency and sustainability.

Custom cooling solutions for every data centre

Data centres vary significantly in size and construction, requiring tailored cooling strategies to maintain optimal indoor climates. Common cooling applications

include in-row cooling for server racks, chillers, precision air-conditioning units, and air handling units (AHUs). ebmpapst offers a range of advanced EC (Electronically Commutated) axial and centrifugal fans engineered to meet the diverse cooling needs of

modern data centres.

Axial fans: quiet, efficient, and reliable

Data centres are increasingly located near residential and industrial areas, meaning noise control is critical. ebmpapst's AxiBlade and

AxiEco axial fans are designed to deliver maximum cooling performance while adhering to strict noise regulations.

- AxiBlade fans provide a high-power density with low noise emissions, making them ideal for locations requiring quiet

operation.

- AxiEco fans excel in applications requiring higher pressure increases, such as noise-sensitive environments with additional acoustic dampening or unique heat exchanger designs.

Centrifugal fans: designed for precision and savings

ebmpapst's RadiPac centrifugal fans are a preferred choice for computer room air handlers (CRAH) and air handling units (AHUs). They are designed with optimised outflow characteristics, reducing air deflection and outlet losses.

Enhanced reliability with resonance detection

One of the challenges in data centre cooling systems is the risk of fan failure caused by resonance at certain speed ranges.

To address this, the fans feature automatic resonance detection, which identifies critical speed ranges and adjusts operations to avoid failures.

Active power factor correction for energy efficiency

Efficient energy use is crucial for data centres, and ebmpapst fans excel in this area with Active Power Factor Correction (PFC). This feature minimises current harmonics, reducing strain on power supplies and eliminating the need for external filters or oversized components.

Prepared for sustainable refrigerants

As the use of natural refrigerants like propane gains momentum in South Africa and globally, its fans are equipped to handle these changes. Designed in compliance with safety standards (EN 60335-2-40), ebmpapst fans are tested to prevent ignition risks, ensuring safety when used with flammable refrigerants.

Pioneering green cooling for South Africa

As South Africa's data centre market continues to grow, ebmpapst remains committed to delivering innovative, energy-efficient cooling solutions tailored to local needs. Whether for small-scale facilities or large-scale campuses, its fans combine advanced technology, reliability, and sustainability to ensure uninterrupted operations in critical applications.

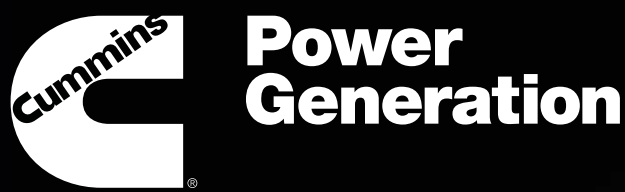
For more information visit: <https://www.ebmpapst.com/za/en/industries/data-centers.html>



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Contributor**



South Africa's data centres have adapted well to the 'Energy Crisis' – Cummins

Continued from P1

Harnessing Cummins generators to secure data centre uptime during the energy crisis

"Data centre power backup systems are designed to meet the load demand of the data centre facility. Therefore, load shedding did not have an impact on diesel-generated power capacity," says Warrick Gibbens, power generation leader at Cummins Southern Africa.

Gibbens explains that while it is standard practice for data centres globally to have backup power, those operating in South Africa have had to adapt specifically to the energy crisis.

"Data centres across the world already mandate the need for emergency backup supply to their systems to ensure the absolute highest level of site operation uptime and power availability. However, due to the history and level of load shedding in South Africa, every data centre customer – from small co-location facilities to the largest hyperscale data centre operators – has increased their expectations of how long they may need generator power, specifically on a year-to-year, running-hour basis."

Despite the impact

of load shedding, there are few signs that the increased investment in data centres will slow down anytime soon.

Growing quickly

According to the 2023 Africa Interconnection Report, hyperscale data centre providers have committed to spending up to \$6-billion (approximately R112-billion) in Africa over the next two to five years. South Africa is set to receive the largest share of this investment, as it accounts for 90% of the African data centre market.

The scale of this investment, and its importance to businesses, means companies setting up these data centres need partners with experience and expertise in providing bespoke solutions tailored to their needs, particularly when it comes to backup power.

Tougher requirements

This means the requirements for backup power systems in data centres are more stringent than in other industries.

"Fundamentally, data centres provide a critical service to their clients, and their success is measured through their commitment to delivering reliable and available

power," says Gibbens.

"Therefore, on-site power generation sources, such as diesel gensets, are considered the most reliable option. This is partly because data centre facility managers do not have full control over the utility network but do have full control over diesel gensets once they are installed on-site."

A long history

Cummins is one of the first engine manufacturers to be accredited by the Uptime Institute for Data Center Power Ratings and has a track record spanning more than 100 years. The company also offers a premium brand with exceptional engine transient performance, resulting in a fast response time to customer load when utility power is lost.

Strong reliability, backed by both local and global engineering support, coupled with tailored aftermarket solutions, all contribute to Cummins' reputation as a preferred partner in the industry.

Innovative Backup Solutions: How generators keep South Africa's data centres operational

While having a genset is key to ensuring backup

power, it is not the only consideration. The complexity of these systems requires digital master control systems (DMCs), which act as the system's brain.

A DMC improves the reliability of the system and ensures the most economical operation. Gibbens explains that Cummins' generators feature highly capable controllers, which can manage the generator set as well as some system-level controls when multiple generators are involved.

However, with increasingly complex system topologies and redundancy requirements – especially in critical industries like data centres – a dedicated system-level controller may be necessary to ensure fully efficient and effective management of the system as a whole.

"This usually consists of multiple breakers, multiple diesel generators, and other hybrid power sources on-site. Some of our DMCs are programmed specifically for the site they will control, resulting in a bespoke solution optimised through modelling and redundancy designs. All of this is critical for the data centre industry," says Gibbens.

Amazon is the largest corporate purchaser of renewable energy globally for the fifth year in a row



WITH more than 600 projects worldwide, Amazon is also supporting solar and wind initiatives in regions with polluted grids to help curb emissions.

Building new renewable energy projects—including solar and wind—is one of the most effective ways to slow the speed of climate change. As part of Amazon's Climate Pledge commitment to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2040, we're supporting these efforts on a global scale.

tainable and reliable for everyone.

Amazon is also focused on placing projects on grids that rely heavily on carbon-intensive energy sources, where a solar or wind farm can have an even greater impact on avoiding carbon emissions and help phase out less sustainable energy options.

To date, Amazon has invested in more than 40 utility-scale solar and wind projects across countries with a mix of fossil fuel use and high emissions,

"Amazon isn't just the top corporate purchaser of solar and wind, we're also prioritising projects in the locations where they can have the biggest impact on curbing emissions and improving the local environment," said Amazon chief sustainability Officer Kara Hurst.

"When it comes to addressing climate change, speed and location matter. From collaborating on new energy policies, to accelerating renewables in underserved regions, Amazon is working to help decarbonise grids around the world as quickly as possible."

Building wind and solar projects on polluted grids is known as carbon matching, and it has the potential to significantly amplify the environmental benefits of a renewable energy project. According to WattTime, an environmental tech nonprofit, the world could avoid five gigatons of carbon dioxide by optimising where wind and solar projects are located. Amazon is focused on putting that practice into action.

For example, in India, where the grid is primarily powered by fossil fuels, Amazon has invested in nine utility-scale solar and wind farms. By locating these projects in India, they have the potential to avoid 55 times more carbon emissions annually than if the projects were located in Sweden, one of the world's most decarbonised power grids, according to publicly available sources and Amazon calculations.

Cassava Technologies secures \$310-million from investors including Google

CASSAVA Technologies (Cassava), a global technology leader of African heritage announced three significant milestones: a substantial equity injection, the successful completion of its South African rand debt refinancing, and the finalisation of its legal reorganisation.

These strategic initiatives position Cassava for robust growth underpinned by a strong balance sheet.

Cassava has closed an equity investment round of \$90-million with participation from the US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC), Finnish Fund for Industrial Cooperation (Finnfund), and Google LLC.

This funding is a key part of Cassava's plan to strengthen its balance sheet, drive sustainable profitable

growth, and cement its position as a global technology company of African heritage.

The conclusion of this equity round coincides with the successful reorganisation of Cassava's business to create an integrated digital solutions platform.

This platform provides Broadband Connectivity, Co-location (data centres), Cloud, Cybersecurity, Compute (AI), and Payment services across more than 30 markets in Africa, the Middle East, India, and Latin America.

Additionally, Liquid Intelligent Technologies, a business of Cassava Technologies, has successfully signed new facilities to refinance its South African Rand term loan on a multi-tenor basis. The new facilities, equivalent to \$220-million in South African rands, are be-

ing provided by Standard Bank of South Africa, Rand Merchant Bank, Nedbank of South Africa, and International Finance Corporation (IFC).

"We are excited to announce these significant achievements, which collectively strengthen our financial position and are a powerful testament to the vision of our founder and Group chairman, Strive Masiyiwa, and the dedication and commitment of our teams across the Group," said Hardy Pemhiwa, president and group CEO of Cassava.

"The closing of this equity round, completion of our rand debt refinancing, and reorganisation represent more than just capital – it's a pivotal milestone that we expect to unlock immense value and catalyse the further expansion of our digital infrastructure

and services to bridge the digital divide on the continent".

With the addition of DFC, Google LLC, and Finfund, Cassava's impressive roster of shareholders includes Econet Group, British International Investment (BII), Public Investment Corporation (PIC), Royal Bafokeng Holdings (RBH), Africa-Export Import Bank (Afreximbank/FEDA), and Gateway Capital.

Cassava Technologies has built a strong portfolio of business units comprising Liquid Intelligent Technologies, Africa Data Centres, Liquid C2, Cassava.ai, and Sasai Fintech, all of which are leaders in their respective sectors. This integrated platform of business units enables the Group to fulfil its vision of a digitally connected future that leaves no African behind.

"In South Africa, its 10-megawatt solar plant in the Northern Cape Province. The plant is expected to generate up to 28 000 MWh of renewable energy per year, which equals the annual electricity consumption of over 8 000 average South African homes."

For the fifth year in a row, It was the largest corporate purchaser of renewable energy globally, according to Bloomberg NEF, and has supported more than 600 wind and solar projects to date.

In many cases, these projects wouldn't be built without Amazon's support, and together they will be capable of powering the equivalent of 8.3-million US homes.

Through these projects, it helps match the electricity consumed by its operations and brings net-new renewable energy to the grid, making it more sus-

including Australia, China, Greece, India, Indonesia, Poland, and South Africa, and states like Louisiana and Mississippi.

In South Africa, its 10-megawatt solar plant in the Northern Cape Province, the largest province in the country. The plant is expected to generate up to 28 000 MWh of renewable energy per year, which equals the annual electricity consumption of over 8 000 average South African homes. Amazon Web Services (AWS) also plans to invest R46-billion in the Cape Town region by 2029.

Second Condra crane for Tongaat Hulett

CONDRA is to manufacture a second overhead crane for Tongaat Hulett's Maidstone sugar mill in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

The order is for a 23-metre-span double-girder electric overhead travelling crane with 25-ton main hoist and 8-ton auxiliary, to work in conjunction with the existing millhouse crane and a 10-ton Condra crane commissioned in the bagasse store in March 2024.

Maidstone is one of four South African sugar mills operated by Tongaat Hulett, a leading agriculture and agri-processing company.

In the bagasse store, the 10-ton crane is already used to move and position conveyors feeding fibrous raw residue (bagasse) into Maidstone's secondary processing system. Left over as waste after harvesting juice from the sugarcane, bagasse is used after processing as a biofuel, and in the manufacture of paper pulp and building materials.

The new 25/8-ton crane will help operate and maintain the mill house.

Condra was able to meet Tongaat Hulett's technical requirements for Maidstone's new crane because of modular products that facilitate manufacture of a customised lifting solution; this instead of having to shoehorn a standard machine – often imported – into the application, an approach frequently followed by rival firms.

Such modular design comes very close to the theoretical ideal: all elements of the crane – hoist, crab, end-carriages, drives and controls – are themselves assembled from a wide array of component parts. Only the crane girders are manufactured from scratch.

For Tongaat Hulett's new mill house crane, Condra precisely tailored its design to match the specification, paying particular attention to combinations of rope, drum and pulley to achieve the necessary hoist reeving arrangements for accurate load positioning over the considerable lifting heights of 12 m on the main hoist, and 12,2 m on the auxiliary.

A striking feature will be the airconditioned control cabin with docking station for the remote control instead of the more usual hard-wired control panel. This will allow the operator to use the same control unit for remote operation from

the floor, from overlooking office, or docked within the cabin as an integral part of the cabin's dashboard.

There will be digital read-outs from hoist loadcells, while an independent pendant control will provide back-up and additional flexibility.

An ultrasonic

anti-collision system will reliably prevent accidental contact with the existing mill house crane that will remain in the bay.

Other features include frequency drives on the long travel, cross travels and hoists, full-length walkways with fibreglass grating on both sides of the crane, IP65 brakes,

IP65 panels, stainless steel fasteners, floodlights, safety lights and siren, full seam welds with rounded edges, lifting lugs and a special paint finish.

Besides the installed 10-ton crane and 25/8-ton crane on order, Condra has previously delivered a monorail hoist and crawl to Ton-

gaat Hulett's Zimbabwe mill.

Delivery of the new 25/8-tonner is scheduled for April 2025, with installation and commissioning to be executed by authorised agent Natal Cranes & Hoists.

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



Typical double-girder overhead crane under manufacture in Condra's Germiston factory.

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SOLA Group achieves significant milestone of producing 1-billion kWh of clean electricity

RENEWABLE energy solutions provider SOLA Group has announced that it achieved its ambitious goal of producing 1-billion kilowatt hours (kWh) of renewable energy generation by 2025 – a month early, having hit the target at the start of December 2024.

This milestone represents a significant contribution to South Africa's renewable energy capacity and the country's transition towards a more sustainable energy mix, says SOLA MD Katherine Persson. "1-billion kWh is enough electricity to meet almost all of the residential demand in Bloemfontein, for an entire year. We produced the overwhelming majority of this in the past few months, showing an exponential increase in the clean electricity we are producing" explains Persson.

Staying true to its mission of uplifting the communities where it works, Persson says that in the past two years, SOLA Group's four major projects have created 1767 jobs for local workers during their construction phase, with a number of individuals transitioning into longer-term employment during the sites' operations phases.


Collectively, she says, the four projects have spent more than R462,5-million on local goods and services in the communities and towns close to the projects, directly boosting economic activity and supporting local enterprises. In addition to this, the projects have, to date, invested R5,3-million in community development initiatives, in partnership with host communities and other key stakeholders.

Persson explains that policy certainty has played a big role in the exponential increase in renewable energy generation since 2021.

"In 2013 SOLA set the target of producing 100-million kWh by 2020. We achieved this goal on 31 December, 2019. Then in 2021, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced an amendment to Schedule 2 of the Electricity Regulation Act, which raised the licensing threshold for embedded generation projects from 1 MW to 100 MW. On 17 January 2023, the government amended Schedule 2 again, removing the licensing threshold entirely.. The government's decision to remove the cap was a key milestone that enabled us to scale up and achieve 10 times the generation we did over the seven years prior, in a far shorter timeframe," explains Persson.


"Policy certainty creates an environment, where, if you just give it time, the private market will create value for the country. There is no doubt that the lifting of the license cap was a turning point. Looking forward, if the government can ensure continued policy certainty, including clear and fair processes to access the grid, we will be in a strong position to set an even more ambitious goal for 2030," says Persson.

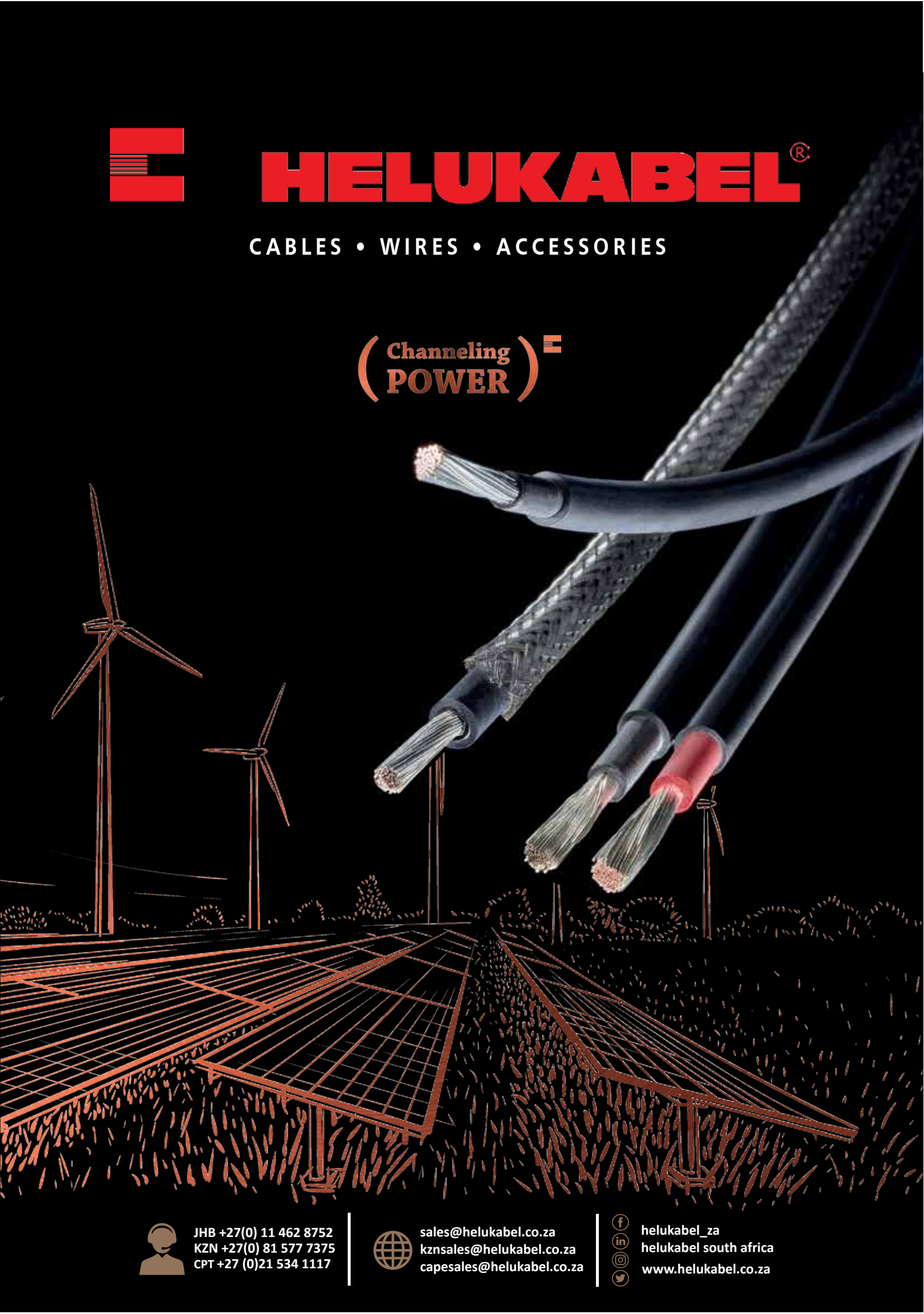
Expanding on the value private players in the renewable sector create, Persson explains that generation by SOLA's solar plants serves commercial customers, and alleviates the impact of day-time loadshedding on the country. "Our plants in Lichtenberg, for example, represent 20% of a single stage of load shedding. We all know there's been a respite from load shedding now, but until very recently the cost of unserved energy was a significant contributor to stagnant economic growth in South Africa."




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Revolutionising TIG welding for aerospace manufacturing

YASKAWA Southern Africa has partnered with Aerosud Aviation, a leading aerospace manufacturer, to implement a cutting-edge robotic TIG welding solution tailored to the exacting demands of aerospace production.

The collaboration, highlighting both companies' commitment to innovation, precision, and efficiency, is poised to strengthen Aerosud's production capabilities and ensure compliance with stringent Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) standards.

The project, spearheaded by Yaskawa national project manager Devon Prinsloo and Aerosud welding engineer Nico du Toit, demonstrates the potential of automation and

robotics to transform aerospace manufacturing.

Meeting aerospace challenges with advanced automation

Aerosud's need to scale up the production of aluminium track cans for Airbus A320 aircraft was a key driver for the project.

"Airbus is ramping up production on its Single Aisle aircraft, requiring us, as a single-source supplier, to increase throughput," explains Nico du Toit. "This welding robot solution allows us to repeatedly produce uniform welds on 1,4mm–1,6mm aluminium while meeting OEM specifications with the highest efficiency."

The TIG welding process, chosen for its superior quality and precision, delivers clean, consistent welds with minimal distortion, essential for aerospace components. The solution integrates Yaskawa's high-precision robotic arms, Fronius TIG welding systems, and a SERVO-ROBOT Micro-Trac camera system, ensuring accurate seam tracking and filler wire positioning.

"The camera scans the weld seam before welding, enabling precise alignment," says Devon Prinsloo.

"This approach not only ensures repeatability but also reduces waste by minimising errors. Automation in TIG welding enhances safety, precision, and

efficiency, all of which are critical in aerospace manufacturing."

Seamless integration and tangible benefits

Yaskawa's expertise in robotics and software was instrumental in overcoming the complexities of aerospace welding. Using MotoSim simulation software, the welding process was meticulously planned, reducing programming errors and setup time.

Additionally, Yaskawa's custom solutions addressed challenges such as variable component geometries and maintaining consistency across diverse materials.

The impact on Aerosud's operations has been significant.

"This technology improves workflow efficiency by reducing rework and increasing yield," notes du Toit. "Automation allows us to maintain consistent quality while scaling up production. This positions Aerosud as a

competitive, innovative supplier in the global aerospace market."

A commitment to innovation

The success of this project underscores Yaskawa's mission to push the boundaries of automation technology. "This collaboration reflects our dedication to developing solutions that address the most complex manufacturing demands," says Prinsloo. "Aerospace manufacturing requires precision and reliability, and Yaskawa is proud to contribute to Aerosud's growth and innovation."

Looking ahead, the partnership between Yaskawa and Aerosud is set to explore new advancements, including adaptive welding technologies. By leveraging their combined expertise, the two companies are paving the way for further innovation in aerospace robotics and manufacturing.



SAIW cuts course fees for 2025 to bolster South Africa's real economy skills base

THE Southern African Institute of Welding (SAIW) has unveiled a significant reduction in course fees for the 2025 academic year, marking a milestone in its commitment to accessibility and industry relevance.

This initiative reflects SAIW's dedication to providing world-class training at a price point that benefits both individuals and businesses while maintaining the highest standards in education and certification.

All course fees will be reduced by 10% for 2025, with most courses returning to 2020 pricing levels. Adjusted for inflation, this means that many programmes will now cost 25% less than in 2020, offering exceptional value for students and companies.

SAIW executive director John Tarboton reports, "We believe this fee reduction will empower more people to access high-quality welding education. This step aligns with our purpose as a non-profit organisation to not only support the industry but also positively impact individuals and society."

Driving innovation with new laser welding course

In addition to the fee reduction, the SAIW is expanding its course offerings with the

launch of a Laser Welding Course, addressing the growing demand for advanced welding technologies in modern manufacturing and construction.

"Laser welding represents a significant leap forward in precision and efficiency, and this course will prepare our students to excel in this cutting-edge field," says Tarboton.

The new course underscores the Institute's commitment to staying at the forefront of technological advancements in the welding industry, ensuring that students are well-prepared for future challenges and opportunities.

Ensuring long-term sustainability

As a non-profit organisation, the SAIW's fee reductions are part of a broader strategy to enhance accessibility while remaining financially sustainable. The institute remains steadfast in its mission to uphold safety, reliability and innovation in welding practices.

As such, this initiative is part of a long-term plan that includes operational restructuring, improved examination processes, and the redeployment of staff expertise to maximise the quality of training and certification. In addition, the SAIW is actively preparing for future in-

dustry needs, including collaborations on nuclear and green energy projects with partners such as NECSA.

The fee adjustment also aligns with the SAIW's commitment to industry relevance, shaped by insights from stakeholders and real-world needs. These changes aim to provide students with affordable access to the skills and certifications required to thrive in a competitive job market.

Explore the 2025 Prospectus

In light of these changes, the SAIW invites prospective students and industry partners to explore its updated 2025 Prospectus, which includes details on the reduced fees, the new Laser Welding course, and other training opportunities.

Looking to the future Tarboton comments, "Our focus remains on supporting individuals and the welding industry at large. With these changes, we're ensuring that SAIW continues to be the backbone of welding training in South Africa and across the continent."

To learn more, download the 2025 Prospectus here: <https://www.saiw.co.za/saiw-course-prospectus-2025/> or email: training@saiw.co.za for specific enquiries.

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Cut-off power with Grinding Techniques' Superflex

THE abrasive cut-off disc, commonly referred to as a chop saw, is a versatile tool used for cutting off various materials. These tools have become indispensable in both the home-and-general fabrication workshop, as well as many building sites around the world.

When paired with the correct abrasive cut-off disc, they are able to repetitively and quickly make cuts in mild and carbon steels, stainless steel, rebar, concrete, asphalt and other construction materials.

The use of oxy-acetylene torches, plasma cutters and other such devices have become more prevalent – none of which prove to be as portable as or have the ability to cut as wide a range of materials as the humble abrasive cut-off saw.

Grinding Techniques locally manufactures the Superflex range of cut-off discs to suit various application requirements. When selecting a cut-off disc, there are a number of important points to consider. Key elements include the specific material being cut, the power rating of the machine, the speed at which the machine operates and the required accuracy and neatness of the cut.

When selecting any



abrasive product, safety is paramount, and abrasive cut-off discs are not exempted.

Before making any purchases on stationary cutting discs, it is critical to ensure that the product adheres to the strictest quality standards, and carry the relevant markings.

All Superflex abrasives are manufactured in accordance to OSA and ISO standards and rigorously tested to ensure compliance and safety to the highest international standards.

At the same time, it is vital that a pre-check of the product is done to ensure that it matches with the material being cut, and the machine on which it will be utilised. Most entry level chop saws are rated at 2200 to 2600 watts and duly suited to the lighter duty, thinner abrasive cut-off discs.

Where applications require higher powered machines, light duty discs should be replaced with thicker, heavier duty products, as these are constructed to better suit the higher power input while operating at a safe speed.

The Superflex range carries two light duty Industrial Steel cut-off discs for use on standard chop saw machines. The 350x2.8x25.4 AS30Q Rough Side, and the 350x3.0x25.4 AS30R. These cut-off discs are designed to provide excellent rate of cut in various steel sections, while also reducing load on the machine. The specially designed fibreglass reinforcing ensures that these discs remain safe while keeping the thickness as low as possible.

For heavier duty, higher powered

machines with power ratings of 3000 watts and higher, the Superflex 350x3.6x25.4 AS30P Rough Side and 350x3.5x40 AS24R are ideal. Their grain and bond structure is designed to perform optimally under these operating conditions, making them perfectly suited to cutting off of larger, thicker sections. Using them on lower powered machines incapable of maintaining speed while under load, will potentially lead to the abrasive grain rubbing, instead of engaging into and cutting the material, effectively leading to loss of disc life.

These thicker cut-off discs also have greater inherent stability and will therefore provide a straighter cut than their thinner counterparts. It is important to remember that excessive pressure on the machine could result in distortion of the cut-off disc, and lead to skew cuts, regardless of the thickness of the disc.

In order to select either a Rough Sided or a conventional cut-off disc, it needs to be noted that Rough Sided cut-off discs have an open sided structure with internal reinforcing, tending to have less clogging of the cutting face, providing cleaner cuts with reduced burr

formation on the material and lower heat generated in the material.

Rough Sided discs are typically suggested for use on materials that clog and burr more easily, such as galvanised pipes or sections, taking note that these discs have a rougher exterior, and are not designed for excessive side loads and should never be used to grind down cut sections on the disc face.

The Superflex range also boasts the 350x4.2x25.4 A24Q Rail disc. This Heavy Duty cut-off disc is designed for use on large portable petrol cut-off saws for cutting railways and other large steel sections, only suitable for higher powered, faster machines. Updated grain technology has also seen the introduction of the 350x4.2x25.4 ZA24S Zirconia Alumina Rail disc, which greatly reduces cutting time and overall cost per cut.

The Superflex abrasive stationary range is also available for Stainless Steel and Stone / Masonry / Non-Ferrous material applications. Sizes range from 300mm up to 500mm, with various bore sizes available.

For more information: info@grindtech.com

Bystronic wins the Swiss Technology Award



WITH its new "Intelligent Cutting Process (ICP)" autonomy kit, Bystronic won the Swiss Technology Award in the "Industry Innovation" category. Numerous projects were entered into the competition, and Bystronic, a leader in the sheet metal processing industry, came out on top with its autonomous laser cutting machine.

The Swiss Technology Award is Switzerland's highest recognition for innovation and technology. Behind this award is the full innovative power of Bystronic: the potential of artificial intelligence (AI) has been recognized to solve customer problems.

The aim is to optimise and automate the cutting process and thus address key challenges in the metalworking market.

- **High personnel costs:** Automating the programming, set-up and monitoring of the laser cutting machine significantly reduces personnel costs, as the parts no longer have to be reworked.
- **High production costs:** The laser cutting machine minimises raw material consumption, waste and post-processing steps, which also leads to considerable cost savings
- **Shortage of skilled workers:** Automation of the cutting process reduces the need for highly qualified skilled workers.

With this solution, Bystronic helps its customers to produce more sustainably, efficiently and cost-effectively. They benefit ecologically and economically thanks to a short amortisation period for the investment.

"With our new "Intelligent Cutting Process (ICP)" feature, we offer a semi-autonomous machine and have successfully established the first applications on the market. In order to further increase the machine's degree of autonomy, we are working on controlling other process parameters in addition to speed. In the near future, we will make the product ready for series production," says Andreas Lüdi, innovation manager at Bystronic.

The Swiss Technology Award

Innovation is the most important driver of the Swiss economy and ensures its prosperity. The Swiss Technology Award supports and promotes this culture of innovation. Every year, outstanding technology-based innovations and developments from start-ups, universities and established companies are honoured in three categories.

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Four times platinum in a row: Jungheinrich is one of the most sustainable companies worldwide

Jungheinrich has been awarded the EcoVadis Platinum sustainability certificate for the fourth year in a row, consolidating its position among the top 1% of the world's most sustainable companies.

THE international CSR rating agency EcoVadis has awarded Jungheinrich a platinum certificate for corporate responsibility in sustainability for the fourth time in a row.

By once again receiving the platinum certification, Jungheinrich continues to be among the top 1% of the world's most sustainable companies. The award recognises Jungheinrich's outstanding commitment to the environment, labour and human

rights, ethics and sustainable procurement. "The platinum certification confirms our consistent commitment to sustainability. We have a corporate and personal responsibility to leave a world worth living in for future generations. For us, it is a matter of course to fulfil this responsibility," explains Dr Lars Brzoska, chairman of the board of management of Jungheinrich AG.

Effective measures for more transparency and climate protection

EcoVadis once again highlighted Jungheinrich's outstanding performance in environmental protection. In particular, the company further expanded its climate protection measures last year and created even more transparency regarding the emissions of its vehicles by calculating the product carbon footprint of numerous product series.

This analysis provides information on the CO2 emissions of the vehicles throughout their entire life cycle – from resource extraction, production,



transport and use to disposal.

Progress in responsible resource extraction

In 2024, Jungheinrich became the first intral-

ogistics provider to join the Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance (IRMA). The global multi-stakeholder initiative is committed to more socially and environmentally friendly mining. As

part of its lithium-ion strategy, Jungheinrich is particularly keen to promote the sustainable mining of lithium. Joining the initiative underlines the company's commitment to greater transparency

and safety in the procurement of resources.

EcoVadis is considered one of the world's leading institutions for evaluating corporate responsibility. In total, EcoVadis analyses the sustainability management of more than 150 000 companies worldwide in terms of the environment, labour and human

rights, ethics and sustainable procurement. Only the most sustainable 1% of companies are awarded a platinum certificate.

The current platinum certification is already the fourth top award for Jungheinrich.

For more information: <https://www.jungheinrich.co.za/>

About Jungheinrich

As one of the world's leading providers of material handling solutions, Jungheinrich has been advancing the development of innovative and sustainable products and solutions for material flows for more than 70 years.

As a pioneer in the sector, the family-owned listed business is committed to creating the warehouse of the future. In the 2023 financial year, Jungheinrich and its workforce of more than 21 000 employees generated revenue of €55-billion. The global network comprises 12 production plants and service and sales companies in 42 countries.

Move more. Waste less.

At Jungheinrich, we understand the modern pressures business face - balancing efficiency with strict environmental regulations. With our cutting-edge solutions, decarbonisation isn't just a compliance measure; it's the key to unlocking unparalleled efficiency.

Find out more at
www.jungheinrich.co.za/sustainability



JUNGHEINRICH

MetPac-SA announces winners of inaugural research awards

METPAC-SA, the Producer Responsibility Organisation (PRO) representing the South African metal packaging industry, is proud to announce the winners of its first-ever research awards.

The competition

formed part of MetPac-SA's commitment to environmental sustainability and skills development, aiming to encourage young researchers to explore solutions to pressing issues within the metal packaging recycling sector.

The Gold Research Award, valued at R3 000, was awarded to Mthabiseni Thobekile Majola from Durban University of Technology.

The Silver Research Award of R2 000 went to Seth Geysman from the University of the Western Cape. Bronze Awards, each worth R1 000, were presented to Libonge Blandine (Stellenbosch University),

Denae Naicker (University of KwaZulu-Natal), and Belinda Manda (University of Johannesburg).

The research project, titled Consumer Practices and Challenges in Recycling Metal Packaging in South Africa, involved

28 students from five universities across the country.

The initiative provided participants with theoretical training and hands-on practical experience, enabling them to engage in collaborative problem-solving while gaining valuable insights into the research environment.

"The purpose of this competition was to raise awareness about the value and recyclability of metal packaging, while also equipping students with the skills and experience they need to succeed in their future careers," said Dr Ravi Nadar, research analyst of MetPac-SA.

"The excellent work delivered by the students not only highlights the potential of South Africa's future researchers but also underscores the importance of fostering a culture of environmental responsibility."

MetPac-SA is dedicated to promoting the environmental sustainability of metal packaging by working with stakeholders to improve collection, recycling, and awareness.

This inaugural competition demonstrated the organisation's proactive approach to addressing recycling challenges while supporting the professional development of South African students.

MetPac-SA extends its gratitude to all participants for their hard work and congratulates the winners on their exceptional contributions to the research project. The organisation remains

committed to championing innovation, collaboration, and sustainability within the metal packaging sector.

For more information about MetPac-SA and its initiatives, visit www.metpacsa.org.za



The Gold award was awarded to Mthabiseni Thobekile Majola from Durban University of Technology



The silver award was awarded to Seth Geysman from the University of the Western Cape.



The bronze award was awarded to Libonge Blandine from Stellenbosch University.



The bronze award was awarded to Belinda Manda from the University of Johannesburg.



Shaping Tomorrow

Sustainable and Responsible
Metal Packaging Solutions



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

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

SAPVIA welcomes energy reforms in President Cyril Ramaphosa's 2025 State of the Nation Address

THE South African Photovoltaic Industry Association (SAPVIA) has welcomed President Cyril Ramaphosa's 2025 State of the Nation Address (SONA), endorsing its emphasis on energy reform and infrastructure investment.

SAPVIA highlighted the importance of grid infrastructure development, aligning with its mission to accelerate solar photovoltaic (PV) adoption and expand the renewable energy sector.

The association reiterated its commitment to positioning South Africa as a leader in renewable energy and green manufacturing, emphasising the potential for job creation through the availability of affordable green energy.

The organisation acknowledged the positive changes in energy policy as it opened the way to a more competitive electricity market.

"We commend progress made in energy policy, particularly the Electricity Regulation Amendment Act, which paves the way for a competitive electricity market. We need to outline clear action plans for the acceleration of private sector investment and the development of transmission infrastructure to

integrate an increased number of renewable energy projects," it said in a statement.

In the SONA address, the president said the Electricity Regulation Amendment Act would allow multiple electricity generation entities to emerge and compete.

Aside from opening up the market, Ramaphosa also noted that increased investment in transmission infrastructure is on the way.

"We will mobilise private sector investment in our transmission network to connect more renewable energy to the grid. As we reform our energy system, we are continuing to build successful multilateral partnerships."

SAPVIA also expressed support for skills development initiatives and the localisation of renewable energy components, noting South Africa's competitive advantages in the sector.

To secure a sustainable energy future, the association urged decisive action on energy reforms, stronger incentives for rooftop solar adoption, and enhanced public-private collaboration.

SAPVIA represents South Africa's solar PV industry and advocates for its growth and development.

South Africa's plastic packaging industry and the European Union's new packaging regulations

THE European Union's Packaging & Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) has introduced new regulations for plastic packaging that could have significant ripple effects on South Africa's plastics and packaging sectors.

As global sustainability requirements evolve, South African packaging manufacturers must adapt to remain competitive, particularly in export markets.

Recyclability by 2030: A South African perspective

The PPWR mandates that all packaging must be recyclable by design and practice by 2030. Fortunately, South Africa's plastics industry, especially for export-oriented businesses, has already made substantial progress in meeting these recyclability standards. According to Anton Hanekom, executive

director at Plastics SA, "South Africa has made great strides in designing for recyclability, and our local packaging designers, brand owners, and retailers are consciously developing products with end-of-life considerations in mind."

Efforts to include recycled content where possible have seen significant investment in infrastructure, technology, and expertise. South African manufacturers are successfully exporting plastic packaging to international clients, demonstrating compliance with global standards.

Post-consumer recycled content: Progress and challenges

A key requirement of the PPWR is the gradual increase of post-consumer recycled (PCR) content in plastic packaging from 2030 onwards. South Africa has already achieved considerable progress in



this area, with PET bottles already successfully being recycled back into bottles, trays and punnets used for food contact.

Hanekom acknowledges the challenges, stating, "While South Africa is making strides in recycling PET bottles, scaling up food-grade PCR production and enhancing recycling capabilities

remain areas that require further investment. Ongoing investment in research and development (R&D) is critical to overcoming these hurdles and expanding the use of PCR across various packaging formats". A greater focus for South Africa needs to be fixing our broken waste management system. As

Hanekom explains: "We can (and do) have packaging products that are 100 % designed for recycling. However, it is of little use if it is not picked up by waste pickers or collected by waste management companies. To this end Plastics SA has been engaging with local and national governments to educate them about proper waste management and encourage improved collection".

Eco-modulated extended producer responsibility (EPR) fees

The PPWR also introduces eco-modulated EPR fees, which incentivise sustainable designs and penalise non-compliance. Hanekom highlights that South Africa is beginning to see the benefits of its own EPR system, with Producer Responsibility Organisations (PROs) managing funds to enhance collection and recycling efforts.

"EPR has led to a notable increase in the collection and recycling of post-consumer packaging, alongside growing consumer awareness. As we refine the system, annual fee reviews ensure that lessons are incorporated to enhance collection and recycling efficiency."

Ensuring compliance for export markets

Non-compliance with the PPWR presents a major risk for South African exporters of plastic packaging or packaged products destined for the EU, potentially leading to market restrictions. To address this, the local plastics industry is proactively enhancing product design and increasing recycled content.

Innovation and collaboration: The path forward

The PPWR is widely regarded as a catalyst

for innovation, driving the development of circular economy solutions. South Africa's plastics industry can seize this opportunity to innovate in areas such as advanced recycling technologies, mono-material packaging solutions, and 100% recyclable designs.

Conclusion

South Africa's plastics industry is well-positioned to align with the EU's new packaging regulations through ongoing investments in design, recyclability, and sustainability initiatives. With continued collaboration and innovation, the industry can not only comply with international regulations but also lead the way in sustainable packaging solutions for the future.

For more information visit www.plasticsinfo.co.za

AES and the great decarbonisation debate

Providing powerful assistance with carbon footprint reduction

ALTHOUGH many manufacturing and industrial companies have stated objectives to reduce use of fossil fuels, there are not yet any silver bullets in the green fuel space, says Dennis Williams, commercial director at steam and boiler operations and maintenance service provider, Associated Energy Services (AES).

Supply and logistics constraints, high costs and technological limitations are just some of the challenges encountered by AES, as they assist an increasing number of clients to investigate the use of more environmentally sustainable, lower carbon fuel alternatives - thereby obviating the requirement to pay carbon taxes both locally and abroad.

"When a global business decides to reduce its carbon footprint - or even go carbon neutral - this decision seems to be applied across all marketplaces, irrespective of the local economic pressures and technical challenges."

One AES client is already running out of time to meet the ambitious decarbonisation target of its global parent company.

"We have reviewed all options - from electricity to solid fuels,

liquid fuels, different gases, biomasses and agricultural residues - and shown the capex, opex and supply dynamics on multiple occasions. We have also considered the amount of space needed - and what each fuel choice will incur from an emissions and carbon tax perspective. In addition, we have looked at how much the steam will cost, the ash which could be generated and how to deal with that."

Williams's key message is that carbon taxes are here to stay - and that companies and consumers will not be able to absorb the costs of using fossil fuels indefinitely. Companies must be educated about different options that suit their specific needs.

Gas: just hot air? For Williams, gas is best regarded as an interim step on the decarbonisation journey.

"Not only is supply an issue in terms of gas - but it remains a fossil fuel with a carbon footprint. Companies will still pay substantial carbon tax and find themselves only part of the way to a zero carbon target. There is naturally also a cost associated with making this interim switch - so it is a less than ideal option in most cases."

Apart from the predicted local shortages of locally available natural gas, converting and transporting this fuel as liquefied natural gas (LNG) is not environmentally friendly and is expensive - with recent price indications at US \$18 to 20 per gigajoule, which is probably four times the cost of coal.

Biomass: Why waste? Williams says bagasse, derived from sugar cane residues, was probably the earliest biomass fuel used in South Africa.

"The business models for this have changed substantially over the years. Years ago, bagasse was regarded as a problem. This view has been turned on its head - to the point where local sugar mills maximise its use as energy feedstock in their boilers for steam and power generation."

In the timber industry, the focus is on maximising the useful yield from timber. Each log is scanned to determine the sizes, widths and thicknesses which can be cut; as well as the potential wastage. White wood chips are often sold for board manufacture, typically leaving mainly contaminated wood chips, saw fines and bark. These can be used for energy.

AFRICA stands at the forefront of the global green energy transition, with vast reserves of critical minerals essential for clean energy solutions.

The continent is home to approximately 30% of the world's critical minerals required to power the energy transition. This presents a significant opportunity to attract investment, fast-track development, and achieve key Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

However, challenges such as currency and convertibility risks have traditionally hindered large-scale financing efforts.

"The demand for critical minerals will continue to grow exponentially over the next 30 years, and Africa's role in the global energy transition cannot be overstated. To unlock this potential, it is essential to implement innovative financing mechanisms that address currency and convertibility risks," said Auguste Claude-Nguetsop, partner & financial service sector head at KPMG Southern Africa.

"By leveraging Africa's resource wealth, we can create an environment that attracts investment at lower costs and accelerates infrastructure development."

Claude-Nguetsop was speaking at the State Energy Summit which



Auguste Claude-Nguetsop, partner & financial service sector head at KPMG Southern Africa.

took place on the 27th and 28th of January 2025 in Dar Es Salaam, where industry leaders, policymakers, and investors were convened to explore opportunities to leverage Africa's natural resources to drive sustainable economic growth and bridge the continent's funding gap.

At the Africa Energy Summit, KPMG South Africa contributed insights on the African Development Bank's (AfDB) proposed currency convertibility mechanism. This innovative approach seeks to mitigate exchange rate risks by utilising a non-circulating currency backed by a diversified basket of Africa's critical commodities.

This mechanism aims to:

- Reduce the cost of capital for clean energy projects.
- Encourage cross-border financial cooperation and integration.
- Strengthen Africa's bargaining position in global resource markets.

Wale Shonibare, director, energy financial solutions, Policy & Regulations, African Development Bank, stated: "Africa's green energy future depends on unlocking innovative financial solutions that empower the continent to harness its vast mineral wealth. The AfDB's currency

convertibility mechanism will play a crucial role in stabilising investment flows and accelerating sustainable development."

"The economic impact of leveraging Africa's critical mineral wealth is profound," said Frank Blackmore, lead economist at KPMG South Africa.

"By addressing financial constraints and mitigating currency risks, we can unlock new economic opportunities, enhance industrialisation, and drive sustainable growth across the continent."

This financing paradigm shift has the potential to significantly narrow Africa's \$400-billion annual funding gap and support the continent's sustainable development goals.

By pooling natural resources strategically, Africa can harness the power of collaboration to ensure long-term energy security and economic prosperity.

"KPMG South Africa remains committed to partnering with key stakeholders such as the African Development Bank to unlock Africa's energy potential by bringing forth key strategic solutions to Africa's financing models for a more robust and sustainable future," concludes Claude-Nguetsop.

Unlocking Africa's green energy potential through effective financing models - KPMG

Vibration monitoring in three axes with IO-Link - ifm-pm

Machine vibrations are important indicators when it comes to assessing the current condition of a machine. Damage to rolling element bearings and other machine components can be detected at an early stage before costly machine downtime occurs. ifm's new and smart IO-Link vibration sensor helps to implement a simple and scalable condition monitoring approach using but a single device.

THE new VVB30x condition monitoring sensor, which ifm will be presenting at the SPS in Nuremberg, continuously detects vibrations in all three dimensions. From the measured values recorded, the sensor calculates proven indicators to evaluate the machine condition:

information on fatigue (v-RMS), mechanical friction (a-RMS), impacts (a-Peak) and bearing wear (Crest factor). As an additional wear indicator, the surface temperature is also transmitted. What is more, the sensor offers a whole range of other smart functions.

In the Basic condition monitoring version, the sensor can continuously analyse and, if required, reliably communicate any unbalance developing in the machine. The sensor also calculates the machine operating hours based on the machine-related vibration level, which is

another auxiliary variable in modern maintenance. Last, but not least the DataScience condition monitoring version of the device also comes with a smart bearing demodulation process for reliable and continuous bearing analysis, known as BearingScout.

The new vibration sensor uses IO-Link for data transmission, device diagnostics and parameter setting. This enables users to implement vibration monitoring and analysis in a SCADA system by any manufacturer using standard fieldbus protocols.

Optionally, this can be done simultaneously via a standardised MQTT or HTTPS interface in any IT system. With the moneo IIoT platform, ifm electronic offers a whole range of smart additional functions for root cause failure analysis, making it easy to implement IT-based condition monitoring.

Configuration is also very easy via IO-Link. In agreement with the respective machine category according to ISO 20816-3, predefined



The new VVB30x offers vibration monitoring in all three dimensions.

limit value profiles are stored directly in the device and can be adapted to the respective target application using the corresponding system command. In the event of a limit value being exceeded, a detailed root cause analysis is easily possible, even without moneo, thanks to the integrated BLOB ring

memory. Up to 12 seconds of raw data can be made available automatically if required. In addition, the sensor has an internal characteristic value history that provides an overview of the last nine days.

With condition monitoring, damage to pumps, fans, geared motors, vacuum pumps and many other rotating machines can be detected at an early stage. This means that maintenance work can be planned cost-effectively and in line with requirements, maximising machine availability.

Where vibrations in machines have an impact on the quality, condition monitoring also helps to improve the production process.

Other information on the new IO-Link condition monitoring sensor. Vibration sensors.



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BMG GROUP HQ, 2023
Printed in South Africa

Proposed zero-rating of chicken

THE South African Poultry Association (SAPA), in collaboration with the Association of Meat Importers and Exporters South Africa (AMIE SA), has submitted a proposal urging the National Treasury to include specific chicken products under the zero-rated items listed in the VAT Act. This initiative follows President Cyril Ramaphosa's 2024 State of the Nation Address, which emphasised expanding essential zero-rated food items to support vulnerable South Africans amidst rising food prices. The proposal highlights the critical role of chicken as an affordable and nutritious source of protein, particularly for combating malnutrition and food insecurity among young children,

pregnant women, the elderly, and low-income households. "A large portion of the South African population suffers from malnutrition and food insecurity. It is therefore unsustainable that the list of zero-rated food items contains limited animal-based protein items when an affordable animal-meat protein would both combat malnutrition in the most vulnerable of society and provide much needed food security to those most in need in South Africa," said SAPA and AMIE SA in their official proposal. "The expansion of the list of zero-rated items is not merely a political talking point. It is a real and actionable poverty alleviation mechanism that has been objectively proven

to ease the burden on poor and low-income households," said the proposal. It recommends zero-rating frozen bone-in chicken products, as well as fresh and frozen offal. Additionally, alternative measures, such as simplifying chicken definitions or applying reduced VAT rates to all chicken products, are suggested to ensure effective implementation while balancing fiscal impacts. SAPA and AMIE SA said the proposal has garnered widespread public support, reflecting the urgent need for practical solutions to alleviate poverty and improve food security in South Africa. SAPA looks forward to positive consideration of this proposal by the National Treasury.

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People for Process Automation

Why spray dry nozzles are important for high-quality dairy powders



SPRAY dry is a critical process in the dairy industry, used to convert liquid dairy products like milk, whey, or cream into powders with extended shelf life, enhanced stability, and ease of transportation. One of the essential components in this process is the spray dry nozzle, which atomises the liquid feed into fine droplets, enabling rapid drying when exposed to hot air.

Among the promi-

bution of the droplets in the drying chamber. These parameters directly influence the final product's quality, including its solubility, texture, and particle size distribution. For dairy powders like infant formula, milk powders, or whey proteins, achieving the right consistency and particle attributes is crucial to meet consumer and industrial needs.

Spraying Systems Co. has specialised in delivering high-perfor-

mance spray dry nozzles that address the unique requirements of dairy processors. Their nozzles are designed to handle high viscosities, resist wear from abrasive materials, and maintain consistency even in demanding production environments.

Spray dry nozzle applications and benefits in the dairy industry

Spraying Systems Co.'s SprayDry® nozzles are widely used in various applications, including production of milk powder, infant formula, whey protein isolates, and specialty dairy products.

Some of the benefits that dairy processors derive from using these spray dry nozzles include enhanced product quality, improved operational efficiency, regulatory compliance, and cost savings.

Due to the use of advanced materials and precision engineering of the nozzles, their lifespan is extended thereby lowering long-term costs.

For more information contact grant@monitorspray.co.za, www.spray.co.za

'Bearing' innovation and growth in mind: B.E.D. and SKF collaborate to meet customers' power transmission needs

WITH over 16 years of successful collaboration to their credit, Bolt and Engineering Distributors (B.E.D.) and global bearings supplier SKF have created a significant impact across South Africa's agricultural, mining and industrial sectors.

Their collaboration focuses on providing robust, reliable and efficient bearings solutions which address the specific requirements and challenges of these industries.

At the core of this partnership lies a unique synergy, akin to a scale. On one end is SKF with its cutting-edge bearings technology and products - and on the other end are customers with distinct needs. In the middle, balancing and bridging the gap, is distinctive distributor B.E.D., with its unparalleled vertical sector knowledge and commitment to its customers' success.

Transmitting power to customers

SKF's extensive bearings product portfolio is complemented by B.E.D.'s deep industry insight and technical expertise. B.E.D. product manager and agri product Specialist Gerhard Botes explains: "We effectively act as a 'bridge', connecting SKF's technological advancements and the specific needs of our customers. Our local knowledge and expertise enables us to understand their pain points and deliver solutions that truly make a difference."

Over the years, B.E.D. has focused on sectors where the demand for high-quality and dependable power transmission solutions is paramount. Micaela Willers, SKF's Power transmission manager for Sub-Saharan Africa notes.

"Electricity is a huge input cost in any sector. South Africa's recent energy issues illustrated this very starkly. Our power transmission solutions



Left to Right: Micaela Willers, Power transmission and training solutions manager at SKF South Africa and Gerhard Botes, agri product specialist at Bolt & Engineering Distributors

essentially take the load off applications, thereby decreasing energy costs, while increasing productivity. An excellent example of this is in agriculture.

It takes specialised knowledge to serve the agricultural sector effectively. Gerhard and his team at B.E.D. bring this knowledge to the table, with an intricate understanding of everything from combine harvesters to crop sprayers - and more."

B.E.D. has become synonymous with the providing the right solutions, especially in agricultural power transmission. "Our customers know that they can count on us for reliable products, which enhance efficiency and reduce operational costs - essential during the planting and harvesting seasons," Botes advises.

Empowering customers through training and support

Both companies emphasise the importance of customer training as a strategic tool to maximise the benefits of SKF's power transmission solutions. "The training we provide - together with B.E.D. - covers practical skills which are immediately applicable in sectors such

as agriculture, mining and manufacturing. It is about more than just using the product; but is about understanding its full potential," Willier explains.

"B.E.D. does not just push products: they build relationships. Rather, true to their company ethos and tagline 'It's our business to know your business', they invest in understanding their customers' businesses, which means providing meaningful ongoing support after the sale is made. This relationship-driven approach ensures SKF's solutions fit seamlessly into customers' operations."

A future built on innovation and trust

Looking ahead, B.E.D. and SKF are poised to expand their collaboration into new vertical sectors - including food and beverage. B.E.D. is also planning to explore opportunities in original equipment manufacturing (OEM). Botes shares his enthusiasm for the future.

"We see tremendous growth potential in areas where reliability and efficiency are non-negotiable, such as power transmission. With SKF's commitment to research and develop-

ment - combined with our extensive local footprint and expertise - we are confident that we can continue to deliver exceptional value."

"By working with SKF, B.E.D. has access to a wealth of global expertise, as well as research and development-related resources. This enables us to bring cutting-edge bearings solutions to the South African and sub-Saharan African market, tailored specifically for these unique challenges and conditions," Willers says.

This collaboration means access to best-in-class power transmission products that are both robust and user-friendly. B.E.D. ensures they have the stock and support to meet customers' requirements - be they immediate or longer-term - backed by their own and SKF's responsive after-sales support.

"Our goal is to be the go-to supplier for all our customers' power transmission solutions across many different vertical sectors. We aim not just to provide products, but peace of mind, supported by the trust and excellent relationships which we have with SKF and with our customers," Botes concludes.

For more information: <https://bolteng.co.za>



Monitor Engineering's SprayDry® nozzles address the unique requirements of dairy processors.

ment manufacturers of spray drying nozzles, Spraying Systems Co. - represented in South Africa by Monitor Engineering - is widely recognised for its advanced technology, high-quality products, and tailored solutions for the dairy sector.

Importance of spray dry nozzles in the dairy industry

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Small food business success: Mobile units help vendors go commercial



By Larry Claasen

IT was his visits to church bazaars that got Western Cape ME for Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism, Dr Ivan Meyer thinking about how to help small food business owners succeed. Watching local vendors sell their high-quality products, he envisioned turning these occasional sellers into sustainable commercial ventures

Small food business growth through mobile support

Meyer says people were making food products like jams and cheeses, but their sales were limited to local communities and only sold when the bazaars were held.

He thought instead of having these people make money only once a year, he would look at ways for them to develop their products and businesses, so they could sell their products every weekend.

"I wanted the church bazaar aunties to make money," is how he summed up his goal.

This led Meyer to develop the concept of providing agri-processing support from several trucks.

"So we have a truck. We can bring the truck to a town where people

make jam and cheese and whatever they want to make."

He adds: "We can then upskill them in food safety, healthy safety standards, bottling, labelling, design, export, market, and a little bit of support."

This service can even provide micro-businesses with access to other markets like restaurants, and retail outlets.

"If they want to make sausage, cheese, or biltong, or salads, or jam, different types of jam or processing, we have that facility to teach people to make money every year."

The Agri-Processing on Wheels programme is based at the Agri-Hub in Elsenburg, in the Boland region.

The Agri-Processing Support sub-programme runs the Mobile Processing Unit, the Mobile Meat Processing Unit, and the Mobile Fruit & Vegetable Processing Unit.

The units enable the department to reach producers in remote areas by bringing the processing equipment to them.

In addition, by increasing capacity in agri-processing, the region is positioned to increase its labour intake, which is primarily absorbed by agriculture.

Speaking at the

launch of the programme in 2022, Meyer said it can be an important tool when it comes to tackling youth unemployment.

"The agri-processing sub-sector in the Western Cape plays a critical role in addressing the youth unemployment challenge. This is because it employs a significant proportion of youth, i.e. about 45%. The subsector is also essential in transforming agriculture as about 47% of those used within the sub-sector are women."

Demand for mobile units services is growing according to the Western Cape Department of Agriculture's Annual Report for 2023-2024.

Small food business programme to be expanded

"The Agri-Processing On Wheels initiative increased the demand for services, which was difficult to meet. There is a huge potential and interest at the grassroots level, but this is hampered by the lack of financial products to support entry-level entrepreneurs."

The demand is so great, that the department says the Agri-Processing On Wheels mobile units will require additional capacity and support from various programmes in the department and from external stakeholders to ensure its successful implementation.

"Given that it is a new initiative, it will have financial implications but will be absorbed within the operational budget of the programme," said the annual report.

CCPB's consistent focus on Values and Leadership secures 15th Top Employer accolade

COCA-COLA Peninsula Beverages (CCPB) has been recognised for the 15th year in a row as a Top Employer.

The accolade acknowledges companies who have demonstrated their approach to people strategy, work environment, talent acquisition, learning, well-being, diversity and inclusion.

"Our people are the heart of what we do every day, and we simply cannot be a successful company if we don't look after their wellbeing. Our ethos of 'People are number one' has guided us in protecting the best interests of our team and putting systems in place to help them grow and thrive," says Bryn Morse, culture and people development director at CCPB.

All team members at CCPB, he adds, are seen as leaders and are treated as such.

"Our people are leaders of themselves or of others and we try to empower them with the skills they need to be the most impactful leaders they can be. We believe they have the power to lead their



own personal development, and we show them how to take ownership of that journey by putting a focus on continuous improvement which is one of our core values."

Morse explains that another metric that speaks to the company's consistent focus on their team members is the number of employees who have been with CCPB for extended periods of time.

"We want to maintain an environment in which our team members can reach their full potential and winning Top Employer for the 15th time shows that we are still fulfilling this aspiration," says Morse.

"Our values and

purpose are the main factors that drive a working culture of professional satisfaction and development at CCPB. Our team members are mobilised and feel united when we grow them and engage with them. We are ultimately able to help our team members feel valued and motivated across the company no matter what their role might be."

CCPB's certification as Top Employer in the Food and Beverage category was announced recently by the Top Employers Institute, the global authority on recognising excellence in people practices.

CCPB is the local

bottler and distributor of The Coca-Cola Company in the Western and Northern Cape. Products and brands include Coca-Cola, Sprite, Fanta, Stoney, Appletiser, Powerade, Bonaqua, PowerPlay and Monster Energy amongst others.

CCPB has been operational for more than 80 years, having first opened for business in 1940. Their state-of-the-art bottling facility is based in Parow Industria, with six distribution centres and offices located around the CCPB region.

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



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Modernising Cape Town's Container Terminal: A balanced path forward

Charles Dhaniram,
Port Service Manager
for Konecranes South
Africa.



THE recent arrival of seven pre-owned rubber-tyred gantry cranes (RTGs) at Cape Town Container Terminal marks an important step in addressing the efficiency challenges that have concerned our agricultural exporters and other port users. While this equipment boost is welcome news, it also presents an opportunity to consider how we can maximise the value of both new and existing equipment through strategic modernisation.

As someone who has observed port operations for many years, I've seen how the terminal's performance directly impacts the Western Cape's R1-trillion economy goal. With 55% of South Africa's fresh produce and 80% of fruit flowing through Cape Town's port, even minor improvements in handling efficiency can have major ripple effects across our agricultural sector.

The good news is that modern crane technology offers a pragmatic path forward that aligns with both operational needs and workforce considerations.

For instance, smart steering assistance helps operators maintain precise paths between container stacks, reducing the physical and mental strain of constant manual adjustments. This not only improves safety but allows operators to focus more attention on the complex task of container handling. Similarly, systems that help position trucks more accurately under cranes can significantly reduce the time spent on each container move while enhancing safety for both operators and truck drivers.

These operator-support technologies are particularly relevant given Cape Town's notorious weather challenges. When strong winds impact visibility, having additional positioning guidance gives operators more confidence to work safely in challenging condi-

tions. This could help address some of the weather-related delays that have impacted our agricultural exporters during crucial shipping windows.

The key is to view these enhancements as tools that help our skilled workforce per-

form their jobs more effectively and safely.

From a business perspective, the ability to upgrade existing equipment incrementally is also cost-effective. Rather than requiring wholesale replacement of cranes, terminals can strategically add capa-

bilities as budgets allow and as operators become comfortable with new features.

Looking at the broader economic context, Minister Meyer's vision of tripling Western Cape exports to R450-billion will require sustained im-

provements in port efficiency. The recent drop in container handling volumes - from 800 000 TEUs (Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit) in 2019 to 700 000 TEUs last year - underscores the urgency of finding practical solutions that can be implemented

without disrupting existing operations.

By taking a measured approach to modernisation that emphasises operator assistance over automation, Cape Town Container Terminal can steadily improve its competitiveness while maintaining

strong relationships with its workforce. This balanced strategy could help secure the port's position as the region's premier agricultural export hub while creating opportunities for both existing workers and the broader economy they support.

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Port performance South Africa: Sorting out Durban will alleviate congestion in the Port of Cape Town



By Larry Claasen

THE congestion at one port can easily lead to congestion at another, says MEC Dr. Ivan Meyer.

Port Performance South Africa, the turnaround at the Port of Cape Town largely depends on the performance of the Port of Durban, says Dr. Ivan Meyer, the Western Cape MEC for Agriculture, Economic Development, and Tourism.

"In November 2023, over 60 000 containers were reportedly stuck at sea around the Port of Durban due to bad weather and equipment failures."

Meyer explains that while there is a turnaround plan for the Port of Cape Town, delays at the Port of Durban have a knock-on effect.

"Part of the problems that we experience is the delays at the Port of Durban. And from Durban, they come here, and then to Europe. Now if there are delays in Durban, exports come here. Then people say, but they are stuck in Cape Town. No, they were stuck at the Port of Durban."

Transport minister prioritises Durban

The importance of resolving Durban's challenges is evident, as Minister of Transport Barbara Creecy has made it a top priority for ports. Meyer supports this move, emphasising the intercon-

connectedness of South Africa's transport system.

The relationship between ports can be seen in the dramatic rise in coal exports from the Western Cape. According to Wesgro's Western Cape Trade Flows & Developments 2022 report, coal exports increased 395% from R1,63-billion in 2021 to R8,12-billion in 2022.

This spike coincides with a drop in coal exports from the Port of Richards Bay in Kwa-Zulu-Natal, home to Africa's largest coal terminal.

Port performance South Africa: Economic impact overview

South Africa's port inefficiencies are not just a logistical headache but a drag on economic growth. "Analysts estimated that during the peak of the port challenges, the collective economic impact of slowdowns exceeded R124-billion a day," notes a report by the US Department of Agriculture.

The crisis was severe. In November 2023, over 60 000 containers were reportedly stuck at sea around the Port of Durban due to bad weather and equipment failures.

"Transnet generally pointed to ageing equipment as the cause, while others in the industry pointed to underinvestment in strategic infrastructure and a lack of critical maintenance," the report added.

The ripple effect of Durban's port challenges has impacted

Cape Town, causing backlogs and delays that cost the fruit industry an estimated R2,5-billion in the 2021/2022 season. The scale of inefficiency is reflected in the World Bank's Container Port Performance Index, where Durban ranked 341 out of 348 ports globally, and Cape Town ranked 344 in 2022.

Progress at Cape Town's port

Despite these challenges, Meyer says efforts to address the crisis are gaining traction. "There is now a port turnaround plan. They've discussed the plan in detail. The plan is feasible," he says. Meyer highlights the collaboration between stakeholders: "The people are co-operating. And all the producers are now in a daily war room."

Minister Creecy's leadership brings urgency

Meyer commends Transport Minister Creecy for her proactive approach to addressing the crisis.

She's responding to urgent requests, he says. For example, one of the things they required was a helicopter. And the staff of Transnet explained the helicopter could only come later this year. Creecy said this could not wait, and expedited the request.

"There's an urgency that she brings to it. And I'm particularly happy. And I will go again to the harbour to make sure that things are working."

South African fresh produce exports: ZZ2 battles Cape Town port delays

By Diane Silcock

ZZ2, a major South African agricultural conglomerate that is more than a century old, is on a growth trajectory to expand its South African fresh produce exports, with new markets having opened up for the group in China, India, and Japan. However, will their efforts be hampered by Cape Town's port problems?

South African fresh produce exports: diverse farming regions and crop variety

The group farms mainly in the Limpopo province, as well as in the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, North West province, Gauteng and Namibia with their farms producing avocados, tomatoes, apples, pears, onions, mangoes, litchis, cherries, almonds and Medjool dates.



Avocados being packed for exporting.

challenges they have been experiencing.

"It's been around six years that we have been struggling with the ports, but in the last two years it's reached crisis proportions with our avocados taking over 40 days to land in Europe. South Africa will produce more avocados, apples, pears, grapes, stone fruit, subtropicals, if we are

ate jobs which is what South Africa needs, therefore we should not be hamstrung," he says. "The agriculture industry is prepared to expand because the markets are there, but we dare not, if the logistics remain a problem."

South African fresh produce exports: 2025 harvests and global expansion strategy

Garrett says ZZ2 harvests for 2025 are looking very good and they will start exporting their produce around end February. There is an indication via their exporters that there is some improvement in the Cape Town port, but they are not confident that delays may not arise and are therefore looking very closely at exporting some of their avocados out of Durban and Gqeberha.

"In terms of avocados," says Garrett, "traditional markets have always been in the UK and European Union. We have been working very hard with the South African Avocado Growers' Association and with the South African Department of Agriculture to open up new markets and the Department has done a sterling job in opening up China, India and Japan for us. Therefore from 2025 we will start sending volumes to these countries. We are also hoping to get the USA open to us this year."

making very sure that we can get our product to the export market. If we can't, we are not going to plant one more hectare of avocados to have it destroyed in a logistics chain."

Garrett goes on to say that these problems have cost the industry billions of rands as well as caused damage to the country's reputation along with brand reputation damage. "Agriculture has the opportunity to cre-

Local market and retail

On the local front, ZZ2 was recently awarded Shoprite Group's annual Supplier of the Year Award 2024 in the Fruit and Vegetable Producer category. Through these awards, the Shoprite Group recognises the valuable contribution suppliers make to the group's continued success.

ZZ2 prides itself on its consistency in supply, high quality produce, and all-round good service delivery levels. The group's joint venture company, N'Voy, handles all of ZZ2's business in retail.

What sets ZZ2 apart from competitors is its ability to provide a basket of produce right from a basic staple food like tomatoes through to an exotic cherry. Its tomatoes are also cultivated all year round as they farm in harmony with nature, planting in different regions of the country and moving as the climate changes.

Annually, around 230 000 tons of fresh produce is currently packed and marketed, making ZZ2 one of the largest companies of its kind. Its brand name is well known across South Africa and internationally and is synonymous with high quality. ZZ2 is proud to be able to provide healthy, affordable food every day of the year.



ZZ2 Marketing Manager, Clive Garrett.

Cape Town port challenges resulted in avocados taking over 40 days to reach Europe

ZZ2 is expecting to produce around 33 000 tons of avocados in 2025, the majority of which will be destined for the UK, Europe, China, India, Japan and possibly the USA. Cape Business News spoke to ZZ2 marketing manager, Clive Garrett, about the port



THE NEXT GENERATION

Internships, Skills & Development Programmes

Discretionary grant skills development funding for businesses

By Diane Silcock

IN our January issue, we provided insights into the Skills Development Levy (SDL), giving employers valuable information on mandatory grants and how to claim back funds for training. In this issue, we focus on discretionary grant skills development funding for businesses that can be applied for at the discretion of the relevant Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA), no matter the size of an employer's payroll.

Discretionary grant skills development funding for businesses

Schalk Kotzé, skills development facilitator for the National Employers' Association of South Africa (NEASA), explains: "A company does not have to be paying skills development levies to be eligible to gain access to discretionary grant funding for their business. Even a small company, for instance, with a payroll below R500 000 that is exempt from paying skills development levies to SARS, can apply for funding in the specific sector in which they operate, as long as it's relevant to what they are doing."

The difference between mandatory and discretionary grant funding

Kotzé explains that with mandatory grants, a company needs to have implemented its training before applying for a grant, whereas with discretionary grants, it's about the training that the company is planning to undertake, going forward, and within a specific timeframe that the relevant SETA will stipulate.

The type of training that falls within the scope of discretionary grant funding is Professional, Vocational, Technical and Academic Learning (PIVOTAL).

It's training that leads to a qualification or part-qualification, such as bursaries, learnerships, apprenticeships, scarce and critical skills and short skills programmes.

First steps to applying to SETAs and window periods

Any company applying to a SETA for discretionary grant funding needs to be a registered company that is operating within a particular sector.

The first step is for employers to register with the SETA under which their business falls. This will ensure that the company is kept informed of all communications and advertisements issued by the SETA, particularly in regard to the window periods in which a company can apply. No exceptions are made for applications received after a submission deadline.

These window periods vary from SETA to SETA. Some have multiple window periods throughout the year and others may have only one. The window periods could apply to PIVOTAL training or special projects that offer funding for a specific number of learners within a particular category or qualification, targeting companies with the capacity to accommodate these learners.

Project Implementation Plan (PIP), Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and timeframes

"Although requirements and documentation in applying for a discretionary grant vary from SETA to SETA," says Kotzé, "a company would need to devise a PIP that includes information such as the training they are planning to undertake, how many learners, the project start date and end date. Employers also need to confirm if they have capacity to train the learners and that they have mentors in place."

An MOA, a contract between the



Information provided by Schalk Kotzé, skills development facilitator for NEASA.

employer and relevant SETA, stipulates the approved funding and training interventions, the terms and conditions for the specific funding and qualifications that the SETA has agreed to, and the timeframes. Kotzé stresses the importance of the company waiting for approval before commencing with their training.

"It has to be done in the implementation period stipulated by the SETA and therefore cannot commence prior to the given start date," he says.

Financing of the training following approval

Training is arranged by the employer with a training academy that is accredited for the relevant qualification. The SETA pays the employer who in turn pays the training academy. Tranche payments for the discretionary grants differ from intervention to intervention and from SETA to SETA.

Kotzé emphasises that employers need to be mindful that funding is completely at the discretion of the SETA, and that the training applied for must be for skills relevant to the sector's skills plan, and that are in demand in the industry in which the company operates.

Weir invests in future through process and applications academy



The Process and Applications Academy had nearly 40 participants attending.

TESTAMENT to Weir's dedication to shaping the future of mining through knowledge, the company has invested in its new Process and Applications Academy, a training programme designed to give graduates technical insights into processing equipment. Held in April 2024, the inaugural training session attracted nearly 40 graduates.

As with several other sectors of the economy, the mining industry is undergoing a fundamental shift in which technological advancements are redefining the landscape. Consequently, the need for consistent ongoing training and development has never been more critical. With that in mind, Weir's newly established Process and Applications Academy provides graduates with fundamental technical knowledge of processing equipment.

The academy represents an extension of the company's existing Mill Circuit University (MCU) training programme specifi-

cally designed for customer-facing personnel at Weir. Its primary objective is to equip these individuals with the requisite technical knowledge to deliver effective solutions to their customers. This initiative has been successfully extended to Weir's customers in the East African region, with a particular focus on Tanzania, as well as to customers in West Africa.

In discussions with several Engineering, Procurement and Construction Management (EPCM) managers, the concept of the Process and Applications Academy was introduced. The academy aims to impart essential technical knowledge to recent university graduates, ensuring that they are well-prepared for their professional responsibilities.

The training programme is designed for graduate process engineers, mechanical engineers, metallurgists and chemical engineers from various EPCM or Engineer-

ing, Procurement and Construction (EPC) organisations, as well as recent graduates from Weir. The academy also welcomed graduates in electrical and civil engineering, thereby remaining open to all graduates nominated by their respective line managers.

By integrating Weir graduates with those from EPC and EPCM companies, the academy fosters the development of professional relationships that will yield significant value for the future of the minerals sector. The participating graduates represent the future of their respective organisations, and the relationships established during the academy are anticipated to provide lasting benefits for years to come.

Essential concepts, selection criteria and troubleshooting techniques were emphasised, with a focus on comminution, slurry and dewatering pumps, wear-resistant products, valves and cyclone simulations.

Additionally, the course addressed the integration of artificial intelligence into these processes. Furthermore, attendees had the opportunity to network with Weir technical experts and toured the company manufacturing facility in Johannesburg, where they observed Weir's assembly, manufacturing and warehousing capabilities.

The positive feedback obtained from various EPC and EPCM entities, as well as the responses from the graduates themselves, indicate a favourable assessment of the programme.

For more information: www.global.weir

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Can circular thinking go beyond economics to help solve public health issues?

RECENT reports of childrens’ deaths in townships due to toxic pesticides have shone a light on inadequate municipal waste services to residents living in lower-income areas. Here, uncollected household and other waste piles up in open spaces, attracting vermin and rats. To get rid of them, residents turn to what may be available at their local spaza shop – often cheap but highly dangerous chemicals, with fatal results.

Shifting perceptions of waste

Over the past few decades, there’s been a shift in how waste management is perceived which has led it away from its primary purpose – to provide a clean and healthy environment for citizens.

"Could the process that brought social justice for pickers, also work to address public health issues in under-served communities?"

The circular economy approach has placed a focus on the commercial value of waste materials. In circular thinking, waste materials are seen as commodities or elements which flow through an economic system and are kept within the production and consumption process by, for example, recovery, recycling, and reuse. This systemic view has changed the way waste is managed and is embedded in the government’s Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regulations.



Uncollected waste in low-income communities is a public health hazard.

It is particularly well suited to countries where waste services operate efficiently and regularly for all. However for millions of citizens in our country, waste services are often neither efficient nor regular, which leads to negative health impacts. How can circular economy thinking and practice also be put to good use in addressing public health issues in South Africa’s waste space?

How can circular economy thinking address public health issues in South Africa’s waste space?

A precedent may have been set in how the plight of waste pickers has been remedied. Based on sound academic research, and on advocacy by non-profits and other organisations, lobbying directly with government had positive results.

Municipalities are now required to integrate pickers in waste operations, and they must be paid for their work through PROs (Product Responsibility Organisations) under the EPR regulations.

Links between waste and ill-health

Could the process that brought social justice for pickers, also work to address public health issues in under-served communities? If so, research work would first be needed to establish links between inequitable waste services and ill-health in surrounding residents. Initial research through Stellenbosch University and other partners under the DSI/NRF/CSIR SARCHI Chair of Waste and Society is showing that this may indeed be the case. More research projects in other contexts are following to build a strong argument to advocate for efficient waste service provision. During a PRO roadshow recently, municipalities indicated they are keen to work with PROs and receive their support. Bureaucratic red tape holding up these kinds of public/private partnerships is being overcome. Collaboration amongst research, advocacy, PRO, municipal and community actors is growing and will help expand circular thinking beyond economics to resolve urgent social issues as well.

Hugh Tyrrell is director of GreenEdge, a marketing communications and behaviour change consultancy specialising in the circular economy.

Mines must embrace energy storage to align their climate, cost and security of supply goals

By Jonathan Skeen, MD Commercial, SOLA



DURING the 1990s and early 2000s South African mines bought electricity from Eskom at regulated tariffs which were globally competitive. Eskom prioritised the mines as their most important customers, and faced few hurdles relating to climate

change concerns. Buyers had little choice, but the energy was cheap and reliable and there were few viable alternatives. Since 2008, however, the landscape has become unrecognisable: after average annual tariff increases of 15%, a dramatic drop in grid reliability, the rise of carbon laws and trade restrictions, and the emergence of independent power producers (IPPs), energy traders and viable clean energy technologies. South African mines now have more choice, but must solve an increasingly complex puzzle to secure their electricity supplies, while both decarbonising and containing rising costs. Many have moved quickly in recent years to build their own solar energy plants at their operations, or to buy wind or solar power from the grid under wheeling agreements with IPPs. However, as the generation capacity of wind and solar power on the network increases, so too does the complexity of integrating more variable power while minimising waste and balancing supply and demand.

The arrival of compelling battery energy storage solutions

As South African mines look to an unpredictable future, their ability to increase

the flexibility of their electrical demand and supply will be central to achieving steep carbon goals in a cost effective and reliable manner. Here, battery storage technologies have emerged as a pivotal technology for delivering a range of beneficial services both via the grid and behind the meter. The battery revolution bears the hallmarks of the solar revolution that preceded it: solar panel prices decreased by 90% from 2010 to 2023 while Eskom tariffs increased by more than five times. This drove the emergence of the thriving South African solar industry. Similarly, we have seen that a 90% decrease in average battery storage prices over the last 15 years (much of which occurred in the past 24 months) is driving rapid deployment of battery capacity around the world. When coupled with solar PV, large scale batteries can already improve the immediate savings benefit under wheeling transactions by around 20%. This is achieved by enhancing the generation profile, increasing usable clean

energy volumes, and deploying more clean energy during expensive peak demand periods.

It means greater resilience and reliability

As Eskom aims to implement sweeping changes to electricity tariff structures, and as our generation mix evolves at an unprecedented rate, flexibility has become the mining sector’s most valuable resource. Batteries can adapt to future changes in time-of-use periods and tariffs. They can be enhanced and augmented in future to follow cost and market influences. They also offer resilience against the so-called “duck-curve” effect, as surplus solar generation during daylight hours drives technical and economic inefficiencies in the power system.

What’s next for batteries in the mining sector

South African mines can now embrace the flexibility and resilience that comes with existing battery products that are now both economical and proven. With battery storage already delivering real-world benefits, they will soon become a cornerstone of a competitive and sustainable mining sector in South Africa.

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