

CONCRETE CONNECT

BUILDING THE FUTURE – LAYER BY LAYER

ISSUE: 5/2026



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manufacturers of superior cement products

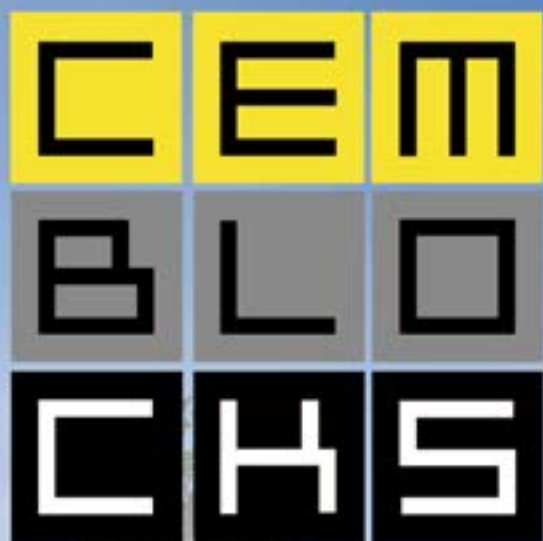


Solid Foundations and Expanding Horizons

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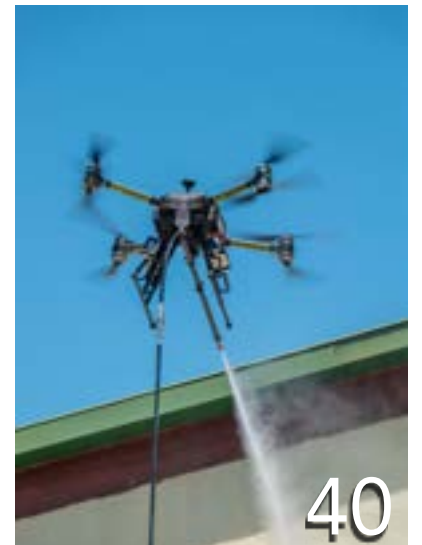
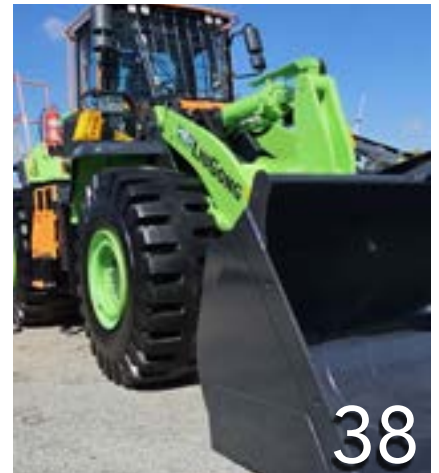


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Endorsed by



Publisher & Advertising: Andrew Meyer (Owner)
Cell +27 (0)82 456 5175
E-mail: Andrew@concreteconnect.co.za

Editorial Director: Raymond Campling (Owner)
Cell +27 (0)76 297 2775
E-mail: Raymond@concreteconnect.co.za

Production & Administration: Lynn Malcolm
Cell +27 (0)84 031 3057
E-mail: Lynn@concreteconnect.co.za

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SOLID FOUNDATIONS AND EXPANDING HORIZONS

“Our paving plant was commissioned in 2023 and continues to produce high volumes of superb quality pavers. We now fully understand the capability of the plant and what it likes and does not like, and we have succeeded in offering the market a better paver at the same price they would have paid elsewhere for an inferior product.”



Aerial view of the Blublok plant in Strand in the Western Cape.

Achieving sustainable growth in South Africa's highly competitive heavy building materials market is a carefully balanced task that requires operations to perform at the highest levels while maintaining operational efficiency and strategic foresight to remain ahead of the competitors.

This is where Strand-based precast manufacturer, Blublok, has thrived over the past three years, providing a textbook example of how modern concrete producers can evolve. Blublok's impressive upward trajectory over the last 36 months stems from a deliberate long-term capital investment plan

focused on three core operational pillars: expanding production capacity, integrating renewable energy infrastructure and pushing efficiency across all manufacturing processes.

According to Blublok managing director, Jess Brews, the first stage of Blublok's growth narrative was the establishment of a dedicated high-capacity cement paver production plant in 2023 to complement its existing wet-cast and brick and block plants at its central manufacturing precinct in Strand. Previously known for its robust output of concrete masonry units and wet-cast concrete units, Brews recognized

an escalating need in the market for a better paver. “I have seen the product quality available in Europe and there is no reason why our customers should not get the same variety of options available elsewhere in the world.”

“Our paving plant was commissioned in 2023 and continues to produce high volumes of superb quality pavers. We now fully understand the capability of the plant and what it likes and does not like, and we have succeeded in offering the market a better paver at the same price they would have paid elsewhere for an inferior product. I can confidently say that the vast majority



The Blubluk Team.

of our customers who use our pavers become return customers and it is down to the quality, service and pricing that we offer," says Brews.

He explains that the fully automated brick and block plant, which has seen numerous technological upgrades in the last few years is still maintaining its production capacity of approximately 3400 boards daily. "My mindset changed this year from chasing the margin to chasing the volumes. Some products will enjoy more margin than others - but what is important is to get the order and service the customer correctly. However, this principle only works if you are manufacturing as efficiently as you can."

To meet market demand, the company is currently making substantial capital investment to upgrade its wet-cast facility with a brand-new batching plant currently being commissioned, as well as a second production line which will effectively double its daily wet-cast production capacity without increasing its staffing requirement. "Our wet-cast customers want their stock when they want it and we need to be able to deliver when called upon." The new batching plant will also see an increase in production quality, efficiency and control while reducing material waste. Having stock available is a key consideration and the quality of the products produced is one of the main reasons why customers return for repeat busi-

ness. The expansions are due for completion by the start of 2027.

"It is no secret that recycled materials are playing a big role in remaining competitive these days. Virgin raw

materials, cement and diesel prices increase significantly more every year than the price of bricks. That is why I have the greatest respect for the operations in our industry who recycle





properly. Unfortunately, incorporating recycled materials is not always done properly, which does have an adverse effect on the quality of your products and this has sadly left a stigma in the market when it comes to manufacturing using recycled materials.”

“With this in mind, we do not shy away from using recycled materials but rather ensure our input materials are of the highest quality. We see the correct usage of recycled materials as a competitive advantage and have recently laid out substantial capital for a comprehensive crushing and screening plant which will be commissioned and operational shortly to supply a proportion of the materials to our plants.

“It is phenomenal what you can achieve with recycled materials if you have the discipline to monitor your primary input material. We have already established our supply of source material and when we are confident that we can produce a high-quality recycled material, we will start incorporating it in the products where margins are under the most pressure,” Brews explains.

He continues that alongside the recycling initiative, solar energy is another

initiative the company has embraced in its quest to achieve the highest possible levels of sustainability. Security and operational continuity represent two of the most critical challenges facing contemporary South African manufacturers. Rising grid electricity costs coupled with load-shedding risks can quickly erode profit margins and disrupt production schedules.

Recognising that true operational efficiency must include energy resilience, Blublok invested heavily in a commercial-scale solar PV installation in November 2025. “It is one of those things you wish you had done sooner. The saving alone makes it worthwhile but knowing you are independently in control of your production facility lets you sleep easier at night. We installed a substantial solar plant which is run by an AI system that ‘learns’ your business and optimises the solar, batteries and grid-tie functions. We have also replaced four of our forklifts with electric machines with another one on the way. Energy efficiency becomes addictive and I have no doubt we will continue to take advantage of renewable energy sources as we evolve.”

“We are one of the only manufacturers in the Cape that distributes primarily

with our own fleet. This year saw the addition of three more delivery vehicles into our fleet, bringing the fleet size to 10 trucks. Doing our own deliveries allows us to service our customers as quickly as possible. We have also started trading and delivering raw materials to our customers. Our customers want to get as much as they can from one place and if they can get the bricks, sand, stone and cement in one stop, they are happy,” he says.

FISANTEKRAAL

While expanding production capacity solves supply dynamics, unlocking long-term market leadership requires solving the logistical equation. Concrete masonry units and paving blocks are inherently heavy, high-density products where transport costs scale rapidly with distance. Historically operating out of Strand, Blublok faced a natural haulage radius beyond which freight costs became prohibitive for price-sensitive commercial contractors.

To overcome this geographical boundary, Blublok is launching a dedicated secondary distribution facility strategically positioned in Fisantekraal near the ever-expanding Durbanville, Kraai-



fontein and Paarl/Winelands corridors.

The Fisantekraal facility is designed as a logistical hub, featuring extensive hardstanding yards capable of maintaining substantial inventory reserves across all product lines. Contractors no longer face lead times on core stock items. Instead, they can view, select and collect materials directly from the yard or schedule site deliveries directly from their nearest distribution point.

“While we are well located for manufacturing, it has always been a challenge servicing our customers beyond our radius. Not because they do not want our product, but because the transport kills the deal. We have been blessed that there has been a lot of development inside our radius, but it will not last forever, and my team and I are excited about Fisantekraal and so are our customers. Sales and deliveries from that yard will be co-ordinated by the existing head office in conjunction with an on-site office in Fisantekraal and our customers can expect access to our products at the same or similar rates they would receive from our manufacturing facility in Strand. At this stage, manufacturing will remain in Strand but should a secondary manu-

facturing operation be justified, that is what we will do,” says Brews.

The story of Blublok over the last three years demonstrates how technical capability and smart market positioning can combine to drive sustainable business growth. By investing in modern manufacturing technology and high-volume output at its Strand

plants, Blublok has built a foundation of product excellence. By establishing its strategic footprint in Fisantekraal, the company is ensuring that excellence reaches a broader market than ever before.



FLOAT CONCRETE BUILDS GLOBAL MOMENTUM WITH AFRISAM SUPPORT



Float cladding achieves its exterior durability through a carefully engineered concrete mix. High-grade cement, pozzolanic binders, fine mineral aggregates and performance-enhancing admixtures combine to form a dense, low-porosity matrix that resists moisture ingress, weathering and prolonged environmental exposure.

After a decade of product development and ongoing technical support from AfriSam's Centre of Product Excellence (CPE), South African precast manufacturer Float Concrete is taking its innovative lightweight concrete panels and 3D tiles to international markets.

Based in Krugersdorp, Float Concrete has evolved from a specialist concrete flooring and furniture business into a manufacturer of high-performance architectural concrete products that are increasingly being specified by architects, designers and developers both locally and abroad.

The company's lightweight concrete panels and sculptural 3D tiles replicate the appearance of fair-faced concrete while offering greater consistency, reduced weight and easier installation. Through continuous refinement of its proprietary concrete mix designs, Float Concrete has developed products that are lighter, stronger and more durable than conventional concrete alternatives.

"From the beginning, it has been a constant process of improving the mix, making it lighter and stronger," says Float Concrete Co-Founder and CEO Waldo Meyer. "In recent years, we have focused entirely on developing our panel and 3D tile ranges while scaling up production to meet growing international demand."

Meyer explains that the products were originally developed in response to architects seeking a reliable alternative to in-situ concrete finishes.

"Architects wanted a guaranteed concrete finish that could be specified with confidence," he says. "Our panels provide the authentic appearance of concrete while giving architects greater control over colour, texture and quality."

Float Concrete's manufacturing director, Francois Pretorius, says the company's ability to advance its lightweight concrete technology has been significantly strengthened through its long-standing relationship with AfriSam.

"The journey to develop a lightweight,



In this technology company's commercial office, concrete provides a strong visual focal point. Natural pitting and subtle variations in tone give the panels an authentic mineral quality, adding texture and contrast to the otherwise precise, engineered interior.

high-strength product has involved extensive testing and refinement of materials and mix designs," says Pretorius. "AfriSam has been willing to work with us as we investigated new materials and processes, helping us source products, test them and evaluate the results."

He notes that the consistency of AfriSam's

ceMENT products has been particularly important as even small variations can affect the final appearance and performance of the finished products.

"The quality and consistency of AfriSam's cement have been excellent and we have also received exceptional service and technical support," he says.

AfriSam technical consultant Bheki Makhathini says the company's Centre of Product Excellence has assisted Float Concrete with testing, mix design evaluation and product performance assessments, including compressive and flexural strength testing.

"We assisted in evaluating different cement options and worked with Float Concrete to improve durability, consistency and production efficiency," says Makhathini. "These products represent a highly specialised application of concrete technology."

He emphasises that the products offer benefits beyond aesthetics. "Far from being a standard concrete product, this is a specialised architectural solution that delivers durability, aesthetic appeal and thermal benefits," he says. "The company has continually improved its manufacturing processes and product performance, and it is rewarding to see the progress they have made."

The collaboration has also enabled Float Concrete to benefit from AfriSam's broad cement portfolio including



Drawing inspiration from mineral formations, soil, stone and weathered landscapes, FLOAT offers six standard colours developed to complement both architecture and the surrounding environment. The finishes preserve the natural tonal shifts, subtle variations and depth characteristic of authentic cast concrete.

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Set against open vegetation and the dramatic Winelands landscape, this residence balances its setting with long-term performance. Float concrete panels create a durable, inherently non-combustible exterior skin, combining the visual depth of cast concrete with lasting weather resistance and material-level fire safety

High Strength Cement and the company's premium Rapid Hard Cement.

According to AfriSam territory sales manager for Concrete Product Manufacturers, Abdullah Hajee, the partnership demonstrates the company's commitment to supporting innovation throughout the construction value chain.

"When we first engaged with Float Concrete, we immediately recognised

the potential of what they were doing," says Hajee. "They are ambitious, innovative and constantly looking for ways to improve their products. As AfriSam, we are proud to support that journey through reliable cement supply and access to the technical expertise within our Centre of Product Excellence."

Hajee believes the partnership highlights how local innovation can create opportunities beyond South Africa's

borders. "Float Concrete is developing products that are attracting growing international attention, and we are excited to be part of that success story," he says. "Together, we are demonstrating what can be achieved when quality materials, technical expertise and entrepreneurial innovation come together."

ACHIEVING CONSISTENT CONCRETE PERFORMANCE



Cornelius Julyan, Field Services Team Leader at Chryso Southern Africa.

As construction and infrastructure projects become larger, more technically demanding and increasingly focused on quality, the role of field service support has evolved far beyond product delivery.

Today, experienced technical specialists working directly alongside contractors, concrete producers and project teams have become an essential part of ensuring consistent concrete performance from batching plant to final placement. Concrete performance is influenced by a wide range of variables including raw material variability, changing environmental conditions, transport times, placing methods and curing practices. Even where premium construction chemicals are specified, achieving the desired results depends on their correct application and ongoing optimisation throughout the life of the project.

This is where Chryso's technical field service teams add significant value. Rather than providing support only when problems arise, Chryso specialists work proactively with customers from the earliest stages of a project,

assisting with mix optimisation, product selection, site trials and performance monitoring. By maintaining a regular presence on site and at batching plants, they are able to identify potential issues before these develop into production delays, quality concerns or unnecessary costs.

According to Cornelius Julyan, field services team leader at Chryso Southern Africa, technical field service has become one of the most important differentiators in modern concrete construction.

"Construction projects operate under immense pressure to meet demanding quality standards while maintaining programme schedules and controlling costs. Having experienced technical specialists available on site allows challenges to be addressed quickly,

ensuring concrete performs as intended under actual operating conditions rather than simply under laboratory conditions," Julyan says.

Chryso teams understand that every project presents unique conditions. Differences in aggregate characteristics, cement chemistry, water quality, ambient temperatures and logistics all influence concrete behaviour. Continuous monitoring allows admixture dosages and mix designs to be finetuned where necessary, ensuring consistent workability, strength development, durability and finish quality throughout construction.

This technical support becomes particularly valuable on major infrastructure developments, high-rise buildings, industrial facilities and specialised civil engineering projects where concrete



Site observations and testing data by Chryso Southern Africa support continuous improvement in concrete performance, consistency and quality.



Fast practical on-site support from Chryso Southern Africa helps minimise disruption, reduce downtime and maintain production continuity.

specifications are often highly engineered and performance tolerances are extremely tight.

Rapid response is another major advantage, Julyan says. Should unforeseen challenges arise, experienced technicians investigate the root cause immediately and recommend practical corrective actions. This minimises disruption to production, reduces the likelihood of rejected concrete and helps contractors avoid costly delays that can impact overall project schedules.

The information gathered by Chryso's field teams also creates valuable feedback for customers. Performance observations, testing data and practical site experience help optimise future pours, improve batching consistency and support continuous improvement across multiple projects.

"Successful concrete construction is built on partnership. Our field service teams work alongside customers throughout the project lifecycle, sharing technical knowledge, optimising concrete performance and helping ensure that every load delivered consistently meets the project's requirements. This collaborative approach

gives customers greater confidence, reduces operational risk and ultimately contributes to better project outcomes," Julyan adds.

Beyond solving technical challenges, regular engagement with customers also supports skills transfer. Chryso specialists work closely with batching personnel, quality control laboratories, contractors and placing crews, helping strengthen understanding of best practice in concrete production and application. This knowledge sharing improves consistency long after individual projects have been completed.

As construction techniques continue to evolve and sustainability targets become increasingly important, field service support is also playing a growing role in helping customers optimise cement content, improve material efficiency and reduce waste without compromising concrete performance.

"For Chryso, technical support in the field is not simply an after-sales function but a strategic extension of our commitment to helping customers deliver safer, more efficient and higher-quality construction projects," Julyan concludes. "By combining advanced admixture technology with



Technical support from Chryso Southern Africa helps ensure consistent concrete performance from the batching plant through to final placement.

practical on-site expertise, we help ensure that engineered concrete solutions perform reliably under real-world conditions, giving contractors and concrete producers the confidence to deliver projects successfully."



Regular site inspections by Chryso Southern Africa help ensure admixture systems continue to operate reliably, efficiently and at optimum performance.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRADEMARKS AND WHY PROTECTING YOUR TRADE- MARK IS VITAL TO YOUR BRAND



“How do you go about continuing to protect your trademark? The most effective way to protect your trademark is through continuous and consistent enforcement. Preventing your trademark from being abused by those who attempt to steal the credibility you built”.

Recent developments in the DIY and construction industry have highlighted the importance of protecting trademarks and preventing others to piggy-back on years of hard work and building of trust in products.

Not only does trademark infringement harm the owner of the trademark but it also affects the customers who are being misled by the party infringing on the trademark. Cindy Engels of A.Shak says the company vigorously protects its trademarks as it believes that much effort needs to go into maintaining a brand name which the industry trusts. “Imitations of our products are not guaranteed to match the quality of our products that we have formulated and by not protecting our trademark we risk having our brand tied to products we have no say in the quality of.”

“How do you go about continuing to protect your trademark? The most effective way to protect your trademark

is through continuous and consistent enforcement. Preventing your trademark from being abused by those who attempt to steal the credibility you built. As a customer, think to yourself if you would trust a company who didn’t even have the integrity to create their own name for their product and would rather steal the name from a company that put in decades of work to build the trust of an industry. You would need to question just how reliable the product inside is if they could not even put in the effort to make their own name for their product.

“That is why we encourage people to do their research on the products they are purchasing to avoid knockoffs and inferior products. The importance of going for the reputable brand cannot be overstated. Do not just assume that the size of the company manufacturing the product is a good indicator for quality as even some of the largest players in the industry may attempt to

force a smaller company who has developed their product over decades off of the trade mark they own and claim it for their own product that may be inferior,” she says.

Cindy adds that by taking this type of approach to checking the authenticity truly makes a difference as it rewards brands that maintain quality and develop their own unique identity. If a company is no longer able to fool customers by copying the name of their competitor then they will need to put in the effort and actually build trust for their product themselves through results.

“Next time you go to a store we encourage you to take a moment and think about which is the name brand and which is the brand that stole the name. Just because you see a large company using a name that does not mean they are the owners of that name and they may be attempting to force the original owners off their trademark out of greed for what the original owners have built and a lack of respect for the customers looking for the reputable product.”



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GALS IN HARD HATS ENTERING THE CONSTRUCTION AND ENGINEERING SECTORS

"Construction is not easy. Being women in construction makes it even harder. However, you have chosen a career that can bring an incredible amount of joy and pride. There is something very special about standing back and looking at a building, a bridge or a road and knowing you were part of that. We know the challenges behind the scenes but when you finally see what you have helped to create it is all worthwhile. That is when you put on your lipstick, smile and know you were born for this!"

That was the message from guest speaker Martie Coulson, owner and founder of Zambia-based Mart Solutions, at the third annual Gals In Hard Hats event which was co-sponsored by precast concrete products provider Colossal Concrete Products (CCP), construction chemicals company Chryso Southern Africa and supplier of cement construction materials and technical solutions AfriSam at Pretoria University's Engineering 4.0 Concrete Laboratory recently as part of their South Africa's National Women's Month celebrations.



Mmapitso Kiewiet - Colossal Concrete Products Chief Operating Officer

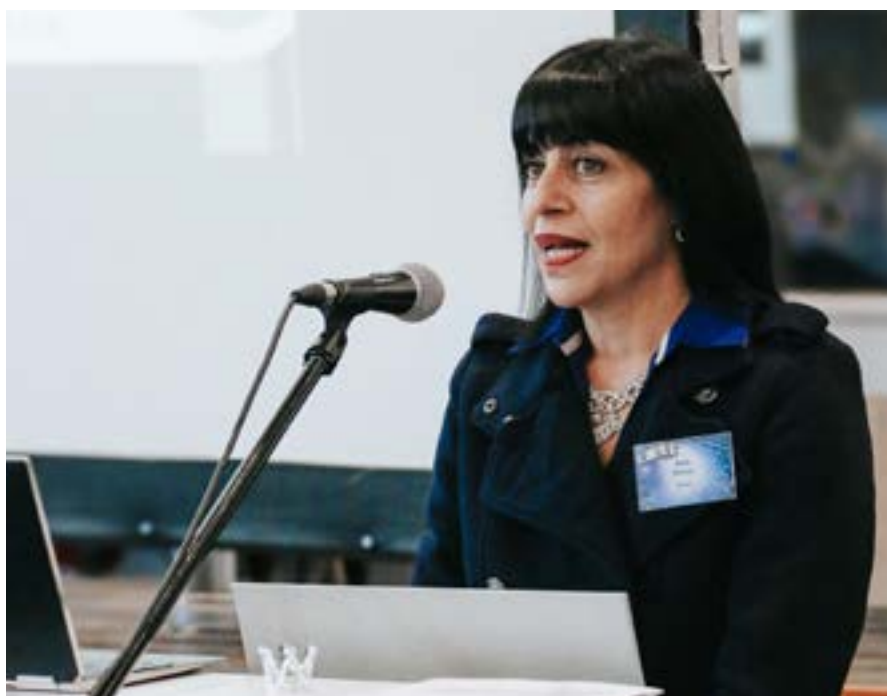
The initiative is the brainchild of Colossal Concrete Products CEO Gwen Mahuma-Madida which sets out to facilitate mentorship, motivation and networking opportunities while highlighting career opportunities for South African women in science, technology, mathematics and engineering (STEM)-related professions.

The co-sponsors take turns hosting the event and this year Chryso Southern Africa did the honours with a blue- and purple themed event which sparkled with bling, fun and inspiration. This year's angle - Queens in Construction - focused on women's contribution to the construction sector.

"The message that we sent at Gals in Hard Hats 2026 has inspired young women and opened their eyes to the challenges they may face. Many of those who attended are still young. I think we have shown them that, as we mature in our careers, we need to be balanced - because we have careers and families, we study, we have personal commitments and we are still pursuing our professional goals," adds Michelle Fick, business unit development manager at this year's host Chryso Southern Africa.

"We have been intentional about what we are doing. Women are often believed to stand in the way of each other when it comes to career advancement. We are showing that it is possible for women to work together and help each other in a sector that is very male-oriented," adds Mahuma-Madida.

Coulson, who entered the construction industry at 18 and has significant



Adele Wentzel - AfriSam Sales Manager: Cement Manufacturing.



Gals in hard hats

sector experience locally and in Africa admits this was not where she initially saw herself but things changed as she moved from aluminium to roofing and finally, to setting up her own Zambian company.

"It became my career and my passion. I still have hard days. There are days when you question yourself, when projects and people frustrate you. One of the biggest lessons that I learnt over the years is that you need to stand your ground. You will walk into meetings and be the only woman at the boardroom table and arrive at a construction site where people assume that the man standing next to you knows more than you do. However, you do not have to prove yourself or change who you are. Stay humble while also being firm and confident and setting

your own boundaries. You do not have to shout the loudest in the room. Keep learning, ask questions listen to people around you," she advises.

Colossal Concrete products chief operating officer Mmapitso Kiewiet emphasises the importance of punctuality, self-presentation, integrity, building a solid routine and accepting constructive criticism in building confidence and success.

Kiewiet also stresses the need for allies as most women are not self-made, but rather are surrounded by key individuals who help to propel them forward. She also advised that while sacrifices are required for career growth, it is also important to remember to make time for relaxation.

"Looking back on the start of my career, I recognise how valuable guidance and practical advice can be in helping someone navigate their professional journey. So, it is good for young women entering this construction and engineering sectors to realise that back in the day we faced similar challenges and experiences," observes AfriSam sales manager: cement manufacturing, Adele Wentzel.

In her speech titled When Biology meets the Boardroom, Wentzel shared her experiences: capturing the essence of what it means to be a woman going through career- and biology-related life-stages, while achieving goals and striving for excellence. This point really resonated with Water Resource Engineering PhD student Sana Jina, one of the University of Pretoria graduate students who attended the event:

"When I started studying I questioned whether I would have time for a family and be able to cope. It was therefore very interesting to see so many women in the same room today in the engineering space. Usually it is 90% men. It was inspiring to hear from senior women in the industry about their thoughts and their experiences. It is always good to gain knowledge from people who have walked the path, maybe in even more difficult circumstances," she comments.

Mahuma-Madida says Gals In Hard Hats originally began as a platform for women to meet and network. It has however become far more than this developing into an opportunity for women in the industry to inspire and motivate one other: "We aim to use this as a powerful means to show younger women that it is possible we have been the trailblazers and we are willing to open doors and clear the way for them to have a bright future in the engineering and construction sectors," she advises.

Wentzel agrees: "Relationships are not purely transactional but are also built on trust and meaningful connections. It is our responsibility to demonstrate these values and pass them on to others."

Fick concludes: "The event speaks for itself. The calibre of speakers over the past three years has influenced - and made a tangible difference - in female students' lives. Awareness is growing, women in the industry are very keen to participate and we are really building momentum. We are already making plans for the Gals in Hard Hats event next year!"



Martie Coulson and Sana Jina

HARSHER PENALTIES CANNOT COMPENSATE FOR A WEAK SAFETY CULTURE

*By Olebogeng Manhe, group chairman and co-founder of the Gap Infrastructure Corporation (GIC)



Olebogeng Manhe, Group Chairman and co-founder of the Gap Infrastructure Corporation (GIC)

A string of recent incidents on construction sites has drawn regulatory attention to the sector, raising the question of why major safety failures are still so common despite South Africa's extensive construction regulations and what will it take to stop them? We simply must do better.

The solutions might not be tougher penalties or at least, not on their own. Greater penalties may deter deliberate non-compliance, but the industry must also confront the harder truth of why dangerous practices are being allowed to take hold on site and whether the deeper failure lies in the sector's

We have seen just how deadly poor safety measures can become following four different building collapses between December 2025 and March 2026, killing 17 people and injuring 24. Investigations pointed to a pattern of failure across these construction sites, including inconsistent application of existing regulations, inadequate oversight, weak safety enforcement and widespread non-compliance.

In response, the Council for the Built Environment (CBE) has recommended reviewing the penalties for developers who proceed with construction without the required approvals. It has noted that even after a full year of unauthorised operations, the fine may only amount to around R36,000 a sum that can simply be absorbed rather than acting as a meaningful deterrent.

But even dramatically higher fines will not change what happens on sites by themselves. A worker operating powerful equipment, laying bricks, pouring concrete or working high above the ground on scaffolding is not focused on the potential penalty an owner might face if something goes wrong. Their attention is firmly on doing the job at hand as to earn a living for

What changes behaviour is a strong safety culture where Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), established procedures and basic precautions are treated as non-negotiable parts of how the job gets done.

Examples abroad demonstrate that higher fines have mixed results. Hong Kong, for example, has already introduced much tougher penalties to improve workplace safety. Since 2022 the most serious breaches of employers' general safety duties have carried fines of up to HK\$10 million, while those convicted may also face up to two years in prison. The fine is designed to carry real financial weight although even at that level it may represent only a small share of a major construction company's annual profit.

Whether such penalties translate into better safety outcomes is less clear. Construction accidents remained stable for the first few years after the fines were introduced, then fell noticeably in 2025. At the same time, however, more people were killed in 2025, as 21 workers lost their lives compared with 14 the year prior.

South Africa should take this experience as a reminder that penalties can



Health and Safety is a main priority and the responsibility of all on site.

safety culture itself.

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themselves and their loved ones.

strengthen accountability, but the real

work to prevent injuries and deaths is still done on the construction site itself. Safety is shaped by what supervisors tolerate, the risks and behaviours workers see normalised every day and whether somebody who spots a hazard is expected to speak up or keep quiet and carry on.

Critically, no worker should have to choose between raising a safety concern and being branded as difficult, accused of slowing down the job, or fearing for their livelihood. People are far more likely to report damaged equipment, unsafe scaffolding, missing protection or dangerous shortcuts when they know the concern will be taken seriously and acted on. That's an enabling environment which promotes a virtuous circle focused on safety.

Site leadership therefore carries enormous responsibility for setting the standard. Supervisors and contractors shape culture through what they allow to become normal. One ignored shortcut lowers the bar and makes the next one easier to justify. In contrast, halting unsafe work immediately and acting on concerns without hesitation sends a clear message about what will and will not be tolerated on site.

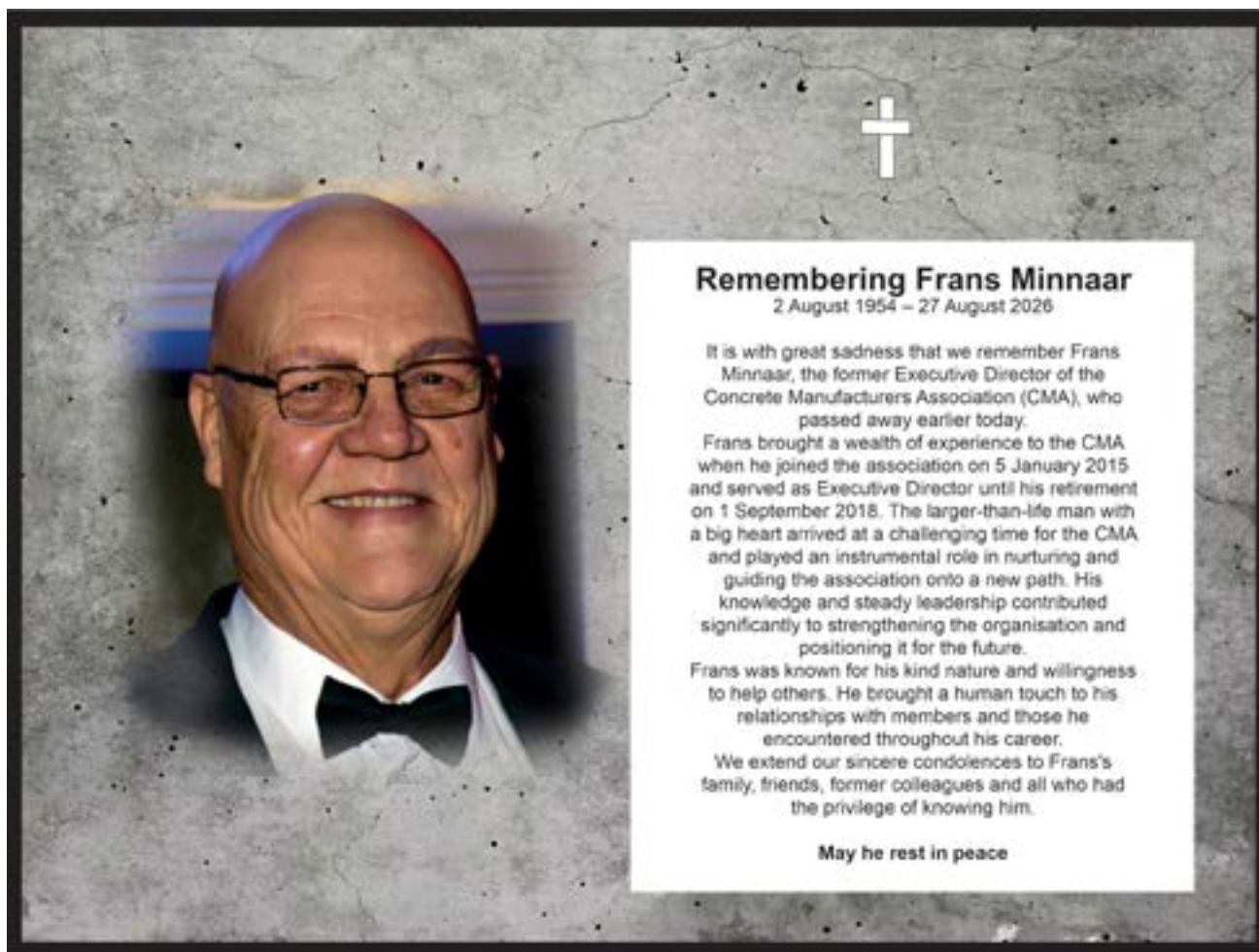


The industry should also pay far closer attention to the warning signs that appear before a serious incident. Near misses, repeated shortcuts, missing PPE, poor housekeeping and work that starts drifting away from approved procedures can all expose where standards are beginning to break down. Correcting those behaviours early can stop a warning from becoming an injury or worse.

Construction safety ultimately has a much bigger human purpose. Workers deserve to return home safely after every shift, while families, businesses and communities must be able to trust the

schools, hospitals, homes, roads and other infrastructure they depend on long after construction crews have left.

There is a clear place for penalties where people deliberately abdicate their responsibilities, both when it affects their own safety and the safety of fellow workers and the wider community. However, the industry must match those consequences with a safety culture strong enough to ensure that safe behaviour is part of how every job is done, every day.



70 YEARS OF ENGINEERING, ARCHITECTURE AND INVESTMENT



For 70 years GIBB Group has helped shape South Africa through engineering expertise infrastructure and partnerships that enable industries and economies to thrive.

Founded in South Africa in 1956 the Group has evolved alongside the country and the continent it serves. Today, GIBB Group brings together engineering, architecture and investment solutions to help clients plan and deliver infrastructure that supports economic growth and improves quality of life.

The milestone comes as South Africa faces significant infrastructure demands across all sectors. The anniversary is a celebration of longevity and an opportunity to reflect on what seven decades of infrastructure delivery have enabled and reaffirm its commitment to the challenges that remain.

GIBB Group CEO Vishaal Lutchman says reaching 70 years is a proud moment for the business.

"Seventy years is a milestone we share with the people and organisations that have walked this journey with

us. Our employees, clients, partners, communities and stakeholders have each played a role in shaping the GIBB Group we know today. Our legacy has been built through collaboration and trust."

GIBB's history is one of continual evolution responding to the changing needs of clients and the continent it serves. From its beginnings as Hill Kaplan & Partners in 1956, GIBB has grown through strategic partnerships and diversification into a proudly South African and 100% employee-owned business with capabilities extending well beyond its traditional engineering roots.

"We are no longer only an engineering consultancy. Across the group we bring capabilities to support infrastructure. This allows us to work as a long-term strategic partner with the capability needed to navigate complexity and create sustainable value."

Across the African continent the company's work has helped expand access to clean water, connecting communities through transport networks,

strengthening energy systems, developing sustainable cities and unlocking economic opportunity.

Its track record includes the Gautrain Rapid Rail Link, the Ingula Pumped Storage Scheme and major water-security programmes including the Lesotho Highlands Water Project and Umkhomazi Water Project, alongside architecture and urban-development projects delivered through SVA International.

The Group's move into infrastructure investment also reflects its long-term commitment to the markets it serves. Through GIBB Crede, GIBB can participate as an adviser or technical partner as well as a co-developer and investor in infrastructure projects.

"Our heritage lives in our people," says Lutchman. "It is carried in the knowledge passed between generations, in relationships built over decades and in the commitment of our teams to continue learning, adapting and finding better ways to serve our clients."

W-CAPE CONSTRUCTION GROWTH PUTS SKILLS AND CAPACITY TO THE TEST

The Western Cape's construction sector is expanding, creating jobs and attracting significant infrastructure investment but ensuring there are enough skilled people and capable businesses to deliver that growth which is becoming increasingly important.

In 2025, construction created 57,341 jobs in the Western Cape, while the value of completed buildings grew by nearly 34%, even as the sector contracted nationally. The value of build-

ing plans passed in the province also reached almost R35 billion, the highest in the country (Western Cape Government, 2026 State of the Province Address).

At the same time, the province has identified an integrated infrastructure pipeline worth R152 billion, with 52 projects considered investment-ready (Western Cape Government, 2026 State of the Province Address).

The scale of the opportunity is being

matched by a renewed focus on skills. In August, the Western Cape Government opened applications for construction-sector training opportunities and funded apprenticeships, including theoretical and practical training, practical training on site and work on building sites (Western Cape Government, Department of Infrastructure, 2026).

For the industry, the challenge is therefore not simply creating more construction activity but ensuring that the people and businesses delivering it have the skills, knowledge and capacity to do so safely, compliantly and professionally.

"Companies increasingly recognise that operating successfully in construction requires more than simply winning work," says Chandré Abrahams, vice president of the Master Builders Association Western Cape (MBAWC). "Businesses need access to industry knowledge, representation, networking, professional development and a better understanding of the regulatory and operating environment."

For Abrahams, sustainable growth depends on businesses being able to operate professionally while navigating contracts, regulation, employment requirements and the broader construction environment. Compliance and ethical conduct are not simply administrative requirements, but part of building trust and maintaining standards across the sector.

This is an area where industry associations can play a role by helping businesses understand their obligations and develop the capability to meet them. MBAWC represents around 400 member companies, whose work accounts for approximately 70% of Western Cape building activity and provides support around contracts, labour relations, occupational health and safety, regulatory requirements and industry standards.

But capacity also depends on developing the people who will build and manage the industry in future. MBAWC supports training and education, trade development, occupational health and safety initiatives, bursaries, student support and programmes exposing



young people to construction careers. Its initiatives include the OHS Cadet Programme, Go for Gold, bursaries and trade training.

"All the initiatives have a compulsory site component for on-the-job practical training to bridge the gap between academic or theoretical knowledge," says Petra Devereux, executive director of MBAWC. "This is critical especially in construction where exposure to real site conditions allow learners to apply their theoretical knowledge, develop practical competence and understand the safety, productivity, teamwork and workplace discipline required in the industry."

The need extends beyond individual workers to the businesses employing them. Through its Entrepreneurship Programme with the University of the Western Cape, MBAWC annually supports 30 emerging contractors with the fundamentals of running a construction business and meeting compliance requirements. Participants can subsequently apply for Candidate Membership and access mentoring and other support.

That focus is increasingly relevant as the province seeks to broaden participation in its construction economy. For emerging and township-based businesses, access to opportunities

needs to be matched by the capability to sustain them, from compliance and business management to delivering quality work and competing in the wider market.

"For me, growth is not only about growing turnover. It is about building businesses that are sustainable, professional and capable of creating opportunities for others," says Abrahams.

The wider challenge is one of capacity. Turning a major infrastructure pipeline into completed projects requires artisans, supervisors, technical professionals, project managers and construction businesses with the capability to deliver.

"Our industry relies heavily on people. While technology and AI will undoubtedly transform the way we work, they cannot replace the skilled people who physically build our homes, infrastructure and cities with their hands," says Devereux.

As the Western Cape builds out its infrastructure pipeline, the ability to develop those people and businesses alongside the physical projects could prove just as important as the construction itself.





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SAINT-GOBAIN SPONSORS RENO RACE ON SABC 1



As Cashbuild Reno Race returns with new ideas, new partners and a brand-new season of inspiring home transformations, Saint-Gobain Africa is excited to once again be part of one of South Africa's most recognised home renovation platforms, connecting with homeowners and showcasing the solutions that help turn renovation ambitions into reality.

This year's partnership represents an exciting new chapter for Saint-Gobain Africa. While the Group has previously supported the programme through one of its individual brands, Season 12 marks the first time Saint-Gobain will showcase its broader portfolio through a multi-brand solutions approach, highlighting how different products and systems work together to transform living spaces from floor to ceiling.

Through the series, viewers will be introduced to a range of Saint-Gobain solutions designed to improve comfort, durability, aesthetics, sustainability and overall building performance. From ceilings, insulation and finishing products to flooring and tiling solutions, the partnership reflects Saint-Gobain's continued growth and expansion in the market, as well as the breadth of solutions now available to homeowners.

"Cashbuild Reno Race provides us with a unique opportunity to connect directly with the people who use our products every day," said Mpho Mothupi, brand marketing manager at Saint-Gobain Africa.

"Homeowners are at the heart of everything we do. This platform allows us to move beyond simply talking about products and instead demonstrate how complete solutions can help homeowners create spaces that are more comfortable, healthier and better suited to the way they live"

For Saint-Gobain Africa the sponsorship is also an opportunity to get closer to consumers, better understand the realities and challenges homeowners face every day and engage in meaningful conversations about what matters most in their living spaces. While our extensive portfolio already

addresses many common building and renovation needs, platforms like Cashbuild Reno Race provide valuable insights into evolving homeowner expectations, helping us continuously innovate, refine our offering and ensure we're delivering solutions that remain relevant to the people and communities we serve.

Throughout the season, viewers can expect to see Saint-Gobain products and expertise incorporated into renovation challenges and home transformations that highlight the benefits of integrated building solutions.

As anticipation builds for the new season, Saint-Gobain Africa looks forward to joining homeowners on their renovation journeys and inspiring better ways to build, renovate and improve living spaces.



SAICE CELEBRATES PEOPLE DRIVING ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE



Dr Chris Roth, SAICE President 2026

As South Africa renews its focus on infrastructure as a driver of economic growth, service delivery and job creation, the South African Institution of Civil Engineering (SAICE) used its 2026 National Awards to celebrate the engineers, technologists, technicians, mentors and future leaders helping to build the country's future.

Hosted at the NH Hotel in Sandton on 3 September, the awards recognised excellence across the civil engineering profession, honouring outstanding individuals, institutions and project teams whose work continues to strengthen communities and improve the lives of South Africans.

While the awards celebrated engineering achievements the focus of the evening was firmly on the people behind them and the institutions helping to develop the next generation of engineering leaders. "These awards are about celebrating excellent projects, outstanding individuals, and inspiring student chapters, branches and divisions. As engineering practitioners, we must keep championing excellence and showcasing the great work happening across South Africa. Sustainability and environmental stewardship are now central to every branch of civil engineering. The quality on display this year has been truly exceptional," said Dr Chris Roth, SAICE President 2026.

SAICE CEO Sekadi Phayane-Shakhane said the profession is entering a period of significant change and opportunity. "South Africa has placed a renewed focus on infrastructure and the role it must play in growing our economy, creating opportunities and improving the lives of South Africans. For us as

civil engineering professionals, that comes with enormous opportunity, but also enormous responsibility."

She noted that engineers are increasingly expected to be more than technical specialists.

"The engineers of today are expected to be leaders, problem-solvers, innovators and trusted advisors. As infrastructure becomes increasingly central to South Africa's growth agenda, the voice of the engineering profession has never been more important."

Throughout 2026, SAICE continued to advocate issues affecting infrastructure delivery and professional practice, including public procurement, water legislation, skills development and the professionalisation of the public sector. "Our responsibility is to ensure that the technical voice of the profession is represented wherever important infrastructure decisions are being made. Infrastructure decisions must be

guided by competence, quality, safety and long-term value."

A defining feature of the 2026 awards was the exceptional calibre of young professionals recognised across multiple categories, highlighting the strength of South Africa's future engineering talent pipeline. "We need technically competent engineers, but we also need engineers who are ready to lead. The young professionals in our institution today will become the leaders making some of the country's most important infrastructure decisions tomorrow."

Phayane-Shakhane said the awards ultimately celebrate the people who make progress possible.

"Behind every successful project are engineers, technologists, technicians, project managers, mentors, educators and industry leaders whose expertise and dedication make progress possible. Tonight is about celebrating those people and the institutions that continue to develop talent, raise standards and strengthen our profession."

The awards also recognised the important contribution of SAICE's branches, divisions, student chapters and volunteers in advancing professional development, mentorship and industry collaboration across South Africa.

Phayane-Shakhane thanked Auto & General, SAICE's new Gold Sponsor



and strategic partner, for its support of the profession. She noted that the partnership extends beyond sponsorship and marks the beginning of a collaborative relationship aimed at creating meaningful value for SAICE members, supporting professional growth and contributing to the long-term development of the engineering sector. Several initiatives are already being explored through the partnership, with further announcements expected in the coming months.

She also thanked the Association of Arbitrators (Silver Sponsor), Infraconsult Engineering (Bronze Sponsor), PPS for Professionals, MPAMOT, Smart Civils, Form-Scaff, SIKa South Africa and Best Training for their ongoing commitment to engineering excellence and the advancement of the profession.

In closing, she reaffirmed that the profession's greatest asset is its people.

"As South Africa enters a renewed era of infrastructure development, tonight we celebrate not only excellence in engineering, but also the leaders, mentors, institutions, future professionals and industry partners who continue to move our profession forward. The future of South African infrastructure will ultimately be shaped by the quality of the people we develop, support and inspire today."

The winners of the SAICE National Awards 2026 are:

Individual Awards:

Academic Staff Recognition

- Samantha Miller, Technical Manager at the University of Johannesburg

Mentor Recognition

- Sandile Ngidi, Lecturer at the University of Johannesburg
- Mmatshapo Maina, Founder and Director of Chrinia Solutions
- Lesetja Boshomane, Lead Civil Engineer at BEAL Africa
- Roxanne Canny, Acting Area Project Manager at eThekweni Municipality

Graduate Engineer of the Year

- **Winner:** Victor Chibaya, Sivest
- **Highly Commended:** Jean Swane-poel, Knight Piesold; Hugo Kirchner, Sanral seconded to Gibb and Itumeleng Sethlabane, Nyeleti

Graduate Technologist of the Year

- **Commended:** Vuyo Phulane, Vertis and Kuzani Setshedi, Beal

Young Technologist of the Year

- **Winner:** Boiki Mokobori, Central Univ Technology
- **Highly Commended:** Prinell Nicker, Knight Piesold

Young Technician of the Year

- **Highly Commended:** Nonkululeko Makhanyela, 2MC Consulting

Technologist of the Year

- **Winner:** Samantha Naidoo, MD Huesker

Young Engineer of the Year

- **Winner:** Sachin Ravjee, Zutari

Engineer of the Year

- **Winner:** Gordon Laing, Self-employed

Project Manager of the Year

- **Winner:** Mohamed Ibrahim, ECS

The PPS Photo Competition

- **Winner:** Nashil Singh
- **Second Place:** Bianca Robba
- **Third Place:** Trisha Naidu

Most Supportive Advertiser of the Year

- **2025 Most Supportive Advertiser Winner:** GeoQuest
- **2025 Most Supportive Advertiser Runner-Up:** Sizabantu Piping Systems

Project Awards

The Technical Excellence Civil Project of the Year Award

- **Winner:** N3 Upgrade Cato Ridge to Dardanelles, SANRAL/Nyeleti/Raubex/Pietermaritzburg
- **Highly Commended:** Shallcross/Blundell Road and Bridge, eThekweni City/In house dept/Afrostructures/Durban and Lower Umkomazi Bulk Water Supply Phase 1 - Abstraction Works, Umgeni Water/Gibb/Stefanutti/Durban

The Technical Excellence Structural / Building Project of the Year Award

- **Winner:** Hunslett Road Bridge over Piesang River, eThekweni City/In house dept/Afrostructures/Durban

The Technical Excellence Maintenance or Rehabilitation Project of the Year Award

- **Highly Commended:** N2/R61

Emergency Slope Repairs, SANRAL/Zutari/Rumdel/Wild Coast

- **Highly Commended:** Emergency Repair of Mbokodweni River Bridge, SANRAL/Naidu/CSV Base Major/Durban

The Technical Excellence International Project of the Year Award

- **Winner:** Senqu Bridge – Polihali, Lesotho Highlands Development Agency/Zutari/WRES JV
- **Highly Commended:** Quaryat Water Plant Marine Works, Qurayyat Desalination SAOC/WSP Group/Archirodon SPC/International - OMAN

The Technical Excellence Community-Based Project of the Year Award

- **Winner:** Pierre Rd Major Culvert Demolition and Reconstruction, Johannesburg Roads Agency/SMEC/Pule & Vic Construction

The Technical Excellence Investigative Project of the Year Award

- **Winner:** Jwaneng Underground Mine Flood Risk Assessment, Debswana/Zutari/Lesotho

Institutional Awards

Branch of the Year: In the category of more than 500 members

- **Winner:** SAICE Durban Branch
- **Commended:** SAICE Johannesburg Branch

Branch of the Year: In the category of less than 500 members

- **Winner:** SAICE Bloemfontein Branch

Division of the Year:

- **Winner:** SAICE Water Division
- **Commended:** SAICE Structural Division

Student Chapter of the Year (Universities of Science):

- **Winner:** SAICE Stellenbosch Student Chapter
- **Commended:** SAICE WITS Student Chapter

Student Chapter of the Year (Universities of Technology):

- **Winner:** SAICE CPUT Student Chapter
- **Commended:** SAICE CUT Student Chapter

RETAINING WALLS SUPPORT MAJOR CLUB MED COASTAL DEVELOPMENT



Project Team

- **Client:**
Club Med
- **Developer:**
Collins Residential Consortium / Tinley Leisure Group
- **Architect:**
Craft of Architecture / Studio MHNA
- **Engineers:**
M3 Africa / Struxit Projects/ Vertex Engineering Consultants
- **Quantity Surveyor:**
MHS Consulting
- **Retaining wall design:**
iCOS Engineers
- **Main Contractor:**
R&B Civils
- **Terraforce® Recommended Contractor:**
Interlock Retaining Systems & Maintenance
- **Terraforce licensed L13 block supplier:** Corobrik

Terraforce retaining walls have been used to stabilise slopes and create landscaped retaining structures at Club Med Tinley Manor, a R2.1 billion hospitality development on KwaZulu-Natal's Dolphin Coast.

The recently opened resort is the first Club Med property in South Africa and sub-Saharan Africa and is located on a 32-hectare site formerly used for sugarcane farming. The beautiful resort has 411 rooms and forms part of a dual-destination concept combining a beachfront resort with a dedicated safari lodge.

Terraforce retaining walls were specified and designed by iCOS Engineers' Fred Laker. In order to address steep slopes along the site boundaries, building platforms and spaces be-

tween hotel buildings the design brief called for retaining structures that could accommodate changes in level while complementing the resort's architecture and natural surroundings.

The Terraforce L13 system was selected for its rounded face allowing walls to follow sweeping curves and incorporate vegetation. The design provides a textured finish and supports planting that helps integrate the retaining structures into the landscaped environment. Approximately 50 000 Terraforce L13 blocks were installed, supplied by licensed manufacturer Corobrik in Durban. Foundations were mechanically excavated and compacted with reinforcement tied into concrete strip footings according to a steel fixing schedule.

A 25 MPa concrete mix with a 95 mm slump was specified to meet the project's installation programme from foundation levelling to block placement. Higher retaining walls incorporated Rock Grid 100/100 geogrid reinforcement to provide additional soil stability.

Construction of the retaining walls took place between June 2024 and October 2025 with several contractors working simultaneously across the development. R&B Civils was the main contractor, while Interlock Retaining Systems & Maintenance undertook the Terraforce wall installation during the first phase. Local contractors completed the final phases.

The coastal location, with construction taking place less than 100 m from the ocean, added to the logistical demands of the project. Coordinating the different construction disciplines while maintaining quality and meeting deadlines was a key part of delivering the retaining structures.

The completed walls provide the required slope stabilisation and level changes across the resort while accommodating curved layouts and planted surfaces within the overall landscape design.



BOSUN ANNOUNCES MAJOR WESTERN CAPE INVESTMENT



Bosun is set to enter the Western Cape paving, kerbing, retaining wall and erosion control markets with the development of a new manufacturing facility in the Cape Town Northern Growth Corridor.

Representing an investment of more than R300 million, the new facility is expected to commence production in early 2028.

While Bosun has supplied projects in the Western Cape for some time, such as the Riverlands precinct and V&A Waterfront in Cape Town, The One Student Accommodation in Stellenbosch and Val de Vie Estate in Paarl, the investment marks an important new chapter for Bosun and will bring the Group's extensive product range, manufacturing capabilities and focus on innovation directly to the Western Cape market.

For more than 30 years, Bosun has concentrated on what it does best: developing and manufacturing high-quality precast concrete products. Over that time, the business has established it-

self as the market leader in innovation, quality and product diversity in Southern Africa.

The new Western Cape operation will give architects, landscape designers, developers, contractors and homeowners greater freedom to create distinctive outdoor spaces, while also providing civil engineering contractors with access to Bosun's patented technical products and solutions.

At the heart of the new operation will be an imported Hess production plant, incorporating the latest available German manufacturing technology.

Part of a Broader Investment Programme

The Western Cape development forms part of a wider programme of investment across the Bosun Group.

The Group recently announced major upgrades to its existing manufacturing facilities in Gauteng and the North-West, with the Eastern Cape operation to receive similar investment.

SmartStone is also part of the Bosun Group and, in March 2026, acquired its Western Cape licensee. The facility will be substantially modernised, enabling it to manufacture the latest SmartStone wet-cast product range.

Together, the new Bosun facility and SmartStone operation are expected to provide approximately 80 permanent jobs in the Western Cape.

While the new Bosun facility is being developed, selected products will be supplied from Bosun's Midrand and Gqeberha operations through SmartStone's facility in Wellington, giving the Western Cape market access to the Bosun range ahead of local production commencing.

This investment is about more than establishing a new manufacturing facility. It is about building long-term relationships in the Western Cape and giving the market greater choice in design, performance and technical solutions.



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KHAYELITSHA PAVING PROJECT

TICKS ALL THE BOXES



BRT Multi colour interlocker

Attractive and functional pavers supplied by C.E.L. Paving Products for the MyCiTi bus depot in Khayelitsha has provided a large-scale example of how concrete block paving can meet the demanding requirements of public transport infrastructure without compromising on appearance or stormwater management.

More than 50 000m² of concrete paving supplied by C.E.L. Paving Products was installed across the facilities incorporating permeable pavers, conventional interlocking blocks and exposed aggregate finishes. The extensive use of different colours and textures creates visual definition across the site while the paving is designed to withstand the repeated heavy vehicle movements associated with bus operations.

The depots form part of the City of Cape Town's R474 million Integrated Rapid Transit (IRT) Phase 2A investment in expanding the MyCiTi bus network. Construction began in August 2022 and the facilities were officially opened in October 2025. After a full year of heavy-duty usage the facilities are still in tip-top condition and after heavier than normal rainfall season have performed in accordance with

the city's strict stormwater handling requirements.

According to C.E.L. Paving Product's Peter Visser, the facilities will support expanded public transport services linking Mitchells Plain and Khayelitsha as well as planned connections to Claremont and Wynberg.

"The project required us to supply more than 27 000m² of grey Permealock permeable pavers, together with approximately 19 000m² in various colours. A further 9 000m² of conventional interlocking pavers and 3 900m² of coarse exposed aggregate pavers in Brownstone was also required to complete the installation.

"The combination of colours was chosen for both practical and aesthetic reasons. While the large grey paved areas provide a consistent finish the coloured sections help distinguish passenger loading and access areas. The varied pattern also has the practical benefit of making tyre marks, dirt and oil stains less conspicuous across heavily used surfaces," says Visser.

He explains that one of the project's defining features is the extensive use of permeable paving to manage

stormwater. Cape Town's requirements for new developments place an emphasis on managing runoff at source, using solutions such as permeable surfaces, swales and retention facilities. The Permealock system allows rainwater to pass through openings between the pavers into a specially designed pavement structure. Twelve protruding lugs on the vertical faces of each block create the spaces required for water infiltration while helping to resist lateral movement.

The Permealock paver has a water-throughput capacity of 13 000 litres per hour and in combination with the carefully constructed underlayers works in conjunction with underlying aggregate layers and geotextile, allowing water to infiltrate into the pavement structure. Subsurface drainage channels direct excess water towards retention ponds when the underlying layers reach their storage capacity.

Visser adds that the system is particularly relevant to large developments like this one where extensive hard surfaces would usually generate substantial stormwater runoff. By incorporating drainage into the paved surface itself the project meets the City of Cape Town's Sustainable Urban Drain-

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BRT Multi colour interlocker with grey

age Systems (SUDS) requirements for urban water-management.

The paving specification also had to accommodate the forces generated by heavy buses particularly when turning. Unlike vehicles travelling in a straight-line buses exert significant lateral forces on the pavement as their tyres drag across the surface during manoeuvres.

He explains that the 16-sided profile of the interlocking pavers provides more contact faces between adjacent blocks than a conventional rectangular paver. This increases resistance to movement under the sideways forces generated by turning wheels. In addition they had to meet strict strength requirements considering the weight of the busses and high traffic volumes and were subsequently tested to meet specified compressive strengths exceeding 45 MPa. Peter reported that tensile test results also exceeded 3 MPa. Production batches were tested regularly throughout the project to maintain consistent quality across the different colours and product types.

The supporting pavement structure was equally important. Much of the Cape Town region has fine sandy soils, making the stabilisation and preparation of the underlying layers critical to long-term performance. Site testing including sonic and dynamic probing investigations was conducted during construction to verify the condition of the supporting layers as "the performance of concrete block paving depends on the quality of the pavement structure beneath it as much as on the blocks themselves."

C.E.L. Paving Products manufacture both standard and topped pavers for increased abrasion resistance. The

wearing layer incorporates silica sand which provides better bonding characteristics with cement than the fine local sand used in the Cape.

Visser adds that the company operates three manufacturing facilities with dedicated production for exposed aggregate, domestic paving and industrial products. Its industrial production line incorporates an upgraded German vibration system designed to achieve high compaction and low water absorption with an in-house laboratory

that carries out regular testing across its manufacturing operations.

Successful showcase projects like the MyCiTi bus depot in Khayelitsha has earned C.E.L. Paving Products considerable bragging rights and as a result of this and other successful, attractive and functional projects it continues to supply substantial quantities of permeable and other across the region. It also shows the way forward for transport facilities and other developments with large, paved surfaces.



BRT Multi colour interlocker with grey

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TECHNICRETE SUPPLIES TO NEW BLUE HILLS RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT



Technicrete Blue Hills 3

The newly developed Blue Hills Residential Estate, near Midrand, Gauteng, will offer purchasers over 118 units of various configurations and all of its side roads, traffic circles, bus stops and parking areas have been established with Technicrete pavers and kerb product.

Thabani Mtolo, sales consultant for Technicrete commented "Technicrete's wide range of precast concrete products are known for their quality and longevity, particularly for developments, commercial or residential, where a high volume of vehicle and foot traffic is expected. Additionally, their aesthetically pleasing finish and colour choices can smarten up even the most mundane of functional road requirements such as traffic circles".

Markus Hay, project manager for KwaMhlanga Construction, the engineers involved with the development of the Blue Hills project, commented that based on the Technicrete reputation for a quality solution, that it made sense to source the pavers and kerbing from them. "We were pleased with the quality of the products from Technicrete. They went out of their way to ensure that all of our requirements were addressed in a timely manner enabling our scheduling to remain on track. We were very happy with the service received from them," said Hay.

Two thousand square meters of Technicrete's JZZ (Zig-Zag / Double Zig-Zag) 80mm grey paving blocks and six thousand square meters of the 60 mm grey pavers were supplied to the Blue Hills Residential Estate project. These blocks are heavy-duty, interlocking concrete pavers designed for high-traffic surfaces, and form a continuous, durable surface.

"We have also supplied over five thousand Figure 7 and 8C garden kerbs to this residential project. The 8c is a heavy load duty kerb, which can also be used in conjunction with Barrier Kerbs. It's a versatile precast kerb often used for edge restraint in the construction of roads, gutter systems and rumble strips, whilst the Figure 7



Technicrete Blue Hills 2

is a semi mountable kerb. This has the 'Splayed' profile most suitable for use in situations where a vehicle may need to 'bump up' onto a verge in an emergency," said Mtolo.

"Precast products from our vast catalogue have been selected for many municipal and private sector commercial developments such as medical, mining, transportation and automotive facilities as well as the residential prop-

erty development sector. There is also keen interest from project engineers in our permeable paving solutions that play a role in a projects overall storm-water drainage system," he said.

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CMA LAUNCHES #AFE2026 DIGITAL AWARDS



The showcase of the Southern African precast concrete industry is officially back with the formal launch of the Concrete Manufacturers Association (CMA) 2026 Digital Awards for Excellence (AFE2026).

The awards are set to build upon the success of previous competitions and are open to producers, engineers, architects and concrete associates nationwide. It follows the success of its previous digital campaigns with recognition of excellence in the use of precast concrete across all sectors of the built environment where it promises to showcase new standards of excellence.

The CMA Awards for Excellence are a highlight on the country's precast concrete calendar and have been so since the awards inception in 1985. The mission of the biennial awards is to recognize outstanding engineering and aesthetic achievements in precast concrete applications while honoring the professional teams behind them. The competition spans diverse categories ranging from architectural paving and masonry to massive structural elements and long-term infrastructure functionality ensuring that every tier of precast mastery is celebrated. Entries close at the end of December 2026.

"The evolution from traditional physical judging to a dynamic live digital

platform has completely transformed what it means to be an entrant. Data from the #AFE2024 campaign proves the power of this shift with entry videos generated a staggering 200,000+ social media hits viewed for a total of more than 550 hours.

"Also, rather than locking entries away for months until a private gala evening the 2026 campaign broadcasts every single entry live to the world from the moment submitted until entries close. Thereafter the entries are loaded online and further promoted by targeted CMA-funded paid promotional campaigns that ensure entrants receive sustained and high-impact visibility," says CMA general manager Henry Cockcroft.

He adds that the true value for CMA members goes far beyond the potential of taking home a physical trophy. Every single entry is converted into a professional corporate video created and hosted by the CMA on its official channels. This video asset becomes the permanent property of the entrant and is ready to be shared across corporate websites, client pitches and business networks. Early entry is paramount as it maximizes exposure, giving projects a longer timeline to accumulate likes, shares and clicks, casting a massive net across the global construction and architectural markets.

- Visit the official CMA YouTube Channel to see how video assets are delivered. Subscribe to monitor incoming entries in real-time.
- Connect & Share: Follow the live campaign networks on Facebook and LinkedIn to like, comment and expand project's digital presence across the continent.



HEAVYWEIGHT PAVING MANUAL

JUST RELEASED

The new Concrete Manufacturers Association (CMA) Paving Manual is a publication that has something for everyone involved in the manufacture, specification and laying of concrete paving blocks.

It should spend very little time gathering dust on a bookshelf. Although aimed at tertiary institutions and professionals it is equally useful to anyone involved in the design and manufacture of concrete block paving. In its First Edition it combines the latest information on concrete block paving in South Africa with useful references to the current SANS standards for easier identification of requirements that apply to particular aspects of paving rather than searching through a range of separate documents.

What becomes apparent when working through the manual is the breadth of information it contains. It starts with the development and history of concrete block paving before moving into applications, block types, laying patterns and the factors that influence the selection of a particular paving system. Comparisons with other paving solutions also help put concrete block paving into perspective.

It also has a depth of its technical content with attention given to pavement design and the various factors that need to be considered when selecting and designing a pavement explained in a way that makes it easy to understand without oversimplifying it. Traffic loading, subgrade conditions, materials, drainage and construction requirements all have an influence on the performance of a paved surface and the manual deals with these issues in a structured manner.

For someone less familiar with paving technology this information provides a useful introduction to why a particular pavement should be designed and constructed in a particular way. For experienced manufacturers tradesmen and professionals it provides a convenient reference against which existing practices can be checked.

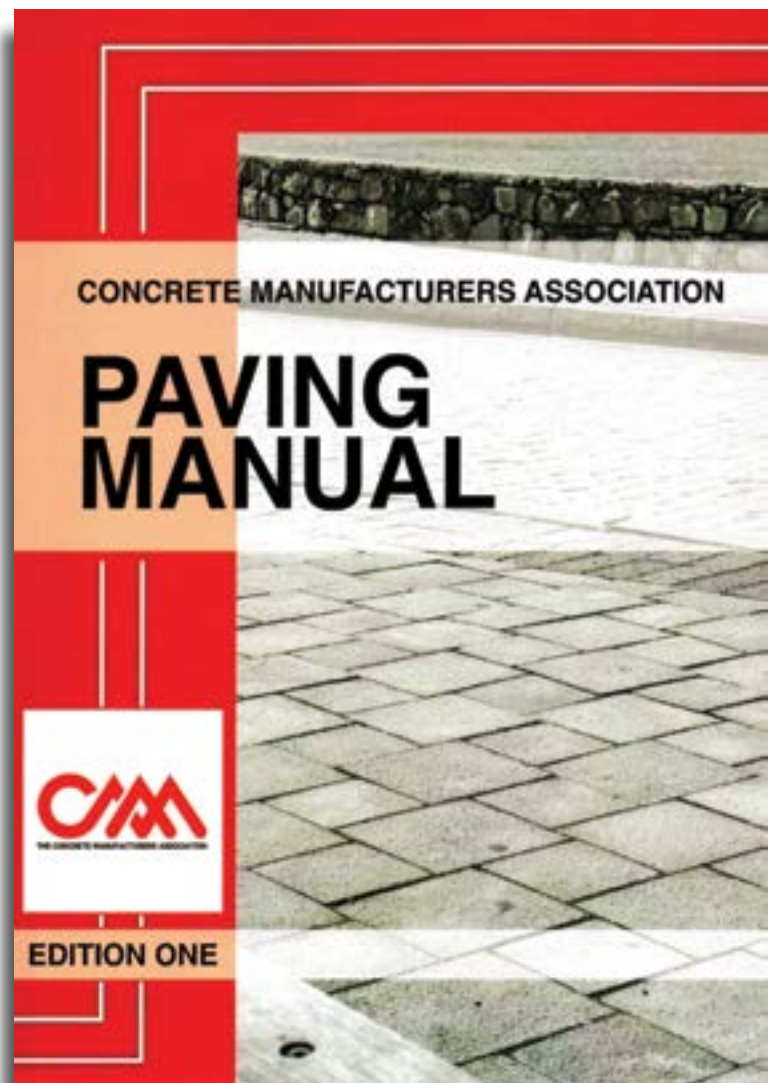
There is also practical information covering specifications, dimensional tolerances, testing and quality re-

quirements. Site management and construction practices receive attention too, including earthworks and preparation of the pavement foundation. This is important because the performance of a block pavement depends on considerably more than the quality of the blocks themselves. Poor preparation, inadequate drainage or unsuitable construction practices can compromise an otherwise correctly designed pavement.

The inclusion of maintenance guidance is another useful feature. Concrete block paving is often selected because individual units can be removed and replaced, but that does not eliminate the need for proper maintenance.

The manual looks at the issues that can arise during the service life of a pavement and how they should be addressed.

Case studies add another dimension to the publication. They provide practical examples of how the principles discussed in the technical sections are applied and make some of the more detailed design and construction information easier to understand. The checklists are another addition that is particularly welcome as they provide a practical way of applying the information contained in the manual to real projects and can help ensure that important considerations are not overlooked.



SA SUPPLIERS ARE FINANCING THEIR OWN CUSTOMERS



Lulapay's Vice President Jordan Gosling

"As South Africa debates whether to legislate against late payment, Lulapay's vice president, Jordan Gosling, talks about how the need for suppliers to extend their terms to their own customers has turned them into involuntary lenders"

As South Africa considers stronger protections against late payment Lulapay's Vice President Jordan Gosling argues that payment terms are effectively turning suppliers into involuntary lenders. He believes the starting point is recognising what payment terms represent and creating solutions that resolve the direct challenge, for both buyer and supplier.

"When a supplier delivers goods or services today but agrees to receive payment in 30,60 or 90 days, it is extending credit," he explains, "The supplier is carrying the cost of labour, stock, tax and operations while the customer retains the cash. In practical terms, suppliers have become involun-

tary lenders."

Trade credit is often described as a routine feature of doing business, however this language hides the risks taking place between supplier and buyer. A bank can choose whether to lend, assesses the borrower, prices the risk and sets the conditions for repayment while a supplier rarely has this level of freedom. Many accept lengthy terms because a large customer insists on them and rejecting those terms could cost the contract, or challenging a late payment invariably jeopardises future work. The supplier is financing the customer without necessarily earning interest or receiving security.

The challenge is finding an innovative way to bridge the gap between payment terms and supplier need, one that isn't necessarily going to be fixed by more legislation. Currently, the SME's only alternative is to pay upfront to secure a deal, and if they are light on cash, the deal doesn't go through. Recently re-launched with features that support both the supplier and the customer, Lulapay flows cash on both sides of the deal to ensure it goes through, benefitting both the buyer and the supplier. It bypasses the delays with a secure solution that puts the business back on the proverbial drawing board.

A rule implemented by any form of legislation needs to be supported by visibility and consequences and there needs to be a practical and enforceable route that suppliers can follow to enforce their rights without destroying commercial relationships. It's at this intersection of need and relationship that solutions like Lulapay play an important role, instead of SME's running the risk of bad debt while waiting on a customer's ability to pay, they can avoid lost sales and late payments with a payment solution that enables wholesalers, suppliers and distributors to grow sales and eliminate credit risk by settling invoices upfront.

Suppliers are often left carrying the cost and they face funding gaps that they need to overcome to ensure their cash flow can keep up with demand. "When a company comes to us be-

cause their customers are slow to pay, it is rarely a distress signal," says Gosling. "It usually means the orders are there and the relationships are good, but the cash needed to keep trading while the invoices clear is missing. Access to funding at this point is a sign of health."

The regulatory debate, he argues, is aimed at the right problem but reaches for a blunt instrument. Statutory payment terms and mandatory interest may compel faster payment in some cases, but they do little for the supplier who needs money now and can't wait for a dispute to resolve. "Regulation can change what people are obliged to do," says Gosling. "It cannot change the fact that a business needs cash on the day the bill lands, not when a tribunal decides it was owed."

It is a distinction Lulapay sees clearly because of how its own products are structured. Lulapay assesses a customer's cash flow and ability to generate revenue and treats that as an asset, funding against it to give businesses access to revenue they have yet to earn. The funding is built around future revenue rather than issued as a conventional loan. The company is a founding member of the South African SME Finance Association (SASFA), which represents the self-regulating, non-bank alternative lending sector and aligns with a code of conduct that requires transparency, fair treatment, responsible lending and strict prohibition on loan stacking and predatory behaviour. The platform's structure has been reimagined and redefined to ensure that both supplier and buyer receive support and funding at the right time. Lulapay pays the supplier upfront, the buyer repays Lulapay over an agreed term so the supplier is paid immediately with no credit risk and the buyer gains room to manage cash flow on their stock purchases. It changes the narrative from complex and rigid to a flexible and secure financial management solution that benefits all parties involved.

"Introducing rigid statutory terms could load the market with compliance cost without touching the mac-



roeconomic and administrative causes of slow payment,” says Gosling. “Cash flow in a real business fluctuates and if reform removes that flexibility, it will make the problem worse. That said, reform is important – well-designed oversight would support SASFA’s goal of moving the market away from distress lending towards long-term growth-oriented funding. This would lower the structural default risk and let accredited lenders offer fairer, more transparent and lower-cost working capital.”

Lulapay closes the gap between the moment a bill lands and the payment

of an invoice, providing companies with a solution that settles the invoice upfront while giving the customer time to pay. Because Lulapay’s agreement is with the buyer, the supplier carries no recovery risk if the buyer defaults and they stop being an involuntary lender. To date, Lulapay has disbursed almost R1 billion in funding across 600 SMEs.

“Our customers are looking for a way to say yes to more customers without financing them,” concludes Gosling.



About Us

- ◊ Established 42 years ago
- ◊ Largest supplier of pre-cast concrete products in the Southern Cape
- ◊ Focus on Service and Innovation for new & custom products
- ◊ SABS Certified with on Site Lab
- ◊ Proud member of Concrete Manufacturers Association (CMA)

What we Offer:

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- ◊ Full range of civils products – Kerbs, Markers, Cover Slabs, Channels, Copings, Bollards etc.
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- ◊ Löffelstein and Terraforce retaining & grass blocks

Specialized production divisions

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- ◊ Solid and modular complete Pre-cast toilet systems
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- ◊ Almost any size precast product to customer specification
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THE CONCRETE MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION

SABS
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ELECTRIC EXPERIENCE WOWS EARTHMOVING FLEET BUYERS



Construction and mining fleet owners were able to experience the real-world power of electric earthmoving machines at a special event hosted by ELB Equipment to demonstrate the capabilities and seamless integration of the machines into their fleets.

ELB Equipment is among the first major supplier to launch multiple models of its electric Liugong wheel loaders with the first three models launched already in operation at some of its customers' sites. The event held at its Middleburg branch was attended by more than 300 customers who were given the chance to operate the powerful machines alongside some of the company's traditional diesel equivalents.

ELB Equipment divisional director,

Keon Kardolus, was on hand to walk customers through the experience explaining that skyrocketing diesel prices are strengthening the case for electric machinery in applications where charging infrastructure is available. The relative simplicity of the electric drivetrains require significantly less maintenance offering unmatched reliability in the toughest of conditions.

The event allowed an unusual opportunity to customers to compare the performance of electric loaders with Liugong's established diesel range where the consensus among attendees was that the electric machines could match the diesel loaders in every way including working all day without the need for recharging. The electric range on display included the Liugong

856HE, 870HE and 8110TE for different loading requirements in heavy construction and smaller-scale mining with the larger 8110TE suited to larger-scale operations.

"Some of the differences our customers noticed was that the electric drive systems provide high torque from standstill and have much lower noise levels. There are no emissions and the operators have an easier and safer working experience with fewer vibrations, effortless controls and technologically advanced safety features built-in to the cab environment.

"But the main factors driving the move to electric equipment is the potential savings which are particularly significant for machines operating for long hours in fixed locations wherever suit-



able electrical infrastructure and the machine's duty cycle allows.

"Luckily wherever the case does not suit electric machines we have a full range of LiuGong diesel loaders. These are well proven in the market with tried-and-tested engine, drive-line and hydraulic systems designed for our hard-working local conditions and in every application our sales and support representatives will be able to assess and advise of the available options," says Kardolus.

He added that LiuGong is one of the largest earthmoving equipment manufacturers globally with world-leading research and development facilities that are pioneering new ways of powering earthmoving operations into the future. Its partnership with ELB Equipment has created one of Southern Africa's fastest growing and most successful earthmoving equipment operations with branches in 14 locations across South Africa as well as dealerships in Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Eswatini, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and subsidiary operations in Kenya.

"Events like these bring us closer to our customers and gives them the opportunity to view and even operate machines that have the potential to move their own operations forward. They have relied on us to bring them the best earthmoving and mining solutions from across the globe for more than 100 years and with the addition of world-beating electric machines from LiuGong we believe we are showing them the way forward for the next 100 years," Kardolus said in closing.



INDUSTRIAL CLEANING TAKES FLIGHT



Cleaning a high-rise building or concrete walling has traditionally meant scaffolding, rope access or elevated work platforms, each bringing significant cost, disruption and safety risks. However, drone technology offers an alternative for routine cleaning of difficult-to-reach structures.

Drone Wash SA has become one of the first companies to introduce commercial drone-operated industrial cleaning services to the South African market, using a ground-based pumping system designed and built in partnership with Werner Pumps.

According to Glenn Jones, director of Drone Wash SA, the technology has applications across a wide range of assets, including newly constructed concrete structures, commercial buildings, concrete manufacturing plants, cranes and equipment. Instead of sending workers to dangerous heights the system keeps operators safely on the ground while the drone delivers precisely controlled water and cleaning solutions exactly where they are needed.

For property owners and facility managers, the potential benefits extend beyond improved safety. Drone-operated cleaning can reduce disruption to building occupants and the public below, while significantly reducing the time required to complete many cleaning projects.

"Traditional access methods have served the industry well because there simply wasn't another option," says Jones. "Drone technology gives us a safer, faster and less intrusive alternative for many high-access cleaning applications."

Although the aircraft is the most visible part of the operation, Jones explains that it functions primarily as a highly maneuverable delivery platform. The real work begins on the ground, where water is supplied from a municipal connection to a purpose-built mobile ground service station. Specialised pumping equipment generates the pressure required to transport water vertically through a lightweight hose to the drone. Depending on the application, environmentally friendly detergents and heat can be introduced into the system before the surface is rinsed with high-pressure water.



Werner Pumps - Industrial Cleaning Takes Flight

The system must deliver a remarkably wide operating range. Lower pressures are used to apply detergents gently across delicate surfaces, while substantially higher pressures provide the force needed to remove stubborn contaminants from concrete, steel and other harder construction materials. Maintaining consistent pressure throughout the cleaning process is essential to ensure predictable spray performance and uniform cleaning results.

According to Jones, this is where Werner Pumps' contribution proved critical. "The drone is only one tool in the toolbox," he explains. "The heart of the entire system is the controlled delivery of water from the ground to the target surface. Without being able to manipulate the pressure and flow characteristics of the water, the system would simply not be effective."

The Werner Pumps-designed mobile rig incorporates both low-pressure and high-pressure pumping systems, allowing operators to adjust water delivery according to the surface being cleaned. It also includes built-in protection systems that help safeguard the equipment during operation, allowing crews to focus on flying the drone safely while the ground station manages the water supply.

"We love working with our customers to develop jetting and pumping solutions that meet their specific needs," says Sebastian Werner, managing director at Werner Pumps. "Working with Drone Wash SA gave us the opportunity to test our industrial pressure cleaning expertise in a new setting for a different application, which is always exciting."

While high-rise buildings may be the most obvious application, the technology has the potential to support maintenance across several industries, from cleaning of solar panels and wind turbines to large industrial facilities, warehouses, ports, mines and public infrastructure.

Jones believes drone cleaning should not be viewed as a replacement for conventional high-access contractors, but rather as another tool available to asset owners. "There will always be work that requires people at height," he says. "Drones cannot repair buildings or carry out maintenance work. What they can do is provide a safer alternative for many cleaning applications while creating new opportunities for highly skilled drone operators."

Werner says this collaboration with Drone Wash SA demonstrates the role local engineering expertise can play

in supporting emerging technologies. "Rather than adapting an off-the-shelf solution, Drone Wash SA approached us to develop a mobile ground station tailored to the demanding performance requirements of aerial pressure washing," he says. "The result is a locally engineered system that's able to deliver the pressure, flow control and operational reliability needed to support commercial drone cleaning."

For over 38 years, Werner South Africa Pumps & Equipment has been designing, manufacturing, supplying and maintaining specialist high-pressure jetting equipment. The company has built a reputation as a local industry leader through its focus on delivering high-quality, low-maintenance, 100% South African manufactured products that last, all while considering clients' budgets.

Aside from its in-house manufacturing capabilities, Werner Pumps specialises in the supply and maintenance of high-pressure jetting equipment, German high-pressure pumps, high-pressure sewer cleaning hoses, Swiss-engineered Nozzles by ENZ, and high-pressure guns, lances and cleaning equipment.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT PLATE COMPACTOR FOR PAVING WORK



A plate compactor is a relatively simple machine but choosing one purely on price or engine size can result in problems down the road, with slower work, inadequate compaction or in the case of concrete paving can even damage blocks.

For anyone preparing a larger paved area the starting point should be the material being compacted rather than the machine itself. Sand, gravel, crushed stone and soil containing a mixture of materials respond differently to vibration while cohesive clay-type soils can require a different machine altogether.

The basic purpose of compaction is to remove air from the material and bring the particles closer together. The amount of force required depends on the material, the thickness of the layer and its moisture content. A heavier machine is not automatically better because excessive force on a thin layer can disturb rather than improve the surface.

Most paving failures are associated with what happens below the blocks rather than with the blocks themselves. A paved driveway normally consists of

the prepared natural ground, a compacted sub-base, a bedding layer and the paving units. Each layer needs to be treated according to its characteristics.

Granular materials such as sand, gravel, crushed stone and the aggregate mixtures commonly used in paving construction respond particularly well to vibratory plates. Vibration causes the particles to rearrange and settle into a denser structure. This is the territory in which a conventional forward-moving plate compactor is particularly useful.

For a small residential path or patio where the material is relatively thin and access is restricted, a light machine can be more practical. A 50- to 70-kg machine is considerably easier to move around a garden and can get into areas where a 100-kg or heavier plate becomes cumbersome. Compact machines commonly range from the 53 kg with a 320 mm working width to the 110 kg with a 500 mm plate. The manufacturers specify these machines for earthworks, asphalt and paving, with the smaller machines particularly suited to small-scale work and restricted areas.

For a typical residential driveway the middle of the range is often more practical. A machine weighing around 80 to 110 kg, with a plate around 400 to 500 mm wide and centrifugal force in the region of 15 to 20 kN, provides a useful combination of manoeuvrability and productivity. The important point is that centrifugal force should not be considered in isolation. The operating weight, plate dimensions, vibration characteristics, travel speed and the material being compacted all affect the result.

Once the job involves thicker layers of crushed stone, larger driveways, road shoulders, extensive paving or repeated reinstatement work, a reversible plate becomes more attractive. Unlike a conventional forward plate, a reversible machine can travel forwards and backwards. This means the operator does not have to lift or turn the machine at the end of every run, and the machine can be manoeuvred more effectively in confined areas.

Reversible plates are also generally heavier and deliver substantially more centrifugal force. That does not mean a 40 or 60 kN machine should automatically be selected for domestic

paving. A large reversible plate can be unnecessarily difficult to transport and manoeuvre on a small property. The machine needs to match the thickness and type of material being compacted.

There is also a point at which a plate compactor is no longer the appropriate machine. Cohesive soils containing significant amounts of clay do not respond in the same way as clean granular material. A vibrating plate may compact the surface without achieving the required result deeper down. For narrow trenches, pipe bedding and cohesive backfill, a tamping rammer is often more appropriate because its vertical impact is concentrated over a much smaller area. Rental companies similarly distinguish between plate compactors for broader ground preparation and rammers for trenches and confined areas.

Moisture is another important consideration. Soil that is excessively wet can become difficult to compact and may deform under the machine rather than becoming denser. Conversely, material that is excessively dry may not compact as efficiently. The correct moisture condition depends on the material, which is why professional earthworks are normally based on specified compaction requirements rather than simply running a machine over the surface a certain number of times.

Plate size becomes increasingly important as the paved area gets larger. A narrow plate is easier to manoeuvre around walls, kerbs, posts and garden features, but covers less ground with each pass. A wider plate covers more area, reducing the number of passes needed, but requires more room to turn and is generally attached to a heavier machine.

Paving blocks need a different approach

Compacting the material underneath the paving is different from compacting the finished paving itself. Once interlocking concrete paving has been laid, the objective is to settle the blocks into the bedding material and help establish the finished surface without damaging or marking the units. This is where a suitable polyurethane or rubber mat becomes important, particularly with decorative or coated paving.

Some manufacturers specifically offer polyurethane mats for plate compactors for use on concrete paving stones, including coated surfaces. These re-

duce marking and the risk of breaking paving units during compaction. The machine therefore needs to be selected with the entire job in mind. The same plate that is useful for compacting a crushed-stone sub-base may need a paving mat before it is used on the finished blocks.

For a homeowner or contractor doing occasional paving, hiring is usually worth considering before buying. Current South African hire prices illustrate the relatively low entry cost from as little as R354 per day. Hiring also means that the user can select a different machine for different jobs. A small forward plate may be all that is required for a garden path, while a heavier reversible machine may be justified for a large driveway or substantial sub-base.

Buying becomes more attractive when the machine is going to be used regularly. A paving contractor, landscaper, maintenance contractor or small civil contractor can spread the capital cost over many jobs and avoid repeated collection and delivery charges. Ownership also means the operator knows the history of the machine and can select the machine configuration, such as a paving mat or water tank, to suit the work.

Right for the job

For the average person laying paving, the most useful way to select a plate

compactor is to work backwards from the job. A small garden path on granular material does not justify a 300 kg reversible machine. A large driveway with a substantial crushed-stone base may justify a wider and heavier reversible plate because productivity and compaction depth become more important. Clay-rich or confined areas may call for a rammer instead of a plate, while finished concrete paving requires attention to the base mat and machine setting.

The cheapest machine is therefore not necessarily the cheapest way to complete the job. Nor is the biggest machine automatically the most effective. The right combination of machine weight, centrifugal force, plate width, travel direction and surface protection should follow the material being compacted and the size and layout of the area.

For occasional paving, hiring provides a relatively inexpensive way of obtaining the appropriate machine for each stage of the work. For contractors using compactors repeatedly, purchasing a recognised machine with accessible parts and local technical support becomes a longer-term equipment decision rather than simply a question of the initial price.



TRUCK MANUFACTURER REACHES MILESTONE 150 000TH TRUCK ASSEMBLED LOCALLY



The Daimler Team

Daimler Truck Southern Africa marked a significant milestone with the celebration and handover of its 150 000th locally assembled truck, a Mercedes Benz Actros 2645LS/33 at its East London assembly plant.

The milestone vehicle was delivered to a valued customer, TT Group Holding, underscoring the strong partnerships and customer trust that continue to drive the company's success.

Commenting on this exciting customer handover, Olaf Petersen, Vice President for sales and marketing says: "The trucking industry is built on strong, enduring relationships. We don't simply hand over a truck, we partner with our customers and support them throughout their journey. It is especially meaningful to deliver our 150 000th locally built truck to TT Group Holding, a valued customer who shares our commitment to performance and excellence. This milestone is a reflection of our product strength and trust and collaboration that drive our business and the business of our customers forward."

The first truck, a L-Type Mercedes-Benz Truck rolled off the DTSA Assembly Plant in East London in 1962 marking the start of local production of Mercedes-Benz Trucks and local truck production in South Africa. Over 60 years later the 150 000th truck rolls off the same line underscoring decades of excellence and commitment to driving the local production in the Southern Africa region forward.

The DTSA Assembly Plant continues to play a crucial role in supporting the company's promise of delivering reliable, efficient and fit-for-purpose transport solutions to its customers. Beyond production, the plant has been instrumental in driving localisation, job creation and skills development, reinforcing DTSA's long-term commitment to South Africa and the broader region. These milestones reflect growth in volume and advancements in manufacturing standards, safety and sustainability.

Other key milestones

In 2022, the East London Assembly Plant proudly celebrated 60 years of

production, marking six decades of local manufacturing excellence. Over the years, the facility has achieved several significant milestones emphasising its contribution to both the South African and global Daimler Truck network.

In 2010, Mercedes Benz Buses assembled OH bus chassis in support of the FIFA World Cup hosted in South Africa. This was followed in 2015 by the assembly of the 125 000th truck in the East London assembly plant. The plant continued to build on this legacy with the production of the 750 000th CKD unit and the 800 000th unit from the Wörth plant in 2019 and 2024 respectively. In 2023, Mercedes Benz Trucks also celebrated 25 years of the Actros in South Africa and its assembly in East London.

These achievements culminate in the celebration of the 150 000th locally built truck in 2026, coinciding with global milestones including 130 years since the first Mercedes Benz truck, 30 years of the Actros in Europe and 80 years of the iconic Mercedes Benz Unimog.

WOMAN-OWNED CONSTRUCTION FIRM SHORTLISTED IN SA'S ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR AWARDS



Women on the move

A R300 million fund for small and emerging contractors opened this year, aimed at moving smaller firms up the contracting pipeline. Noko Ramasenya has built one without that support and has now been shortlisted for South Africa's Entrepreneur of the Year® title.

Ramasenya is in the running for the Small Business Entrepreneur category in the 38th annual Business Partners Limited competition. She founded Noleo Projects in 2016 and owns the

Benoni-based construction and civil engineering company outright.

The business covers a wider range than most contractors its size, spanning civil engineering, construction, building maintenance, renovations, facilities management, project management, electrical and plumbing work and engineering, design and architectural services. Its clients are industrial rather than public sector, including Ardagh Glass Packaging, Tharisa Minerals and Mpac Plastics. Ramasenya has

grown the business through tendering, referrals and repeat work rather than advertising.

Noleo employs 12 people permanently and another six on a temporary basis. Four in five of them are under 35. The company prioritises local labour and subcontractors on its sites and mentors employees into the trade through on-the-job training.

"Getting an industrial client like a glass packaging plant or a mine to trust a contractor with their site is difficult for any small firm and harder in a sector that has not made much room for women who own the business rather than work on it," says Gugu Mjadu of Business Partners Limited.

The finalists will now compete for top honours in their respective categories and for the overall title of South Africa's 2026 Entrepreneur of the Year®. The Job Creator, Innovator and Impact Entrepreneur of the Year titles may also be conferred at the judges' discretion.

Winners will be announced at an awards ceremony this month. They will share in award prizes designed to accelerate business growth, including funding, mentorship, technical assistance and business exposure opportunities.





CONCRETE MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION (CMA) MEMBER LIST

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PROGRAMME STRENGTHENS CONTRACTOR CAPABILITIES



The ability to build a structure and the ability to build a successful construction business are not always the same thing. While technical skills remain essential, contractors increasingly need strong capabilities in financial management, contract administration, procurement, project planning and leadership to sustain and grow their businesses.

This gap between technical capability and business management is receiving renewed attention as South Africa looks to strengthen its contractor base and improve infrastructure delivery.

The issue was highlighted at the launch of the Certificate in Construction Management (CCM) programme in North West recently, where the Construction Industry Development Board (cidb) and the University of the Free State (UFS) are working together to strengthen the management capabilities of emerging and developing contractors.

The CCM programme forms part of the cidb's contractor development programme and is designed for cidb-registered contractors in Grades 2 to 6. It equips participants with the practical business and management skills needed to build sustainable construction enterprises, covering areas such as construction project management, procurement and contract administration. Participants can also specialise in

electives including construction innovation, digitalisation and information management and building standards.

Speaking at the launch of the CCM programme in Rustenburg recently, North West MEC for Public Works and Roads, Elizabeth Mokua, said the province's infrastructure ambitions depend on the strength and sustainability of its contractors.

"Infrastructure delivery is about capability. We need contractors who can manage projects effectively, administer contracts professionally and build sustainable businesses that can grow and create jobs in the North West. Developing those capabilities is essential if we are to meet the infrastructure needs of our province."

Mokua said the demands placed on contractors have evolved significantly in recent years requiring businesses to navigate increasingly complex regulatory and project delivery environments. Programmes such as the CCM are intended to help contractors strengthen these capabilities and position themselves for sustainable growth.

cidb CEO Bongani Dladla says the programme was developed to address one of the most persistent challenges facing emerging contractors: converting construction experience into sustainable business growth.

"The transition from contractor to business leader is not always straightforward. As businesses grow so do the demands associated with managing projects and performance. The CCM has been designed to help contractors navigate that transition with greater confidence while laying the foundation for sustained growth and competitiveness."

Dladla says the partnership between the cidb and the University of the Free State is one of the programme's defining strengths.

"The programme brings together the cidb's deep understanding of industry realities with the academic expertise of the UFS. This ensures that the learning experience is practical and closely aligned to the challenges and opportunities facing today's construction sector."

The programme will be delivered at three learning centres in Rustenburg, Mahikeng and Potchefstroom, making it accessible to contractors from across the province. The North West is the fourth province to implement the CCM under the cidb's national roll-out plan following successful launches in KwaZulu-Natal, Free State and the Eastern Cape, as the initiative continues to expand its national footprint.

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COMMON CEMENT is used for all structural concrete; it can also be used for mortar and plaster. Foundations, floors, columns, beams, and slabs are examples of structural concrete. CEM are printed on the bags. (For example, CEM II/B-M (V-L) 42,5 N).

• What influences the quality of cement ?

The quality of cement in South Africa is influenced by raw material composition, manufacturing processes, additives used, storage and handling conditions, and how it is mixed and applied on site.

• How is the quality of cement controlled ?

Cement is regulated by a Compulsory Standard (VC 9085). By law cement must meet certain performance specifications and be certified to do so by an accredited certification body. No Cement may be sold in South Africa without being certified.

• How to know you are buying quality cement ?

One of the rules is that specific markings must appear on every bag of cement sold in South Africa. Most importantly, an LoA number (Letter of Authority) should be printed on the bag. Look out for the CMACS APPROVED certification mark on cement bags, as this confirms the product has been tested and verified to meet South African quality standards for strength and performance.

• Markings to look out for on cement bags.



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