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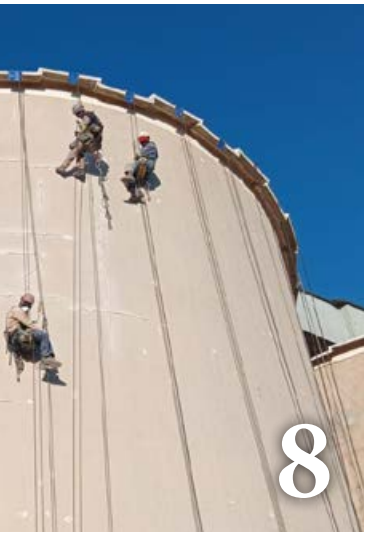
In this issue

According to market research and consulting firm 6Wresearch, the South African precast concrete market size is projected to rise at a compound annual growth rate of 6,2% from 2025-2031. Furthermore, according to a report on www.moneyweb.co.za on 27 May, President Cyril Ramaphosa informed delegates at a recent infrastructure summit in Cape Town that the South African fiscal year which began on 1 April will see approximately 250 construction projects – primarily in infrastructure – being carried out across the country in sectors such as energy, roads and water.

Heartening news, indeed. And in these pages, we identify crucial areas which need similarly urgent attention, such as Johannesburg's eroded bridges and integrating public transport into smart transportation infrastructure that leverages existing technology and innovative solutions. We also celebrate Chryso Southern Africa's success in meeting the growing demand for exposed aggregate concrete finishes. In addition, we salute the collaboration of AfriSam and RADA in restoring the dignity of schoolgirls in underserved communities and enabling them to attend all school days every month by providing them with essential hygiene products.

We hope you enjoy this issue!



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ON THE COVER

Chryso's combination of visual impact, surface durability, slip-resistance and improved bonding makes exposed aggregate finishes a smart choice for both new builds and renovations.

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Built to last, exposed aggregate delivers a hard-wearing finish that stands up to the demands of roads and transport infrastructure.

Michelle Fick, BU development manager: concrete aesthetics at Chryso Southern Africa.

CHRYSO RIDES THE EXPOSED AGGREGATE WAVE

An upward trend in the use of surface retarders in South Africa's construction and infrastructure sector is shining a spotlight on the increasing popularity of exposed aggregate concrete finishes. According to Michelle Fick of Chryso Southern Africa, this trend reflects a growing appreciation for both the aesthetic and functional benefits that exposed aggregate offers.

"Exposed aggregate is no longer just a decorative finish; it's being adopted across a wide range of applications, from pavements and driveways to architectural façades and public infrastructure," she says. "The textured non-slip surface offers a safer option for high-traffic zones, while the natural stone aesthetic enhances the visual appeal of buildings and outdoor spaces."

The finish is also ideal for preparing concrete surfaces that will receive a subsequent layer. Whether it is a waterproofing membrane, screed or cladding, the roughened texture created by the exposed aggregate allows for superior bonding, improving the durability and lifespan of the entire system. This makes it a preferred solution not only in aesthetic applications, but also where structural performance is key.

Chryso Southern Africa offers surface retarders designed specifically to meet these evolving needs. The company's products facilitate reliable, consistent exposure of the aggregate to the required depth – up to a maximum of 3mm – ensuring a uniform and high-quality result. This is essential for specialist applicators who rely on precision and repeatability, particularly in large-scale or architecturally sensitive projects.

"The simplicity of the application process is another advantage," explains Fick. "After the concrete's poured, the surface retarder must be applied evenly before the concrete begins to set. Following a pre-determined curing period, the surface is washed with water, removing the top layer of cement paste and revealing the aggregate below. A final sealant is then applied to enhance the surface's durability and finish."

Sealants can be selected to suit different environments and project

> "The simplicity of the application process is another advantage."

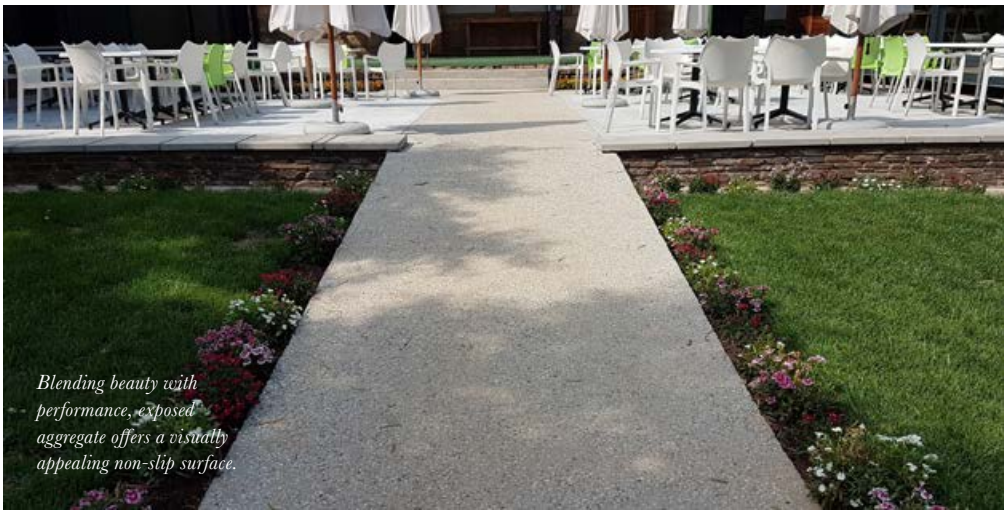
needs, including internal and external use, UV-resistance and finishes ranging from matte to high-gloss. This flexibility allows architects and contractors to customise the final appearance, while ensuring long-term performance.

Significantly, Chryso was the first manufacturer to offer a mineral solvent-free, water-based retarder designed to prevent soil and groundwater pollution during the cleaning of treated concrete. The product contains no toxic substances, is 85% biodegradable, is classified as harmless and complies with EEC Directives 88/379 and 93/18.

Fick notes that Chryso's surface retarders are developed with the applicator in mind, offering not only technical consistency, but also ease of use in site conditions that can often be challenging. "Our retarders provide reliable performance even under variable temperature and humidity conditions, which is critical for projects with tight timelines and complex environmental demands," she says.

With sustainability and safety continuing to drive specification choices in the built environment, the use of exposed aggregate finishes is expected to grow. "The combination of visual impact, surface durability, slip-resistance and improved bonding makes it a smart choice for both new builds and renovations," adds Fick. "As the trend gains momentum, we're committed to supporting the market with reliable solutions that ensure consistent high-quality results."

As urban spaces evolve and developers seek more creative, yet practical finishes, the role of surface retarders – and particularly exposed aggregate – is likely to become even more prominent in shaping the look and functionality of tomorrow's concrete structures. ■



Blending beauty with performance, exposed aggregate offers a visually appealing non-slip surface.

Durable and visually appealing, exposed aggregate offers a textured non-slip surface, combining safety and style for high-traffic public spaces.

Jet Demolition specialises in fast-track, high-pressure bridge demolition projects.

URGENT ROLE OF DEMOLITION IN **JHB'S BRIDGE CRISIS**

Recent assessments have raised significant concerns about the structural integrity of Johannesburg's bridges. According to the Johannesburg Roads Agency (JRA), about 78% of the city's 902 bridges are in poor or very poor condition, with 20 bridges on the brink of closure. The JRA has indicated that addressing these issues would require an estimated R16 billion to bring the bridges up to acceptable standards.

The deterioration of these structures has been attributed to factors such as ageing infrastructure, increased traffic loads and damage from recent floods, which have led to the collapse of critical components such as stormwater culverts and embankments. Budget constraints have further delayed essential repairs, exacerbating the risk of structural failures.

Fast-track, high-pressure bridge demolition projects, where timeous completion and safety performance are critical, is a specialised area of expertise for Jet Demolition. "Here the increased risk and high-pressure conditions lend themselves to our specific set of expertise," says contracts and project manager Kate Bester.

Bridge demolition projects are typically on a turnkey, rapid-demolition basis. The company's innovative, state-of-the-art and technically advanced methods and machinery allow it to tackle the most demanding and complex bridge demolition projects.

These include aspects of road safety – from temporary road closure design and implementation to extensive communication and consultation with the general public, liaison with all relevant authorities, engineering suitable demolition methods, planning for unforeseen circumstances and final road-clearing.

Emergency demolition is often required where bridge stability or safety is compromised by an unforeseen event, such as traffic accidents which have impacted on a bridge structure, or vandalism causing structural stability concerns. Emergency bridge projects invariably impact the travelling public,

since – like all emergencies – they are unforeseen.

"One of the biggest challenges on an emergency bridge project is mobilising our plant and personnel to the works. If a bridge is suddenly compromised, all traffic in the immediate area is gridlocked until such time as alternative routes are made available. In these circumstances, we rely heavily on the assistance of traffic authorities to provide emergency escorts to the site, fast-tracking the establishment of plant and personnel," explains Bester.

Jet Demolition recently successfully carried out the overnight demolition of the Rockdale Road Bridge in KwaZulu-Natal as part of a larger project to upgrade the N3 highway and the EB Cloete Interchange. The company is now preparing for the next overnight project, anticipated to be carried out in June.

"One of the biggest challenges on an emergency bridge project is mobilising our plant and personnel to the works. If a bridge is suddenly compromised, all traffic in the immediate area is gridlocked until such time as alternative routes are made available. In these circumstances, we rely heavily on the assistance of traffic authorities to provide emergency escorts to the site, fast-tracking the establishment of plant and personnel."

CITI-CON'S CONCRETE REPAIR CAPABILITIES IN DEMAND

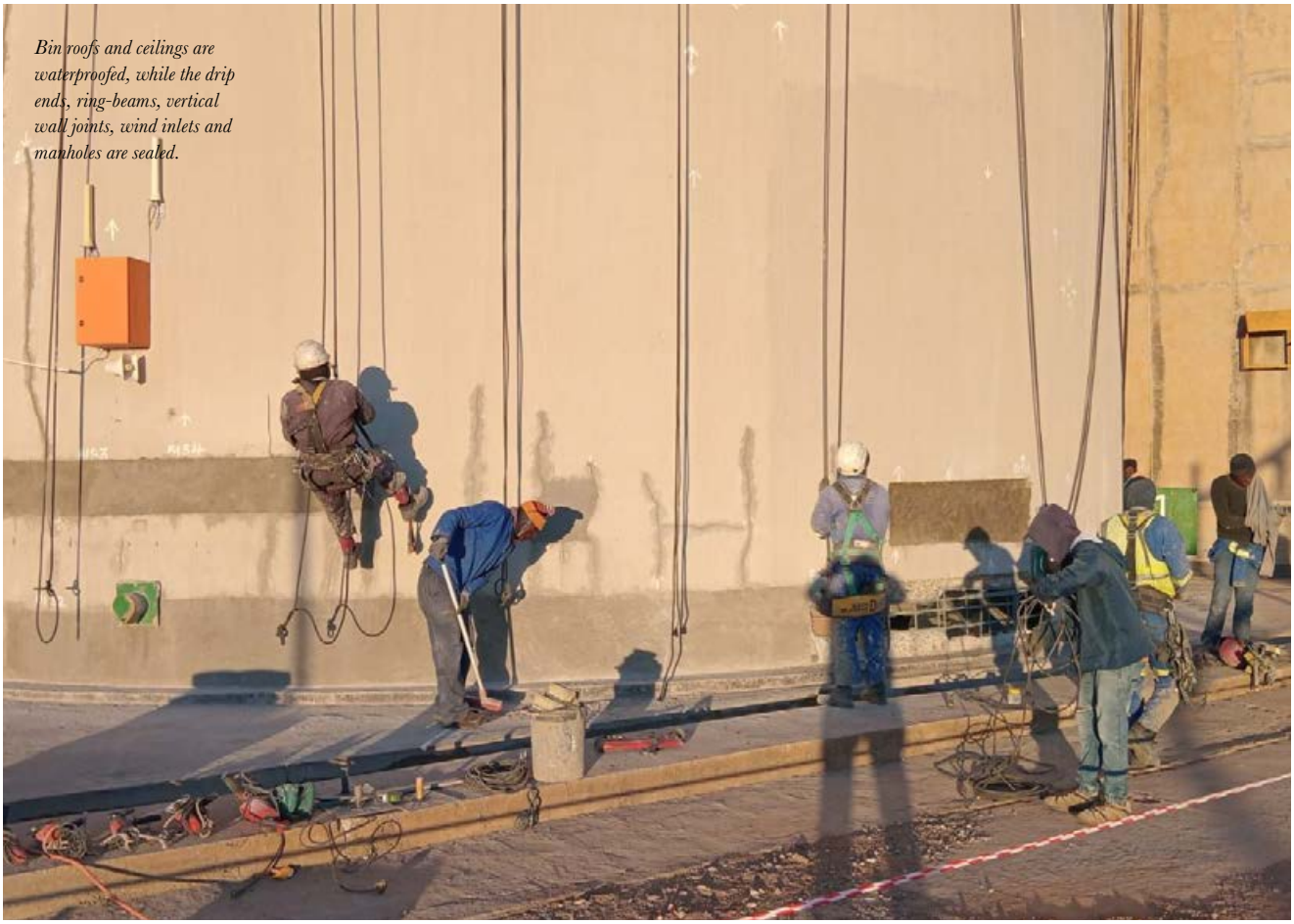
The work scope includes repairing the concrete walls, each about 33,5m in height and 49m in diameter.

Citi-Con's specialist concrete repair capabilities are being harnessed by a leading agricultural company to refurbish its silos at three sites. Their useable lives are also being extended, a critical intervention considering the strategic nature of this infrastructure.

"Silos are very costly to demolish and reconstruct, which often involves specialist construction techniques to reduce build time and costs. Even so, it isn't always possible to decommission this infrastructure without negatively impacting operations. This is considering the strategic role that silos play in preventing post-harvest losses by providing efficient and reliable storage capacity," says Andrew Rudolph, technical director of Citi-Con.

Considering the age of these silos, they require extensive concrete repairs. The work scope includes waterproofing the bin roofs and ceilings, as well as sealing the drip ends. Citi-Con is also sealing the ring-beams, vertical wall joints, wind inlets and manholes.

This is in addition to comprehensive repairs to the concrete walls, each about 33,5m in height and 49m in diameter. Rudolph says that the process starts with thorough preparation of the concrete substrate, removing a thin layer of concrete via high-pressure cleaning at 200 bar. This exposes the many vertical and horizontal cracks in the walls, after which a comprehensive structural investigation is undertaken. Cracks greater than 1mm in width are addressed first. A chip hammer is used to identify honeycombing and spalling due to steel reinforcement corrosion and the compromised concrete is then marked for attention.



Bin roofs and ceilings are waterproofed, while the drip ends, ring-beams, vertical wall joints, wind inlets and manholes are sealed.

Thereafter, square cutting is undertaken to prepare the compromised concrete for repair. This entails cutting the edges of the cracks to about 120mm on either side and widening the bases. They are opened to about 20mm behind the reinforcement to create a shelf for the repair material to lock in. "This level of preparation is key to ensuring durable concrete silo repairs. In many instances, premature failure of concrete repairs can be attributed to poor preparation practices to save time and costs," explains Rudolph.

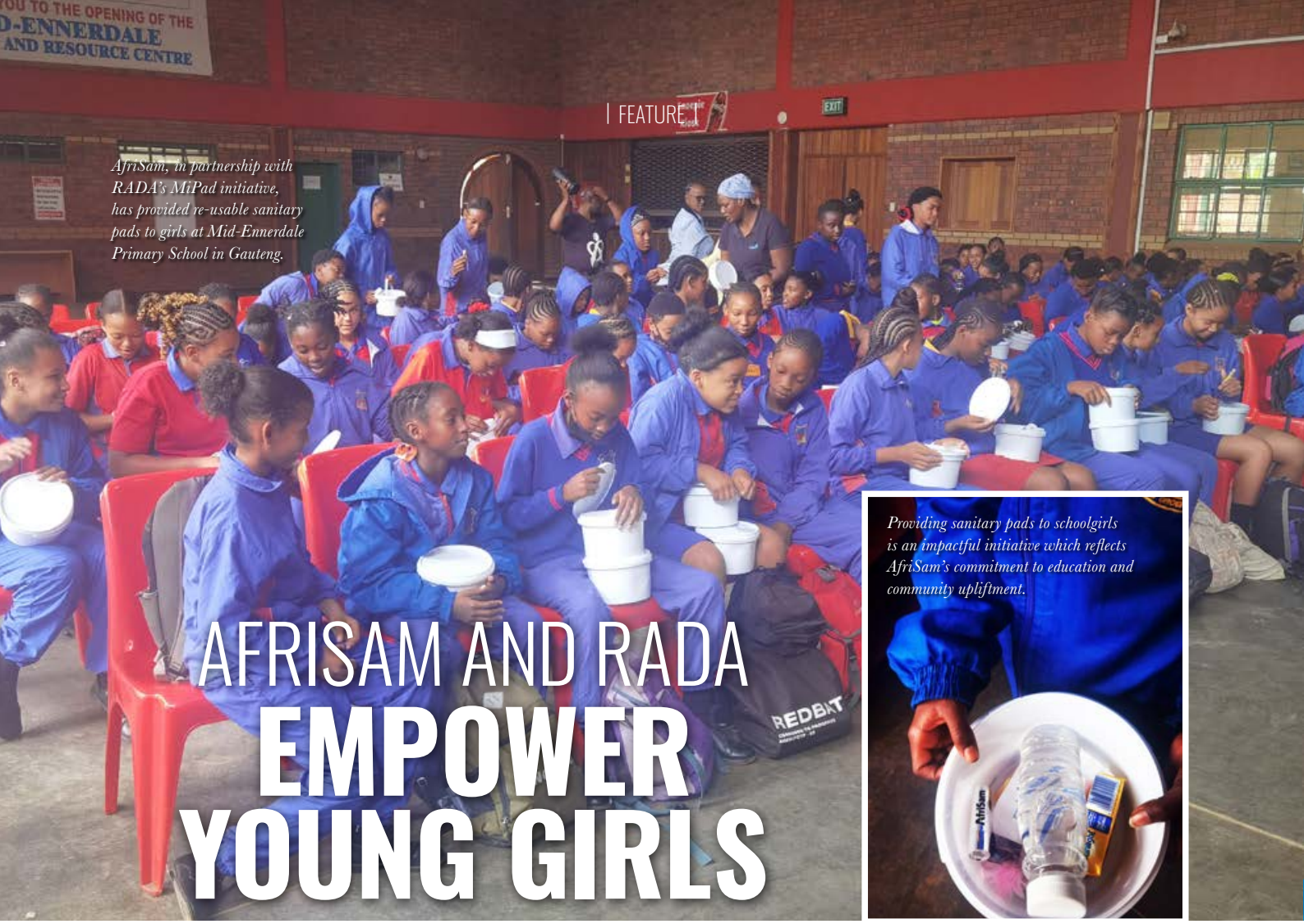
As part of the process, the steel reinforcement is treated with StonCor Africa's Pro-Struct 688 Zinc Rich Primer. It was specified for this application because of its durable and corrosion-resistant properties. He says that this is a sound example of how Citi-Con is also extending the useable life of the infrastructure, considering that corrosion is one of the leading causes of degradation of reinforced concrete structures.

Thereafter, the exposed concrete is saturated with water ahead of the application of StonCor Africa's TAMMS structural mortar, which provides high strength and increased adhesion due to its proprietary formulation. The structural mortar consists of Portland cement, graded aggregates, unique fibres and polymers, while also containing a corrosion inhibitor.

Cracks that are less than 1mm in width are chased with V-joint/V-groove cutting discs and then reinstated with ProStruct 506 Flexicoat. This is a high-quality elastomeric waterproofing membrane.

"Completing the concrete silo repairs also entails treating the other repair areas with Pro-Struct 506 Flexicoat. The wall is first saturated with water using a hose. The first coat is applied horizontally from right to left and the second perpendicular, starting from the top. This approach ensures proper adhesion of the 2mm-thick waterproofing membrane," says Rudolph. ■

"Completing the concrete silo repairs also entails treating the other repair areas with Pro-Struct 506 Flexicoat. The wall is first saturated with water using a hose. The first coat is applied horizontally from right to left and the second perpendicular, starting from the top. This approach ensures proper adhesion of the 2mm-thick waterproofing membrane."



AfriSam, in partnership with RADA's MiPad initiative, has provided re-usable sanitary pads to girls at Mid-Ennerdale Primary School in Gauteng.

AFRISAM AND RADA EMPOWER YOUNG GIRLS

Providing sanitary pads to schoolgirls is an impactful initiative which reflects AfriSam's commitment to education and community upliftment.

Leading construction materials producer AfriSam has proudly sponsored and distributed re-usable sanitary pads to Grade 7 female pupils at Mid-Ennerdale Primary School in Gauteng. This initiative, part of RADA's MiPad programme, reflects both organisations' commitment to education, empowerment and sustainable community upliftment.

The distribution of re-usable sanitary wear is not just about hygiene – it is also about restoring dignity, promoting equality and keeping young girls in school. According to Unicef, one in 10 girls in Africa misses up to 20% of the school year due to a lack of access to menstrual products. In South Africa, research by the Department of Women, Youth and Persons With Disabilities has shown that 30% of girls miss school during their menstrual cycle because they cannot afford sanitary pads.

> **"The future's bright for these young girls," adds Sehloho. "We look forward to meeting them again one day – this time, as successful women who're contributing to our beautiful country."**

"AfriSam has seen in communities that pupils who can't afford to buy sanitary towels stay at home and miss out on valuable teaching time," says Mathapelo Sehloho, AfriSam community development manager. "By partnering with RADA, we're contributing to a reduction in absenteeism and enhancing the academic performance of young girls."

With the support of corporate sponsors like AfriSam, RADA's MiPad programme ensures that these challenges do not derail the futures of young women. By distributing re-usable, eco-friendly sanitary pads, the initiative supports both education and environmental sustainability.

"Too often, the needs of these young kids are overlooked," says Ebeth van den Berg, AfriSam marketing manager. "I hope that each of these girls will find their unique space where they can become the absolute best they can be."

AfriSam's involvement in this initiative is part of its broader corporate social responsibility programmes which include investment in education, infrastructure development, youth empowerment and sustainable livelihoods. These initiatives reflect the company's core value of People, focusing on meaningful impact in the communities it serves.

"The future's bright for these young girls," adds Sehloho. "We look forward to meeting them again one day – this time, as successful women who're contributing to our beautiful country."

RADA understands that, despite their motivation and ambition, many girls struggle to maintain regular attendance due to menstrual-related challenges. The MiPad initiative directly addresses this by providing a practical, re-usable solution which helps girls take control of their education and future. ■

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Chris Allen

CHRIS ALLEN APPOINTED TO **CIB INTERNATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The CIB appointed Chris Allen to its board of directors during the CIB World Building Congress, Purdue University, Indiana, USA on 20 May this year, effective immediately. "Chris Allen brings a dynamic blend of academic leadership, research excellence and practical insight in the field of construction management and building science," read a statement from the board.

"Chris brings a rich perspective grounded in both research and practice. His leadership in digital construction curriculum development, building science research and interdisciplinary collaboration will contribute significantly to our mission of advancing global building and construction innovation," said CIB CEO Don Ward.

Allen currently heads the Department of Construction Management at Nelson Mandela University, where he lectures in building science (environment and services). He is also the co-director of the MSc (Built Environment) Programme and the interim director of the Built Environment Research Centre. With a career that bridges academic research and industry collaboration, he has been instrumental in shaping innovative approaches to sustainable design, building services and digital construction management in the built environment sector.

"It's an honour to join the board of an organisation which I've long respected for its global impact. The CIB plays a vital role in connecting research with industry practice and I look forward to contributing to its ongoing efforts to shape a more sustainable and forward-thinking built environment," said Allen.

The CIB is a worldwide network of experts committed to advancing research, knowledge-sharing and innovation in the built environment. It works with professionals, academics and policy-makers to address key challenges in sustainable building, construction technology and performance-driven design. ■

Prof John Smallwood

CONSTRUCTION HEALTH AND SAFETY PRESENTATION

With safety a growing concern in the South African construction industry – sparked by events like the collapse of the bridge over the M1 in Sandton, Johannesburg in 2015, the 2024 George tragedy and a number of other fatal accidents on building sites – the need for increased vigilance, greater knowledge and expertise in managing these spaces responsibly is essential. These tragedies are caused not only by negligence on sites, but by the failure of construction companies to prioritise a culture of vigilance, health and safety among their workforce in order to cut costs and meet deadlines. To address this situation, it is important to be aware of the current levels of health and safety in the industry so that such fault lines can be ring-marked and improved in building projects.

This requires not only compliance with existing safety legislation, but additional expertise in identifying and preventing potential risks on construction sites in order to save lives, reduce costs and uphold our country's proud legacy of excellence in the global industry.

John Smallwood, PhD (Constr Man) FCIOB FCMSaiosh MACHASM MACPM MARCOM MESSA MICOH MIOSH, Professor of Construction Management in the Department of Construction Management at the Summerstrand North Campus of Nelson Mandela University in Gqeberha, Eastern Cape, will be delivering a presentation titled "The State of South African Construction Health and Safety" at the SA Institute of Occupational Safety and Health's 2025 Health and Safety Conference – the largest event of its kind in the country.

The presentation will include, among others, the rating of the South African construction industry relative to 250 aspects/parameters in terms of health and safety.

Professionals in the sector are strongly encouraged to attend this informative and crucial event.

Secure your seat and join fellow occupational health and safety professionals to gain insights from Prof Smallwood and other industry pioneers driving progress and innovation across this field. ■

Date:
15 August 2025
Registration starts at 7am

Venue:
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Cape Town

Contact:
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To register, visit:
https://www.saiosh.co.za/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=1930893&group=

UNPACKING THE NEW **EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT REGULATIONS**

The South African labour market is set for a significant transformation with the publication of the new Employment Equity (EE) Regulations. These regulations, published on 15 April 2025, aim to promote greater transformation and inclusivity within workplaces across the country. Mandilakhe Gcilitshana, employment equity specialist at Strata-g Transformation Solutions, underscores the significance of these changes in advancing equitable representation across various sectors.

Key highlights of the new regulations

1. General administrative regulations

- Standardised reporting forms: The introduction of standardised forms such as EEA2 and EEA4 aims to streamline the reporting process for employers.
- Templates for EE analysis and plans: Employers will now have access to templates for EE analysis (EEA12) and EE plans (EEA13), facilitating better planning and implementation.

"The new EE regulations are a pivotal step in SA's transformation agenda. They aim to ensure equitable access to opportunities for previously disadvantaged groups such as black people, women and persons with disabilities, fostering a more inclusive economy," says Gcilitshana.

2. Sector numerical EE targets

The regulations establish five-year sector-specific numerical targets for designated groups across 18 key economic sectors. These targets focus on increasing representation at upper occupational levels, including persons with disabilities. The introduction of mandatory numerical targets under Section 15a (2) of the EE Act compels employers to proactively work towards achieving equitable workforce representation, which is vital for socio-economic development.

3. Compliance requirements
Designated employers with 50 or more employees must align their EE plans with these targets to ensure equitable representation. Non-compliance could result in hefty penalties of up to R1,5 million or 2% of annual turnover. It is crucial to note that over 200 employees have already faced the Labour Court for prior violations.

The introduction of mandatory numerical targets under Section 15a (2) of the Employment Equity Act brings tectonic shifts in the labour landscape. It requires employers to take proactive steps towards achieving equitable representation, which is essential for the country's socio-economic development.

"Enforcing these sector targets will greatly affect designated employers and their capacity to engage in business with the state. Businesses must understand and comply with these regulations to avoid hefty penalties and ensure sustainable growth," says Gcilitshana.

Implications for B-BBEE
The new Employment Equity (EE) regulations will significantly impact B-BBEE compliance by redefining "designated employers", requiring sector-specific targets and introducing an Employer Equity Certificate of Compliance. These changes will require businesses to realign their EE and B-BBEE frameworks to ensure both legal adherence and strategic growth.

Companies wishing to participate in state contracts will be required to provide an Employer Equity Certificate of Compliance. This certificate demonstrates compliance with the Employment Equity Act and its regulations, including the attainment of sector-specific targets. Companies without this certificate may face exclusion from state tenders and potential penalties for non-compliance.

The path forward
While the new EE regulations present significant challenges, they also offer opportunities for businesses willing to adapt and innovate. Gcilitshana notes that these changes are crucial for fostering a more inclusive and representative workforce in SA.

"Employers are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the new regulatory framework to ensure compliance and alignment with the employment equity objectives outlined by the Department of Employment & Labour. By doing so, they can contribute to a more equitable and inclusive South African labour market," he says. ■

> "The new EE regulations are a pivotal step in SA's transformation agenda. They aim to ensure equitable access to opportunities for previously disadvantaged groups such as black people, women and persons with disabilities, fostering a more inclusive economy."

Kgalaletso Tlhoaele, head of enterprise development at Absa.

ABSA'S 14TH ANNUAL ESD EXPO

Too many corporate enterprise and supplier development (ESD) initiatives focus on compliance, rather than real results. For long-term success and a sustainable impact on lives, the economy and South Africa's unemployment crisis, emerging suppliers must be integrated into real supply chains.

This is the contention of Kgalaletso Tlhoaele, head of enterprise development at Absa. Ahead of the 14th annual Absa ESD Expo, he urges businesses to examine whether their ESD approach is just a compliance checkbox or a truly transformative economic driver. "After 14 years, and with more than 14 000 small businesses engaged since 2012, the Absa ESD Expo is a powerful formula that works and creates real business opportunities," he says.

"This is more than just an event and offers much more than exhibition stands and networking sessions. It's a market access programme that continues to empower emerging businesses long after the expo. Hosted small, medium and micro-enterprises [SMMEs] benefit from a six-month extensive buyer linkage platform which includes ongoing buyer match-up sessions, direct introductions to buyers and ongoing access to SMME clinic master classes," he explains. "The 2024 programme culminated in a gathering in Riversands, where attending small businesses got a powerful kick-start to 2025 with access to more than 40 buyers from across the industry spectrum. This is a comprehensive, purpose-driven formula for business growth, ensuring that emerging suppliers aren't just seen, but integrated into real supply chains."

Feedback from attendees echoes this. "Since joining the Absa/Smart Procurement World ESD Programme, our business has grown tremendously. We secured a supplier development loan and an agreement that strengthened our financial position and market access. We've also formed key partnerships in Kenya, Gauteng, Rwanda and Zambia, expanding operations and securing sustainable feedstock sources. This programme's greatly strengthened our long-term sustainability," says Kealeboga Tshikovhi from Lamo Fuel.

Mechanical engineering company Bareng Cons Services has benefited through exposure to major original equipment manufacturers, according to Rita Sello-Mohlala. "We've built a strong database of buyers and are already working on a tender submission. Some

> **"The programme opened doors we never imagined. We also secured a five-year contract worth R500 000 – a game-changer for our business."**

corporates have initiated communication and we're planning a factory site visit for potential clients. The last session led to serious commitments from buyers."

"The programme opened doors we never imagined. We also secured a five-year contract worth R500 000 – a game-changer for our business," says Thabile Makhoba of Makhoba Professional Services.

The Absa ESD Expo's success in bridging the gap between SMMEs and corporate procurement teams is what sets it apart, according to Colleen Mac Namara from Zeltec Telecoms.

"While exhibitions and networking are essential, real supplier development happens when SMMEs receive sustained, structured support beyond the event itself. That's why the Absa ESD programme ensures long-term market access through structured, facilitated engagements with corporate procurement teams. The proof lies in the numbers and. more importantly, in the voices of the entrepreneurs whose businesses have been transformed through the programme. The future of ESD lies in moving beyond lip service," says Tlhoaele.

The 2025 Absa ESD Expo takes place from 16-17 September 2025 at the Gallagher Convention Centre, Midrand. It runs alongside the 19th annual Smart Procurement World Indaba.

Smart procurement ESD project manager Nyasha Mate urges corporates and SMMEs to get involved in the Absa ESD Expo. "This is an invaluable opportunity for corporates to empower their beneficiaries with direct access to hundreds of buyers actively seeking solutions. Their growth is your success. This is also where meaningful connections that drive sustainable business opportunities are established. Corporates have commended the impact of the supplier match-up sessions. It's an opportunity that can't be missed for SMMEs to showcase their offerings on the exhibition floor."

The expo will feature more than 250 exhibiting SMMEs, interactive on-floor sessions and one-on-one supplier match-up meetings. In addition, an open visitors' day allows broader industry participation, fostering valuable connections.

- ***The 2025 Absa ESD Expo takes place from 16-17 September 2025 at the Gallagher Convention Centre, Midrand. It runs alongside the 19th annual Smart Procurement World Indaba. For further information and booking details, visit: https://smartprocurementworld.com/indaba/absa-esd-event/.***

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REINFORCING THE FUTURE

By Allen Fiford, founder and CEO: GFRP Tech

For nearly two centuries, steel rebar has been a fundamental component in reinforced concrete construction, providing strength and durability to buildings and infrastructure. However, a new contender is rapidly emerging: glass fibre-reinforced polymer (GFRP). With its superior technical performance and numerous advantages over traditional steel, GFRP is redefining the standards for modern construction and gaining widespread popularity as a durable and innovative alternative.

Looking at the key differences between GFRP and steel, by focusing on strength, durability, life-cycle, maintenance, weight, conductivity and sustainability, it is easy to see why GFRP will continue to gain traction in the South African construction industry and perhaps even replace steel.

Through intensive testing, it has been proven that GFRP rebars, which are made up of approximately 75-80% glass fibre and 20-25% polymers, often exceed more than double the tensile strength of steel. For instance, GFRP can achieve tensile strengths of over 1 000MPa, while steel typically ranges from 450-690MPa. This means that while steel can deform, GFRP rebar and mesh maintain their structural integrity without yielding, making them highly resistant to permanent deformation.

As there are no corrosive components in its manufacturing, GFRP is highly resistant to corrosion, making it ideal for harsh environments such as marine structures or areas exposed to chemicals. In Saudi Arabia, this technology was used in the

> **"SA, which aims to lower greenhouse gas emissions and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, as outlined in the updated Nationally Determined Contribution, can leverage GFRP to meet these ambitious targets."**

Jizan Flood Mitigation Channel, one of the largest GFRP rebar projects globally, spanning 23km. This exemplifies how GFRP is being effectively employed in large-scale infrastructure projects where its non-corrosive nature is the ideal choice for structures of this nature.

Even in non-critical infrastructure, such as sidewalks, we have seen the occurrence of spalling in concrete as a result of the pressure and degradation of steel from corrosion and rust.

Spalling is typically seen when surface patches of concrete break up and delaminate in the absence of immediate external influences, which indicates that this is coming from within the structure.

Therefore, non-ferrous materials like GFRP require less maintenance over their life-cycle than steel, which can necessitate costly repairs. Studies have found that concrete also bonds better with the GFRP rebars compared with traditional steel, meaning that it provides great durability and ductility.

Weighing approximately 25% of equivalent steel rebar, GFRP significantly reduces transportation and installation costs. At a recent construction site, a contractor highlighted the ergonomic benefits of GFRP's lighter weight. He noted that using this technology resulted in less physical strain on workers' bodies, leading to fewer injuries. The contractor estimated that implementing GFRP could potentially extend his own and his crew's careers by at least 20 years due to reduced wear and tear on their bodies.

GFRP offers superior thermal insulation due to its lower thermal conductivity, compared with steel. This property is particularly advantageous in SA's predominantly hot climate. Unlike steel rebar and mesh, which can become uncomfortably hot after prolonged sun exposure, GFRP maintains a more manageable temperature. As a result, construction workers can handle GFRP materials more comfortably and safely throughout the day, even during peak sun hours. This thermal characteristic not only enhances worker comfort, but contributes to improved safety and efficiency on construction sites.

As GFRP emits significantly less carbon dioxide (CO_2) during production than steel, it is expected to play a growing role in national and municipal infrastructure projects aimed at decarbonisation. Additionally, GFRP's lighter weight reduces transportation emissions, further enhancing its environmental benefits.

SA, which aims to lower greenhouse gas emissions and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, as outlined in the updated Nationally Determined Contribution, can leverage GFRP to meet these ambitious targets. By reducing carbon emissions associated with both material production and transportation, GFRP contributes to greener construction practices and aligns with the country's long-term climate strategy.

An important trade-off to consider when comparing GFRP rebar with steel rebar is its resale value. Unlike steel, GFRP cannot easily be recycled by melting it down and repurposing it into new products. However, GFRP can be re-used on other projects if a company chooses to do so, offering a practical alternative to recycling. In a local context, this characteristic also makes GFRP products less likely to be stolen from construction sites, as they lack the immediate scrap value of steel. Furthermore, the superior durability and performance of GFRP can enhance the long-term value of structures by ensuring extended lifespans and reducing maintenance requirements, potentially increasing their overall resale value.

With numerous technical advantages over steel rebar and mesh – such as exceptional corrosion-resistance, higher tensile strength, lighter weight and non-conductivity – GFRP stands out as a compelling solution for modern construction. Its long-term benefits not only contribute to more sustainable and durable structures, but align with the growing demand for environmentally friendly and cost-effective building materials.

As the construction industry continues to prioritise resilience and sustainability, GFRP is poised to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of infrastructure development. ■

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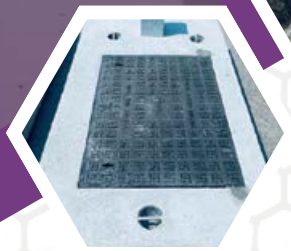

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Concor has successfully completed numerous buildings within the Oxford Parks precinct, contributing to the development of this premier mixed-use urban space.

CONCOR BUILDS MOMENTUM WITH STRONG PROJECT PIPELINE

Concor, one of South Africa's leading infrastructure and construction companies, is building positive momentum with renewed strength and a clear trajectory for future growth. Despite ongoing external pressures in the market, the business has made meaningful progress in strengthening its position and creating a stable outlook for the future.

Concor CEO Jerome Govender confirms that the company's project teams have secured several new contracts, strengthening its order book for the next two to three years. These include two significant renewable EPC energy projects which encompass the delivery of the civil and electrical balance of plant works. The De Aar 2 Wind Farm project is scheduled for completion in October 2026, while the Karreebosch Wind Farm project is due for completion in February 2027.

The SA National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL) has also awarded two contracts to Concor for road improvements: the enhancement of National Road R101 Section 8 from Bela Bela to Modimolle and the improvement of National Route N11 Section 9 between Hendrina Power Station and the N4 Interchange. These projects have durations of 30 months and 33 months respectively.

In the built environment sector, Concor has secured the contract for the

Concor's construction of the Msikaba Bridge in the Eastern Cape is well advanced, showcasing the company's technical expertise on one of South Africa's most iconic infrastructure projects.

construction of an office block at 3 Parks Boulevard. The project includes a three-storey west wing, a four-storey east wing and four basement levels, with completion scheduled for the first quarter of 2026.

> "These new project awards reflect the market's confidence in Concor's ability to deliver quality projects on time, within budget and safely. I'm pleased that they also provide a platform for Concor to contribute meaningfully to job creation and local supplier development."

Another exciting development for the company is the award of the Newmarket Mixed-Use Housing Development Phase 1 contract in the Western Cape. This project includes the development and construction of 375 social housing units, 575 open market housing units and approximately 500m² of retail space.

"These new project awards reflect the market's confidence in Concor's ability to deliver quality projects on time, within budget and safely. I'm pleased that they also provide a platform for Concor to contribute meaningfully to job creation and local supplier development," says Govender.

He adds that Concor is actively pursuing additional medium-term opportunities, with strategies in place to manage any remaining challenges. The company remains cautiously optimistic about the road ahead.

> "Despite ongoing external pressures in the market, the business has made meaningful progress in strengthening its position and creating a stable outlook for the future."

Govender credits the progress made to the support of Concor's shareholders, the board, senior management and employees across the business. "Our collective efforts over recent months have provided a stable platform for us to move forward. With this solid foundation in place, we're well-positioned to deliver on our current commitments and explore new opportunities with confidence," he notes. ■

Chryso's curing compound ensures even moisture retention, reducing cracks and discolouration for a smoother, more visually consistent concrete finish.

Michelle Fick, business unit development manager for concrete aesthetics at Chryso Southern Africa.

CHRYSO ENHANCES CONCRETE'S AESTHETIC IMPACT

"This proactive approach not only extends the life of critical assets, but minimises the risk of unexpected failures."

With growing demand for buildings that are not only functional, but visually striking, Chryso is helping customers reshape the face of concrete. Driven by technological advancements and a strong appreciation for architectural innovation, the company offers a broad portfolio of solutions which ensure that concrete is both durable and beautiful.

According to Michelle Fick, business unit revelopment manager for concrete aesthetics at Chryso Southern Africa, customers now have access to a wide range of innovative products tailored to various applications. "To achieve the desired aesthetic impact, it's essential to consider how the concrete is applied," she says. "That's why we offer a comprehensive suite of solutions, including surface retarders, integral pigments, surface treatments, curing compounds and demoulding oils."

These products can be used in combination to enhance even the most basic concrete features such as pillars or floors, ensuring that aesthetics are never overlooked, regardless of the project's scale or complexity.

One of the most common requirements in aesthetic concrete applications

is colour consistency. Chryso's integral iron oxide pigments provide vibrant, durable colour throughout the concrete mass, so that even chips or abrasions will not reveal an underlying colour difference.

Surface quality is another priority. Chryso's plasticisers and super-plasticisers improve the workability and flow of the concrete mix, reducing surface defects and ensuring a smooth, high-quality finish. To further strengthen and enhance surface performance, the company also offers densifiers and hardeners that provide improved abrasion-resistance. Additionally, its release agents support a clean separation from formwork, enabling a high-class finish with consistent colour and texture.

Texture also plays a vital role in the visual appeal of concrete. Viscosity-modifying admixtures such as CHRYSO® Quad 20 improve cohesion, preventing issues such as segregation or honeycombing.

Efflorescence – the white, powdery residue that can appear on concrete surfaces – is a common challenge that Chryso tackles with products like CHRYSO® Fuge B, an integral waterproofing admixture which blocks pores and reduces the risk of moisture ingress. The company also offers water-repellent surface treatments such as dry-coat sealers, which prevent water from reacting with free lime – the cause of efflorescence.

Surface finishing is key to consistency and CHRYSO® FiniSafe can be applied just before the final finishing operation to enhance surface uniformity. Fick stresses that the success of any aesthetic concrete application depends on best practice. "Consistent batch control, quality materials and correct curing techniques are essential," she says. "We always recommend proper concrete trials before commencing a project, especially for large-scale applications, to confirm the best combination of admixtures and placement methods."

Chryso takes a collaborative approach, working closely with customers from planning to execution to ensure outstanding aesthetic outcomes. "Our innovations are designed to make concrete beautiful," says Fick, "but it's our hands-on support that helps customers unlock their full creative and architectural potential." ■

"Surface quality is another priority. Chryso's plasticisers and super-plasticisers improve the workability and flow of the concrete mix, reducing surface defects and ensuring a smooth, high-quality finish. To further strengthen and enhance surface performance, the company also offers densifiers and hardeners that provide improved abrasion-resistance."

Izak Petersen, CEO of Dipula Properties

DIPULA REPORTS STRONG INTERIM RESULTS IN ITS 20TH YEAR

Dipula Properties (JSE: DIB) has reported a strong set of interim results for the six months ended 29 February 2025, demonstrating continued strategic and operational momentum in a persistently challenging macro-economic environment. The property portfolio increased in value by 5% to R10,3 billion, supporting a 6% rise in net asset value. Dipula's distributable earnings per share (DPS) increased 4,2% for the half year, on track with full-year guidance of 4,0-6,0%.

Dipula Properties (formerly Dipula Income Fund) is a prominent, diversified South Africa-focused REIT with a long-standing track record of sustainable value creation. As a black-managed property company celebrating two decades of operation this month, and nearly 15 of those as a listed entity, it exemplifies a rare blend of resilience, transformation and consistent delivery that continues to contribute to the real estate sector and SA's broader economic landscape.

The Dipula portfolio includes 161 retail, office, industrial and residential properties across the country, predominantly in Gauteng. The portfolio is defensively positioned, with retail centres in townships, rural and urban convenience locations contributing 67% of portfolio income.

"Dipula's operational performance reflects solid delivery and a strongly defensive position in persistently challenging conditions. However, we've felt the impact of higher prevailing interest rates and hedging costs relative to expiring hedge instruments. Encouragingly, we're seeing signs of recovery in the office sector and continued stability in our retail and industrial portfolios, with sustainability initiatives expected to support long-term performance," says Izak Petersen, CEO of Dipula Properties.

Dipula's revenue for the six months was similar to the prior period, at R760 million. Net property income rose 3,0%, constrained by property-related expenses, which grew 6,0%, mainly driven by municipal tariff increases. However, cost control remains a management priority and the total cost-to-income ratio rose marginally to 43,5% (FY24: 42,6%), driven by improved recoveries and Dipula's solar energy roll-out. The administrative cost-to-income was unchanged at 4%.

Operational highlights included significant leasing activity, contributing to a reduction in overall portfolio vacancies from 8% to 7% during the period. Dipula additionally achieved a weighted average positive renewal rental rate across the portfolio, underpinned by positive rates. The office portfolio recorded a renewal rate of 8,3%, followed by industrial at 6,2% and retail at 2,4%. New and renewed leases concluded during the period amounted to R309 million, securing sustainable income streams.

Tenant retention of 79% is lower than in recent periods as Dipula has adopted stricter tenant criteria to improve tenant quality in its industrial portfolio, specifically for mini-units where there is high tenant turnover. Even with this change, the company's industrial vacancies still decreased. Industrial and logistics assets deliver 13% of its rental income and with a vacancy of just 4%, this segment remains stable and sought-after.

Dipula's retail assets remain core to its performance, offering accessible and well-positioned spaces across diverse communities. The retail portfolio reported steady vacancies at 6%.

Offices comprise 16% of Dipula's income, offering adaptable, well-situated workspaces. The office vacancy rate ended the period notably lower, at 19%, down from 23% in the prior interim period, showing clearer signs of recovery. "The office improvement is refreshing, but there's still some way to go and the Johannesburg office market remains over-supplied and highly competitive," says Petersen.

Dipula has telegraphed to the market that it intends to sell its affordable and conveniently located residential rental units, which currently represent 4% of income. This is to re-allocate capital to the retail and industrial sectors which are core to its business. This portfolio showed a reduced vacancy rate from 10% to 9% over the six months.

Dipula continues to implement value-enhancing asset management strategies. It invested R117 million in refurbishments and redevelopments. Nearly R70 million of this was for income-generating projects, including solar PV, with the remainder allocated to defensive projects. A portion of the proceeds from R125 million in disposals, achieved at a 4% premium to book value, contributed to funding these projects together. While no acquisitions were completed during the period, the company has a strategic pipeline of growth opportunities.

"We're firmly committed to future-proofing our portfolio," says Petersen. "We're assessing some interesting opportunities which fall within our core focus, a few of which we hope to close in the short term. Our installed solar capacity will more than double to approximately 16MW after the installation of an additional 9MW of new solar projects to be rolled out during this calendar year."

A Sandvik CH430 cone crusher has been installed at AfriSam's Rheebok Quarry to improve efficiency, product consistency and energy consumption.

Philconstruct 2024.

AFRISAM UPGRADES RHEEBOK QUARRY

AfriSam has enhanced its Rheebok Quarry operation with the installation of a high-capacity Sandvik CH430 cone crusher from Sandvik Rock Processing. The upgrade ensures reliable, safe production with reduced maintenance and a lower carbon footprint.

Located near Malmesbury in the Western Cape, the granite quarry produces a range of materials, including aggregate stone, crusher sand, roadstone and ballast. According to Desmond Jacobs, AfriSam's senior engineer for the Western Cape, this investment aligns with the company's long-term capital strategy.

The decision to install the Sandvik CH430 was driven by key features such as its hydraulic Hydroset™ system and Automatic Setting Regulation (ASRi) system, both of which enhance performance and streamline maintenance. The Hydroset™ system enables precise, automated, closed-side setting adjustments, while the ASRi system continuously monitors and optimises crusher performance.

"We appreciate the way the Sandvik CH430 minimises operator intervention, allowing real-time adjustments to the closed-side setting," says Jacobs. "This improves product size consistency and quality. The system also tracks key parameters like temperature and pressure, enabling proactive maintenance and reducing unexpected breakdowns."

Jacobs notes that the new unit has already demonstrated its impact on product quality by reducing oversized material in the feed stream.

"Our initial assessments showed a dramatic reduction in oversize material being sent for secondary crushing," he says. "This allows us to optimise throughput and potentially eliminate redundant processing steps in the future."

A crucial factor in selecting the Sandvik

The Sandvik CH430 cone crusher was selected for its compatibility with existing infrastructure and reduced installation time during Rheebok Quarry's scheduled shutdown.

CH430 was its compact footprint, which closely matched the previous crusher. "As a brownfields project, we had to work within existing site constraints," explains Jacobs. "Matching the footprint was essential, as we had limited time for installation and couldn't accommodate extensive structural modifications."

PC Kruger, business line manager for crushing solutions at Sandvik Rock Processing, highlights the Sandvik Plant Designer platform which helped optimise the model selection process. Additionally, the energy-efficient crusher, powered by a 132kW motor, aligns well with AfriSam's specification, contributing to lower energy costs and reduced carbon emissions.

With a local office and warehouse in Cape Town, Sandvik Rock Processing ensures that AfriSam receives prompt technical support, spare parts and plant audits whenever required. ■

AfriSam's Rheebok Quarry upgrade includes the Sandvik CH430, featuring a 132kW motor and automated setting regulation for optimal output.

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John Rammutla, principal associate: Highways, Transport & Infrastructure, WSP in Africa.

MAKING URBAN MOBILITY CONVENIENT

By John Rammutla, principal associate: Highways, Transport & Infrastructure, WSP in Africa

People's transport choices are shaped by safety, accessibility and socio-economic factors. Many African countries lack the infrastructure necessary to provide convenient, safe, reliable and sustainable public transport systems, leaving urban citizens with limited options. To make urban mobility more convenient, safe and accessible in African cities, integrating public transport into smart transportation infrastructure that leverages existing technology and innovative solutions will be key.

Public transport integration and digitalisation of transportation infrastructure considers elements within transport systems through a digital lens. It focuses on how stakeholders can leverage technology and data-driven approaches to meet policy goals and population needs. A good example of this is the City of Cape Town, which is actively working towards integrating a public transport network (IPTN) and aims to create a more accessible and efficient public transport system. Some of its digital solutions include the implementation of a MyCiTi app for route planning, ticketing and tracking real-time vehicle locations.

Implementing system-wide digitalisation is no small feat in cities where infrastructure deficits and funding are clear barriers. It requires a vision developed with a whole-system perspective, strategic investment decisions and a willingness to embrace continuous change. Collaboration across industries, disciplines, municipalities and even nations is

> "Implementing system-wide digitalisation is no small feat in cities where infrastructure deficits and funding are clear barriers."

essential to build resilient and adaptable transport networks for current and future generations.

It also calls upon those who advise, design, engineer and operate road infrastructure to prioritise the provision of inclusive, equitable and accessible digitised systems, making the benefits of digital transformation available to all. Today, the boundaries between vehicles, roads, communication networks and the users themselves have blurred, creating a dynamic, evolving ecosystem.

Gone are the days when vehicles and infrastructure functioned as separate entities. The synergy between technology, infrastructure and people will continue to drive innovations in road transport, especially as transport data becomes ubiquitous and more accessible. As African cities adopt technology that enables the collection and utilisation of more and better-quality transport data, adopting innovations that facilitate the development of safer, greener, more reliable and more equitable transport systems must consider the interdependencies between technology, infrastructure and people.

Transport systems the world over face several challenges which necessitate this kind of change. Safety performance is plateauing, which limits progress toward Vision Zero – the aim for zero traffic fatalities and severe injuries, as well as safe and equitable transport for all. The environmental impact of road transport infrastructure poses a significant threat to ecosystem health and human well-being, constituting the highest proportion of overall transport emissions globally.

Accessibility and inclusivity are significant considerations in Africa, where road transport infrastructure continues to act as a barrier to mobility for marginalised communities, thereby contributing to inequity. And given Africa's rapid urbanisation and population growth trends, road infrastructure must adapt as more people move to urban centres in pursuit of economic, social and personal benefit.

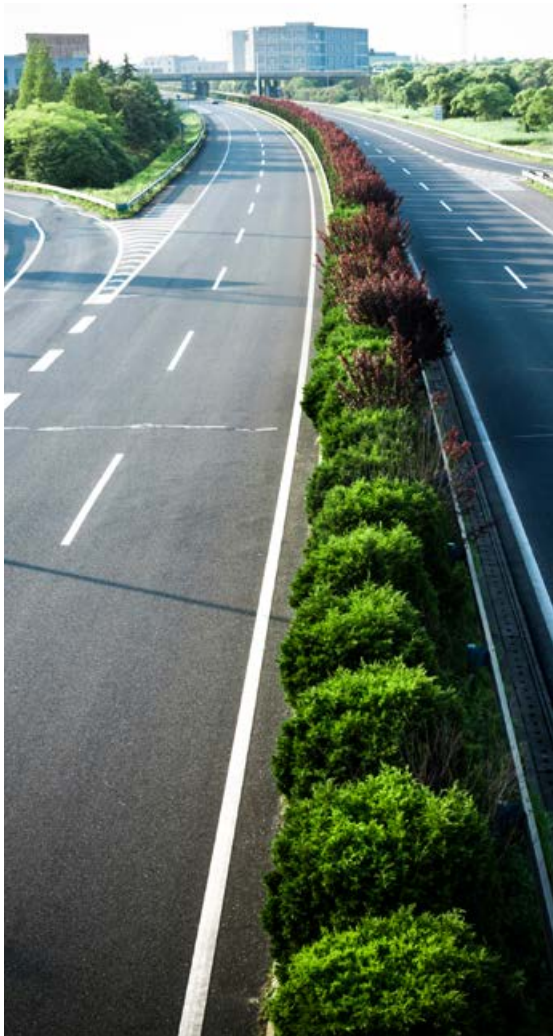
Governments are facing a challenging financial situation with high interest rates and rapidly increasing costs in labour, materials and general service delivery. As a result, road transport infrastructure projects are grappling with constrained budgets and material scarcities limiting the capacity for governments to deliver on construction plans.

Clearly, the transition from analogue to digital road networks is crucial to Africa's sustainable development. Making the transition successfully requires a whole-system approach to understand the impacts and dependencies between people, processes, places, data, technology and services. This holistic view enables system designers to identify and mitigate adverse impacts, providing for safer, more convenient, more equitable and more environmentally conscious systems.

A good example is WSP's work on digital roads for national highways in the UK. Recognising the challenges of achieving ambitious targets such as Net Zero emissions and Vision Zero for road safety, there was an imperative to transform the strategic road network. WSP was commissioned to create a vision for digital transformation of the strategic road network over the next 30 years, setting the strategy that would align the organisation and frame transformational change. The project successfully took digital roads from concept development stage to public launch and now forms a flagship programme within national highways. The benefits of digital roads permeate all aspects of design, construction, operation and customer experience and range from enabling safety improvements to reducing carbon emissions, supporting a safer, smoother and greener road network.

To learn from international examples like this one, prioritising the development of skills and knowledge within Africa's workforce will be key. Developing the necessary skills will allow stakeholders not only to enhance the immediate implementation of digital solutions, but also to cultivate a foundation for long-term success. Investing in human capital to navigate complexities and seize opportunities in the evolving transportation landscape is vital. Empowering individuals and organisations through the development of capacity and capability paves the way for a future where innovation drives efficiency, safety and inclusivity across transportation systems.

Implementing digital transport infrastructure represents an opportunity to address some of Africa's critical infrastructure deficits by implementing modern networks that can effectively respond to diverse social and economic challenges. The journey calls for strategic investment and a willingness to embrace continuous change. ■



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