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BUILDING THE FUTURE – LAYER BY LAYER

ISSUE: 1/2025

REVELSTONE TRIUMPHS AT CMA AWARDS



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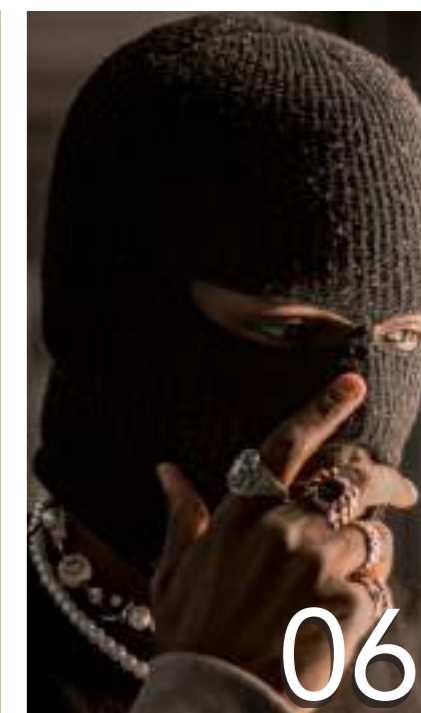


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CERTIFICATION SERVICE SPREADS ITS WINGS



CMACS director Christo van Zyl

The Concrete Manufacturers Association Certification Services (CMACS) continues to lead the way for the certification of concrete, limestone and cement related products in South Africa with a raft of new offerings covering most usage cases.

Being SANAS accredited and providing certification applicable to product quality and system certification (ISO 9001), CS currently have the ability to certify precast concrete related products like concrete pavers, pressure pipes, lintels and culverts among others. The business of certifying systems is also well established. CMACS is in the process of planning and introducing a range of new offerings that will soon include environmental management systems (ISO 14001), as well as occupational health and safety (ISO 45001) standards. These additions will help cement and precast concrete manufacturers meet stringent regulatory requirements and adopt best practices that promote sustainability and safety. Moreso CMACS will supply a convenient one-stop certification service to the industry!

According to CMACS director, Christo van Zyl, this year will be an important milestone for the company as it hopes, with the accreditation from SANAS, to introduce new certifications for cement and promises to provide faster turnarounds for producers and blenders. As with all certifications, CMACS is already well known for providing quick and efficient results and the new certifications for cement will be no different. Across the board, the introduction of new digitalised services will further speed the process and provide customers with



The CMACS mark applied to a certified product

uncomplicated processes to further hasten the process.

Christo says the introduction of new software-based services incorporating data management, workflows, electronic document management and real-time tracking systems, aims to enhance operational efficiency and provide customers with greater visibility into their certification status.

The new web-based software will revolutionise the system management and auditing process by providing comprehensive plans for both the customer and the auditor, as well as monitoring, guiding and providing constant communication to all parties to ensure that everyone remains in the loop at all times throughout the certification process, as well as throughout the period during which the certification remains valid.

"The move to digitise certification processes is not just about speed, it is also about continuous improvement of every aspect of certification. Our main focus is to improve and to bring the certification into the digital era and improve on everything that we do. By leveraging digital tools and technologies we aim to enhance the accuracy, reliability and accessibility of certification services, to provide greater value to stakeholders."

It is interesting to note that CMACS has not had a single complaint about its services in the past year which speaks volumes about its service offerings thus far. The new digitalised platforms will steadily move it beyond being the preferred certification provider in South Africa to becoming the preferred

provider throughout Africa and globally in future.

"Looking ahead to 2025, we also plan to introduce the certification of cement in order to address evolving industry needs. This is a much-needed requirement in the industry, to speed up service delivery in terms of certification and to avoid monopolising this sector of the certification market, which is currently apparent. We hope to ensure cement manufacturers and blenders comply with the highest industry standards and are offered service based on good and fair auditing practices. Additionally, we will focus on enhancing ready-mix concrete certification to support companies in achieving compliance with performance-based specifications on site. Our services will also extend to certain raw materials and processes that are pivotal to the manufacture of concrete in future."

"No manufactured product is manufactured in a bubble and it is important that we include the "ingredients" of concrete and cement into the offering. We are eager to work with other industry bodies and offer certification services to the members of the industry association to advance the goal and service offering of each entity. The recent certification of our first ready-mix client is a typical example of how the advantage can be passed on to other associations."



REVELSTONE TRIUMPHS AT CMA DIGITAL AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

For the past 32 years, Revelstone has been the market leader in the cast stone industry. The company specialises in manufacturing and designing an extensive range of products that replicate the appearance and texture of natural stone and incorporating quality manufacturing techniques that ensure its products' also remain durable and exceed the toughest performance requirements.

Revelstone director, Alex Cyprianos, says the manufacturing process is a labour of love with each product being meticulously cast from original stone masters – the patented rubber moulds ensure an authentic aesthetic that meets the highest standards in architectural and landscape design. It is further distinguished through the use of 100% recyclable Revel Rubber moulds and cutting-edge nanotechnology, which enhances the longevity and appearance of its products.

Not surprisingly the company walked away with an armful of awards at the recent 2024 CMA Digital Awards for Excellence. The company not only secured a coveted Trophy for Aesthetic Excellence for its Cobble project at the Erinvale Estate Hotel but also received multiple awards for projects at SACS High School, Erinvale Estate Hotel and Spa (Wet Cast Stone) and Seaside Village (Paving) the Beauty for Life Award.

Revelstone has been a committed participant in the CMA Awards since its inception, consistently supporting the initiative to celebrate excellence in the concrete manufacturing industry. Alex says the significance of this year's win is tremendous, "We have always valued the CMA Awards as a platform that acknowledges outstanding work in our industry. Winning these awards is not just a reflection of our products but also the dedication and expertise of our team. It is incredibly rewarding to see our efforts recognised on such a prestigious stage."

This is not the first time the company has

won big at the event. Having secured multiple awards for a number of other projects in previous years, the company upholds a fine tradition of excellence and every application of cast stone in the built environment is treated with the same level of expertise and enthusiasm.

The winning projects, Erinvale Estate Hotel, SACS High School and Seaside Village, each stood out for their innovative design, aesthetic excellence and seamless integration into their respective environments. While the final selection rests in the hands of the judges, Revelstone believes that the diversity of these projects and their creative use of concrete played a significant role in their recognition.

"Each project had its own distinctive challenges and characteristics. The Erinvale Estate Hotel's cladding project exuded timeless elegance, SACS High School's application showcased versatility and durability and the Seaside Village paving project reflected how our products can be adapted to diverse environments. These projects, among others, demonstrate the immense potential of cast stone in architectural design," says Alex.

While Revelstone is responsible for the design and manufacturing of its products, the on-site execution relies on contractors and installation teams. This collaboration ensures that the final product exceeds expectations. By providing high-quality, precision-engineered cast stone Revelstone wants to empower architects and designers to realise their visions with confidence.

The company's success is underpinned by a strong, skilled team. With over 100 permanent employees which is scaled up to 130 during peak season. It operates a fully self-sufficient manufacturing facility in Cape Town. The entire process, from product design and mould production to casting and delivery is managed in-house ensuring strict quality control and consistency.

Over three decades, Revelstone products have proven their durability, aesthetic appeal and design excellence.

"For the Revelstone team, winning multiple awards at the CMA Digital Awards for Excellence is a powerful affirmation of their hard work and dedication. "These awards belong to every member of our team. Seeing our products enhance beautiful homes and commercial developments brings a real sense of pride and accomplishment. It reaffirms the importance of what we do and our ongoing commitment to quality and innovation."

Over three decades, Revelstone products have proven their durability, aesthetic appeal and design excellence. Architects and designers continue to specify these products due to their superior quality, longevity and ability to blend seamlessly into diverse architectural styles. The company's focus on innovation also ensures that its offerings remain new and fresh.

According to Alex the best is still to come with significant strides being made by the company towards sustainability. The company is in the process of developing a Green Concrete option, which incorporates recycled and reconstituted materials to reduce plastic waste in landfills. This initiative will soon be available across all product lines and will further cement Revelstone's commitment to environmental responsibility.

"Winning these prestigious awards underscores our industry leadership position in the industry and shows that our dedication to continuous improvement ultimately pays-off. Our legacy is built on quality, craftsmanship and innovation and that is the overarching reason for our continued success – now and in the future."



Revelstone's Alex Cyprianos receiving their award from the CMA's Henry Cockcroft



The Hermanus Station mall



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COMBATING THE CONSTRUCTION MAFIA

BY LIONEL VAN TONDER, DIRECTOR, INGE SWANEPOEL, CONSULTANT, MARTIN VERSFELD, PARTNER AND TYRON THEESSEN, PARTNER, WEBBER WENTZEL

Companies affected by the construction mafia accordingly have, notionally at least, several potential options.

In part 1 of this article in the last issue of Concrete Connect we provided a background to the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act (PPPFA) in the construction industry. While the PPPFA arguably created an unintended foothold for the construction mafia, we, fortunately, have the benefit of other legislation (including foreign frameworks), which (if enforced

and/or adopted) can provide a strong foundation for combatting extortion, corruption and organised crimes.

The Prevention of Organised Crime Act (POCA) aims to address and dismantle organised crime, money laundering and gang activities. POCA enables asset forfeiture, allowing authorities to seize property linked to organised crime. For businesses, this can disrupt the financial means of construction mafia groups, making it harder for them to operate. When businesses co-operate with authorities under POCA, they can contribute to weakening these criminal networks.

If a United States-based company or subsidiary engages with the construction mafia in South Africa through bribery or facilitation

payments, it can be held accountable under the US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA). This broad jurisdiction empowers businesses to report bribes, extortion, or coercive demands by organised crime groups to US authorities, which can provide additional international support in tackling the issue. The FCPA mandates companies to implement and maintain robust internal accounting controls to prevent corrupt payments. For businesses in the construction industry, strong financial controls and regular audits make it easier to identify, deter and document attempted extortion or bribery demands. This is particularly helpful for businesses at risk of construction mafia influence, as internal controls can assist with avoiding being unwittingly involved in corrupt practices.

If a United Kingdom-based company or firm with a presence in the UK indirectly contributes to third-party entities associated with the construction mafia, it could face sanctions for failing to prevent bribery under the UK Bribery Act. This Act has international reach, enabling businesses to seek support and co-operation from UK authorities when dealing with cross-border issues. The Act also empowers businesses to refuse bribes or 'protection payments' demanded by the construction mafia under the risk of severe penalties. Similar to the FCPA, businesses impacted by the construction mafia can adopt anti-bribery policies compliant with the UK Bribery Act, which is beneficial in light of the UK Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act (2023). This Act states that companies will need to have reasonable procedures in place to prevent fraud being committed by their associated persons (such as employees, agents, subsidiaries and other persons that perform services for or on their behalf) by 1 September 2025, so that they have the best chance of raising a defence if prosecuted for failing to prevent such wrongdoing.

In April 2024, the National Prosecuting Au-



thority took matters a step further by publishing the Corporate Alternative Dispute Resolution (C-ADR) policy. The provisions of C-ADR enable companies affected by the likes of the construction mafia to make voluntary disclosures to the authorities. By doing so, the disclosing company protects themselves against the risk of actions or fines being initiated against them (in instances for example where they have succumbed to the demands of the construction mafia). The construction mafia typically relies on intimidation and violence to exert control over construction projects. C-ADR provides a formal, non-confrontational way to manage these disputes with the support of the authorities.

Companies affected by the construction mafia accordingly have, notionally at least, several potential options. Collaboration with law enforcement agencies, particularly forums such as the South African Police Service's 'Infrastructure Built Anti-Corruption Forum' and the 'National Priority Committee on Extortion and Violence at Economic Sites'. Companies can also engage with bodies such as the South African Forum of Civil Engineering Contractors of South Africa. We have noted and are encouraged by the increased levels of collaboration between government, civil society and business.

Having engaged multiple businesses about how best to manage their exposure and the practical realities they face, particularly given the limited intervention (at least

until very recently) on the part of law enforcement agencies, we have focussed on advising them on how to "get ahead of the game". What do we mean by this? While it is beyond the remit of this article to engage in all the details, getting ahead entails amongst other strategies the following:

- Ensuring that staff are appropriately trained to deal with both legitimate and illegitimate community forums.
- Conducting thorough due diligence of the project site and stakeholders involved, to understand which community forums, other organised groups or businesses control the area and assess the feasibility of negotiating with them.
- Assuming that the forums and persons in question can be meaningfully negotiated with, establish which firms could provide the required services and establish which, for public tenders, are either listed as providers by the state-owned entity issuing the tender or whether they could be included in the list.
- Structuring downstream procurement in a manner that is fair, transparent and accessible.
- Agreeing with the community forum on what services will be provided by the community and what compensation will be paid in exchange.

- Ensuring (where possible) that the state-owned entity that issues the tender also participates in the negotiations with and is accountable to the local community forum.
- Ensuring appropriate measures to protect on-site equipment and employees. This should go beyond well-trained security staff and should include visible cameras and recording devices.

By engaging in these proactive strategies, legitimate community forums and businesses enjoy the recognition they deserve and the illicit construction mafia struggles to get the support they require from the communities they claim to represent. Beyond eroding construction mafia support and networks, community engagement and measures such as providing facilities or services can significantly bolster a company's Environmental, Social and Governance scorecard, create meaningful future supply chains and create a positive legacy of beneficence in the area they do business.

The options listed above have been provided as examples of some of the things that can be done and are of course by no means exhaustive. While we won't be so bold as to claim that we have all the answers we would certainly encourage you to 'get ahead of the game' by engaging with us or another suitable service provider to try and reduce the risks to your business associated with falling foul of the construction mafia.



From Left to Right: Inge Swanepoel | Lionel van Tonder | Martin Versfeld | Tyron Theessen



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PAYMENT SOLUTION SUPPORTS LOCAL CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

Payment platform PayJustNow is playing an important role in supporting the country's construction sector with responsible credit solutions by expanding its offering to Builders Warehouse.

This is in a drive to not only help consumers manage their home improvement planning but importantly offer SMEs an additional option when it comes to purchasing materials without exhausting their cash flow. The construction and hardware retail category has faced significant challenges over the past few years. Since 2018, there has been a steady decline in consumer spending in the sector due to economic uncertainty as well as higher import costs. Furthermore, recent Stats SA data shows the construction sector experienced a 0.2% reduction in employment during Q2 2024.

However, there are positive signs. In the same quarter, the industry's contribution to the GDP increased by 0.5%. This was driven primarily by heightened economic activity in residential and non-residential building projects. Additionally, the rebound has been fuelled by consumer adoption of innovative financial solutions like BNPL. This provides them with flexible repayment options that make home improvement more convenient and accessible.

"Our partnership with PayJustNow aligns with our commitment to providing value and convenience to our customers," says Riaan Nieuwoudt, executive for membership and services for the group. "Our Builders customers - from DIY enthusiasts to professional contractors, now have a smart way to access the tools and materials they need while managing their budgets effectively."

The construction industry's backbone lies in its SMEs, which often face cash flow challenges due to delayed payments or extended project timelines. With convenient and flexible payment options, SMEs can purchase necessary materials and equipment upfront without straining their finances or even incurring interest with BNPL.

"These small businesses are the lifeblood of our economy and PayJustNow is committed to providing solutions that help them succeed. Our platform enables contractors to maintain a healthy cash flow, ensuring they can complete projects efficiently and take on new opportunities without taking on any additional financial strain says Greg van der Riet, chief commercial officer at PayJustNow.

This platform has become an ecosystem that benefits both retailers and SMEs by helping retailers showcase and sell their product range to contractors that want to purchase more conveniently, while contractors can browse a variety of suppliers, as well as deals on offer.

Similarly, as consumer behaviour evolves, retail on demand models have become a necessity. Customers expect greater convenience and flexibility, whether shopping online or in-store. Platforms like PayJustNow provide them with more choice, and the ability to spread payments over time, making it an essential tool in boosting retail performance.

"Traditionally, the start of a year is a time when many homeowners embark on renovation projects and contractors gear up for a busy period. The partnership between PayJustNow and Builders ensures that consumers and contractors alike can start the year on a strong footing, accessing the products they need without straining their budgets," says van der Riet. "This while helping the construction retailer increase sales and improve customer retention."

"This partnership is about building better lives and stronger businesses. We are proud to provide a platform that empowers South Africans to achieve their goals, whether they are upgrading their homes or growing their construction businesses," concludes van der Riet.



Greg van der Riet, chief commercial officer at PayJustNow.



Builders has rolled out PayJustNow across the country



The South African Association of Engineering Insurers executive committee

RESHAPING ENGINEERING INSURANCE

A staggering 3 000% surge in global Strike, Riot and Civil Commotion (SRCC) claims over the past two decades, coupled with South Africa's construction industry decline since 2016, is forcing a radical transformation in engineering insurance.

These challenges took centre stage at the 6th annual conference of South African Association of Engineer Insurers (SAAEI), held under the auspices of the South African Insurance Association (SAIA) recently.

According to SAAEI Chairperson, Chris Charlton, "The construction and engineering space is seeing escalating technology enhancements as processes become more efficient". Discussions echoed this sentiment as speakers lamented the hanging engineering insurance landscape and how to navigate it to ensure the sector's sustainability.

The conference, themed "Open to Learn" revealed critical challenges facing the sector, including the ongoing threats of the construction mafia and an unprecedented move towards renewable energy projects especially in the mining sector.

Dr Hubert Joynt, programme manager of the Centre of Excellence at Infrastructure South Africa (ISA), laid the groundwork for other discussions spoke on the Economic Outlook for South Africa's Construction in-

dustry. The industry has been in a decline since 2016 characterised by a downward trend in completed buildings. Adding to this is a decline in labour productivity and government departments' inability to spend allocated budgets, putting a serious dent to the 2030 National Development Plan targets.

To address this, Joynt, made valuable recommendations including addressing institutional arrangements, centralised planning and prioritisation, accelerated budget reforms, addressing municipal infrastructure constraints, unlocking other income sources and economic regulation.

The construction mafia and the distinction between the South African Special Risks Insurance Association (SASRIA) and underlying engineering policies and identifying gaps in covers, were covered by Senior Associate at Norton Fulbright South Africa Inc, Rethabile Shabalala and SASRIA Executive, Themba Sibiyi. The speakers highlighted the impact this risk has on construction timelines and the work quality, necessitating urgent intervention.

Director of M Squared Resources, Kobus Breytenbach, discussed renewable energy and its impact on the mining sector. With the rising electricity costs alternative energy sources are seriously being considered. Breytenbach mentioned mining houses

successfully pursuing renewable energy to save on their electricity bills and exceed Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) compliance.

Legal experts David Vleck from Cox Yeats and Martin Vass from Specialists Adjusters, gave sobering presentations on recent building collapses and incidents. Policy wording becomes a major talking point after such disasters. Clyde & Co's, legal director, Hickley Hamman, engaged the delegates on navigating non-disclosures and misrepresentations by the insureds. The recurring theme was ensuring no ambiguity in the policy wording.

Reinsurers were well represented as Swiss Re and regional manager Kevin Stanley and Insurance Attorney Matthew Scorgie spoke on the shifting reinsurance appetite for Strike, Riot and Civil Commotion (SRCC) risk and its implications for engineering in Africa. They discussed the massive 3 000% increase in SRCC claims globally in the last two decades attributed to social, economic and geopolitical factors. In a history lesson-style presentation, Munich Re Senior Underwriter Romeo Outarra addressed Inherent Defective Insurance (IDI), referencing the 21 March 1804 French civil code implemented by Napoleon Bonaparte to explain what a decennial policy (an IDI) in this day and age includes and excludes.

IIE'S DEGREES RECEIVE ECSA ACCREDITATION

Building professionals will be keen to know that the Independent Institute of Education (The IIE), SA's leading private higher education institution and a division of JSE-listed ADvTECH, has received full accreditation from the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) the first private higher education provider in the country to be recognised in this manner by the industry authority.

All Engineering degrees in South Africa must be offered with the approval of the ECSA. The IIE has been offering ECSA endorsed Bachelor of Engineering (B.Eng) degrees since 2018. During the initial development stages and in the first years of offering these degrees, ECSA conducted various site visits and reviews of The IIE's B.Eng Degrees, to ensure that the qualifications adhere to best practice and to national and international standards for engineering.

Full accreditation has now been awarded for The IIE's B.Eng Degrees in Electrical and Electronic Engineering and in Mechanical Engineering.

"This milestone is truly significant as The IIE becomes the first private higher education institution in Africa to receive full accreditation for engineering degrees under the international Washington Accord," says Louise Wiseman, managing director of The IIE's Varsity College, Vega & IIE MSA.

Private higher education institutions in South Africa may not, at present, call themselves private Universities due to historic criteria. However, the Department of Higher Education and Training is in the process of finalising criteria for institutions with the aim of ensuring that qualifying private higher education institutions may rightly be recognised as private universities (as opposed to state funded public universities).

"This latest recognition re-affirms that The IIE is uniquely positioned in the private sector to provide the highest quality of academic excellence, while ensuring our qualifications and students are deservedly recognised – in line with their peers in public universities - in the industry and the workplace," she says.

The IIE offers tertiary qualifications in various aspects of design, business management and engineering and is the largest private higher education institution in South Africa. It operates across 24 sites and via distance, offering 135 registered and accredited higher education programmes from Higher Certificate to Doctorate level on its IIE Varsity College, IIE Vega, IIE MSA, IIE Rosebank College and IIE HSM campuses.



Louise Wiseman, MD of The IIE's Varsity College, Vega & IIE MSA





Sibaya Coastal Precinct

PROPERTY MARKET READY TO SURGE

According to many professionals in the property sector, the start of 2025 has indicated a strong improvement in the appetite for property ownership in the South African market. Property Marketing expert and Rainmaker Marketing's Director, Stefan Botha, shares how this latest announcement by the South African Reserve Bank to further reduce the country's interest rate by 0.25% is only going to stimulate the appetite and opportunity for first time buyers and investors to capitalise on the property market.

With this latest interest rate announcement marking the second decrease in three months, we have observed a significant increase in buyer appetite and interest with each reduction, as well as the unlocking of substantial land parcels in key areas across South Africa. More broadly, the positive economic impact of property development

in terms of job creation, SMME growth and community upliftment, has also contributed to the shift in market sentiment we are currently witnessing.

With the repo rate now at 7.5%, I believe this sustained momentum will further drive the property market, setting the stage for a strong 2025 across various sectors and regions in South Africa.

The proof is in the pudding

With interest rates being largely defined by our countries inflationary targets and global macro influences, reductions have a significant impact on the market. They enhance affordability, boost sentiment and we're witnessing the strongest buyer confidence in years across key property regions. For investors or those looking to enter the market, declining rates and a market poised for

growth present the perfect opportunity to capitalize on capital appreciation.

From December into the month of January 2025 we have seen a considerable upswing in sales by consumers with reports from real estate developers like Devmco Group and developments like Seaton, BlackBrick Umhlanga and others reporting higher than expected sales figures. The strong collaboration between key players in the development sector and government to unlock catalytic projects is also promising, particularly in the Western Cape with The Bridge in Stellenbosch and in KwaZulu-Natal with Sibaya Precinct and Club Med on the North Coast.

A glo-cal perspective

The Government of National Unity (GNU) and the ongoing suspension of load shed-



Seaton Estate showing rugby legend Pat Lambie's House



Stefan Botha, Director of Rainmaker Marketing

ding have seemingly contributed towards the fundamental stability we are seeing within the country. However, US and international foreign policies being implemented do tend to have an influence along with other external factors that can shape what happens in the coming months and year ahead. Headline inflation has remained at the bottom of the inflation target band, supported by positive base effects and demand-driven pressures remaining contained. This trend is expected to remain intact until the second quarter, but further reductions in the interest rate for the year do have a slight underlying of caution amid an uncertain global environment. Ultimately, South African growth, which is on an up-trend, will rely heavily on structural reform implementation.

In light of this, while the interest rate cut is a positive development, it is important to balance this sentiment with a realistic view of South Africa's broader economic challenges. Structural issues such as high unemployment, rising labour costs and sluggish productivity remain stubborn barriers to sustained growth.

What does this all mean for the average property owner

For South African consumers, especially those carrying debt such as home loans, car finance, and credit card repayments, the interest rate reduction provides much-needed relief. Over the past two years, the cost of borrowing has risen steadily, placing enormous pressure on households. Middle-class homeowners have felt this burden acutely, with some experiencing bond repayment increases of an additional few thousands per month. Now, with rates on

the decline, there is a tangible easing of financial strain, offering many the chance to recalibrate their finances.

For instance, if one had to look at buying a property worth R2 million at the previous interest rate of 11.25%, your monthly repayment on a 20-year home loan with no deposit would be around R20,985.00. With the latest interest rate drop to 11%, your monthly repayment would decrease to about R20,644.00 – saving you just over R4,000.00 annually.

In short, with inflation easing South Africans can expect more disposable income and we are already seeing a resurgence in consumer confidence. This renewed confidence is a crucial driver for sectors such as retail, automotive and especially property, where affordability has been a growing concern in recent years.

What hope 2025 brings

South Africa's inflation is not quite aligned or at its lowest yet, which does prime itself for further interest rate decreases during 2025. While timelines are unknown, SARB governor Lesetja Kganyago, was quoted as saying in yesterday's announcement that inflation is likely to remain in the bottom half of our target range through the first half of this year, but headline inflation should revert to around 4.5% thereafter, aided by core inflation which remains at or below the midpoint over the forecast horizon.

We are anticipating the next interest rate cut to only being announced mid-year in 2025 but even that is positive for savvy investors wanting to build their wealth creation and expand on their property portfolios in the interim. By staying informed and proactive, South Africans can navigate this evolving landscape with confidence and capitalize on the opportunities ahead.



Planning The Bridge Precinct

CHRYSO'S GREENER CONSTRUCTION FUTURE FOR AFRICA



Having merged with GCP Applied Technologies under the Saint-Gobain banner, Chryso's new identity reflects its commitment to eco-friendly innovation, according to Sibulo Hlatshwayo, Managing Director of Chryso Southern Africa. This focus is at the core of its mission to responsibly support Africa's infrastructure growth.

"We are addressing local needs while helping customers reduce CO₂ emissions," says Sibulo. "Our new green branded identity signals our dedication to pioneering the future of construction by creating practical, sustainable solutions."

He highlights that Chryso's approach centres around four pillars: innovation, proximity, partnership and sustainability. An example of its innovative edge is the Chryso Quad Range, which allows contractors to use local aggregates that fall below traditional standards, to minimise transport distances and reduce carbon emissions.

"Our Chryso Quad app complements our technical capability, guiding users to the best products based on specific aggregate characteristics, while our clay testing kit helps ensure quality results. Our Chryso En-

viroAdd Range further reduces the environmental impact of construction by lowering clinker content in concrete mixes, as clinker is one of cement's most energy-intensive components."

Another breakthrough is Chryso's innovations related to limestone calcined clay cement (LC3), a more sustainable alternative to traditional cement that blends limestone and clay to produce a greener concrete.

"Proximity is also a critical aspect of CHRYSO's strategy, as we consider ourselves as a 'multi-local' business – rather than just multinational," he says. "Our African footprint is well equipped to meet specific local needs with our facilities and our sales and technical support teams. By expanding our network of local laboratories – recently opening a new facility in Kenya, for instance – we can test raw materials locally and quickly to provide optimised solutions."

Through more localised production, such as its manufacture of cement additives in Ghana, customers have the advantage of quicker turnaround times and reduced logistics costs, as well as the convenience of purchasing in local currency.

"CHRYSO is also driven by a passion for collaboration. Climate change requires a united approach, so we work with partners



across the construction ecosystem to enhance our impact," says Sibulo.

Sustainability is at the heart of Chryso's mission and the company shares both admixture solutions and specialised knowledge to help customers to reduce their environmental footprint. The Chryso Academy is a valuable resource in this mission, offering courses to contractors, universities and other stakeholders to promote sustainable construction.

He concludes that sustainability needs to include renewed attention on the circular economy, as Africa's rapid urbanisation is demanding increased recycling of concrete. This is another area where Chryso admixtures are playing their role.

Top Left: Localised laboratories strengthens Chryso's support across Africa. / Top Right: LC3 cements will make a huge advance in making cement greener around the world / Below: Chryso Quad empowers the construction industry to overcome construction and sustainability challenges.

MAN MADE AGGREGATES

A patented process has been developed to produce sand-based granules as a replacement for quarried sand in concrete production offering interesting environmental and technical benefits.

Quarried sand is becoming an increasingly scarce resource, with approximately 40-billion tonnes used by the global concrete industry each year. The environmental impact of excessive quarrying is severe, leading to habitat destruction and the disruption of ecosystems and livelihoods.

This innovative process developed by Munich-based German company, Multicon GmbH, combines fine rock flour, fine and desert sands, mineral binders and specialised additives to create pressure-resistant granules suitable for concrete production. These custom-made pellets, ranging in size from 0 to 16 mm, are optimally graded to improve concrete performance. By using the granules alongside high-speed mixing technology, it is possible to produce high-quality concrete that is up to 25% lighter, hardens faster and in most cases achieves greater strength within 24 hours compared to conventional concrete.

Traditional cement production generates vast amounts of carbon dioxide. The newly developed dual concrete mixing technology has been shown to reduce CO₂ emissions by up to 50%, making the production of high-quality concrete more environmentally friendly and cost-effective. This advancement makes it possible to significantly lower carbon emissions per cubic metre of concrete by optimising cement usage.

It facilitates the production of multi-material cements, enabling the widespread application of high-quality, lower-carbon concrete. In regions experiencing rapid urban development there has been growing interest in these technologies particularly for manufacturing CO₂-reduced concretes and processing desert sands. Long-term agreements have already been established with major cement manufacturers, supporting the transition to more sustainable construction materials. If widely adopted this technology could contribute significantly to reducing the construction industry's carbon footprint.

This advanced processing technology al-

lows previously unusable sand deposits to be converted into high-performance gravel aggregates with optimised grading curves and mix compositions. These granules can then be used in suspension-based concrete formulations to achieve superior strength and durability.

Processing facilities equipped with high-performance mixers can manufacture both the necessary sand and gravel on-site, reducing reliance on expensive and environmentally harmful aggregate transportation. This localisation of material production is expected to have significant cost and sustainability benefits, particularly in regions where traditional aggregate sources are limited.

Desert sand, historically unsuitable for construction due to its fine, round and smooth particles, can now be transformed into a valuable resource. This breakthrough opens up new possibilities for sustainable concrete production, particularly in regions with abundant desert sand deposits like the Northern Cape and Namibia among others.

The processing of previously unused fine sands is also being explored and show promising results indicating potential for broader application and more useable sand sources.



CONCRETE REMAINS THE BUILDING MATERIAL OF THE FUTURE



Concrete construction delivers durable structures that require less maintenance than many alternative materials. Its exceptional longevity and ease of use make it the most economical choice for engineered structures.

One of concrete's greatest advantages is its ability to serve multiple structural functions. Tilt-up concrete panels, for example, not only enclose buildings but also support roof and wind loads, eliminating the need for separate cladding and structural systems. This enhances efficiency and reduces overall construction costs.

Concrete is often left exposed on interior walls and is valued for its aesthetic appeal, durability and natural fire resistance. This eliminates the need for additional fireproofing measures and reduces both material and labour costs while meeting stringent building safety requirements.

The material's density and mass provide significant structural advantages. Concrete's lateral stiffness makes it the preferred choice in regions where high winds or seismic activity are concerns. This stiffness minimises horizontal movement ensuring greater stability and reducing perceptible building movement particularly in high-rise structures.

As a versatile, cost-effective and widely available material, concrete will continue to shape South Africa's built environment. Architects and engineers turn to concrete for its strength, adaptability and design potential. Its flexibility allows for modifications during construction often accommodates project changes without compromising structural integrity. As a result concrete remains the building material for all ages.



MAKING GOOD CHOICES WITH AFRISAM

It is now easier than ever to manage the purchase of construction materials from AfriSam, but the whole customer experience is much deeper than just this moment in the relationship.

“We have built our business around our customers, ensuring that they are buying not just our products but peace of mind and long-term cost effectiveness,” says Richard Tomes, AfriSam sales and marketing executive. “Beyond the products themselves, customers are also benefiting from our depth of technical expertise and support – while also joining our quest to create a better society.”

Tomes highlights that AfriSam’s digital platform ClickToGo streamlines the customer experience when purchasing products online. It provides a seamless process from enquiries and quotes, through order place-

ment and technical advice, to payments and delivery tracking.

“At the same time, we know that customers often need to speak directly to an informed and responsible employee, who will deal with their query – however complex,” he says. “Automated systems can’t always do that, so we have a contact centre manned by experienced people, and they work from a centralised office – not from home – that is well resourced for optimal responsiveness.”

He emphasises, though, that the whole customer experience rests upon decades of innovation and a market leading expertise that underpins the success of customers’ projects – whether large or small. Serving the growing DIY and small builder market, for instance, AfriSam’s quality All Purpose Cement ensures strength and longevity in a

diverse range of applications.

“For those segments where the risk of selecting an inappropriate cement category is high, our All-Purpose Cement gives users the best results across various applications,” he says. “This is becoming more important as more and more cement is sold from retailers, often to relatively inexperienced users.”

Tomes points out that there is significant risk involved when people make poor or uninformed purchasing decisions about critical building material like cement. The BBC has reported that the Nigerian capital Lagos experiences a building collapse every two weeks on average, with standard or inappropriate building material being a common factor.

“We also see tragic consequences from

unsafe food in South Africa, and we should recognise that products like cement also require informed purchasing decisions,” he says. “We are proud that we can assure people of our guaranteed quality, so that they can build safe and durable buildings.”

At the same time as it serves inexperienced users, AfriSam is well known for its leading-edge skills and facilities, on which large and medium-sized contractors often rely for technical advice, bespoke concrete mixes and specialised support. Its reputation for reliability also means that quality is consistent and deliveries are on time, keeping projects on track and on budget.

“This capability gives our customers the comfort that project risks are being effectively mitigated, to deliver structures that are safe and long-lasting,” says Tomes. “It also ensures value for money, as quality materials in construction will avoid unbudgeted expenditure on repairs and maintenance.”

As a responsible company investing continuously in skills and community development, AfriSam’s commitment to a ‘positive African future’ includes maintaining and nurturing critical expertise for construction to thrive.

“As a BBBEE Level 2 contributor, we active-

ly pursue transformation goals for our company, the sector and the country,” he says. “This ensures that the economic growth we facilitate is inclusive and supports future livelihoods for all.”



Richard Tomes, AfriSam sales and marketing executive.



Above: AfriSam’s e-experience platform, ClickToGo, is a first of its kind in the industry. / Top Left: AfriSam has smoothed its customer journey in multiple ways. / Top Middle: AfriSam provides its customers with peace of mind that comes with guaranteed technical excellence. / Top Right: AfriSam’s premium All Purpose Cement is designed to meet the requirements of many applications.

EVERYTHING ABOUT WHEELBARROWS



Selecting the appropriate wheelbarrow is crucial for building contractors aiming to enhance efficiency and safety on-site. The choice depends on factors such as material, design, capacity, and intended use. This article delves into the various types of wheelbarrows available, comparing materials like steel, plastic, wood and provides usage scenarios, lifespan considerations and price examples from major South African suppliers.

Types of Wheelbarrows: Material Comparison

1. Steel Wheelbarrows:

- **Durability:** Steel wheelbarrows are renowned for their robustness, making them ideal for transporting heavy and abrasive materials like concrete, bricks and rubble.
- **Weight:** While sturdy, steel wheelbarrows are heavier, which can be a drawback when manoeuvring on uneven terrain.
- **Corrosion:** Exposure to moisture can lead to rust; however, galvanised or powder-coated finishes can mitigate this issue.
- **Example:** The Lasher Heavy Duty Concrete Wheelbarrow, priced at R1,999.00 at Leroy Merlin, features a reinforced steel pan suitable for demanding construction tasks.

2. Plastic (Polypropylene) Wheelbarrows:

- **Durability:** Modern plastic wheelbarrows, often made from high-density polyethylene, offer resistance to corrosion and are lighter than their steel counterparts.
- **Weight:** Their lighter weight makes them easier to handle, especially when transporting lighter materials.

- **Usage:** Best suited for carrying materials like soil, mulch, or garden waste; not ideal for sharp or heavy objects that could cause damage.
- **Example:** The Lasher Polypan Concrete Wheelbarrow, available for R1,169.00 at Leroy Merlin, combines a durable polypan with a sturdy frame, making it versatile for various tasks.

3. Wooden Wheelbarrows:

- **Durability:** Less common in modern construction, wooden wheelbarrows are susceptible to wear and damage from heavy loads and exposure to the elements.
- **Usage:** Typically used for light gardening tasks or decorative purposes rather than heavy-duty construction work

Design Considerations

1. Wheel Configuration:

- **Single Wheel:** Offers better manoeuvrability in tight spaces but may be less stable with heavy loads.
- **Dual Wheel:** Provides greater stability, making it easier to balance heavy or uneven loads, though it may be less agile.

2. Handle Design:

- **Straight Handles:** Allow for better leverage when lifting heavy loads.
- **Ergonomic Handles:** Designed to reduce strain and improve comfort during prolonged use.

Capacity and Load Rating

Wheelbarrows come in various capacities, typically ranging from 65 to 100 litres. For construction purposes, a larger capacity is

beneficial to reduce the number of trips required. However, it's essential to balance capacity with manageability, ensuring the wheelbarrow can be comfortably handled when fully loaded.

Lifespan and Maintenance

The lifespan of a wheelbarrow depends on material quality, frequency of use and maintenance practices. Steel wheelbarrows can last many years if kept dry and periodically treated to prevent rust. Plastic wheelbarrows are resistant to corrosion but may become brittle over time, especially with prolonged sun exposure. Regular maintenance, such as tightening bolts, inflating tyres and cleaning after use, can significantly extend the service life of a wheelbarrow.

Price Examples from Major South African Suppliers

- Lasher Heavy Duty Concrete Wheelbarrow: R1,999.00 at Leroy Merlin.
- Lasher Polypan Concrete Wheelbarrow: R1,169.00 at Leroy Merlin.
- Lasher Falcon Concrete Wheelbarrow: R1,299.00 at Chamberlain.
- Lasher Builders Wheelbarrow: R1,549.95 at BRIGHTS Hardware.

Selecting the right wheelbarrow involves assessing the specific needs of your construction projects, considering factors like material durability, load capacity and ease of use. Investing in a quality wheelbarrow tailored to your requirements can enhance productivity and ensure longevity, providing reliable service across various tasks on the construction site.

www.leroymerlin.co.za
www.chamberlains.co.za
www.brights.co.za

CONCRETE CONNECT

BUILDING THE FUTURE - LAYER BY LAYER



Dear Reader

We have now published our 5th edition of **Concrete Connect** since starting at the beginning of 2024 and we are excited at the support and contributions we have received from the market so far. We are excited about where we are headed with our publication and believe we have a major role to play in the industry.

We invite all roleplayers, stakeholders and supporters to allow us the opportunity to meet face-to-face and introduce you to our brand-new **Concrete Connect**.

Over the past few years, we have witnessed division in the cement, concrete and precast industries and seen a steep decline in real order and growth of the construction industry. As the market returns to a new phase of growth, we think it is critical to reignite interest in the sector, to build communication bridges and stimulate interest among suppliers and users of concrete products and the tools and services that go with it.

Our aim for the concrete industry is to facilitate a sustainable sector that is resilient and able to withstand the onslaught from competing construction projects such as steel, plastic, clay and other synthetic materials competing against concrete and precast concrete.

Concrete Connect is all about cooperation, collaboration and spreading the word of concrete's many advantages among clients and developers. Allowing them to form opinions based upon facts and ex-

pertise of our customers and contributors while communicating and explaining why concrete is the foundation of civilizations through the ages, while modern advances continue to elevate it to being the most exciting construction material of tomorrow.

We also want to introduce you to the team of publishing professionals leading the **Concrete Connect** team who have worked in the industry and understand what is needed to build and assist with effective communications and marketing.

Publisher: Andrew Meyer, past founder and publisher of Precast magazine. Andrew also served as MD of a design & marketing company with amongst its clients SASOL, The Jewellery Council of South Africa, Edgars, CMA and numerous others for many years.

Editorial: Raymond Campling is a past editor of Precast magazine and currently owns a PR and advertising agency, Media Savvy. His experience as a journalist, editor and publisher spans more than 30 years.

We do need your support to ensure that the **Concrete Connect** is sustainable and we will be seeking six sponsors who will be asked to contribute an amount towards the running of the publication.

Sponsors will have the opportunity to get great value for their sponsorship of R13,980.00 per issue (6 issues per year) which ensures that publishing costs are covered. Sponsorship will be based on a one-year contract.

In return each sponsor gets a logo on the content page, logo on letterhead, a page in every issue, editorial coverage and first refusal rights on sponsorship of any events. This funding will cover essential operational costs and as such ensure we are sustainable.

Advertising will also be sold to generate development costs.

Our long-term view is to develop other exciting elements to add to the **Concrete Connect** portfolio to strengthen the cement, concrete and precast markets. As a group we will be offering an array of marketing, PR, video and photography services at special rates to our clients.

South Africa now has a publication serving all aspects of the cement, concrete and precast industries under one cover.

We look forward to hearing from you and meeting in person to share information on **Concrete Connect**.

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HIGH ACCOLADES FOR CMA Digital Awards for Excellence winners

The Concrete Manufacturers Association (CMA) Digital Awards for Excellence have become a powerful marketing tool thanks to the reach of digital marketing and social media platforms.

Having aired at the end of last year, the digital awards have enjoyed unprecedented coverage that culminated in the release of a digital Award Winners Booklet which was distributed digitally through Concrete Connect magazine and ongoing social media coverage through the CMA's popular social media channels.

Henry Cockcroft, director and general manager of the CMA, emphasises the significance of these awards in shaping the industry. "Winning a CMA Award for Excellence is not just about receiving a trophy - it's about securing a long-term marketing advantage. The winning projects and companies remain online and accessible to the industry for years, serving as a lasting testament to their commitment to quality and innovation."

"Too many times we see industry accolades that fade from memory after the event and the winners fade into insignificance or are forgotten. The shift to a digital award format however has given many more people the opportunity to be a part of the event we see far more value in creating a lasting digital footprint. That is why winning projects are featured on the CMA website, social media platforms and Concrete Connect, ensuring continued exposure long after the ceremony.

"This is a key differentiator. When potential clients, engineers or developers visit the CMA's platforms, read the digital magazine or search for reputable manufacturers, they will come across CMA Award winners. It's an endorsement that carries weight and that is proof that these companies have been awarded for delivering

superior products and are recognised by their peers.

"Our awards also serve as a benchmark for the industry to drive companies to continuously improve and push the boundaries of precast concrete applications. You have those who manufacture a product and remain static, focusing on sales and market expansion and then you get those that aspire to be the best they can be. This is where it is easy to see the real industry leaders who believe in quality, innovate, diversify and set new standards for quality and design. These are the companies that win awards and they are the ones that stand out in a competitive market," says Henry.

He continues that in an industry where quality is paramount, an award-winning project signals to clients and specifiers that a company is at the forefront of innovation. After all, it is a well-known fact that South Africa's precast concrete market is unforgiving when it comes to quality. If you don't produce a top-tier product, there's no space for you in the market.

As the preeminent concrete industry body the CMA plays a crucial role in advocating for quality and innovation. The association has always championed the industry and over the past five years membership numbers are at an all-time high, while other associations are struggling or have disappeared. This just shows that visibility is key.

Social media and digital platforms like Concrete Connect have amplified the CMA's reach making it easier to showcase award-winning projects and best practices. These forms of communication are invaluable and have also allowed the CMA to promote product certification, share insights and ensure that quality is upheld.



CMA Director and general manager, Henry Cockcroft

Beyond the awards the CMA serves as a vital resource for the industry and few people know about the work they do. A good example is the sheer number of daily inquiries it handles from contractors and engineers seeking advice to developers looking for certified manufacturers. "If every caller became a member the association would be a much wealthier organisation," Henry jokes. "But as a non-profit, our focus is on supporting and growing the industry rather than reaping profits"

With the next CMA Digital Awards for Excellence set to take place in 2026 it offers manufacturers a powerful tool to build their reputation and gain industry recognition. As the awards continue to evolve and reach ever-growing numbers of people it will remain an important means of recognising the efforts of award winners and will continue to drive local manufacturers towards excellence.

WHAT THE WINNERS HAVE TO SAY



C.E.L Paving

"Winning such prestigious awards acknowledges our commitment to producing high quality aesthetically pleasing products that last a lifetime. It gives us industry recognition and validates the quality, innovation and craftsmanship of our paving blocks. Our entire team, factory and office staff alike, can take credit for this award!"

Technicrete

"We are committed to quality and service excellence. We are proud members of the CMA with all relevant products carrying the CMACS mark of approval. The awards' recognition for the innovation and R&D behind our new Insika-Wall Retaining Wall Block is encouraging as we are very excited about this evolutionary new product.

Elematic

"Winning two awards is a feather in the cap of our exceptional team. It shows that quality and innovation still triumphs in today's tough economy. We are beyond proud and pleased that our clients have also received the recognition they deserve for their outstanding projects."

Rocla

"Innovation is at the heart of progress" and Rocla's Montague Gardens Bulk Outfall Sewer project pushed boundaries by combining two existing technologies into one product, namely HDPE lining and Steel-Band Jacking Pipes. The CMA awards, being the consolidated platform where we are directly compared against our peers, makes us very proud of these awards and a trophy as recognition for exceptional product development success.

Kolbe Blocks

"Winning the CMA Award for the Aesthetic Excellence in the Masonry category feels incredibly rewarding. It's a testament to the hard work, dedication and craftsmanship of our team. We're proud to be recognized for our commitment to excellence and this achievement fuels our passion to continue raising the bar in the industry."

Revelstone

"Revelstone was elated with the Trophy for our Erinvale Hotel project, as well as Seaside Village and SACS High School getting Category Wins. It's always nice to be acknowledged and great for our clients' projects to get highlighted and mentioned in an industry where good designs and quality building is not highlighted enough."

JUDGING THE AWARDS

The prestigious CMA Digital Awards for Excellence was judged by a diverse panel of three judges in Pretoria in November last year.

The general comment from the judges was that the standard of submissions was of a very high standard and it was encouraging to see the high level of entries from the Western Cape. The number of internation-

al projects done by South African companies and entered for the 2024 Awards spoke to the high standing of our industry on the international stage.

The judging criteria was set by the CMA and it took all aspects from creative to technical into consideration. The voting and auditing of the Awards was done under the watchful eyes of Jayden Trueman

from Genacc Accounting Services, the auditors for the CMA.

The judges were Dr Karien Venter from the CSIR Smart Mobility Cluster, Louis Orffer from Precast Concrete Specialist Consultant and lastly Andrew Meyer, publisher of Concrete Connect magazine.



The Judges and coordinators for the Concrete Manufacturers Association's Digital Awards for Excellence 2024 Competition were Jayden Trueman, Genacc Accounting Services, Louis Orffer, precast concrete specialist consultant, Johnathan Sanders, CMA digital media specialist, Henry Cockcroft, CMA general manager, Rita Naude, CMA administrative manager, Andrew Meyer, Concrete Connect publisher and Dr Karien Venter of the CSIR Smart Mobility Cluster

BLUBLOK UPS THE ANTE IN WESTERN CAPE PAVING MARKET



New management and the launching of a paving manufacturing plant has seen newly appointed Concrete Manufacturers Association member, BluBlok, realise substantial growth over the past two years.

Until 2022, when fresh blood in the guise of Jess Brews took over as managing director, sales were static and production was confined to concrete bricks, blocks and kerbs.

Brews first worked for BluBlok between 2015 and 2017, and in the five intervening years before he returned to the company, he was immersed in the Johannesburg construction industry.

“On rejoining in 2022 my primary goal was to expand the business, and because it was situated in the high-growth area of Somerset West, we were presented with a golden growth opportunity. Hence our

decision to begin manufacturing top-quality concrete block pavers,” said Brews.

“As we were housed in a 10 000m² building we had plenty of under-roof space available for production expansion. Moreover, we were able to piggyback the new venture on our existing infrastructure and administration.

“Financially backed by substantial third-party funding, we made the decision to pursue a third plant predominantly dedicated to manufacturing pavers. This job in general is a difficult. The market is not sympathetic to quality. You have to manufacture the best possible quality product at a price the market is willing to pay for it and the only way you can achieve that is by taking large capital risks and running your business as efficiently as possible. Magnitude, capital, efficiency and volumes are the only way to survive”

“After visiting all the major paving plant manufacturers in Germany in 2022 we settled for the ‘Rolls Royce’ of paving machines which was commissioned in April 2024. It offered state-of-the-art compaction and vibration performance and incorporated topping technology which allowed additional 10-20mm layers of more expensive and more attractive materials to be cast on top of the paving blocks.

“There is a general misconception in South Africa that topped pavers are inferior. But I always tell people that it is common practice in Germany where pavers are produced in far greater varieties and volumes and at higher quality levels than our local equivalents. We decided to follow the European model and we are managing to produce superb pavers in a variety of toppings”

“The versatility of modern paving machines means they can offer a variety of paving types and configurations. For instance, we are able to deliver product which people think is only available through wet-cast production, and we do so at a fraction of the price. We also use chemical additives for colour enhancement and the reduction of phosphorescence.”

“And it goes without saying that we make the traditional paving range familiar to the SA market, such as the bonds, double cobble and ZZ interlockers, as well as a grass block and the long thin Klompie block, predominantly used for borders and smaller places. But we are also firmly committed to introducing new shapes and styles to the market and there is absolutely no reason why we shouldn’t be able to offer a wider scope of product as is done overseas.

“We also produce the I paver, an interlocker used all over the world in residential



and industrial applications. I think we are the only company in SA that does it. Our customers love it once they see it laid out. The shape is not new to the local market but quality problems, to which our new plant is not prone, were experienced with earlier versions of the product.

“Our brick and block machine is a fully automated Schlosser plant, and depending on how busy we are, we either run it in single or double shifts. In busier months we can run the machine non-stop. BluBlok has always made more expensive, better-quality bricks and blocks. Although 99% of the block industry is price driven, our customers are drawn from those companies which build high-quality structures.

“We also produce a high-quality wet-cast product range with a very smooth finish and currently we are unable to meet the demand. We sold 30 000m of kerbs in November and we intend to double our capacity during 2025.

‘As from the beginning of 2025 we’ll be showcasing part of our paving range at Hathersage Homestead, a small but picturesque farm on the banks of the Lourens

River. The balance of the farm, which roughly spans 30 hectares, lies on both sides of the Lourensford River and borders Morgenster Farm,” said Brews.

Roughly 4 000m² of I pavers have been laid at Hathersage. The paved areas include the main road leading to the farm gate and the driveway between the gate and the main house. A 60mm I paver together with a charcoal bond paver was used to pave the driveway and an 80mm paver was used for the main road. Our E3 edging kerb was installed on the borders of the roads. The river flooded twice in 2024 which meant the G5 sub-base material required substantial re-working.

The paving was installed by All Fence Civils together with PN Construction and Civils. The former has been in the industry since 1996 and has been working with BluBlok since 1998.

Commenting on the performance of the I paver, Eugene van Vuuren of All Fence Civils mentioned that it is a very clean product and all the lines are clearly defined.

“It is very easy to lay because each block is identical. They have a very nice edges and fit exactly into each other. They also come with half-blocks which makes for straight borders and edging. What’s more, they need very little cutting and this meant there was very little wastage on the Hathersage project,” said Van Vuuren.

“I enjoy the manufacturing environment and I particularly like the raw materials side of the business. I learnt about paving from the team of people I’m surrounded by, especially Willem Smit, who can pick up a pile of dust and tell you whether it will make a good paver or not.

“We have a very low staff turnover at BluBlok, most of whom have been here since 2011. I’m very lucky to be supported such a strong team and our mission is simply to become the biggest,” concluded Brews.

Main Image: The BluBlok factory and silo. / Top Left: Jeff Brews and the new paving plant. / Top Right: The main house at Hathersage Homestead. / Bottom left: The BluBlok yard. / Bottom Right: The main driveway at Hathersage Homestead paved with BluBlok’s 60mm I pavers and bordered with its charcoal bond paver and E3 edging kerb.



PIKETBERG RESERVOIR ROOFED WITH PRECAST CONCRETE

Precast concrete beams and hollow-core slabs supplied by Concrete Manufacturers Association member, Cape Concrete Works, have been used to roof a new reservoir in Piketberg, 80km east of Saldanha Bay.

Commissioned by the Bergrivier Municipality, the structure adds 4ML to the town's existing 3ML storage capacity. Erected on the site of a disused open reservoir built in the early part of the 20th Century, a site which entailed the lowest environmental impact, the new unit is situated next to a 2ML reservoir and both are fed by a third reservoir which in turn draws its supply from the Piketberg water-purification plant.

With a roof area of just under 1 400m² and shaped as a quadrilateral, the new reservoir was constructed by main contractor, Hiload Inyanga and was designed by iX engineers, the project's consulting engineers.

The original intention had been to build a 2ML circular reservoir on the site of the old reservoir but a subsequent geotechnical investigation revealed an existing 200mm thick solid concrete floor which could be deployed as sub-base material for the new structure.

"That left us with three options," said the reservoir's design engineer, Alwyn Le Roux. "We could stick with the original plan and build a 2ML reservoir inside the old structure, or we could opt for a 4ML reservoir by relining a section of the old structure and adding a roof to it. The third option entailed revamping the old structure as a 5ML storage unit but it was never given serious consideration. This was because the Bergrivier Municipality wanted to allocate some of the old unit's floor space for vehicle access and the construction of an above-ground valve-control chamber adjacent to the new reservoir.



"Although we went to tender on the first two options it was soon apparent that the second offered the best solution because a circular reservoir would have entailed additional excavation, work which was unnecessary in the construction of the 4ML option. What's more, on a cost per-cubic-metre storage basis the 4ML unit proved the better proposition and that was the clincher.

"We proceeded on the basis of retaining the old structure as a liner for the new floor and the three embankment walls. Although its concrete strength was more than adequate, over the years lateral movement between panels had taken place which meant it could only be used as a sub-base layer," said Le Roux.

Construction began with the erection of a 5.6m cantilevered wall which formed one of the four reservoir walls and divided the old reservoir into two sections, two thirds for the reservoir itself, and one third for

the control chamber and vehicle access. With a tapered outer face, the wall is 600mm wide at its base and 300mm at the top.

The wall footing was anchored to the old floor with Y20 shear studs, and 25 tonnes of rebar were required to build the footing and the wall. Both are 37m across and to accommodate the slope of the old floor, footing height varies from 1.2m to 700mm. The bulk of its 3.5m width falls within the reservoir to create the cantilever effect and it was cast in two lifts with protruding rebar and vertical sides to buttress the wall.

An 80mm no-fines drainage layer, also used as a concrete correction layer, was the first of three new concrete strata cast on the original concrete surface. However, some of the old embankment walling consisted of a stone-pitched concrete conglomerate which required remedial work in preparation for the no-fines layer in those sections.



A 10mm plastered layer was trowelled to seal off the no-fines concrete layer and a reinforced concrete lining, which, depending on the existing dam's profiles, varied between 150mm-200mm, formed the third layer.

Perforated pipes are imbedded in the no-fines floor sections for sub-surface drainage, leak detection and pressure relief, whereas embankment drainage is channelled through the no-fines layers into the flooring's perforated pipes.

The reservoir is divided into four zones using in-situ cast concrete cut-off beams. Movement joints were filled and sealed with a SIKA Flex polyurethane sealant. Thereafter a 200mm SIKA Combiflex (hyperlon) bandage was placed over the joints. SIKA Swell sealable strips were used in the construction joints.

"We used the same rebar for the embankments and the floor and we opted for a dry mix to minimise cracking and to make the embankment casting process easier. The steep embankment slopes in some areas required shuttering at the floor-end and the casting was done in stages to prevent the concrete from sliding down. Both the floor and the embankments were cast with protruding rebar for the construction of the column bases.

"It is normal practice to construct column



footings on top of reservoir flooring which is what was done in this instance. Some of the columns were erected on the sloped sides and level footings had to be constructed to accommodate them," said Le Roux.

The columns were cast at varying heights to ensure that the hollow-core-slab roof fell 1° to either side of the central beam structure for drainage. Five rows of parallel beams support the hollow-core slab roof covering and each of the two rows on either side of the central row are slightly lower than the preceding row to accommodate the roof slope.

Cape Concrete sub-contractor, CPI, took only five days to install the 38 beams and 240 slabs using a Teemane Cranes 100 tonne mobile crane.

Each beam end was cast with a vertical groove and once the beams were installed, opposing grooves formed a cocoon around Y20 dowel bars which had been cast into the middle of columns. This arrangement provided the columns with lateral support and once two facing beams were installed on top of a column the 50mm gap between them was grouted. Besides forming a beam joint, the grouting protects the rebar from corrosion.

All the hollow-core slabs are 150mm thick and most are 5.7m long. However, some

are only 1.0m while others are as long as 6.8m. Moreover, some of the slabs ends are splayed to accommodate the structure's quadrangular shape and prior to delivery, Cape Concrete cut them to fit. The control chamber, which provides easy access to the inlet and outlet valves, was also roofed with hollow-core slabs.

Cast with protruding rebar for splicing with the roof topping rebar, the 40MPa beams were designed to bear the weight of the precast slabs and the working load during construction. Structural continuity over the column heads was achieved once the topping had been cast. The structural topping was reinforced and treated with a crystalline additive for waterproofing and crack control and Xypex was used as a sealing/crack additive. Once the roof-topping screed had been cast, beam thickness increased from 350 to 570mm, yielding additional strength for live loads and deflections.

Cape Concrete inserted polystyrene void formers into the hollow cores of the roof slabs to limit the amount of concrete which could enter the cores during the screeding process. A layer of clean-washed aggregate forms a third and final roof layer and precast coping, cast on site by Hiload Inyanga, was installed on the roof edges to create a barrier for the aggregate and to improve the overall appearance of the reservoir.

Main Image: The old reservoir. / Top left: The old reservoir. / Top Right: The casting of the concrete topping. / Left: The roof structure, comprising columns, beams and slabs.

Project Team

Client	Bergrivier Municipality
Consulting Engineers	iX engineers
Main Contractor	Hiload Inyanga
Precast Concrete Supplier	Cape Concrete Works

Text and photography:

David Beer on behalf of the Concrete Manufacturers Association and Cape Concrete Works.

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MAKING GREENER READYMIX CONCRETE

Concrete is widely recognised as a durable and sustainable building material although its environmental impact depends largely on how it is produced. By integrating sustainable practices throughout the entire manufacturing process the carbon footprint of readymix concrete can be significantly reduced.

Steps Towards Greener concrete

Sustainable readymix production involves optimising resources, minimising waste and reducing emissions without compromising quality. Implementing the following measures can help manufacturers produce environmentally friendlier concrete at a cost comparable to conventional mixes:

1. **Recycle and Reuse Materials** – Water is one of the most critical resources in concrete production. Recycling wash water and rainwater reduces dependence on potable sources. Additionally, waste concrete can be crushed and reused as aggregate, reducing the demand for virgin materials.
2. **Optimise Batching Accuracy** – Precise batching reduces material waste, improves consistency and enhances the overall performance of concrete. Modern batching plants equipped with automated controls can help minimise errors and excess usage of materials.
3. **Dust and Emission Control** – Suppressing visible dust at production sites with misting systems and ensuring compliance with air quality regu-

lations helps minimise environmental impact. Carbon capture technologies are also emerging to reduce emissions from cement production.

4. **Reduce Hidden Pollution Sources** – Idling trucks and inefficient engines contribute to carbon emissions. Ensuring vehicles and machinery are regularly maintained and optimising delivery routes, as well as investing in fuel-efficient or electric transport options can significantly lower emissions.
5. **Automation and Digitalisation** – Smart batching systems, IoT-enabled monitoring and AI-driven predictive maintenance reduce human error and improve efficiency. Automation also reduces waste and ensures consistency in production.
6. **Better Raw Material Utilisation** – Supplementary cementitious materials (SCMs) such as fly ash, slag and silica fume can partially replace cement, lowering the carbon footprint of concrete. Using locally sourced materials also cuts transportation emissions.
7. **Energy Efficiency** – Investing in energy-efficient mixers and production equipment reduces electricity consumption. Solar power and other renewable energy sources can further enhance sustainability.
8. **Workforce Engagement and Training** – Motivated and well-trained employees are more likely to implement sus-

tainable practices effectively. Training programs on resource conservation, quality control and workplace efficiency contribute to a greener plant.

9. **Maintain a Smart and Efficient Plant** – Keeping operations well-organised and ensuring regular maintenance improves efficiency. A clean, well-maintained plant reduces wastage and improves safety.
10. **Utilise Smart Technology** – Mobile applications, cloud-based data tracking and Bluetooth-enabled equipment help monitor and optimise production remotely. Affordable technology, such as tablets and microcontrollers like Raspberry Pi, can streamline operations and improve sustainability.

The transition to sustainable readymix concrete is essential for the construction industry's long-term viability. Innovations such as carbon-negative cement, bio-based admixtures and enhanced curing techniques are set to redefine how concrete is produced and used in the coming years.

By adopting these greener practices, readymix producers can contribute to a more sustainable built environment while remaining competitive in the market.





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DELIVERING SUCCESS IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT



The common basement of 10 Parks Boulevard and 55 Eastwood Road is a substantial structure, utilising 15,350 cubic metres of concrete and 1,620 tonnes of rebar.

Achieving successful project delivery without cutting corners is not only possible but necessary for creating a sustainable future.

For construction company, Concor, a prime example is its work being carried out on two new buildings, 10 Parks Boulevard and 55 Eastwood Road, within the prestigious Oxford Parks Precinct in Johannesburg. Known for its top-tier tenants, Oxford Parks is a highly sought-after commercial area and the calibre of its developments is testament to the commitment of both Concor and the client, Intaprop, in enhancing the exclusive feel of the precinct.

Warren Mills, contract manager at Concor, says work on the project commenced in February 2024, with bulk earthworks completed by March and raft foundations following in April. "Once construction of the super-basement was underway, focus then shifted to the 10 Parks office tower and the project has progressed to the completion of level five on 10 Parks and activities on three for 55 Eastwood," he explains. Both buildings are being

constructed simultaneously, ensuring that timelines are met and that efficiencies are achieved throughout the process.

The common basement of 10 Parks Boulevard and 55 Eastwood Road is a substantial structure, utilising 15,350 cubic metres of concrete and 1,620 tonnes of rebar to ensure its strength and durability. With a footprint of 21,035m² spread over four levels, the basement also incorporates 520,000 bricks for internal brickwork, providing the foundational support needed for both buildings.

The 10 Parks Boulevard office tower will require 4,250m³ of concrete, 510 tonnes of rebar, and 450,000 bricks to complete its structure, with a Gross Lettable Area (GLA) of 7,562m² spread across its five floors. Meanwhile, the 55 Eastwood Road building will use 3,250m³ of concrete, 370 tonnes of rebar, and 370,000 bricks for its four floors, with a total GLA of 4,734m². These materials reflect the scale and quality of the construction, ensuring both buildings meet high standards of durability

and aesthetic appeal.

Despite some challenges, the company's 10 Parks project is currently ahead of schedule, highlighting the company's ability to deliver quality work while adhering to tight timelines. This success can largely be attributed to Concor's experienced project team, which has extensive knowledge of the Oxford Parks Precinct, having worked in the area for over seven years.

Central to this is its commitment to uplifting SMMEs. "We have actively pursued a dedicated programme of mentoring small subcontractors from the start of our work within the Oxford Parks Precinct. One of our focuses has been to ensure they meet the high standards required for quality and safety and this approach not only ensures that work is completed to our quality specifications but also helps develop a skilled and sustainable subcontracting workforce for the future."

Significantly, this Concor programme has seen many of these subcontractors be-

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10 Parks offers five floors of office space and a retail floor totalling 7562m² GLA, while 55 Eastwood provides three floors of office space and a retail floor covering 4734m² GLA.

come preferred partners, further ensuring that Concor's projects remain ahead of schedule and exceed client expectations.

Warren stresses that it is important to note that Concor remains competitive by tendering out all subcontracting work, thereby giving a wide range of SMMEs the opportunity to participate. "By spreading these opportunities, we help foster a more inclusive and dynamic construction industry, ensuring that the benefits of projects are shared among a broader pool of businesses."

The 10 Parks Boulevard and 55 Eastwood Road developments will be impressive additions to the Oxford Parks Precinct. 10 Parks offers five floors of office space and a retail floor totalling 7562m² GLA, while 55 Eastwood provides three floors of office space and a retail floor covering 4734m² GLA. The buildings share a four-level basement that includes parking and energy centres. Additionally, both buildings will feature rooftop solar installations, contributing to the sustainability of the project.

The ground floors of the buildings will house retail outlets, opening onto open terraces and pedestrian walkways. Terraces will also be available on the first and top floors, providing open spaces for social interaction. Both buildings are designed with curved east-facing facades to invite more natural light and 10 Parks will feature a mechanically fixed tile façade, enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the development.

The Oxford Parks Block 2A Phase 1 project is targeting a Green Star V2 certification, reinforcing Intaprop and Concor's

commitment to sustainable construction. Achieving this certification requires a collective understanding and effort from the entire professional and construction team, including subcontractors and labourers. Communication and education are key in ensuring that every team member is aware of the requirements to minimise the project's carbon footprint.

The company's operating model is centred on a back-to-basics approach, which focuses on executing the fundamental aspects of construction to the highest standard. Warren says that this attention to detail has proven time and again to be a formula for success. "When the basics are done right, everything falls into place, and the result is a successful, high-quality project."

Agility also plays a critical role in project delivery. The company's ability to accommodate reasonable changes in design or

programme allows it to remain competitive in a dynamic market, particularly when dealing with the ever-evolving demands of the property rental sector. Whether it's adjusting to a tenant's request for an earlier occupation date or modifying design elements, its agility ensures that its projects stay on track without sacrificing quality.

Concor's continued success in delivering quality projects, even amid economic challenges, is a testament to its commitment to excellence, sustainability and inclusivity. By focusing on the basics and uplifting small contractors, Concor ensures that each project is completed to the highest standard while contributing to a sustainable future for the construction industry. The 10 Parks Boulevard and 55 Eastwood Road developments are just the latest examples of how a tried-and-true approach continues to deliver remarkable results in the built environment.



Concor's ability to accommodate reasonable changes in design or programme allows it to remain competitive in a dynamic market.

CONTRACTORS FAVOURITE BAKKIE GETS ABS



JAC Motors recently announced the addition of ABS (Anti-lock Braking System) to its popular X200 2.8L TDI 1.5-tonne single-cab to further enhance safety for both the crew and cargo. This latest upgrade complements the ABS-equipped X200 1.3-tonne double-cab targeted at organisations with labour-intensive crews.

The X-Series includes two 1.5-tonne single-cab and two 1.3-tonne double-cab derivatives. The X200 double-cab offers seating for six people, an unmatched product offering in the local market. The X-Series is powered by a 2.8-litre four-cylinder direct-injection, inter-cooled turbo-diesel engine which customers able to choose between 68 kW or 80 kW derivatives.

The X200 offers large disc brakes in front supported by drum brakes at the back to ensure excellent stopping power. However, today, ABS has become an essential feature for light commercial vehicles navigating Africa's demanding, potholed roads and challenging weather conditions. With ABS now standard across the X-Series drivers gain better stability during hard braking for increased safety.

"We are thrilled to now also offer ABS on our X200 single cabs which is a crucial feature for today's challenging road conditions. We are proud to be the only brand in the country that provides ABS as a standard feature on forward-cab bakkies, leading the way in safe transportation practices," says Karl-Heinz Göbel, CEO of JAC Motors South Africa.

The X-Series features 68 kW/210 Nm and 80 kW/240 Nm turbo-diesel derivatives. Both options ensure excellent fuel economy, delivering maximum torque at low RPM to reduce gear changes, conserve fuel and enhance overall efficiency for diverse applications. The average fuel consumption of the X200 is 8.0 l/100 km

(combined cycle). It supports a Towing Mass (braked) of 1,250 kg.

"A local online car publication, in direct comparisons with similar rivals, found the X200 outperformed competitors in price, performance, fuel consumption, payload and service plan. It was commended as the forward-cab workhorse with the lowest running costs in its class," says Göbel.

A forward-cab design is more practical than a standard bakkie. Its main benefit is the increased load box size, which results in much larger load volumes. The X200 single-cab's load box measures almost 2.8 metres and supports a large load area of 4,595 mm². Its cargo area of 2,785 mm (length) x 1,650 mm (width), coupled with 355 mm high drop-sides, is designed for optimal space utilisation. Its maximum permitted payload of 1,500 kg is the largest in the forward-cab market.

The X200 double-cab's maximum payload of 1,300 kg matches its single-cab rivals. Despite the space being used to fit three more people inside the extended cab, the X200 double-cab supports a large load area of 3,654 mm². The cargo area of 2,215 mm (length) x 1,650 mm (width) and 355 mm high drop-sides can still accommodate heavy and bulky loads.

The X200's double-wishbone independent front suspension and robust ladder-frame chassis ensure durability across various body applications. This setup enhances stability, manoeuvrability and handling, regardless of payload size. Maximised axle

capacity for optimal weight distribution keeps drivers, passengers and cargo safe on the road, regardless of body configuration or challenging road conditions.

The X200's elevated driving position adds to its safety credentials. It allows the driver to see and judge traffic better on open roads and improves visibility when parking at loading bays. Its compact size and 5.75-metre turning radius, combined with hydraulic power steering, ensure safe, effortless manoeuvrability in tight spaces where larger trucks struggle to navigate.

Crumple zones, side-impact protection bars, height-adjustable headlamps and an immobiliser further enhance the X200's occupants' safety. Remote-controlled central locking with motion lock at 40 km/h and a clutch-engaged ignition system further boost the X200's comprehensive safety features.

The X-Series includes a factory-fitted air-conditioner, a height-adjustable steering wheel and comfortable synthetic leather seats with headrests for a relaxing drive. All derivatives feature a Radio/CD/MP3 player with Bluetooth for added safety, while the X200 double-cab also offers electric windows.

Göbel emphasises that safety is a top priority for JAC Motors and expresses confidence that entrepreneurs and transport operators will appreciate the addition of ABS on forward-cab workhorses.

"We aim to make a difference in road safety, aware of the lives, time and resources lost to transport accidents. By prioritising driver and cargo safety, we strive to help entrepreneurs and fleet operators contribute to safer roads across Southern Africa," adds Göbel.

Product line-up and pricing

The JAC X200 2.8L TDI forward-cab range comprises four derivatives. Prices are VAT inclusive:

- X200 68 kW 1.5-tonne Single-cab D/S R349 900
- X200 68 kW 1.3-tonne Double-cab D/S R359 900
- X200 80 kW 1.5-tonne Single-cab D/S R399 900
- X200 80 kW 1.3-tonne Double-cab D/S R409 900

The X-Series comes with a 7-year/200,000 km manufacturer warranty and a 24-hour roadside assistance plan. The X200 80 kW includes a 5-year/100,000 km service plan, while the X200 68 kW offers an optional service plan, available for purchase from JAC Motors. The first service is at 5,000 km/6 months, followed by every 10,000 km/12 months.

"Our fuel-efficient X200 has the lowest sticker price among forward-cab workhorses in South Africa. It is the only competitor with ABS and outperforms rivals with the ideal engine size and drivetrain setup, perfect for harsh African conditions. The X200 is the most cost-effective solution for transport operators," concludes Göbel.

JAC Motors' dealer network covers over 70 locations across Southern Africa, including Namibia, Botswana, Zambia, Eswatini, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. This extensive reach ensures that the brand's after-sales service meets global brand standards, providing a consistently positive customer experience throughout the region.

UPCOMING FEATURES



In addition to our ongoing coverage of news, projects, products, services and events in every issue of our carefully compiled Concrete Connect we will focus on some highlights to help advertisers plan and give companies a chance to submit suitable editorial for these features. The highlights include:

March/April 2025

- Forklift buying guide
- Super additives for better concrete
- Mixers for largescale insitu concrete and manufacturing plants
- Where to find readymix suppliers countrywide

May/June 2025

- Metal reinforcing suppliers to the concrete industry including accessories
- Bagged or bulk concrete for concrete manufacturers – an economical choice
- Front-end loaders or TLB for your stock yard
- Concrete walling still a popular choice

Jul/Aug 2025

- Who's who in Concrete water infrastructure pipes, culverts kerbs, drains
- Who are the mains suppliers of Formwork in SA
- Is blended cement an alternative to virgin cement
- Tertiary education for concrete careers

Sept/Oct 2025

- Concrete road construction and road furniture
- Compactors and rollers for concrete placement and manufacturing
- Concrete laboratories and testing equipment
- Transporting concrete – trucks and trailers

Nov/Dec 2025



- Bakkie choices for contractors
- Product certification and the role of standards in concrete and cement
- Industry bodies and what they do for you
- Coastal erosion and the challenges of taming the sea

Additional news and stories in our regular features in Aesthetics, Readymix, Precast, Insitu, Cement, Home and Garden, Tools, Plant Equipment, Bakkies and Vans, Trucks, Testing, Education and everything to do with concrete.

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ELB EQUIPMENT PARTNERS WITH LIUGONG



Major construction equipment supplier, ELB Equipment, has announced that it has signed an exclusive agreement with Liugong to act as its sole distributor in southern Africa.

The move represents a significant shift for both companies, combining Liugong's innovative machinery and global reputation with ELB Equipment's decades-long expertise, after-sales support and far-reaching market presence. It provides ELB Equipment with the firepower it needs to compete with the country's largest suppliers providing it with a comprehensive offering in all the sectors it serves from mining to construction and general industry.

The agreement was signed by Desmond Van Heerden, CEO of ELB Equipment and Pu Yonghua, Liugong sales manager of southern Africa, with a shared vision of growth, quality service and commitment to providing the right technical solutions for customers equipment requirements.

"For our existing customers in the construction and concrete manufacturing industries the partnership signifies a significant expansion of our product portfolio and gives them access to Liugong's world-class range of equipment and we remain committed to delivering the highest standards of service and support to our valued customers.

"Similarly, Liugong's existing customer base in South Africa can rest assured that ELB Equipment will uphold the quality and reliability that they have come to expect from the Liugong brand. With our robust infrastructure, 11 branches as well as sub-dealers and dedicated service teams strategically located across the country, we are well-equipped to support Liugong's growing footprint," says Desmond.

He explains that this collaboration provides access for contractor and concrete manufacturers to Liugong's globally acclaimed equipment including wheel loaders, excavators, road building equipment, backhoes

and skid steers which will now enjoy ELB Equipment's local expertise in sales and aftermarket service.

"As we move into 2025, ELB Equipment and Liugong are committed to setting new benchmarks in the South African equipment market. Together, we aim to foster innovation, expand opportunities and deliver sustainable value to our customers and stakeholders.

This strategic partnership marks a new era of growth, collaboration and exceptional service for ELB Equipment and Liugong customers."

Pu Yonghua, Liugong sales manager of southern Africa, commented:

"South Africa represents an important market for Liugong, and we are thrilled to join forces with ELB Equipment. With their extensive network and customer-first approach, we are confident that this partnership will further strengthen our position



Gerrit Kapp, commercial director ELB Equipment, Desmond Van Heerden, CEO ELB Equipment, Keon Kardolus, ELB Equipment divisional director (EMC) and Charles Pettit, CEO Apex Business Partners at the Liugong Global Dealer Conference

in the region. We look forward to a prosperous relationship."

Desmond Van Heerden, CEO of ELB Equipment, stated:

"We are honoured to partner with Liugong, a brand that shares our commitment to delivering high-quality equipment and exceptional customer service. This agreement not only enhances our product offering but also allows us to better serve our customers across various industries. Together, we are well-positioned to meet South Africa's growing demand for world-class construction and mining equipment."

About Liugong

Liugong is one of the world's leading manufacturers of construction, mining and materials handling equipment. With over 60 years of expertise, Liugong is known for its durable, high-performing machinery and is trusted by industries worldwide.

About ELB Equipment

Founded over 105 years ago, ELB Equipment is a leading supplier of equipment in Southern Africa. Representing world-renowned brands, it is dedicated to delivering innovative solutions and exceptional customer support through its extensive network of branches and sub-dealers.



PREVENTING RISING DAMP IN PLASTERED WALLS



Rising damp is a common issue in brick-plastered walls where moisture from the ground travels upward through porous materials like bricks, mortar and concrete plaster. This capillary action leads to unsightly and damaging consequences such as flaking paint, salt deposits, plaster deterioration and in severe cases structural weakening.

Rising damp occurs when water is absorbed from the soil due to a lack of adequate damp-proofing measures. The problem is exacerbated by poor drainage, inadequate ventilation or the absence of a damp-proof course (DPC). To effectively prevent and mitigate rising damp, it is crucial to consider solutions for both new constructions and existing structures.

Six steps to prevent rising damp

Installing a Damp-Proof Course (DPC)

The most effective way to prevent rising damp in a newly built home is to install a DPC. This horizontal barrier, typically made of polyethylene, bitumen felt or chemical additives, is placed at least 150mm above ground level within the mortar joint. The DPC prevents moisture from wicking upward into the walls.

Choosing the Right Foundation and Substrate

In high-risk areas concrete foundations

should be waterproofed using additives and sealants to minimise moisture absorption. The ground beneath the foundation should be well-drained with a properly compacted sub-base.

Using Damp-Proof Membranes (DPMs)

In high-risk areas a damp-proof membrane made of high-density polyethylene or liquid-applied waterproofing can be installed beneath concrete floors and wall footings to act as a moisture barrier. It should be seamlessly integrated with the DPC to ensure complete protection.

Applying Waterproof Additives to Plaster and Mortar

Incorporating water-resistant additives into cement-based plasters and mortars reduces porosity and prevents capillary action. Hydrophobic admixtures can be used.

Proper Drainage and Groundwater Management

Effective site drainage is crucial. The area surrounding the structure should be graded to direct water away from the foundation. Additional measures such as French drains help manage groundwater levels effectively.

Ensuring Adequate Ventilation

Good airflow helps evaporate residual moisture that may infiltrate walls. Installing

airbricks, vent aids in preventing damp accumulation.

Preventing Rising Damp in Existing Structures

For homes already affected by rising damp, the following remedial measures can be employed:

Chemical Damp-Proofing Injection

If a DPC was never installed or has failed, a chemical damp-proofing injection is a viable retrofit solution. Silane/siloxane-based water-repellent creams or liquids are injected into drilled holes at the base of the wall to form a moisture-resistant barrier.

Removing and Replacing Damaged Plaster

Salt-laden, damp-affected plaster should be removed and replaced with a moisture-resistant plastering system. Using a breathable, salt-resistant plaster ensures that any residual moisture can escape without causing damage.

Installing Physical Barriers

Retrofit DPC solutions such as electro-osmotic damp-proofing systems or mechanical damp-proof membranes can be introduced to existing walls to halt moisture ingress.

Applying Surface Waterproofing Treatments



Hydrophobic coatings or breathable sealants can be applied to external brickwork to repel water while allowing trapped moisture to escape.

Improving Drainage and Groundworks

Enhancing site drainage by installing a French drain or ensuring downspouts and gutters direct water away from walls is essential in mitigating rising damp.

Increasing Ventilation and Dehumidification

Encouraging airflow through proper ventilation strategies, such as airbricks or mechanical ventilation, helps evaporate trapped moisture. In severe cases, dehumidifiers may be required to lower indoor humidity levels.

Understanding How Damp Moves

Damp migrates through plaster due to capillary action, where microscopic pores in cementitious materials draw moisture upward. As water evaporates it leaves behind soluble salts leading to efflorescence—white, powdery deposits that degrade plaster. Continuous moisture presence results in:

- Plaster deterioration: Bubbling, cracking and crumbling occur as moisture weakens the material.
- Mould growth: Damp conditions encourage fungal growth which can pose health risks.
- Structural damage: Long-term exposure to moisture weakens masonry bonds, leading to potential structural failures.
- Thermal inefficiency: Wet walls have reduced insulation properties, leading to increased heating costs.

By implementing proper DPCs, damp-proof membranes, waterproof additives and efficient drainage new buildings can remain moisture-free. For older homes, chemical injections, ventilation improvements and targeted waterproofing solutions can mitigate the problem effectively.



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PLEASE NOTE:
The member list is correct at the time of going to print. For any additional information regarding CMA membership or current members please contact the CMA at marketing@cma.org.za or give us a call on tel: (011) 805 6742.



A HAT TRICK OF SUCCESS FOR SA'S MOST POPULAR TRUCK MANUFACTURER

Daimler Truck Southern Africa (DTSA) claims Top Employers Automotive Industry Leader for the third consecutive time.

The Top Employers Institute recently announced the certification of companies in South Africa, their respective rankings as well as leading companies per industry.

DTSA once again claimed victory for remaining the automotive industry leader for the third consecutive year in a row and improving to the third place in the Top 20 ranking of companies in South Africa.

Nathier Jappie, head of Africa, Top Employer Institute said, "We are delighted to once again welcome Daimler Truck Southern Africa as the Automotive Industry leader for 2025. Having not only achieved certification, but a ranking in the Top Employers elite suite of "Top 20 Employers of choice", is an accolade worth bold recognition and celebration. At Top Em-

ployers Institute we are delighted to see employers certify, but even more proud to see them thrive – DTSA has achieved this esteemed accolade once again! Congratulation to DTSA and their phenomenal team!"

DTSA says it is an honour to add another feather to our cap. The Top Employers certification is really important to DTSA for numerous reasons: it offers global recognition, builds credibility and trust to enhance employee experience, attraction of top talent in the industry and serves as the global people practices benchmark for continuous improvement.

"We are incredibly proud to receive our 2025 certification, as well as to advance our position on Top 20 companies in South Africa from fifth to third place and to put the cherry on top, being recognised as the automotive industry leader. This achievement is a true reflection of the DTSA HR

team's passion as well as unflinching devotion and serves as a powerful motivation to continuously improve our people practices in order to offer an exceptional, sustainable work environment for our employees because our employees make us" Tebogo Shumba, group chief human resources at DTSA.



Tebogo Shumba of DTSA



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the alternative to real stone



ANNOUNCING

Revelstone's triumph at the CMA awards

Revelstone Wins Big at the CMA Awards!

Revelstone has been recognized for Aesthetic Excellence in multiple categories at the CMA Awards! These prestigious awards celebrate outstanding craftsmanship and design, and we're honored to receive the following accolades:

- **Category 4:**
Stone Cladding, Aesthetics Excellence: @sacshighschool
- **Category 5:**
Wet Cast Stone, Aesthetics Excellence: @erinvalehotel
- **Category 7:**
Beauty for Life – Project Over 20 Years, Aesthetics Excellence: Seaside Village, Big Bay



Trophy Overall Winner: Aesthetic
Excellence in Wet Cast: @erinvalehotel

Cape Town Showroom:

Adam House, Orion Road, Nerissa
Estate, Lansdowne, Cape Town,
Western Cape, 8001, South Africa

Showroom Times:

Mon – Thurs: 8:15am – 5pm
Friday: 8:15am – 4:00pm
Saturday: 9:00am – 12:00pm
Sundays & Public holidays: Closed

Contact Information:

Tel: 021 761 9739
Email: info@revelstone.co.za
Website: www.revelstone.co.za