



MECHATRONICS SUPPORT BUILDS LOCAL TALENT PIPELINE

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GQEBERHA REVS UP FOR AUTO WEEK 2025

NAAMSA Auto Week is more than an industry gathering. It is a strategic platform for shaping the future of mobility in South Africa.

This year's theme, Reimagining the Future Together - Cultivating Inclusive Growth and Shared Prosperity, sets the tone for bold, collaborative action, according to Andrew Kirby, president and CEO of Toyota South Africa Motors (TSAM).

After previous years' successful events in Gauteng and Cape Town, this year SA Auto Week 2025 comes to the province where automotive production started in South Africa, the Eastern Cape. The event takes place at Coega Development Corporation's Coega Vulindlela Conference Centre in Gqeberha from 1-3 October.

"We are delighted to support SA Auto Week, recognising the significant role the automotive industry plays in our province's economy and also to be part of celebrating 90 years of naamsa, which was established in our province," says Khuselwa Randtjie, Eastern Cape provincial government spokesperson.

"The provincial government is looking forward to imagining the future of the automotive sector to ensure that our province continues to thrive through inclusive economic growth. More importantly, this event provides a platform for the province to engage directly with industry leaders," says Randtjie.

Mikel Mabasa, naamsa CEO said the trade body's partnership with the provincial government highlights the province's pivotal role in driving the sector's growth, innovation, and global competitiveness. For the duration of Auto Week, the automotive community will converge on the Eastern Cape for a landmark showcase of heritage, innovation, and the industry's exciting future, he said.

"We are incredibly grateful to have



Eastern Cape OEMs accounted for the most significant proportion of light vehicle production, as well as light vehicle exports in 2024. Image: Naamsa

partnered with the Eastern Cape Provincial Government as the hosts of this year's event. Our anchor partners, WesBank, Absa, the Automotive Industry Development Centre-Gauteng Province (AIDC-GP), and the Tshwane Automotive Special Economic Zone (TASEZ), have provided strong and consistent support. Their commitment to our strategy, as we re-imagine the future of the automotive industry in South Africa, is evident in the support we receive from them, year-on-year," said Mabasa.

HIGHLIGHTS

naamsa will be hosting the Automotive Indaba and Conference, a two-day event spanning three stages. Over 20 thought-leadership roundtable panels and expert industry presentations will explore and debate topics such as innovation, transformation, public policy, supply chain management, investment mobilisation for the South African auto sector, challenges faced by the medium and heavy commercial vehicle sector, global

best practices, and discussions on current policy reforms that will help insulate the country's manufacturing base.

Among the speakers is TSAM's Kirby who will deliver an expert keynote address and participate in a panel discussion on the theme: "The South African Automotive Industry as a Catalyst for Re-industrialisation." This session will explore how the industry can drive inclusive economic growth, job creation and sustainable manufacturing.

TSAM said its participation reaffirms the company's commitment to driving re-industrialisation, fostering innovation and contributing meaningfully to the country's economic transformation. "We believe the automotive sector is a powerful conduit for transforming this, and we're excited to contribute to this national dialogue," Kirby said ahead of the event.

"The global shifts in the automotive industry following the US tariff policy decisions will undoubtedly influence many of our discussions at this year's event," said Mabasa.

AUTO INNOVATION EXHIBITION

A highlight of the Coega-based event will be the Auto Innovation Exhibition, which showcases the latest and cutting-edge industry products, services, and technologies across the automotive ecosystem. TSAM, for example, is participating with three main stands featuring a dynamic display of vehicles and initiatives. Toyota, Lexus and Hino will display various models, including the bZ4x, Corolla Cross Hybrid, Hilux Legend 55, Lexus RX and the Duetto Z EV.

Mabasa says TransUnion will be back on stage at the TransUnion Summit to explore how changing consumer needs, generational trends, and digital adoption are reshaping auto decisions and paving the way for innovative mobility solutions.

Another highlight will be the naamsa Accelerator Awards, powered by WesBank, which celebrates excellence and recognises organisations and individuals whose vision, innovation, and leadership are shaping a sustainable automotive future.

NEV ROAD TRIP

Leading up to the event, 20 NEVs have traversed along three routes starting from either Johannesburg, Durban or East London, with Gqeberha as their final destination.

Demonstrating South Africa's charging infrastructure capabilities and readiness for the future of driving, the vehicles were due to meet in Colesberg before heading to Port Alfred and finally arriving in Gqeberha before SA Auto Week.

The convoy includes Hybrid EVs, Plug-in Hybrid EVs and Battery EVs, representing nine automotive manufacturers.

A RESHAPED TRAJECTORY

naamsa recognises that a slew of challenges is currently reshaping the trajectory of the automotive industry, globally and in South Africa, exerting pressures that are fundamentally transforming its landscape. The more complex and uncertain the world becomes, the greater the demand for clear insights from data to provide a more predictable roadmap through economic disruption and political turmoil.

To this end, *the Automotive Trade Manual, 2025, South Africa* publication, previously produced and compiled by the Automotive Industry Export Council (AIEC), is now published by naamsa | The Automotive Business Council. Since 2024, the newly branded naamsa publication, like the 18 publications since 2007, remains the acknowledged source of all key automotive data in South Africa.

The publication is available for download from the naamsa website and provides a comprehensive overview of the export and import performance of the South African automotive industry under the Automotive Production Development Programme (APDP) and APDP Phase 2 (APDP2). Among the topics covered *continued on page two*

Municipal engineers and technicians set to meet in East London in October

THE Institute of Municipal Engineering of Southern Africa (IMESA) urges delegates to book now to secure standard rates for its annual conference and exhibition, taking place in East London from 29-31 October 2025.

This annual event, now in its 88th year, has evolved into one of the most important gatherings for the engineering profession. In 2024, more than 750 national and international delegates (excluding exhibitors) convened to learn, share knowledge and network.

This year, the IMESA Conference and Exhibition is being held under the theme "Sustainable Engineering Solutions", reflect-

ing the global imperative to balance economic growth with environmental stewardship and social equity in the development of infrastructure. In South Africa, where rapid urbanisation, water scarcity and energy challenges are pressing issues, sustainable engineering solutions are especially critical to enhance resilience, reduce environmental impact and promote inclusive development. "Sustainable municipal engineering has a vital role to play in building future-ready South African cities and towns that are environmentally responsible, economically viable and socially just," states IMESA president Geoff Tooley.

He notes that this year's IMESA Conference

and Exhibition will not only showcase practical examples of sustainable design and innovation but also foster collaboration across sectors to ensure that engineering solutions serve both people and the planet. "This is a not-to-be-missed opportunity to learn from experts and gain insights into the latest developments and innovations in our field," Tooley stresses.

Engineers and municipal technical staff are urged to register before 13 October 2025, when the rates for this year's IMESA Conference and Exhibition will go up to the last-minute registration fee.

Gqeberha revs up for Auto Week 2025

continued from page one in the Manual are the top automotive export destinations, the major countries of origin, the main export trade blocs, the top automotive products being exported and imported, as well as the top growth markets and products. The Manual further explores the impact of the trade arrangements currently enjoyed by South Africa in the trade of vehicles and related automotive components.

Data from the *Automotive Trade Manual 2025* shows that the total sales of NEVs in South Africa, including heavy commercial vehicles, jumped from 7,782 in 2023, to 15,611 in 2024. Over 13,00 of the NEVs sold in 2024 were 'traditional hybrids'. Just four years before, in 2020, the NEV total was 324.

It further shows that, in 2024, there were seven operating multinational OEMs with CKD manufacturing plants in South Africa and the Eastern Cape OEMs once again accounted for the biggest proportion of light vehicle production, as well as light vehicle exports in 2024.

With Volkswagen Group Africa, Mercedes-

Benz SA, Isuzu Motors SA and Ford Motor Company of Southern Africa's engine plant in the province, it accounted for 57% of light vehicle exports out of the total 390,080 units exported in 2024. Of the total 567,946 light vehicles produced by OEMs in South Africa in 2024, 50% were made in the Eastern Cape, 29% in Gauteng and 21% in KwaZulu-Natal.

According to the manual, the Eurozone, Africa and the US remained the top export destinations for South African-manufactured vehicles and automotive components due to their long-standing relationships.

Vehicle exports decreased in 2024 for the first time since the Covid-19 pandemic, to 390,844 units, down 8,965 units, or 2.2%, compared to the record performance of 2023, when the industry exported 399,809 units. A total of 390,844 left- and right-hand drive vehicles were exported to 109 countries around the world in 2024.

Another trend highlighted in the report is the growth of vehicle imports. According to the report, there has been a structural change in the makeup of vehicles being sold in South

Africa as demanding consumers benefit from access to a wide variety of new models and a highly competitive pricing environment. In 2024, light vehicle imports, as a percentage of total new light vehicle sales in South Africa, increased from 59,5% in 2023 to 62,8% in 2024. The manual notes that this trend has become more pronounced over the last decade, as the share of domestically manufactured light vehicles has fallen steadily, with imported light vehicle models averaging 58,5% of annual new vehicle sales over the past decade, while the domestically manufactured models' new vehicle share declined to 41,5%.

The report estimates that South African automotive trade revenue under the APDP2, amounting to a substantial R494,8 billion in 2024, comprised 16,4% of South Africa's total trade GDP, down from 16,7% in 2023. The automotive export revenue of R268,8 billion in 2024 reflected a decrease of R2,0 billion, or 0,7%, compared to the record R270,8 billion export value in 2023.

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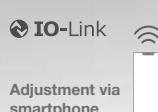
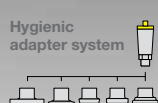
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Looking Forward

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Mechatronics support builds local talent pipeline

SINCE 2018, Isuzu Motors South Africa (IMSAf) and the Nelson Mandela University (NMU) Chair of Mechatronics have been collaborating to enhance the quality of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering graduates.

The successful long-term collaboration is a testament to IMSAf's commitment to narrowing the skills gap in the automotive sector by aligning academic learning with real-world industry needs. Through this partnership, students gain invaluable experience within a manufacturing environment at the IMSAf plant, equipping them with the skills required to meet the demands of the job market.

The programme is designed to deeply immerse students within the IMSAf manufacturing plant, allowing them to connect their academic learning with real-world industrial contexts. Through hands-on research and development on actual challenges, combined with dedicated mentorship and project support, students gain a holistic experience. This approach not only equips them with practical skills but also fosters the innovative mindset



From left: Etienne Venter, senior manager: manufacturing engineering at Isuzu Motors South Africa; Laa'iqah Gaffor and Nqaba Laxa, B-Eng Mechatronics third-year students at Nelson Mandela University and Professor Theo van Niekerk, head of mechatronics department at Nelson Mandela University

needed to drive meaningful progress in the manufacturing sector.

"Over the years, we have been able to empower Nelson Mandela University engi-

neering students who have come through our system to develop innovative solutions, thereby building practical job-ready skills," said Professor Theo van Niekerk, head of the

mechatronics department at Nelson Mandela University. "This is largely due to our collaboration with Isuzu Motors South Africa through our Chair of Mechatronics, that has allowed us to bridge the gap between academia and industry ensuring a seamless integration of our graduates into the world of work."

The partnership has set an ambitious goal to reach and expose 400 students in the Mechatronics, Mechanical and Electrical Engineering fields by 2030, reinforcing its dedication to nurturing local talent and driving innovation.

"Our partnership with Nelson Mandela University is a critical part of our long-term vision to build a sustainable talent pipeline for the automotive industry in South Africa," said Celestin Ndhlovu, executive vice president for the corporate services Division, Isuzu Motors South Africa. "By connecting academic knowledge with hands-on industrial experience, we are not only preparing students for the world of work but also inspiring them to become the innovators and problem-solvers of tomorrow."

Initiative to empower youth with digital skills

VODACOM has partnered with the Eastern Cape Development Corporation (ECDC) and technology providers to provide young people with access to digital skills in a province with a high unemployment rate.

In partnership with AWS, Microsoft, Skillsoft, and other organisations, Vodacom says it seeks to close the digital skills gap across eight African countries and upskill one million young people by the year 2027.

ROLL-OUT

"The Eastern Cape province has consistently recorded unemployment rates above the national level, and this has moved us to use digital technologies to provide youth from this province with digital skills and training to equip them for the job market in the digital economy. As a purpose-led organisation, the roll-out of the Digital Skills Hub in the Eastern Cape demonstrates our commitment to leading the way towards using our resources and technology to respond to socio-economic challenges that are seriously plaguing the country," says Zakhele Jiyane, managing executive for Vodacom Eastern Cape region.

In 2024, during the opening of the provincial legislature, the Eastern Cape Premier emphasised that 65% of households in the province had access to the internet and positioned the digital economy alongside agriculture, manufacturing, the oceans economy, and tourism as one of five key frontiers to drive growth.

Responding to this call, the Eastern Cape Development Corporation has partnered with Vodacom to equip young people with the skills, confidence, and opportunities to compete on a global stage. "This partnership is an investment not only in digital literacy

but also in the long-term social and economic transformation of the Eastern Cape," says Baphelele Mhlaba, acting executive: economic development and sector support at the ECDC.

DIGITAL SKILLS TRAINING

The Vodacom Digital Skills Hub is designed to empower the next generation, to consider a career in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), and entails fun and engaging practical digital skills training for young people. AWS Educate is one of the first programmes to be offered through the Digital Skills Hub and an additional programme to Vodacom's various existing online learning platforms. AWS Educate offers beginners an extensive library of self-paced online training that covers a range of topics from cloud fundamentals to artificial intelligence and machine learning.

"We are extremely excited about this initiative which seeks to inspire the next wave of digital innovators. Our main aim with this initiative is to not only address the digital skills shortage on the continent but to also nurture a pipeline of young talent and in turn advance Africa's digital future, boosting opportunities for empowerment in an inclusive digital economy," says Matimba Mbungela, chief human resources officer at Vodacom Group.

According to Vocacom, its Group Digital Skills Hub is available in South Africa, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Mozambique, Lesotho, Egypt (Talimy), the Democratic Republic of Congo (VodaEduc), and in Kenya (Industry Digital Talent Program) to empower the next generation of digital innovators, enabling Africa's digital society and leveraging existing e-learning platforms in the respective markets.



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Advancing agricultural research with institutions in SA

CORTEVA is deepening its commitment to agricultural innovation in South Africa through strategic partnerships with premier research institutions and leading universities. These collaborations span initiatives in crop science, pest management, sustainable farming and cutting-edge breeding techniques.

According to the company, each initiative is designed to address the unique challenges faced by South African farmers while boosting productivity and promoting sustainable practices. These efforts align with Corteva's global sustainability goals, which include improving soil health, enhancing yield stability and reducing emissions to ensure long-term environmental stewardship.

FROM RESEARCH TO IMPACT

Corteva's research collaborations in South Africa are already delivering tangible, on-the-ground benefits. Climate-resilient seed varieties, developed using advanced genomic tools, are improving farmers' capacity to manage the effects of drought

and increasingly erratic weather patterns.

Corteva's partnership in the Seed Production Technology for Africa (SPTA) initiative will help local seed producers adopt a novel non-GM trait that enables more efficient and accurate hybrid maize seed production. By reducing the need for manual detasseling and ensuring high genetic purity, this technology makes high-quality maize hybrids more accessible and affordable for smallholder farmers across the region, supporting both food security and economic development.

STRENGTHENING

Corteva says it operates four key research and development facilities in South Africa. This includes the Delmas Africa Technology Hub, which houses genomics and digital phenotyping tools. The Potchefstroom multi-crop research centre focused on stress tolerance. In Rosslyn, Pretoria, the Centre for Seed Applied Technologies (CSAT) develops advanced seed treatments suited to local conditions. A fourth

site in Kroonstad supports seed production through quality testing and parent-seed development.

These investments support infrastructure development and knowledge transfer, ensuring South African researchers and farmers benefit from world-class scientific tools and techniques. It enables Corteva's ability to deliver locally adapted innovations to farmers.

PRECISION BREEDING AND GENOMICS

Corteva's commitment to precision breeding is showcased in several initiatives in South Africa. By integrating marker-assisted breeding, genomic selection, artificial intelligence and digital phenotyping, local teams accelerate the development of high-performing crop varieties with enhanced resilience. These efforts directly address regional pressures such as climate variability, drought and pest incidence.

Advanced biotechnology, including CRISPR-Cas9 gene editing, increases genetic diversity for selection by making precise changes to a



plant's own DNA without introducing foreign genes, as is the case in GMOs. The company says it collaborates with local and international partners to demonstrate practical benefits from these advanced breeding techniques to improve sustainable agriculture and grow healthy and nutritious food.

As Corteva is championing open innovation in new breeding techniques, it is making its CRISPR-Cas9 systems available under license to universities and research groups, often royalty-free for non-commercial, humanitarian-driven research.

This approach fosters collaboration between corporate, academic, and public research entities

ENGAGEMENT

The company also works actively with government, academia and industry to support a policy environment that enables the use of new breeding techniques. Through ongoing engagement with key players in the agricultural sector, it contributes to efforts promoting regulatory clarity. Corteva supports inclusive stakeholder engagement to help shape balanced and forward-looking regulatory outcomes in South Africa.

"As agriculture confronts the intertwined challenges of climate change, growth and resource constraints, Corteva's alliance-based approach delivers locally relevant innovations that balance productivity, environmental care, and inclusive development. It is through ongoing collaboration that these research-driven solutions will truly take root, ensuring South Africa's agricultural sector thrives today and into the future," the company says.

Real-time response: Why speed matters more than ever for SA's manufacturing and logistics

OPINION | SOUTH Africa's manufacturing and logistics sectors are at a critical juncture, according to

Merel van der Lei (pictured), CEO of Wyzetalk.

The country's logistics grid is under perpetual stress – with per-

sistent disruptions, ongoing (albeit slowly improving) port delays, rising costs, uncertainty around energy, and infrastructure failures now a regular part of the operating environment. In this context, the ability to adapt with speed grants an invaluable

competitive advantage, but, more than that, it is a core requirement for survival. True responsiveness is about more than just fast communication; it's about addressing the systemic and human factors that create communication "lag" in the first place.

The cost of this lag is high and often underestimated. When updates are delayed, it slows down stock adjustments, production schedules, rerouting, and maintenance coordination. As a recent University of Johannesburg working paper on digitalisation and productivity highlighted, empowering employees with real-time information is essential to improving business performance – especially when sudden and unexpected external factors are already threatening cashflows. But, for many organisations, the communication systems supporting their frontline workforces working in these rough economic seas are not up to the task – and the reasons for this go far deeper than a lack of technology.

Why are operational updates so often delayed or fragmented in our most vital industries? In my experience, it's rarely due to a simple lack of data. It's to a large extent



due to a systemic disconnect between information, learning, and behaviour. Many organisations operate with what can be described as an "information ecology" that is siloed and outdated.

Critical information may be available at a management level, but it fails to reach the driver on the road or the operator on the production line, creating a pervasive and costly communication bottleneck. This fragmentation is often a result of deeply ingrained cultural and structural impediments: a 'silo mentality', bureaucratic red tape, and not prioritising a unified digital space where every employee can access a single source of truth.

Consider the state of South Africa's logistics grid and the subsequent performance of exports that are heavily influenced by it. According to Dr Juanita Maree, CEO of the South African Association of Freight Forwarders, in 2025 the country is losing an estimated R1 billion a day in missed trade opportunities due to port delays, rail disruptions and related infrastructure bottlenecks.

In the latest trade balance update from SARS for the month of June 2025, the YTD cumulative trade deficit of R991 billion has actually worsened by 1,5% compared to the same period in 2024. There have been improvements, yes, but we're operating from a woefully low base. Companies need every bit of efficien-

cy they can get; and the responsibility has, for better or worse, fallen to them.

While the challenges are complex, a key contributing factor to the struggles in logistics and manufacturing is the communication lag between management and frontline employees in such a volatile environment. It's common knowledge that even a small delay in updating a delivery fleet about a road closure can lead to hours of lost productivity. What if the issue is even more unexpected and even more disruptive?

In 2023, Transnet suddenly couldn't carry freight by train along several key northern corridors due to mass faults and breakdowns. ArcelorMittal's steel mills that depended on that network had to shut down for extended periods as a direct result of Transnet's issues.

In general logistics, if even an hour delay due to road closures is commonly accepted as a huge disruption to schedules, what does a week-long and complete loss of logistical access for a business come down to? In ArcelorMittal's case, alternatives weren't available, but communication can still help mitigate the blows such crises deliver.

The most effective businesses in South Africa ensure that critical updates are sent to the right people at the right time. It prevents information overload and ensures that only relevant information reaches those who need to act on it with speed and confidence.



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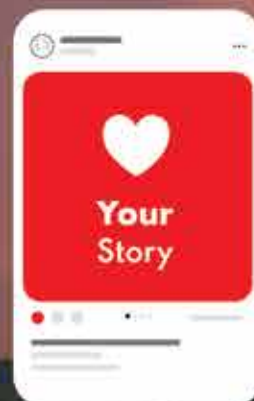


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Specialised concrete admixes enhance wind farm construction

WITH the ongoing construction of wind farms across South Africa, Chryso Southern Africa has seen an increasing demand for its construction admixtures. Contractors are leveraging these solutions to mitigate challenges posed by remote site locations and extreme temperature variations.

Patrick Flannigan, general manager technical and product support at Chryso Southern Africa, highlights the critical role of concrete admixtures in ensuring durability and structural integrity. "Wind turbine bases are subjected to some of the harshest environmental conditions, making durability a top priority for concrete mixes used in these foundations," he explains.

THERMAL CONTRACTION

The bases or foundations of wind turbines are substantial, often reaching diameters of approximately 20 metres and sometimes matching this in height. Given their mass, these concrete placements typically contain high Portland cement content, leading to significant heat build-up during the hydration process. The subsequent dissipation of heat can cause thermal contraction cracking, potentially compromising the struc-



tural soundness of the base.

"To mitigate this," Flannigan explains, "contractors often incorporate Supplementary Cementitious Materials (SCMs) such as fly ash or slag alongside Portland cement. This approach is both cost effective and environmentally friendly but can impact the early and late-age strength development of the concrete."

WORKABILITY AND PLACEMENT

"Another challenge arises from the dense steel reinforcement within wind turbine foundations. This congestion necessitates high slump concrete which, if not managed correctly, can lead to segregation,

negatively affecting durability," he continues.

Additionally, the remote locations of wind farms make concrete delivery a logistical challenge. Readymix concrete plants are typically far from the construction site, and where site batching is done, the batching plant is often at a significant distance from the foundations. This requires solutions that can maintain concrete workability over extended periods.

INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

Chryso Southern Africa offers a robust range of admixtures to address these challenges effectively. The Chryso Enviromix range is widely used to optimise early and late-age strength development,

especially in mixes containing SCMs. This plasticiser improves cohesion and lowers viscosity, enhancing mix homogeneity and durability. For particularly challenging aggregates, the Chryso Quad solution provides targeted performance enhancement, ensuring consistent workability and strength development even in demanding mix designs. Together, these innovations support superior concrete quality across diverse applications.

Flannigan notes that Chryso's expertise in superplasticiser formulation is a key advantage. "Matching superplasticisers with cement and aggregate chemistry is one of Chryso's strengths.

The Chryso Optima range, designed specifically for readymix concrete, offers exceptional robustness. This product is not water-sensitive and aids in producing durable low-viscosity concrete mixes. Engineered with patented phosphonate technology, it ensures prolonged plasticity, which is invaluable for projects with long-distance concrete transportation. It also provides effective water reduction, maintaining workability for 30 to 45 minutes while still achieving high strength.

For precast concrete applications, the Chryso Premia range is ideal, delivering rapid strength develop-

ment and a superior surface finish, making it a preferred solution for precast project plants aiming for high productivity and consistent quality.

PERFORMANCE ENHANCERS

To support long-distance readymix concrete transportation, Chryso Optima ensures extended workability and pumpability for planned deliveries. For unexpected delays or returned readymix concrete, Chryso Rescue Pack enables controlled curing rates, prevents cold joint formation and ensures proper compaction, especially critical in large pours like wind turbine foundations.

Additionally, Chryso Curing Compounds help reduce shrinkage cracks and improve the concrete's overall strength and impermeability. These compounds play a vital role in extending the durability of wind turbine bases by reducing moisture loss during curing.

"With our innovative range of admixtures, Chryso Southern Africa continues to support the construction of resilient and long-lasting wind farm infrastructure, helping contractors overcome the unique challenges posed by these remote and demanding projects," Flannigan concludes.

Shifting the electrification and automation sectors towards a net-zero future

ABB is implementing a strategic initiative aimed at achieving a sustainable future characterised by zero emissions, zero accidents and zero waste. "This mission reflects ABB's commitment to environmental stewardship and social responsibility, aligning with global sustainability goals," comments Bradley James (pictured), product marketing director, Electrification Distribution Solutions (ELDS) South Africa.

By combining energy management systems with electrification and renewable resource technologies, ABB established the trademarked *Mission to Zero* programme. Acting as a guiding light, ABB aims to reach net zero by 2030 at its own factory sites, while also helping customers and suppliers achieve their emission reduction ambitions.

In terms of zero emissions, ABB is dedicated to reducing its carbon footprint and facilitating the transition to sustainable energy solutions. This includes the development of technologies that enhance energy efficiency and promote the use of renewable energy sources, helping customers and industries lower their greenhouse gas emissions.

By choosing the right applications in concert with the designed energy architecture, customers can bene-

fit from reduced CO2 emissions, energy savings, reduced energy loss, as well as cost savings, while fulfilling the requirements of environmental product declarations (EPD) or certificates on their path toward carbon neutrality.

In terms of South Africa specifically, ABB's *Mission to Zero* efforts include local manufacturing of Compact Secondary Substations (CSS) and promoting its new SF6-Free gas switchgear. The *Mission to Zero* blueprint is being successfully applied to other ABB factories, such as ABB's circuit breaker and switchgear factory in Dalmine, Italy.

Here, *Mission to Zero* efforts have aimed to reduce CO2 and other greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, conserve resources and increase visibility and insights into their own energy management. To promote circularity and resource conservation, ABB also evaluated and certified products and processes using life cycle assessments (LCA) and EPD.

By installing photovoltaics (PV) for power generation and consumption, coupled with smart energy and asset management technology to monitor and assess power use, this ABB factory has been able to generate over 20% of its own energy in the summer months. It has reduced



CO2 emissions by over 2,200 tons over the past two years.

ABB is committed to minimising waste throughout its operations by promoting circular economy principles.

This involves reducing material consumption, enhancing recycling efforts and finding innovative ways to reuse resources, thereby minimising environmental impact. Through *Mission to Zero*, ABB aims to lead by example in the electrification and automation sectors, driving innovation that contributes to a sustainable and responsible future for all.

"Currently, what we are witnessing is a lack of available power for our country as a whole, forcing our utility to implement loadshedding and load reduction. Our business pushes our manufacturing facilities to utilise less power while respecting our environment and executing it safely. This promotes development and innovation in ABB to be more creative in generating, storing, and utilising the power in a more efficient manner, therefore putting less reliance and stress on our electricity grid," says James.

He points to the Energy Efficiency Movement (EEM), a global initiative that aims to accelerate the adoption of energy efficiency solutions within industries to achieve net-zero emissions. It provides a platform for stakeholders to share knowledge, collaborate and develop innovative energy-saving strategies.

"Local companies can get involved by joining the EEM, participating in events, implementing energy audits, upgrading to energy-efficient equipment, and engaging employees in energy-saving practices," explains James.

With ongoing energy challenges, ABB's solutions such as microgrids, energy storage, and smart power management enable local businesses and municipalities to optimise energy use, integrate renewables, and enhance energy security. For example, ABB integrates renewable energy into operations through a combination of advanced technologies, digital solutions, and system-level expertise that enable the seamless, efficient, and reliable use of clean energy sources.

For any operation to become a *Mission to Zero* site, it must achieve certain minimum requirements, apply ABB solutions and integrate third-party solutions to enable greater electrification, efficiency and use of renewable energy. There are four pillars of the transition, namely

planning, innovation, monitoring and sustainability.

James adds that ABB aligns strongly with South Africa's Just Energy Transition (JET) objectives through its technologies, services and sustainability commitments that directly support decarbonisation, energy security and inclusive socioeconomic development. ABB contributes to the JET vision by decarbonising the power sector, enabling clean technology industries, and supporting energy security and resilience.

"ABB can play a pivotal role in supporting South Africa's net-zero and climate goals through its advanced technologies, deep local presence, and global expertise in enabling clean, efficient and resilient energy systems," says James. It can accelerate renewable energy integration, promote energy efficiency and support grid modernisation and resilience.

Here, digital technology plays a key role in energy management. "At ABB, we believe digitalisation is key to unlocking a low-carbon future," notes James. Its digital technologies give customers the visibility, intelligence, and control they need to manage energy more sustainably, transforming ambition into action on the path to net zero.



Food-safe environments don't just 'sparkle'

THE rising number of food-borne illnesses in South Africa, particularly among children, has led to hospitalisations and tragic fatalities, leaving families devastated and communities concerned. These cases have made headlines across the country, with investigations pointing to possible food contamination and periodically reigniting national conversations about food safety.

It's a stark reminder of how high the stakes are when hygiene fails.

Jeffrey Madkins, marketing manager for Unilever Professional, explains, "In many businesses, visual cleanliness is prioritised, and hygiene protocols often rely on surface-level inspections and routine tasks – if it looks clean, it must be clean. But hygiene goes far beyond what the eye can see," he cautions.

For South Africa's food industry, this carries particular weight. Cross-contamination, poor storage practices, and undetected temperature changes are often invisible risks that surface only when it's too late.

Beyond the ethical responsibility, there's also a legal duty of care – and it doesn't lie with inspectors or cleaners; it rests squarely with the

Risk Category	Risk	Potential Impact
Direct Risk	Food contamination	Illness, death, public health investigations, forced closures
	Regulatory non-compliance	Legal action, fines, forced closures
Consequential Risk	Operational disruption	Inspections, delays, temporary business suspension
	Reputational damage	Negative media coverage, loss of customer trust
	Financial impact	Revenue decline, compensation claims, increased insurance costs

employer.

Under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (Act 85 of 1993) and the Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants Act (Act 54 of 1972):

- Food must be handled and stored in safe, hygienic conditions.
- Businesses must ensure their premises are clean and free from risk.
- Staff must be properly trained in hygiene practices, and supervision must be in place.

People and profit typically domi-

nate business discussions. Hygiene rarely makes it onto the agenda. "But it should," Madkins notes. "Because one lapse can quickly turn into a major crisis that affects both."

He points to some high-stakes vulnerabilities that, if left unchecked, can escalate into serious business consequences. But the greatest cost is one no business wants to carry – the loss of life or public trust.

WHAT BUSINESSES CAN DO

The good news is that many of

the most serious risks can be prevented with the right systems in place. Madkins recommends some practical steps to help food industry businesses mitigate hygiene risks:

- Audit, act, repeat. Don't wait for an inspection – make hygiene audits routine, not reactive. Spot gaps early and address them promptly.
- Train, train and train some more. Ensure every person who handles food is trained on, and understands safe storage, cross-contamination risks, and personal and environmental hygiene protocols. Consistent refresher training will help to reinforce safe practices, prevent complacency, and ensure hygiene remains a daily priority.
- Store smartly. Food should be stored away from cleaning products, cold chains must be maintained, and raw and cooked items handled separately.
- Records matter. If it's not documented, it didn't happen. Cleaning schedules, temperature

logs, and staff training records show due diligence, provide proof of compliance, and help protect your business.

- Stay current. Food safety laws change. Make sure practices – and staff training – keep pace.
- Safety Starts with the right products. Not all cleaning products are created equal. Choose cleaning solutions that are right for the job. Products such as Unilever Professional's Handy Andy Professional range of food-safe certified cleaners are formulated to help maintain a hygienic, hazard-free environment, supporting safe and contamination-free food preparation.

For families who these types of incidents have impacted, no policy or checklist will ever undo the lasting impact on their lives. But for the thousands of businesses across South Africa that handle food, from production to plate, their story is a powerful and sobering reminder.

"Cleanliness isn't just about sparkle. It's about systems. It's about safety. And ultimately, it's about the people we serve," Madkins concludes.

Municipalities investing in advanced road sweepers

THE call for cleaner, greener and better-managed urban spaces is stronger than ever, and municipalities are feeling the pressure from both citizens who expect clean streets and from rising environmental standards and infrastructure demands.

Far from a nice-to-have, road cleaning machines have become a vital part of how cities manage public health, protect infrastructure and improve day-to-day life. According to Goscor Cleaning Equipment, local governments can take the next step toward building smarter, cleaner cities by partnering with a company like it.

Road sweepers do more than just tidy up. Among other benefits, they clear away litter, sand, and leaves

before they build up. They can keep dust levels down, improving air quality and help maintain road surfaces and pavements.

For municipalities, it's not just about keeping up appearances – it's about delivering essential services that improve quality of life.

Goscor Cleaning Equipment says many people don't realise how closely street sweeping is tied to environmental protection. When waste builds up on roads, it doesn't just sit there. Rain carries it into storm drains – clogging systems, increasing the risk of flooding, and contaminating local rivers and coastlines.

According to the company, by using high-performance road sweepers, municipalities can pre-

vent pollutants from entering waterways, drain blockages and overflow during heavy rains, as well as environmental compliance issues linked to stormwater regulations.

Cleaner roads mean cleaner cities and cleaner ecosystems too.

Today's street sweepers look very different from the machines of a decade ago. Advances in design and technology have made them far more efficient, waterwise, quiet and clean, comfortable and data-driven.

These machines aren't just upgrades. They deliver better service in less time, and with fewer resources. Goscor Cleaning Equipment's range of road sweepers from Macro for large-scale street cleaning are ideal for high-ca-

capacity applications and are built for heavy-duty use.

The company says modern street sweepers deliver real value over time. Municipalities investing in updated fleets are seeing, among other benefits, lower fuel and maintenance costs and fewer breakdowns and disruptions. With battery-powered sweepers and compact, fuel-efficient models now widely available, the total cost of ownership often works out lower than older diesel machines – especially when repairs, parts and downtime are factored in.

Some municipalities are already ahead of the curve.

From Cape Town to Johannesburg and Durban, local governments are upgrading their cleaning fleets

and integrating road sweepers into broader urban renewal and green city strategies. Many of these efforts are supported by government grants and incentives aimed at improving public infrastructure and sustainability.

Goscor Cleaning Equipment has proudly supported several of these projects – providing not just machines, but the training, servicing, and support that keep them running smoothly.

When it comes to keeping cities clean, Goscor Cleaning Equipment says it brings more than just machines to the table. It works with municipalities to deliver equipment that's built for local conditions, backed by expert support and a national footprint.

Safe, effortless, eco-friendly industrial and hand cleaning

BMG's range of Liqui Moly additives, oils and lubricants is enhanced by highly-efficient industrial and hand cleaning products, developed to ensure safe and effortless cleaning and degreasing in all sectors.

Included in this range is the Liqui Moly Oil Binder, designed for the safe and efficient clean-up of oil spills. This powerful oil absorber is based on a 100% polyurethane hard foam, which binds oil, fuel and hydrophobic (water-repellent) chemicals. An important feature of this product is that the oil take-up capacity is barely reduced by water, which

significantly enhances efficiency, even on wet surfaces.

This odourless cleaning material, which is suitable for small and large areas inside and outdoors, is also recommended for breakdown recovery services and fire departments. Notable properties of this product also include residue-free combustion and a high spreading rate – important features in an emergency situation. The Liqui Moly Oil Binder has an efficient absorption ratio, where one litre of the product binds 0,58



litres of oil. "Prior to use, we advise our customers to test the compatibility of the liquid to be absorbed, with Liqui Moly Oil Absorber, especially for large-scale

applications, unknown liquids or mixtures," explains Carlo Beukes, business development manager for BMG's Agricultural, Automotive and Lubrication division. "We recommend that 5mm of Liqui Moly Oil Absorber be evenly spread onto the area to be cleaned and removed after sufficient reaction time. Effective cleaning

may be accelerated and enhanced by sweeping the area with a hard broom.

"For processes that require the removal of oil on outside surfaces, we advise customers to apply the oil binder to the oil surface at least twice, gathering the binder into a pile and collecting it as carefully and completely as possible. It is important that users clean the area with a 1-% water-cleanser mixture.

"To minimise a negative environmental impact, disposal of used cleaning products should be carried out according to the current regulations set out for the substances

absorbed," he says.

BMG's Liqui Moly Rapid Cleaner spray has been developed using a combination of carefully selected acetone-free solvents for the rapid, efficient cleaning and degreasing of components in industrial applications.

This product – with low surface tension and a high proportion of active components – offers excellent penetration properties, enabling it to easily dissolve oil, grease, resin and tar residues and contaminants, even in hidden areas. After the solvent has evaporated, the surface is left free of grease and tar-type residues.



Customers can choose 3D printed parts in two polymers

MOTION plastics supplier, igus South Africa, has introduced a new 3D printing service capable of producing custom parts in two engineering-grade polymers with exceptional strength and without the need for lubrication.

This step bridges the gap between traditional injection moulding and fast-turnaround additive manufacturing, allowing engineers to get custom parts in days rather than weeks without compromising on durability or performance.

According to igus South Africa product specialist, Juan-Eric Davidtz the igus solution is unlike standard 3D printing filaments which lack the load capacity or wear resistance required in industrial applications. The new solution uses iglidur 150

and iglidur 190 materials. These are the same engineered polymers used in igus's injection-moulded plain bearings and other parts. As a result, customers get the same benefits, including low friction, dry-running operation and zero lubrication requirements but with the flexibility of custom geometries and rapid prototyping.

igidur 150 is a versatile, food-grade material ideal for general-purpose bearings and sliding elements. It offers excellent wear resistance, good chemical stability and is certified to meet strict EU Regulation 10/2011 requirements making it a strong choice for packaging machinery, food processing and general industrial applications.

igidur 190 is a heavy-duty

material formulated for higher load



igus South Africa product specialist, Juan-Eric Davidtz

capacity and impact resistance. It is particularly suited to parts exposed

to high stress, shock loading or abrasive conditions such as gears, racks and pulleys.

By pairing these specialist materials with precision 3D printing, igus delivers an engineered solution that it says outperforms conventional printed plastics. The result is a printed part that lasts longer and needs no ongoing maintenance like its injection-moulded counterpart.

"The real advantage here is that customers can get the same proven igus polymer performance in a custom one-off or low-volume run. For our customers manufacturing or maintaining machines, as well as designers, this means faster time to delivery, reduced downtime and a reliable path from prototype to production," concludes Davidtz.

INDUSTRIAL APPLICATIONS

The introduction of its advanced polymer 3D printing service has paved the way for rapid turnaround of one-offs, small production runs or working prototypes from the same material as its world-renowned injection moulded products. T

According to the company, although walk-in business of any type is catered for, the top industrial applications include bushes and plain bearings, gears and gear wheels, rollers and Idler wheels, linear slide Pads and carriages, custom wear pads and strips, chain guides and cable carriers, valve seats and seals, robotic end effectors, housings and brackets, and specialised conveyor components.

Improved technology and connectivity for plasma cutting and gouging

A US-based leading manufacturer of industrial cutting systems and software, Hypertherm Associates, has announced enhancements coming to its Hypertherm XPR platform by the end of the year, including a new streamlined modern design, featuring IIoT capability, manual set-mode, automated gouging capability, vented water injection processes and improved true bevel technology for thicker, more precise bevel cuts.

ENHANCEMENTS

The new control board enables Ethernet LAN capability for IIoT connectivity and robust access to the XPR interface tool. It also incorporates the MTConnect communication protocol for data exchange



between machines and software applications for machine monitoring and process analysis. This capability puts cutting data at the operator's fingertips and allows remote plasma system monitoring from anywhere in the world.

For straightforward applications that do not require sophisticated integration with a CNC/PLC such as gouging and off-table beveling, XPR now features a Manual Set-mode – perfect for repetitive

jobs using the same plasma process. Even after a power cycle, the system remembers the last setup, keeping operations smooth and efficient.

The new XPR gouging capability radically decreases the time needed to get weld-ready parts with wider, deeper, cleaner and consistent gouge profiles that need little or no clean-up compared to traditional gouging technologies. Compared to carbon arc or low-amp plasma hand gouging, XPR automated gouging on a robot, cobot or track-guided motion control reduces labour and increases

productivity by speeding up weld-prep for high-precision welding applications. XPR gouges further from the plate, reaching hard-to-access and tight spaces with an extended arc stretch and higher arc transfer height.

BOOSTED CAPABILITIES

In addition to these XPR platform enhancements, Hypertherm boosted capabilities for the XPR460 with 460A Nitrogen/Vented Water Injection (VWI) for high-quality cuts with smooth surfaces on thick stainless steel and aluminium. New 460A Y-Top proprietary true bevel capability for thicker mild steel increases accuracy and quality consistency, eliminating machine operator guesswork.

Precision in confined spaces



MINIATURE inductive sensors from ifm are supplied in M5 housing or cylindrical smooth 4 mm housing for confined installation conditions. The sensors have a longer sensing range for accurate and reliable position detection and are suitable for dynamic processes due to their high switching frequency.

The inductive IY/IZ type sensors are used in various industrial areas where space is limited, for example, in machine tools, assembly automation and electronics production. They detect end positions of small grippers and clamps, and can be used to accurately monitor speed of gears and rotary movements.

The longer sensing range makes it easy to position the sensors. The position detection is reliable even in case of mechanical tolerance, avoiding accidental switching. This increases the process reliability.

The M5 thread makes it easy to screw in the IY housing. The IZ housing has a 4 mm smooth sleeve and can be fastened precisely and efficiently using the corresponding holder.

The robust housing has been specially developed for demanding industrial environments and offers durability and reliability. Thanks to the protection rating IP67, the sensors guarantee reliable performance even under extreme conditions such as dust, moisture and vibrations, which improves process stability and efficiency in various industrial sectors.

Replaceable head drilling system extends tool life

MODULAR drilling systems with bayonet interfaces enable quick drill head changes directly in the machine – but with a lack of process reliability and short tool life, these time savings can quickly become negligible. The BT 800 from Gühring demonstrates that easy handling and high performance don't have to be mutually exclusive and claims to deliver a 150% longer tool life.

Tradition, innovation, and reliability – these are the hallmarks of Salzgitte Mannesmann Stahlhandel GmbH, which produces and distributes high-quality steel products. These include flat products, tubes, and long products that are characterised not only by a broad and flexible range of dimensions and grades but also by meeting the highest quality standards.

To meet the increasing demands for efficiency and precision, the company, headquartered in Mülheim an der Ruhr, is focusing on modern tool solutions. These include modular drilling systems, which Salzgitte Mannesmann expects to enable more economical and time-saving drilling processes, especially for larger diameters.

QUICK CHANGE

Production employee Tino Becker explains why interchangeable head systems with a bayonet lock are particularly effective: "The drill head can be easily replaced directly in the machine. Compared to alternative modular drilling systems, where the drill head is attached with a screw, we save a lot of time because the drill doesn't have to



be removed from the machine, and the program doesn't have to be interrupted."

Therefore, Salzgitte Mannesmann initially resorted to a drilling system from a Gühring competitor with a bayonet interface. However, it became clear that a simple and quick drill head change wasn't enough when problems arose during an application in structural steel: The company was struggling with

long chips and loud drilling noises. The result was unclear drilling and even tool breakage. "If the holder is also damaged in the process, it can quickly become expensive. The economic advantages of modular tools are then lost," says Becker.

"We can do better," says Gühring application engineer Tobias Förderer, proposing a new solution to the long-standing customer. Gühring's BT 800 replaceable head drilling system combines the advantages of a convenient bayonet interface with the performance of solid carbide drills and a long service life. Salzgitte Mannesmann is convinced of this in the production of steel beams (structural steel S355 J2), where through holes with a diameter of 17.5 mm are to be produced on a Kaltenbach drill-saw system.



Innovative chemical solutions drive industrial efficiency and sustainability

DAMO Chemical Solutions, a part of the DaMo Solutions Group, specialises in supplying advanced chemical products to support manufacturing, metalworking and industrial operations across South Africa. The Gqeberha-based company's objective is to provide industries with high-performance products that improve efficiency, extend equipment life and maintain cleaner, safer production environments. The company operates from the belief that in today's competitive and highly regulated industrial landscape, businesses require products that not only deliver consistent results but also align with global sustainable goals.

A core strength of DaMo Chemical Solutions' portfolio is its industrial lubricants. The company's cooling lubricants range is formulated to manage heat effectively during machining, ensuring precision,

longer tool life and consistent productivity, even in demanding production environments. The company's products play a vital role in reducing downtime, thereby supporting smooth and reliable machining operations.

Complementing these are its forming lubricants that provide enhanced performance in metal stamping, pressing and shaping processes. By reducing wear and friction, they help deliver cleaner finishes and extend the service life of critical tools, enabling manufacturers to maintain output quality while controlling maintenance costs.

What sets DaMo's offering apart is the company's commitment to environmentally responsible solutions. Its water-based range offers



a high-performance alternative that delivers superior results while being safer for operators and less harmful to the environment. This approach not only helps its clients reduce their environmental footprint but also supports compliance with evolving sustainability goals and industry regulations. By optimising usage and promoting resource efficiency, the

company's solutions contribute to reducing total operating costs while enhancing long-term equipment reliability.

The company's key offerings include:

- **Industrial lubricants:** This category includes cooling lubricants which are designed to manage heat during machining, enhance precision, extend tool life, and reduce downtime. It also provides forming lubricants that improve stamping, pressing, and shaping processes by reducing wear and friction, which results in cleaner finishes and longer tool life.
- **Metal cleaning and protection:** Under this category, the company offers effective water-based solutions for corrosion removal and surface preparation.

- It ensures quality and transparency through clear criteria and documentation for inspection and traceability. DaMo collaborates with clients and agrees on rework to ensure alignment with project needs.

- **Environmentally responsible products:** This category features water-based alternatives that are safer for operators and the environment, offering superior performance compared to traditional acidic formulations. These products help clients meet sustainability goals and regulations while reducing operating costs and improving equipment reliability.

DaMo Chemical Solutions offers a compelling proposition, including technical expertise, reliable supply chains and customer-focused service, all underpinned by a deep commitment to productivity, quality, and sustainability.

SA faces shortage of ferrous scrap if concessions are relaxed

SOUTH Africa's ferrous scrap metal resources may fail to meet domestic demand should either the export tax thereon or provisions of the Price Preference System (PPS) be relaxed.

Amit Saini, a director at the electric steel-producing mini-mill Coega Steels, believes the country cannot afford to toy with the existing policies that are already "only just" managing to preserve scrap stocks.

The secondary-steel industry has raised concerns that the availability of scrap will come under pressure should the tax and/or PPS be removed or reset.

It will effectively mean that South Africa will instead export its scrap metal to South Asian countries, resulting in more competition to buy scrap and therefore increasing the production costs of the greener mini-mills.

He warned that backpedalling on these would be "devastating and create an existential crisis" for mini-mills, which rely on the repurposing of scrap in the manufacturing of their product.

"Deindustrialisation is a real possibility if the export tax is done away with and the PPS overhauled," he said.

"Increased production costs are all but guaranteed because of greater competition for scrap, making us less competitive in Africa and other foreign markets."

With more mini-mills – one each in Nigel and Durban – due to come online soon and existing producers continuing to expand their capacity, Saini said the availability of scrap would be even further compromised.

In addition, SA Steel Mills, a mini-mill currently under business rescue and up for sale, will consume

an estimated 300,000 tonnes of scrap annually as soon as production stabilises under the new owners.

Saini, whose company is based in Gqeberha in the Eastern Cape, said the scrap that would be needed by the Meyerton-based plant did not align with the availability of stock in Gauteng.

"IT'S JUST NOT THERE"

As it stood, he explained, the installed production capacity in the secondary-steel manufacturing sector was estimated at 2.5 to 2.8-million tonnes annually, meaning 2.7 to 3.0-million tonnes of ferrous scrap was needed.

Adding the capacity of the two new green-steel producers and planned expansions to the existing ones, this number is estimated to grow to 4.0-million in 2026.

Saini warned that tinkering with the current regulations, which would more than likely trigger a reduction in production, would put thousands of jobs at risk.

The country's 13 mini-mills, which are far and away the top consumers of domestic scrap, currently employ in excess of 5,000 workers.

The PPS requires scrap-metal dealers to sell their wares to local clients at 30 per cent less than international prices (although there are consumers paying more than the regulated rate).

Many nations have and are implementing measures to restrict scrap exports in an effort to retain this critical resource.

Due to the shift towards decar-



bonised production and greener steel, the global demand is projected to rise by almost 50 per cent by 2050, according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Saini, who recently said he believed SA could become Africa's green-steel hub, also pointed out that mini-mills were positioned closer to demand hubs, effectively neutralising the problem of high transportation costs.

"Yet, all this potential will be lost if tax and PPS policies are changed."

He said prioritising the preservation of scrap and ensuring sustainability of green-steel production locally was "imperative".

It would be "unthinkable" for SA to allow exportation of these resources for the benefit of other countries, he said.

"We cannot head in the opposite direction by liberalising the PPS discount. Instead, we should look at imposing an outright ban on the export of ferrous scrap."

This would align with what the rest of the world was doing, he said.

INCREASED DEMAND

The finite supply of ferrous scrap is primarily used in the manufacturing of green steel, which has increasingly been replacing tradi-

tional steel-manufacturing methods worldwide.

Simply put, carbon emissions, affecting the wellbeing of current and future generations, are around four times higher when steel is produced from iron

ore and coal compared to melting scrap.

To stimulate the local green-steel industry and to align with the global trend, government introduced the PPS (September 2013) and export tax (August 2021) on scrap metal.

These measures have led to questions being asked about the long-term viability of the country's solitary primary-steel producer, which, in turn, has led to

pressure being put on the authorities to revisit their policies.

EUROPE

The GMK Centre, a consulting company focused on the European Union's iron and steel markets, predicts worldwide sea-borne trade volumes will decrease as local beneficiation increases, leading to a rise in prices.

Its latest Global Scrap Exports Restrictions report reiterated that "scrap prices will be regulated through trade restrictions" in local markets.

In the EU, for example, enforcement of changes to the Waste Shipment Regulation in May 2027 will lead to a ban on ferrous scrap exports by 27 countries.

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Drive system units simplify auto plant's operations

A MAJOR automotive manufacturer in Gauteng has boosted its operational efficiency, safety and energy savings with the installation of SEW-EURODRIVE's advanced MOVIGEAR mechatronic drive system in its newly expanded buffering zone.

The project saw the delivery of 150 MOVIGEAR units, supplied to drive conveyors in a high-density storage area. According to Willem Strydom, electronics business development manager at SEW-EURODRIVE, the customer's goal was to standardise equipment to simplify stockholding and maintenance, while meeting strict safety and performance requirements. These goals were met using just two

variants of MOVIGEAR, avoiding the need for up to 30 conventional motor variants and significantly reducing inventory complexity.

Each unit integrates a servomotor, gearbox and electronics, offering decentralised functionality with onboard communication and safety features. The system eliminates the need for traditional control panels with all units linked to a compact PLC via hybrid cabling in a daisy-chain configuration - accelerating installation and lowering infrastructure costs.

SEW-EURODRIVE worked closely with the original equipment manufacturer responsible for the conveyor installation, providing design input and on-site support during installation and commissioning. The

reliability of the MOVIGEAR units has already been proven across multiple industries, including food and beverage, and the units at this site have been running reliably since commissioning in January 2025.

A second phase of the project introduced condition monitoring using MOVIGEAR's digital data interface, enabling real-time tracking of performance variables such as vibration and temperature. This data is used to predict maintenance requirements, creating a digital twin of each unit to help prevent unexpected failures and extend equipment life.

With ultra-premium efficiency IE5 SEW electric motors, the MOVIGEAR system also delivers substantial energy savings – esti-



ated at over 38% compared to conventional motors - while offering IP69K protection for demanding environments.

Modular drive systems optimise performance

BMG and German precision engineers, Getriebbau Nord entered a partnership agreement in 1996 to assemble, distribute and support Nord Drivesystems throughout southern Africa.

BMG has made a substantial investment over the years to ensure assembly, stockholdings and technical support for the Nord range are in line with stringent international quality, safety and environmental standards.

"Nord Drivesystems – developed by Getriebbau Nord and assembled locally by BMG – comprise optimum drive configurations, to ensure high-performance of mechanical

speed control for specific applications, in almost every industry," explains Johan (Os) Stoltz, national product specialist, Nord Drive Systems, BMG's electromechanical drives division. "Nord modular drives – designed for reliability, energy-efficiency, low noise levels, extended service life and reduced maintenance – are used in applications where frequently changing speeds are essential and where a specifically-defined sequence of movement is required.

"BMG's IE5+ motor generation from Nord Drivesystems, which com-



bines high efficiency and a compact design, delivers reduced total cost of ownership (TCO). The special design of the IE5+ motor and its operation with a frequency inverter, means the same motor variant can be universally used. Another advantage is that the same motor type can be used independent of the respective mains voltage or local energy-efficiency regulations.

"These energy-efficient permanent magnet synchronous motors offer a high-power density, have considerably lower losses than the current IE4 series and are particularly well-suited for operation in the partial-load range. Compact IE5+ motors, with lightweight aluminium housings, require less installation space.

"This range is initially available in a size for power ranges from 0.35 to 1.1 kW, with a continuous torque from 1.6 to 4.8 Nm and speeds from 0 to 2,100 min. Nord plans to eventually include more sizes and various power ratings to this series."

BMG's corrosion-resistant Nord IE5+ motors, which have been designed for easy cleaning and wash-downs, are ideal for use in hygiene-sensitive applications and in harsh environments. These motors are available with nsd tupH surface treatment, an IP69K protection class and an integrated mechanical brake. An integrated encoder forms part of the standard equipment.

Nord IE5+ synchronous motors can be combined with all Nord gear units and drive electronics as a modular system to enhance LogiDrive systems. Standardised geared motor variants – consisting of an energy-saving synchronous motor, a 2-stage helical bevel gear unit and a NordAC Link frequency inverter – have been specially developed for use in intralogistics,

parcel logistics and airport technology, representing an optimal compromise between energy efficiency and a reduction of variants.

Solutions are customised to suit each customer's specific requirements, by utilising the high-overload capacity of the motors and the system's wide adjustment load range.

According to Nord specialists, all components of the modular plug-and-play drive technology of the LogiDrive system can be individually serviced, which minimises maintenance and repair costs.

BMG's team of technicians, with extensive experience in gearing, offers a technical advisory and support service throughout southern Africa, tailored to meet the precise specifications of contractors, designers and the end-user.

Nord Drivesystems are easy to expand or upgrade, using a minimum of different types and sizes of components. Local assembly at BMG World in Johannesburg enables prompt delivery of drive systems and the quick availability of spare parts.

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INNOMOTICS

Enhancing wastewater treatment

THE R5.2 billion upgrade of the Potsdam Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTW) is well underway as part of the City of Cape Town's efforts to restore the environmental health of the Milnerton Lagoon. Once complete, the facility will more than double its daily treatment capacity – from 47 million to 100 million litres of treated wastewater – supporting the growing demands of the city's expanding population.

WEG was selected to supply critical motor solutions throughout the upgraded plant.

Working in partnership with PCI Africa, a contractor specialising in water and wastewater treatment, WEG delivered a wide range of

high-performance motors installed across primary treatment, dewatering and tertiary reuse systems.

According to WEG, all motors were specified and supplied with enhanced features to meet demanding site conditions. These included dual PT100 temperature sensors per phase, space heaters, auxiliary terminal boxes for accessories, shaft grounding brushes, and corrosion-resistant stainless steel hardware.

The motors also received a C5-rated epoxy coating and colour-coded components for clear visual identification during operation and maintenance.

In the dewatering plant, WEG

supplied motors for sludge mixing, ring main circulation, filtrate handling and waste-activated sludge recycling, ranging from 11 kW to 37 kW. For the primary treatment process, the supply included motors up to 55 kW, powering sludge, press feed and recycle pumps. In the tertiary reuse system, higher-capacity motors – up to 315 kW – drive ultra-filtration pumps that support the reuse of treated water.

WEG's scope extended beyond the PCI Africa contract, with additional motors supplied in partnership with Tri-Com Africa for the MBR Reuse Pump Station. This facility will distribute high-quality treated effluent in the near future.



Rugged stainless steel submersible pump range for durability

KSB Pumps and Valves has launched a rugged stainless steel submersible pump range designed for deep borehole use and other demanding freshwater and saline pumping applications.

The new CoraChrom pumps are a game-changer for African conditions with all wetted components including the diffusers being fabricated from corrosion-resistant high-grade AISI 304 stainless steel or a choice of stainless steel or engineered polymer impellers depending on the environment. This ensures the longest possible operational life even in mineral-rich or aggressive groundwater.

According to KSB Pumps and Valves area manager, Hugo du Plessis, the CoraChrom series is available in 100 mm (4") and 150 mm (6") multistage centrifugal variants and is tailored to cope with the kind of variable borehole conditions and challenging water chemistry commonly encountered in South Africa and across the continent. This includes high iron or salt content, variable water tables and unreliable electricity supply especially in rural areas.

Unlike traditional cast iron or bronze pumps that may degrade or clog over time the new KSB CoraChrom submersible pumps use investment-cast stainless steel for key components such as the suction housing and non-return valve. The range also features integrated intermediate bearings and a counter-thrust ring to support axial loads and extend bearing life and further enhance reliability.

The pump's lightweight modular design allows it to be installed vertically, horizontally or inclined, which makes it adaptable to a variety of borehole and tank installations. What really makes the CoraChrom unique is its wide power compatibility. It can operate on both single and three-phase AC power and is also available in DC solar-ready options, which are proving especially valuable in off-grid or energy-constrained areas."

"Our CoraChrom pumps are capable of delivering flow rates of up to 12 m³/h (200 litres per minute), with maximum heads of 638 m at 50 Hz (2900 rpm) or 780 m at 60 Hz (3500 rpm). Motors are available up to 22 kW, depending on model and application. This is tested and certified in our global manufacturing sites where each pump undergoes rigorous hydraulic testing under ISO 9906 Grade 3B standards verifying its real-world efficiency," says Du Plessis.

KSB says the CoraChrom series is already gaining traction across multiple sectors with successful deployments in:

- Borehole-based irrigation for farms and smallholdings

- Garden and nursery watering systems
- Domestic water supply in rural or peri-urban housing developments
- Dewatering and groundwater management in construction and mining
- Pressure boosting and cooling water systems in commercial and industrial buildings

Du Plessis notes that in drought-prone areas

such as the Northern Cape, Karoo and North West, where boreholes may be drilled to depths exceeding 500 m and access to reliable electricity remaining a challenge, the solar-ready DC models have proven to be game-changers.

"These pumps deliver excellent output per watt-peak (Wp), even in low-light conditions, which makes them ideal for solar applications.

It's part of KSB's commitment to sustainable water access and long-term value for our customers," he says.

As with all KSB products, the CoraChrom range is backed by KSB's extensive South African sales and service network with expert support and technical backup available through its nationwide branches and distributors.

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New multi-port valve block for single-use applications

VALVE specialist Gemü is permanently installed in the plant, expanding its single-use range with the while the M-block (single-use) is replaced after use.

Gemü Multiport Sumondo multi-port valve block. This is available with pneumatic or manual block locking.

Gemü Multiport Sumondo combines several individual single-use diaphragm valves in one multi-port valve block, offering a new solution for applications in pharmaceutical and biotechnological industries. The tried-and-tested Gemü Sumondo diaphragm valve principle ensures hermetic separation between the actuator and the medium by welding the diaphragm to the body. When using the Gemü Multiport Sumondo, the actuator unit (multi-use) remains



The compact M-blocks, which do not require tubes or piping between two seats, have a lower hold-up volume in comparison with single valve solutions. This leads to greater process reliability and efficiency. Due to the compact design, less space is required in the plant. Production in accordance with GMP guidelines also ensures that the media wetted single-use M-blocks meet the highest standards in terms of purity, safety and stability.

PNEUMATIC OR MANUAL

Two block locking options are available, which differ in the way the M-block (disposable) is connected to the actuator unit and offer either pneumatic locking (PSUA) or manual locking using a hand lever (PSUH). Both versions enable simple operation and fast replacement of the disposable between different production cycles.

The milled disposables can be manufactured in various designs, with different connections and sensor integrations for targeted use in the upstream and downstream areas. This means that the M-blocks can be customised and implemented according to customer requirements.

High-head pump available to rent or buy

INTEGRATED Pump Rental (IPR) has strengthened its dewatering solutions portfolio with the addition of the high head Atlas Copco PAC SH dewatering pump. Capable of a 250 m shut-off head, this diesel-driven pump is the ideal choice for demanding dewatering applications in mining, quarrying, construction and industrial environments.

Designed for high performance dewatering, the Atlas Copco PAC SH is a self-priming centrifugal single-stage pump that delivers exceptional reliability in high-pressure high-lift conditions where efficient water transfer is critical. The unit is part of the Atlas Copco range of SH high head dewatering pumps.

The pump boasts a five-vane closed impeller, enhancing efficiency and ensuring superior fluid handling. Its robust design allows it to handle high concentrations of solids and abrasive materials, making it highly effective in challenging site conditions where continuous and consistent dewatering is essential.

The pump is mounted on a galvanised steel base with a two-point lifting system, allowing for easy transport and handling. A protective engine canopy ensures long term durability, even in harsh operating environments. Security and operational efficiency are further enhanced with a manual lockable diesel fuel fill system, preventing unauthorised access while ensuring safe refuelling.

The pump and engine control panel which includes an emergency stop function, provides operators with precise control over performance and safety.



A heavy-duty battery with a secure enclosure guarantees uninterrupted power, while vacuum and pressure gauges enable accurate monitoring of suction and discharge performance.

To maximise pump life and reliability, a pump operating range sign serves as a visual guide to ensure optimal performance while minimising wear and tear.

IPR prioritises safety and ease of use incorporating features such as heat shields, work lights, a lockable battery isolator and a fire extinguisher as standard. The unit can also be configured with rear discharge pipework including an optional geared butterfly valve, allowing for customised application set-ups to meet specific site requirements.

With the Atlas Copco PAC SH's impressive high head capability and 250m shut-off head, IPR continues to expand its offering of high performance dewatering solutions. Available for outright purchase or short, medium and long-term rental, this latest addition provides a cost effective and scalable solution to meet the most demanding dewatering challenges.

Innovative bushings perform in challenge applications

A SUPPLIER of premium products and services to the oil and gas service industry has repeated purchases of Vesconite Hilube bushings for Roper gear pumps, following the bushings' successful in-field performance on the pumps' drive and the driven (idler) gear shafts.

The company initially tested Vesconite Hilube bushings in November 2022. These were introduced as an alternative to the standard bronze bushings typically fitted to Roper gear pumps. Following a promising

performance, the client returned with an order for 10 additional sets in July 2024 and again in March 2025 with a further 12 sets.

"They seem to be holding up better than the bronze bushings they came with," confirms a company spokesperson.

Roper gear pumps, manufactured in the United States, are widely used to pump high-viscosity fluids, such as bitumen, molasses, and resins—all known for their challenging flow characteristics and abrasive properties.

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Government commits to developing an innovation ecosystem in EC

WITH the challenges the Eastern Cape faces of the closure of OEM's, the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), an entity of the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI) reinforced its commitment to fostering a vibrant innovation ecosystem in the Eastern Cape with a successful innovation and industry roundtable, under the theme "innovation from the Eastern Cape to the world" on Friday, 22 August 2025. The event served as a platform to reintroduce TIA's mandate and collaborative approach to local stakeholders, government, academia, industry, innovators, SMMEs and strategic partners.

According to the TIA, the event's significance was heightened by the province's pressing socio-economic challenges. With the Eastern Cape's official unemployment rate standing at over 41%, TIA's presence is a direct response to the need for inclusive economic growth and enterprise development which can lead to job creation.

The roundtable provided a critical opportunity to communicate the government agency's vision and highlight a range of funding and commercialisation opportunities available to startups, Small, Medium, and Micro-sized Enterprises (SMME), and academic researchers, all of which are instrumental in developing new industries and employment opportunities.

In his keynote address, TIA's Acting Chief Executive Officer, Ismail Abdoola, emphasised the Agency's role beyond funding, positioning TIA as a vital connector, enabler and facilitator within the innovation landscape. He highlighted the importance of innovation in addressing local challenges in an inclusive and equitable manner.

"Each province has a role to play in the national innovation agenda based on its industries and unique challenges. This Roundtable engagement with industry, academia and funding institutions is a strategic step to foster partnerships that strengthen an inclusive, resilient and

interconnected innovation ecosystem in the Eastern Cape. This will bring TIA's national impact closer to local innovators and unlock funding, commercialisation and technical support opportunities for local startups, researchers, and SMMEs," said Abdoola.

The discussions resonated with the pressing need for economic reinvention. TIA's GM for strategic partnership, business development and stakeholder relations, Tandokazi Nquma-Moyo, highlighted the provincial challenges, including the closure of business operations due to global restructuring and the general decline in the automotive industry.

She affirmed TIA's role in leveraging local assets to combat these issues. "We have three commercial seaports, including a deepwater port, where the province is upgrading infrastructure to maximise import and export capacity," she noted, adding that TIA is partnering with the local business chamber to work with industry on these challenges. The Nelson Mandela Bay Business

Chamber (NMBBC) stands as one of the most trusted and influential voices for local business and the economy. Its activist, collaborative, and action-oriented approach aligns strongly with TIA's mission to drive innovation, unlock investment, and create sustainable opportunities, according to the government agency.

Kelvin Naidoo, President of the NMBBC echoed these sentiments, explaining that the Chamber has established a local economy reinvention think-tank.

"Looking at the assets the Eastern Cape is endowed with, including the sun, wind and our three ports, a strengthened innovation system would greatly impact the province's economic growth. As the chamber, one of our key strategic priorities is to promote trade and investment by developing initiatives targeted at sustaining and growing small businesses, through national partnerships and linkages. Through a collaboration with TIA, we will be building partnerships that retain

and attract investment and ensure that innovation is a central driver of growth in the province and beyond," said Naidoo.

The day was met with positive feedback from the stakeholders, affirming TIA's role as a lead voice in the Eastern Cape's innovation discourse.

"Our interactions here underscored a clear message that the Eastern Cape has the talent, ideas and industries to drive inclusive innovation. What's needed now is deeper collaboration to turn potential into impact. Our presence today is about strengthening partnerships, unlocking opportunities, and building an inclusive innovation ecosystem.

TIA looks forward to building on this momentum, working collaboratively with all stakeholders to strengthen the innovation ecosystem and transform innovative ideas into sustainable commercial ventures. These will drive tangible socio-economic development aligned with the province's strategies," said Abdoola.

State-of-the-art electrical training centre of excellence launches in the Eastern Cape

EASTCAPE Midlands TVET College (EMC) has, in partnership with the Schneider Electric Foundation and Schneider Electric, established a state-of-the-art electrical laboratory. It now joins the ranks of the French Southern African Schneider Electric Education Centre (F'SASEC) network as a Centre of Excellence.

Situated at EMC's Brickfields Road Campus in Uitenhage, Eastern Cape, the laboratory equips electrical apprentices enrolled in the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) programme with hands-on experience in advanced electrical and electronic systems. Training is conducted on equipment donated by the Schneider Electric Foundation and Schneider Electric.

Speaking at the official opening of the centre, Zanélle Dalglish, global leader: training & education affairs at Schneider Electric said: "As the skills gap continues to widen, there's an urgent need to equip young professionals with future-ready capabilities.

"At Schneider Electric, we're proud to play a role in addressing this challenge by embedding our solutions directly into learning environments. This practical exposure not only enhances technical proficiency but also reinforces our commitment to preparing the next generation of talent for the energy and digital sectors."

Complimenting the newly implemented education benches donated by the Schneider Electric



Foundation, more than 300 students have already been upskilled at EMC through Schneider Electric's circularity equipment donations programme on industry-relevant training panels."

Thareef Bloew, artisan and technician training manager said: "Seeing our students train on Schneider Electric's state-of-the-art equipment which was generously donated is game-changing. These aren't generic training panels; they're the exact systems used in industry today. There's no doubt our new Centre of Excellence gives them unparalleled confidence and competence from day one.

"Furthermore, it aligns with the QCTO electrician qualification, which is fundamentally built around the pillars of Industry 4.0. Think smart grids, IoT integration, advanced automation and energy efficiency – these aren't futuristic concepts here; they're core to our curriculum. Schneider Electric's technology and expertise allow us to deliver this curriculum authentically. Our students aren't just learning about Industry 4.0; they're working with it daily."

INDUSTRY-READY EQUIPMENT

EMC's School of Occupational Training, which delivers apprenticeships and industry-aligned skills programmes, will now offer learners hands-on training with the latest technology in electrical and electronic systems. The centre has been

fitted with advanced training equipment from Schneider Electric that includes:

- Combination motor starter trainers.
- Three-phase Variable Speed Drive (VSD) trainers.
- Programmable Logic Controller (PLC) / Human-Machine Interface (HMI) trainers.

DOMESTIC HOUSEHOLD TRAINERS.

These systems will support practical learning aligned with the registered QCTO electrical apprenticeship qualification, ensuring learners are trained in line with the demands of today's energy sector.

Testimonies from students echo this transformation. Sivikele Ndzwaiba, a third-year apprentice, shared: "What I like about the Schneider Electric panels is that they allow us to explore new technology, particularly industrial automation. You can write your PLC and visualise operations on your HMI, it's an efficient and industrial solution."

Stephan Esterhuizen, also from EMC, added: "The PLC-HMI training panel teaches us how to monitor different variables in a factory setting. It's not just technical know-how; it's insight into the industry of tomorrow."

In addition to equipment donations, the collaboration also includes:

Train-the-Trainer programmes to upskill EMC facilitators.

- Access to Schneider Electric's Energy University – a complementary digital learning platform.
- Technical support and global best practice sharing.
- Peer collaboration with other F'SASEC institutions across Southern Africa.

As a public TVET institution under the Department of Higher Education and Training, EMC serves communities across the Eastern Cape. Many of its students come from disadvantaged backgrounds, with initiatives like this playing a crucial role in breaking barriers and building brighter futures.

Since 2009, the Schneider Electric Foundation has impacted over a million young people globally through meaningful investment and partnerships, contributing to equitable education and workforce development. Training institutions like EMC are part of the Foundation's Energy Technical Training programme and play a fundamental role in nurturing talent for the energy transition, especially within underserved communities.

Seifsa embarks on a roadshow

INDUSTRY stakeholders will have the opportunity to connect and engage with the Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of Southern Africa (Seifsa) during its national roadshow in November.

The last time Seifsa went on the road was in 2014, and much has changed in the past 11 years, including the Covid-19 pandemic, two Donald Trump administrations in the US and the formation of a government of national unity in South Africa. The roadshow takes place as South Africa prepares for the 2026 local government elections, while businesses continue to face electricity shortages, water challenges, and ever-rising costs locally. In the global arena, tariffs are reshaping trade and conflicts in the Middle East and Europe add to uncertainty.

"This roadshow is about reconnecting. It is about hearing about members' concerns and expectations and sharing how Seifsa is working to ensure the metals and engineering sector has a strong voice at the table," says Seifsa marketing, sales and communication executive Nuraan Alli.

Some of the topics that will be touched on include collective bargaining, South Africa's economic outlook for 2026, the importance of investing in human capital, labour market reform and what lies ahead for Seifsa as it reinvents itself.

Seifsa CEO Lucio Trentini will open each roadshow with a big picture view of the collective bargaining landscape going into 2026, followed by other speakers and a Q&A session. The Gqeberha event will be held on 26 November, at Weir Minerals.



Smart energy management solutions can deliver for energy-heavy businesses

By Richard von Moltke,
general manager at Static Power,
a division of Actom.

OPINION WORLDWIDE, rising energy prices are putting real pressure on businesses, especially those in energy-intensive sectors like mining, manufacturing, and large-scale industrial operations. For these companies, energy is more than a consumable; it is a critical part of daily operations. As such, finding ways to reduce consumption without compromising productivity is essential.

EXPANDING GENERATION?

Expanding electricity generation capacity to meet demand might seem like the only solution, but it's not the first step or only solution. A smarter, more sustainable approach is to focus on how, when, and where energy is used. By shifting to intelligent energy management strategies, businesses can optimise consumption, reduce costs, support sustainability goals, and shield operations from ongoing energy market volatility. As part of any energy security or energy savings initiative, understanding and optimising the existing consumption or load profile should be the first step.

If an energy generation expansion option like adding solar PV is considered, it is imperative to first optimise the existing energy load profile and then base the expansion requirement on the smaller load profile. This approach can save a significant amount in capital expenditure

for any proposed expansion project and in some cases even negate the need for immediate expansion. There are various optimising options to consider, depending on the characteristics and size of the load. Once the existing load profile is optimised, then the next step towards the expansion of energy sources can be considered.

FIT-FOR-PURPOSE COMBINATION

At the core of smarter energy consumption strategies is a combination of battery energy storage systems, solar PV, diesel- or gas-generators, utility supply, and a high-quality energy management system, which optimally controls the various energy sources. By adding battery energy storage to form a micro-grid, it immediately provides the opportunity for other cost-saving energy mechanisms, such as peak-shaving, energy arbitrage and energy security.

During energy arbitrage, battery energy storage systems act as an energy bank, storing electricity when rates are low, often overnight or during off-peak (low tariff) hours, or from excess solar PV energy and then supplying that energy during peak demand (high tariff) times when electricity is more expensive. This means companies can reduce their total demand from the grid during high tariff times, which directly cuts down on higher-cost energy charges. These energy demands are measured and billed in both the standard kWh usage as well



as the kVA demand costs, which should both always be considered. By understanding the kVA peak demand of the load profile and using the battery energy storage system to reduce and limit this peak demand from the utility, can produce significant demand savings as this forms a significant part of any industrial energy user's energy bill.

Lately, due to the increased utility charges for energy, and the reduction in cost for battery energy storage systems, the business case for adding battery energy storage to large power users (LPU's) has improved significantly, even without the use of solar PV.

However, storing and discharging energy is not as simple as it sounds. It requires carefully selected equipment with a sophisticated energy- and battery management system that monitors the health of the battery system down to battery and cell levels, predicts its energy needs, and ensures that the system

operates efficiently. Such a system continuously analyses the energy demand and supply, to and from the various integrated energy sources and loads.

No two businesses are the same, especially in sectors like mining and manufacturing where operations can be unpredictable. Machines must be turned on and off, shifts change, and production schedules vary, all causing fluctuations in power demand and a one-size-fits-all energy solution will not cut it here.

By deeply analysing load profiles and operational requirements, energy solution providers can design customised systems that respond to the unique energy consumption patterns for each site, having identified specific periods when energy usage spikes and targeting those for load shifting or battery use.

It is however important to understand - not all equipment is equal and not all equipment will work in every application.

Equipment selection is vital, and this includes both the primary power equipment as well as the control equipment. It is also important to ensure that the selected equipment will be supported for the next 10 or more years.

LOOKING AHEAD

It's truly exciting how these systems will mature soon. Some larger micro-grid installations are now incorporating weather stations directly into their energy management systems, allowing them to monitor local weather conditions in real time and soon, even use forecasts to inform decisions about energy use and storage requirements.

When a sunny day is predicted, a system with solar power integration would opt to store less battery energy overnight, knowing it can rely on solar generation during the day. Conversely, if a cloudy day or storm is expected, the system can conserve battery charge to ensure backup power is available when needed.

Taking this a step further, Artificial Intelligence (AI) will enable these energy management systems to make even smarter predictions and decisions autonomously. AI will analyse complex data patterns, including weather forecasts, historical consumption profiles, and tariff changes, to optimise when to store or use battery energy and even which loads to switch off temporarily to prevent running out of backup power.

Consultancy makes key EC appointments

LEADING engineering consultancy Zutari has appointed new office managers in Gqeberha and East London. In Gqeberha, Andisiwe Rweqane, a professional civil engineer (Pr. Eng.) with 13 years' experience across Africa, takes on the role of office manager.

According to Zutari, Rweqane has managed major water, dam, and hydropower projects, bringing a wealth of expertise in project planning, contract management, and strategic leadership. She has successfully led multidisciplinary teams of over 100 professionals and has been recognised with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) Champion Award in 2022 for her commitment to empowerment and mentorship.

Her career spans senior positions at leading engineering consultancies where she managed multi-million-dollar infrastructure projects in South Africa, Lesotho, Ghana, Zambia, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Rweqane holds an MBA from the University of the Free State and a BSc in Civil Engineering from



Andisiwe Rweqane (left) and Gcina Deliwe (right)

the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

"Andisiwe's leadership, technical expertise, and dedication to mentorship exemplify the values we hold at Zutari. Her appointment strengthens our ability to deliver innovative, community-driven infrastructure solutions in the Eastern Cape and beyond," comments group CEO Teddy Daka.

In East London, the company has appointed Gcina Deliwe as office manager. According to Zutari, Deliwe brings over 22 years of experience in the infrastructure sector, with deep expertise in project and programme management, infrastructure oversight, and quantity surveying.

A registered professional quantity surveyor (PrQS) and member

of the Association of South African Quantity Surveyors (ASAQS), she has held senior roles including senior manager: infrastructure management services at the Eastern Cape Development Corporation (ECDC) and infrastructure oversight specialist at the Eastern Cape Provincial Treasury.

"At Zutari, we are committed to 'Engineering Impact' through strong leadership, client-centric innovation, and a deep understanding of the needs of regional and local communities. Gcina's wealth of experience and proven leadership will play a pivotal role in strengthening our impact in the Eastern Cape," comments group CEO Teddy Daka.






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Report highlights regional procurement challenges

RS South Africa, a trading brand of RS Group plc, a global provider of product and service solutions, has highlighted the growing pressures faced by procurement professionals responsible for maintenance, repair and operations (MRO) supplies across the country's vital economic sectors. This follows the release of the 2025 Indirect Procurement Report: Tackling the Cost of Business, produced in association with the Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply (CIPS).

The report, now in its eighth year, provides insights into the priorities and challenges of procurement professionals working in manufacturing, energy, public services, and facilities management. Findings reveal that inflationary pressures, supply chain risks, and skills shortages continue to dominate the agenda, while environmental, social and governance (ESG) considerations are rapidly becoming a business imperative.

Key concerns for MRO buyers include ensuring cost savings, maintaining ageing assets, contract compliance with preferred suppliers, and managing multiple stakeholder

expectations across dispersed sites. In South Africa, where industries such as mining, energy, and manufacturing rely heavily on operational uptime, the resilience of supply chains and the ability to secure trusted, high-quality components are critical.

Commenting on the report's relevance for the local market, Erick Wessels (*pictured*), sales director at RS South Africa, says: "Procurement professionals in the sub-Saharan African region are operating in an environment shaped not only by global inflation and supply-chain pressures, but also by unique local challenges such as energy instability, infrastructure constraints, and the need to maintain older assets well beyond their original life cycles."

Wessels adds: "At the same time, procurement leaders are being asked to deliver on ambitious sustainability goals while ensuring uninterrupted operations in sectors that underpin our economy. This makes strong supplier partnerships, risk mitigation strate-



gies, and the adoption of best-practice procurement models more important than ever."

The report also shows a sharp increase in initiatives around sustainable and ethical procurement, with nearly two-thirds of respondents globally identifying ESG as central to corporate strategy. Yet, cost pressures remain a barrier, with more than a third of professionals reluctant to pay a premium for sustainable

products.

"For African organisations, the balancing act between cost control and sustainability is particularly complex. Working with trusted distributors who provide not just products, but also technical expertise, supplier vetting, and inventory management solutions, will be essential in building both resilience and efficiency into procurement strategies," concludes Wessels.

The full 2025 Indirect Procurement report is available online.

Pallet trucks and stackers: The overlooked workhorses of warehousing

CRITERION Equipment specialists highlight the crucial role of pallet handling machines used to enhance forklift trucks in logistics.

"While forklifts tend to draw the most attention in warehousing and logistics, smaller pallet handling equipment is often the backbone of daily operations, providing cost-effective, reliable performance where space and budgets are constrained," explains Brenton Kemp, managing director of Criterion Equipment, exclusive distributors of TCM forklift trucks in southern Africa. "Although forklifts play a crucial role in materials handling and logistics, pallet trucks and stackers provide the flexibility and precision needed in everyday warehousing tasks."

"Our team works closely with customers in all sectors to support compliance and operational efficiency by matching the correct machine for the specific task. Choosing the right machine for load weight, lift height, aisle width and hygiene requirements improves productivity and reduces downtime, while ensuring compliance with safety standards."

"An example of how pallet handling machines enhance the efficiencies of forklift trucks can be seen at one of our customers' distribution centres. At this mid-sized distribution facility – which handles both bulk goods and smaller packaged items – forklifts are used for loading bays and heavy lifting. Electric pallet trucks move goods between staging areas, while high-lift pallet trucks support packing stations by raising loads to waist height. Pedestrian stackers in the facility replenish stock quickly in narrow aisles, without disrupting larger equipment. The efficient combination of equipment improves throughput and creates safer working conditions,



without the need for additional forklifts."

Manual hand pallet trucks remain the most common tool for short-distance horizontal movement of palletised goods. These robust machines, typically rated for loads between 2,000 kg and 2,500 kg, are valued for simplicity, durability and low operating costs. In facilities with frequent load movement, electric pallet trucks deliver higher productivity by reducing manual effort. Compact models can handle up to 3,000 kg and are particularly effective in large warehouses or distribution centres where operators travel long distances.

Pallet stackers add vertical lifting capability, enabling operators to stack goods to heights of 1.6 m to 5.5 m, depending on the model. Manual stackers suit lighter loads up to 1,000 kg, while semi-electric stackers combine powered lifting with manual travel, for a balance of affordability and efficiency. Fully electric stackers, designed for intensive use, handle up to 2,000 kg and are well-suited to medium-lift racking applications, where speed and operator comfort are priorities.

High-lift pallet trucks are frequently over-

looked despite their importance in improving safety and ergonomics. These machines, with lift heights up to 800 mm, allow pallets to be raised to a convenient working level, reducing bending and strain during picking, packing and assembly. Pedestrian stackers, designed for operation in aisles as narrow as 2.5 m, provide the manoeuvrability required for restocking, order picking and feeding production lines where space is limited.

Specialised pallet trucks address niche applications. Low-profile designs handle pallets with reduced ground

clearance, while wide-fork models are used for oversized loads. In industries requiring strict hygiene control, like food processing and cold storage, Stainless Steel pallet trucks provide corrosion resistance and can be cleaned easily to meet stringent sanitary standards.

Criterion Equipment supplies and supports a wide range of TCM pallet trucks and pallet stackers designed for efficient handling, lifting and storage of goods in warehousing and logistics.

The company's comprehensive range of TCM equipment comprises all models of forklift trucks, covering most forklift classes. These include Internal Combustion (IC) counter-balance trucks, electric counter-balance trucks, reach trucks, powered pallet trucks and rough terrain forklifts. Mast configurations vary from standard two-stage 3 m masts to high-reach three-stage masts.

The Criterion Equipment team offers technical advisory, spare parts, repair and maintenance services throughout southern Africa, to ensure optimum performance from every machine.

2025 Features

Nov/Dec 2025

Ad Booking / Editorial Deadline:
7 November

- Consulting Engineers & Project Management
- Education & Skills Development
- Electrical & Electronics
- Maritime & Ports
- Recycling & Waste Management
- Security

Jan/Feb 2026

Ad Booking / Editorial Deadline:
10 January

- Automation & Robotics
- Engineering Supplies
- Facilities Management
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- Industrial Property & Development
- Renewable Energy

May/Jun 2026

Ad Booking / Editorial Deadline:
9 May

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- Packaging
- Supply Chain, Distribution & Warehousing
- Technology

Jul/Aug 2026

Ad Booking / Editorial Deadline:
11 July

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- Chemical & Pharmaceuticals
- Materials Handling & Logistics
- Plastics & Rubber
- Water & Effluent Management

Sept/Oct 2026

Ad Booking / Editorial Deadline:
29 August

- Green Industries
- Industrial Cleaning
- Machine Tools & Equipment
- Metals, Alloys and Fabrication
- Motors, Drives & Transmissions
- Pumps, Valves, Pipes & Fittings
- SHEQ Management

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Online platform committed to lubricant enabled reliability

WEARCHECK, a leading condition monitoring specialist in Africa, has officially launched a website for Lubrigard, its dedicated lubricant management division.

Built in collaboration with WearCheck, the Lubrigard platform clearly demonstrates the company's commitment to Lubricant Enabled Reliability (LER) – the principle that maintaining lubricants in peak condition promotes optimal asset performance, extended equipment life and reduced operational costs.

Lubrigard division manager, Chris Hattingh (*pictured*), has been with WearCheck for more than 15 years, specialising in LER for the past five. He views the new Lubrigard website as a pivotal growth point in Lubrigard's journey, an extension of his team's offering, and an important source of information about LER processes, which aids customers with decision-making.

With the new website serving as

an efficient business tool, Hattingh is pleased to be able to offer clients clear and simple solutions once key objectives are established, cutting through complexity. Clients now have direct access to Lubrigard's value propositions in one place, with immediate ability to engage and requested tailored, online support, eliminating the wait for proposals.

"What's more," says Hattingh, "visitors to the new website gain insight into Lubrigard's FLAC strategy – a comprehensive focus on Fuels, Lubricants, Air and Coolants. Our holistic approach utilises data mining and targeted analysis to highlight contamination in key systems early, before it impacts performance or causes breakdowns.

BOTTOM OF FORM

"Using advanced sensory technologies and oil analysis data, the Lubrigard team provides real-time insights into the health of both



the lubricant and the components it serves. We also offer a range of specialised products tailored to specific applications. Our unique techniques allow us to monitor not only the condition of the oil and fuels, but also the performance of the machinery through improved WearCheck oil analysis data.

"Furthermore, at Lubrigard, we use rotating pressure vessel oxidation test (RPVOT) testing to measure lubricant oxidation resistance – especially crucial for turbine oils – demonstrating the depth of its technical capabilities.

"An added component of Lubrigard

is iGard, an IoT-based system, which integrates sensory technology, historical oil analysis trends and real-time data. The result: a fully integrated view of asset health, early wear warning and proactive maintenance planning.

"Our site also features Lubrigard's range of precision-engineered components and best-practice lubrication tools. These include filtration systems for low-pressure systems; a variety of breathers – disposable, rebuildable, desiccant and spinon types; sampling valves engineered for accurate, reliable oil-sampling in diverse environments, and adaptor kits to streamline lubricant handling – from drum or IBC (intermediate bulk container) transfer to connection with filtration units."

Hattingh adds that Lubrigard emphasises its broader capability in customer training and support – building on WearCheck's reputation for quality training courses and customer-focused reporting plat-

forms. Lubrigard's online courses make training convenient for customers who have dedicated training classrooms on site. Certificates are issued following the successful completion of each Lubrigard course, many of which are accredited through the International Council for Machinery Lubrication (ICML). Courses include machine lubrication technician I, machine lubrication analyst I and II, and machinery inspection & verification of lube programmes. Additional courses cover topics ranging from fundamentals and base oils to contamination control, degradation and turbines.

Hattingh says the website launch marks a key point in Lubrigard's trajectory to reach a wider customer base, with a larger product and service offering. "The website not only consolidates our service portfolio – LER strategy, FLAC framework, iGard platform and robust product suite – bringing transparency and confidence to clients."

Uncertified imports undermine SA's electrical sector

RECENT raids by the South African Police Service's Anti-Counterfeit and Illicit Trade Unit and the National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCS) uncovered thousands of rands worth of non-compliant electrical goods. But this represents only a fraction of the broader threat facing the sector, with a Tax Justice South Africa survey showing 78% of industry leaders are concerned about the surge in these products being sold.

"Non-compliant versions of products designed to safeguard electrical installations are increasingly being sold through established South African e-commerce sites and international platforms," explains Khensani Ndobe, international export sales executive at CBI-electric: low voltage. "These include circuit breakers that fail, earth leakage devices that don't trip when they

should, and safety switches that provide no safety at all."

She cautions that while installers might be tempted to save money by buying from these platforms, the hidden costs can be catastrophic.

"All electrical products connected to mains electricity must meet national safety standards and have a valid Letter of Authority (LOA) from the NRCS, issued to the manufacturer, importer, or distributor. Unfortunately, however, many products sold online bypass this essential compliance requirement, creating installations that aren't protected and putting users at risk of burns, electrical shocks, fires, and even fatalities."

Adding to the concern, many of these non-compliant products don't feature genuine certification marks such as SABS (South African Bureau of Standards), UL

(Underwriters Laboratories), VDE (Verband der Elektrotechnik), and CCC (China Compulsory Certificate). "These marks indicate that a product has undergone rigorous independent safety testing," says Ndobe. "Without genuine certification, there's no assurance of safety or reliability."

HIGH COST

Beyond their safety implications, Ndobe warns that installing non-compliant electrical goods carries serious consequences. "Those who use uncertified components risk costly lawsuits, fines, or even jail time, not to mention the potential loss of their professional reputation."

She adds that these products also threaten South Africa's local manufacturing industry, draining revenue from legitimate companies, eroding

consumer trust, and forcing reputable businesses to reduce operations or cut jobs.

GLOBAL PROBLEM

"This issue isn't unique to South Africa," notes Ndobe. "The global counterfeit electrical goods market is estimated at \$250 billion (R4 500 billion) annually, with online commerce creating channels that deliver unsafe products to end-users without proper safety checks."

A UK investigation found that all plug-in devices tested from popular online marketplaces failed basic safety standards. The tested devices not only failed to perform as advertised but also presented serious safety hazards, including poor soldering, excessive lead levels, and general non-compliance with safety regulations.

"These products pose direct risks of fire and electrocution – the very dangers now entering South African homes and businesses through similar channels," cautions Ndobe.

"Online platforms often remove dangerous products once identified and reported," she says. "Unfortunately, this means that by the time listings are removed, these items have already reached unsuspecting users."

To protect themselves and their clients, Ndobe advises installers to source products only from reputable local suppliers who stock certified, standards-compliant, and locally manufactured goods. "By sourcing compliant electrical products, installers avoid legal penalties and most importantly, fulfil their duty of care to the people they serve."

Encouraging a maritime career

TRANSNET National Ports Authority (TNPA) marked a milestone 20 years of investment in maritime education with port open days to spark further maritime interest among Grade 9 and 10 learners across coastal communities.

World Maritime Day is celebrated globally on the last Thursday of September and, in South African ports this year it saw more than 1,000 learners from various township schools receive exposure in maritime education and careers. Aligned to the 2025 theme – Our Ocean, Our Obligation, Our Opportunity – the port open days are designed to steer pupils towards

maritime opportunities by taking up maritime subjects such as Maritime Economics, Nautical Science and Maritime Science. These subjects are considered critical to support global commerce, ocean economy advancement and ensuring a sustainable future for the global shipping industry.

This initiative is premised on TNPA's intention to create shared value by building a pipeline of future mariners through the creation of maritime career paths and the enhancement of marine education.

PARTNERSHIP

TNPA's partnership with Lawhill

Maritime Centre started in 2005. Over the last two decades, this investment has benefitted 140 learners by covering tuition, boarding and extracurricular activities. Fourteen of these beneficiaries are now employed by TNPA as trained tug masters, while others are working in diverse sectors across the country. The 2025 Lawhill intake includes 15 TNPA bursary holders from disadvantaged backgrounds.

A LIFETIME COMMITMENT

According to the state-owned ports authority, it is committed to nurturing young minds and promoting educational excellence and influencing the

introduction of maritime subjects in the curriculum of township high schools. To date, a total of 25 schools across the port cities are benefiting from this drive. The Eastern Cape boasts a total of seven high schools – five in Gqeberha and two in East London. Meanwhile KwaZulu-Natal has 17 schools with five located in Richards Bay and 12 in Durban.

"As a responsible corporate citizen, TNPA is dedicated to making meaningful investments in communities in which we operate, with the primary objective of contributing to



sustainable socio-economic development. One of such sustainable initiatives are exactly these Port Open Days, nurturing young minds today to sustain marine resources in the future," said Phyllis Difeto, acting TNPA chief executive.