

SADC MINING & CONSTRUCTION

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EPIROC WINS LARGE EQUIPMENT ORDER FOR PLATINUM MINE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Epiroc AB, a leading productivity and sustainability partner for the mining and infrastructure industries, has won a large order for underground mining equipment from Sibanye-Stillwater for a platinum mine in South Africa.

Sibanye-Stillwater, one of the world's leading precious metals mining companies, will use the equipment for platinum mining at the Siphumelele shaft at its Rustenburg operations. The order includes low-profile loaders and utility vehicles, designed for use in mining applications with narrow veins. Sibanye-Stillwater will use the equipment as part of its ongoing project to mechanize the operation at the Siphumelele shaft, boosting safety and productivity.

"We are proud to support the Siphumelele operation as it starts to use mechanized equipment," says Helena Hedblom, Epiroc's President and CEO. "It will strengthen Sibanye-Stillwater's continuous efforts to be as safe and productive as possible."

Richard Cox, Chief Operating Officer, Southern Africa operations at Sibanye-Stillwater, says: "The investment in Siphumelele is an important example of our strategic focus on extending mine life and

unlocking additional value from our existing ore reserves. Epiroc's low-profile fleet is well suited to the mining conditions at Siphumelele and will support the safe and efficient execution of this strategically important project."

The ordered equipment includes the LHD 5.5 LP low-profile loader, UV42 utility vehicle, as well as a large range of UV42 cassettes. Derived from Epiroc's acquisition of AARD Mining Equipment in 2023, the low-profile underground equipment expands Epiroc's presence in critical support and service applications, further strengthening the Group's position in underground mining. The utility vehicles are designed to support general operations, maintenance, and logistics below the surface. The cassettes are interchangeable work decks that mount onto the utility vehicles and thus strengthen the utilization of the UV42 vehicles. The cassettes fulfill a variety of transportation functions such as for personnel, tools, explosives and more.



THE REAL TEST OF MINING PARTNERSHIPS IS TURNING AMBITION INTO ECONOMIC VALUE

Leading industry platform Mining Indaba 2027 examines the practical barriers shaping investment, local value creation and industrial development across African mining.

The mining industry is facing a fundamental question: Can governments, investors and mining companies turn ambitious plans into projects that are financed, built and able to deliver lasting economic value? That question runs through the agenda of the forthcoming Mining Indaba 2027, where industry leaders will examine the forces shaping the future of mining, from capital and policy to infrastructure, technology, local value creation and the supply chains that connect mines to wider economies.

Under the theme “Stronger Together: Partnerships in Practice”, Mining Indaba focuses on what happens when partnerships move from discussion to action.

The right partnerships

Laura Nicholson, Industry Director at Mining Indaba, says closing the gap between ambition and delivery will require the different parts of the mining value chain moving closer together.

“Investors and mining companies are watching returns and project timelines,” says Nicholson. “Governments are looking at how to attract investment while securing greater economic value from their mineral resources. Downstream industrial buyers need supply, price, quality and security. All three need to move closer together. Partnership is not about bringing more people into the room. It is about getting the right people to solve the right problems, connecting different parts of the value chain and making something happen.”

But these priorities do not always move at the same speed.

One of the biggest tensions facing the industry is the speed at which decisions need to be made. Mining projects can take decades to develop, investors are under pressure to deliver returns within much shorter cycles, while governments are balancing long-term development with political realities. Mining Indaba 2027 will examine how these competing timelines can work together without sacrificing long-term value.

The local upside

The debate around local value creation is equally important. Ntokozi Nzimande, DDG: Mining, Minerals & Petroleum Policy Development at the Department of Mineral Resources and Petroleum, indicates that greater value will not come from policy ambition alone. It depends on creating the conditions for local businesses and industries to grow.

“Local value creation succeeds when policy, infrastructure and private capital move in lock step,” says Nzimande.

That means clearer policy, stronger local suppliers, reliable energy and logistics, skills development and access to regional markets. It also means building local capacity in a way that allows businesses to compete on quality, scale and price.

The challenge extends into industries that sit downstream of mining. Victoria Backhaus-Jerling, Chief Executive Officer of the African Association of Automotive Manufacturers (AAAM) highlights the scale required to build competitive African manufacturing industries.

“No African country can fully realise the continent's automotive potential in isolation,” says Backhaus-Jerling.

“There is a massive upside to be unlocked. African countries import billions in vehicles and components a year, but only a small proportion of that is imported from other African countries.”

For mining, the message is equally relevant. Processing, manufacturing and downstream industrial industries cannot be built through isolated projects. They require markets, infrastructure, skills, investment and trade links that connect across borders.

Government partnerships

The relationship between governments and investors is also changing. Jito Kayumba, Special Assistant to the President of Zambia for Finance and Investment, points to the need to build domestic capacity alongside investment.

“A genuine partnership means governments and investors working collaboratively to build domestic capacity over time,” he says.

Mining Indaba 2027 Commodity Focus sessions will highlight the plans by Zambia, which already produces 4% of the world's copper, to boost copper production from 800 000Mt to 3 million Mt per year by 2032.

It's an ambition only achievable through partnerships, as governments seek greater local participation and economic value from mining investment, while investors need predictable policy, commercial viability and confidence that projects can deliver returns.

These pressures are reflected across the Mining Indaba 2027 agenda. Discussions at the event will examine whether export restrictions can create competitive domestic industries, how mineral corridors can serve both regional and global markets, and what infrastructure is needed to support industrial value chains.

Other sessions will look at what is required to turn a critical-mineral endowment into a globally competitive industry, how technology can move beyond pilot projects, what is driving copper investment and how the industry should think about mine closures.

An ecosystem of success

The common thread is clear: Ambition alone does not build mines, processing facilities, supply chains or industries. The conditions around them have to work. Capital needs infrastructure. Local content needs capable suppliers. Processing needs reliable and affordable power. Investment needs policy certainty. Technology needs to move from pilot projects into operations.

That is where partnerships face their real test.

Mining Indaba 2027 will bring investors, mining companies, governments, downstream industrial buyers and industry stakeholders together around the decisions that will determine what gets financed, built and delivered.

The conversation is moving from what mining could achieve to what needs to change to make those outcomes possible. The event asserts that the real measure of partnership is not agreement. It is what gets delivered. The Chamber of Mines of Namibia and the event's official channels.

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DAR ES SALAAM CUTS VESSEL TIMES AS TANZANIA EXPANDS ITS ROLE IN AFRICAN TRADE

Dar es Salaam Port is handling ships faster while processing record cargo volumes, strengthening Tanzania's role as an Indian Ocean gateway for trade extending into Central, Eastern and Southern Africa.

The port ranked 255th globally in the World Bank's 2025 Container Port Performance Index, or CPPI, with a score of -7.75. Its standardised score stood at -176 in 2021, marking a substantial improvement in the time container vessels spend waiting and being handled during port calls.

CPPI measures how efficiently container ships move through ports, taking account of vessel size and the amount of cargo handled. It does not measure the full cost of moving goods through customs, roads, railways or borders, but provides a comparable measure of performance at the maritime gateway.

More recent operating figures point in the same direction. DP World reported in July 2026 that discharge time for comparable cargo at its Dar es Salaam operation had fallen by more than 90%, from over 300 hours to less than 28 hours since operations began in April 2024.

The improvement is taking place as considerably more cargo moves through the port. Tanzania Ports Authority said Dar es Salaam handled a record 33.7 million tonnes in the 2025/26 financial year, compared with 27.7 million tonnes a year earlier and 23.7 million tonnes in 2023/24.

That growth increasingly reflects Dar es Salaam's regional role rather than Tanzania's domestic market alone.

The Democratic Republic of Congo accounted for 5.995 million tonnes of cargo through the port in 2024/25, representing 47% of transit traffic handled for neighbouring countries. Zambia followed with 3.51 million tonnes, while Rwanda accounted for 1.72 million tonnes, Malawi 675,200 tonnes and Burundi 425,774 tonnes.

Those figures place Dar es Salaam at the maritime end of supply chains stretching from the Indian Ocean to the Great Lakes and the Central African Copperbelt. Copper, cobalt, agricultural commodities, machinery, fuel and manufactured goods move through corridors linking the port with some of Africa's most important production and consumer markets.

The physical port has also changed. Work under the Dar es Salaam Maritime Gateway Project reconstructed and deepened berths, widened and deepened the entrance channel and expanded the turning basin, allowing larger vessels greater access to the harbour.

Private terminal investment has accompanied those public works. DP World and Tanzania East Africa Gateway Terminal Limited have invested in cargo-handling equipment, yards, information systems and other infrastructure intended to increase the amount of freight that can be processed through the port.

The operational gains are now being tested by the pace of growth.

TPA said during a recent marketing mission in Lubumbashi that cargo from the DRC increased 43%, from 4.1 million tonnes in 2023/24 to 5.9 million tonnes in 2024/25. The authority also said average handling time for container vessels had fallen to about three days.

The expansion has implications beyond the port itself. Landlocked African economies ultimately measure a trade corridor by the time and cost required to move cargo from the coast to factories, mines, farms and consumer markets hundreds or thousands of kilometres inland.

Tanzania is therefore investing beyond the waterfront, including in railways, dry ports and freight facilities designed to move rising cargo volumes away from Dar es Salaam and towards neighbouring markets.

The pressure will increasingly fall on those inland connections. Faster vessel turnaround can increase port capacity and improve shipping reliability, but gains at the quay can be reduced if cargo encounters delays on railways, roads or border crossings.

That makes Dar es Salaam's latest performance part of a wider African infrastructure question. As countries invest in competing routes to the Indian and Atlantic oceans, the ports gaining regional cargo will be those able to connect improvements at sea with reliable movement inland.

Dar es Salaam's recent numbers show progress on the maritime part of that equation. The next test is whether Tanzania can maintain shorter vessel times while carrying record volumes deeper into a regional market that increasingly extends from the Indian Ocean to the Copperbelt and the Great Lakes.

PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA TO INAUGURATE VEDANTA'S GAMSBERG PHASE II EXPANSION, ONE OF SOUTH AFRICA'S BIGGEST MINING INVESTMENTS IN A DECADE

Zinc output to reach about 500 000 tonnes a year, positioning Northern Cape mine among the world's largest producers.

President Cyril Ramaphosa will on Friday, 16 October 2026, officially inaugurate Vedanta Zinc International's (VZI) Gamsberg Phase II Expansion in the Khâi-Ma Local Municipality, in the Namakwa District of the Northern Cape.

Held under the theme "Partnerships for Progress", the ceremony marks a significant milestone in VZI's long-term commitment to South Africa. It will also spotlight the role that collaboration between government, business, employees and communities plays in driving inclusive growth and regional development.

The Phase II expansion ranks among the largest mining investments in South Africa in the past decade. It lifts Gamsberg's annual zinc-in-concentrate capacity to approximately 500 000 tonnes, a scale that positions the operation to become one of the world's largest zinc producers.

The expansion is also expected to sustain between 800 and 1 000 jobs during operations, with recruitment drawn predominantly from the Northern Cape. This reinforces VZI's contribution to local employment, skills development and economic activity in a region where mining remains a cornerstone of the economy.



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RELIABLE INFRASTRUCTURE IS THE FOUNDATION OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN MINING

As mines pursue greater energy efficiency and increasingly integrate renewable and hybrid power sources, robust, fit-for-purpose electrical infrastructure is becoming critical to maintaining reliable and adaptable operations.



Mining's energy-efficiency conversation is increasingly moving beyond simply reducing consumption. For mines operating in demanding environments, how power is distributed, protected and managed can be just as important as how much power is consumed.

For Power Process Systems (PPS), this places electrical infrastructure at the heart of the transition towards more efficient, flexible and resilient mining operations. While the company has historically been rooted in public utilities and municipal electrical reticulation, the demanding requirements of mining have driven the development of increasingly specialised engineering and manufacturing capabilities.

"Mining environments leave very little room for compromise when it comes to electrical infrastructure. Equipment needs to be specified and manufactured for the environment in which it will operate, while also supporting the mine's requirements for safety, reliability, flexibility and uptime," comments Nhlanhla Zondo, Director at PPS.

Designing for demanding environments

Mining places exceptional demands on electrical equipment. Dust, moisture, corrosion, physical impact, mobility and difficult access can all affect the performance and longevity of electrical infrastructure. PPS addresses these requirements through a range of locally manufactured electrical solutions, including its NEMA enclosure range, industrial distribution boards, marshalling kiosks and specialised medium-voltage equipment.

The NEMA enclosure range is manufactured from molybdenum-alloyed 316 or high-grade 304 stainless steel. Available with ratings extending up to IP66/67 to survive high-pressure water washdowns and temporary submersion, it provides protection for critical control infrastructure against dust, moisture and severe IK10-rated physical impact. Industrial distribution boards are designed for heavy industrial power loads, with both free-standing and standard-sized low-voltage configurations available.

Furthermore, to survive the intense solar radiation and heat in the SADC region, these units can be configured with advanced thermal management systems to protect internal electronics without compromising environmental seals.

The importance of this approach extends beyond equipment protection.

In a mining environment, poorly specified or inadequately protected electrical infrastructure can contribute to failures, maintenance requirements and operational downtime, all of which have consequences for the efficiency of the operation.



"Energy efficiency cannot be considered in isolation from operational efficiency. A solution that is correctly engineered for its environment can help support reliable operation and reduce the risks associated with inappropriate equipment specification," highlights Zondo.

Modularity supports a changing energy landscape

One of the most significant developments in mining is the growing need for electrical infrastructure that can adapt as the mine's energy requirements change.

PPS's experience with containerised modular substations reflects this requirement.

High-amperage configurations, including 4 000 A layouts, can be incorporated into containerised boards designed for rapid deployment and future scalability.

This modular approach is particularly relevant as mining operations increasingly consider different combinations of conventional and renewable power sources.

For mines integrating solar, wind generation or battery energy storage systems (BESS), electrical infrastructure must accommodate changing configurations while maintaining reliable distribution and control.

These hybrid configurations introduce complex power quality issues; therefore, PPS infrastructure is engineered to house active harmonic filters and surge protection systems to ensure grid stability.

This creates an opportunity for manufacturers to move beyond supplying individual components towards providing engineered infrastructure that can form part of a broader energy system.

PPS identifies green and hybrid mining footprints as an important area for future growth, with the company's enclosure and distribution capabilities potentially supporting on-site solar, wind and battery energy-storage installations.

Taking medium voltage into the field

The ability to provide flexible power infrastructure becomes particularly important where mining operations are mobile or geographically dispersed. A notable example in PPS's portfolio is its custom-built, skid-mounted and portable medium-voltage (MV) drag boxes.

These were developed for coastal titanium mining in Madagascar, mainly because beach mining requires equipment to move dynamically with the mining face, traditional fixed substations typically incur severe relocation downtime. PPS solved this problem by creating highly mobile units that protect operational uptime during transitions.

The units incorporate submersible connections to support continuous, modular power delivery in a dynamic operating environment where high water tables and tidal shifts pose constant risks. The project demonstrates how mining requirements can drive the development of solutions that differ substantially from conventional fixed electrical installations.

It has also encouraged PPS to broaden its focus beyond its traditional low-voltage (LV) capabilities. The company sees greater adoption of customised MV solutions as an important opportunity for its mining business.

"Mining continually challenges manufacturers to think differently about how electrical infrastructure is deployed. The Madagascar project is a good example of how a specific operational requirement can lead to a solution that is robust, mobile and adaptable," notes Zondo.

Protecting infrastructure and improving resilience

Energy efficiency is also linked to the resilience of the infrastructure through which power is distributed. PPS has developed anti-vandal technologies such as its AV-CAB anti-vandal copper-aluminium busbar,



designed to protect mining substations against infrastructure theft without compromising performance.

By blending these metals, the technology drastically reduces the scrap resale value to deter copper-based conductor theft, a pervasive issue across South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe, while matching pure copper's electrical and thermal performance.

For mines operating in remote locations, protecting electrical infrastructure can be particularly important. Equipment losses and unplanned outages can introduce additional costs and disrupt production, making infrastructure security an operational consideration rather than simply a physical-security issue.

From electrical equipment to integrated solutions

The next stage in mining's energy evolution is likely to require closer integration between electrical infrastructure, automation and digital systems. PPS sees an opportunity to work more closely with automation OEMs to supply fully populated and pre-wired smart control panels that can support remote monitoring and increasingly digital mining operations.

Such integration can help mines build more connected electrical systems in which distribution, control and monitoring work together rather than existing as isolated functions. For PPS, this also represents an opportunity to apply the engineering knowledge gained through mining to increasingly complex applications across its wider product ecosystem.

Building an energy-efficient mining future

The mining industry's energy transition will require more than new sources of generation. It will require infrastructure capable of distributing and controlling that energy safely and reliably in some of the most demanding operating environments in the world.

PPS's strategy is therefore to expand its role within mining from established LV distribution and surface infrastructure into underground operations, MV applications, automation and hybrid energy systems. The company also aims to build on its existing export footprint in Namibia, Botswana and Mozambique to pursue mining infrastructure opportunities across the continent.

For mines, the objective is ultimately practical in that energy infrastructure needs to be robust enough for today's operation while flexible enough to accommodate tomorrow's energy mix.

"Mining is evolving rapidly, and the electrical infrastructure supporting it needs to evolve with it. For PPS, that means designing and manufacturing solutions that are fit for purpose today but can also support the industry's transition towards more flexible, connected and sustainable energy systems," concludes Zondo.



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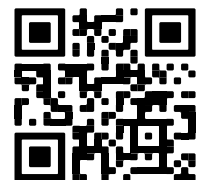
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FIRST QUANTUM MINERALS DRIVES ZAMBIA TO FOREFRONT OF GLOBAL MINING EFFICIENCIES

Zambia has become a model for global mining innovation thanks to the recent patenting of an industry-leading electric trolley-assist system by First Quantum Minerals Ltd that improves efficiency and reduces the carbon footprint of operations.

The pioneering mechanism reduces the consumption of diesel at the company's Kansanshi and Sentinel mines, in Solwezi and Kalumbila respectively, by hooking trucks to overhead powerlines that haul them out of the pit using electricity.

The company's proprietary trolley-assist solution, Quantum Electra-Haul, has now been granted a patent and trademark, by the UK Intellectual Property Office, with further patents pending for additional aspects of the invention.

First Quantum is moving towards the true decarbonisation of its mining fleet through the widespread adoption of Quantum Electra-Haul. With over 14 years of experience in designing, refining and operating trolley-assist systems across its sites, First Quantum has established itself as the industry leader in this transformative technology. 2025 was a record year for the company's adoption of trolley-assist with almost half a million kilometres of haulage conducted under trolley across the group's operations.

Gordon White, First Quantum's Director, Mine Operations & Technology, commented:

"The world needs copper to be mined in a responsible manner. Mining is no longer just an extractive industry, and we need to contribute meaningfully to the environment and to the communities around us. Our patented trolley-assist solution, Quantum Electra-Haul, is a key element of this evolution. First Quantum has mastered this technology by working with long-term partners to provide stable platforms with multiple trucks on the overhead line at the same time. In addition, we have worked to design and implement critical hardware such as transformers, E-Houses, and trolley line systems. It's very pleasing for the business to receive this patent and trademark conformation, a strong endorsement of the innovation, precision and creativity that runs throughout First Quantum."

"We designed the Quantum Electra-Haul hardware to be lightweight and mobile, enabling efficient relocation as the mine evolves through various cutbacks. We believe that this technology is pivotal for decarbonising load and haul operations. First Quantum's long-term life-of-mine plans include significant expansion of trolley assist technology. Currently we have over 15km of trolley-assist installed across our three largest sites, with the ambition to increase this to up to 100% of each up-ramp

cycle. This system is operational, practical and represents an economically feasible solution that will reduce emissions in global mining as other companies look to follow our lead."

The implementation of trolley-assist technology at First Quantum's Zambian mines has led to notable greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions. Replacing diesel with renewable energy, this technology saved an estimated 45,000 tonnes of GHG emissions in 2025, which combined with the company's other pit electrification initiatives yielded savings of more than 130,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO₂) equivalent at its Zambian operations.

The company's operations feature multiple trolley lines across different pit areas, with trucks equipped with pantographs that connect to overhead powerlines on the ramps out of the pit. When engaged, the trolley-assist system activates the electric wheel motors, switching off the truck's diesel engine. This results in diesel savings of up to 90% on up-ramps when the trucks are fully laden and consuming the most energy. Trolley assist technology also offers significant timesaving, approximately a 2-minute time saving per trolley-assist stretch, reducing truck fleet requirements and improving safety by minimizing equipment interactions. Fewer trucks improve operational efficiency and enhance safety by minimising equipment interactions.

Since 2011, the company has also collaborated closely with original equipment manufacturers, including Liebherr, Hitachi and Komatsu, to develop truck and energy network infrastructure essential for the deployment of this technology.

Quantum Electra-Haul exemplifies First Quantum's commitment to innovation and sustainability, further demonstrated by the trialling of the world's first ever ultra-large full battery dump truck combined with trolley assist technology, at Kansanshi copper and gold mine in Zambia. The Kansanshi mine has been First Quantum's flagship operation since 2005 and is one of the country's largest mines. The trial, in partnership with Hitachi Construction Machinery, commenced in June 2024 and is ongoing. The trial aims to verify the practical performance of all rock haulage operations required of a battery-powered dump truck under actual operating conditions, as well as the verification of dynamic battery charging and discharging cycles. In April 2026, First Quantum and Hitachi hosted the Battery Truck & Electrification Showcase, a technical demonstration of its Full Battery Dump Truck for mining customers, at Kansanshi.



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ENGINEERING SMARTER EXPLOSIVE SUPPLY FOR AFRICAN MINING



BME, an Omnia Holdings company, has engineered modular, containerised emulsion plants that help address the logistical and supply chain challenges faced by remote mines by providing a secure, reliable supply of explosives on site.

Dirk Voogt, Production and Logistics General Manager at BME, said traditional explosive supply models in regions such as West Africa and remote southern Africa face pressure from long distances, fragile logistics chains, fluctuating demand, and strict safety and environmental regulations.

“Our on-site modular emulsion plants provide a secure, continuous and independent supply of high-quality blasting explosives while significantly reducing the need to transport higher-risk Class 1 products over long, hazardous distances,” he said.

Most of the raw materials used in the plants are classified as Class 5.1 oxidisers. “The emulsion only acquires the detonation potential similar to a true Class 1.1 explosive once it is chemically sensitised and pumped into the blast hole,” he explained. “This fundamentally changes the risk profile of the supply chain and removes the need for high-security magazine facilities for finished blasting material on site.” On-site production also reduces the risk of product contamination that can occur during long-distance transport.

Rapid deployment and flexible capacity

Voogt said the plants draw on more than 40 years of engineering development. “Built into standard shipping containers and supplied with all required assembly tools, they can be unpacked and commissioned rapidly even at isolated sites,” he explained.

The self-supporting containerised modules can be installed on compacted hardstands or basic concrete plinths rather than extensive reinforced concrete structures. “Utilities connect through predefined interfaces, so site preparation can run in parallel with plant fabrication,” Voogt noted. “This shortens project timelines and reduces construction risk at remote sites where specialist contractors and quality materials are often scarce.”

Capacities range from 20 tonnes of emulsion in an eight-hour shift to more than 40 tonnes, allowing plants to be matched to a mine's production profile. “Preassembled and factory-tested modules deliver predictable commissioning and a rapid ramp-up to nameplate production capacity,” he said.

“The modular design also allows capacity to be scaled by adding modules as operational demand grows.”

When mine layouts change or new projects start, the plants can be

dismantled, moved on standard flatbed trailers and redeployed at far lower cost and with less disruption than fixed facilities. “Standardised modules ensure consistent maintenance, spares and control systems across the fleet,” he added.

Safety, performance and sustainability

Voogt said that safety and process integrity are engineered in from the start. “Multiple layers of process safety – including redundancy on flow and pump systems, mechanical safeguards including world class pump safety protection including electronic as well as mechanical safety trips, such as bursting discs, and rigorous HAZOP studies – mirror the standards applied at BME's stationary facilities,” he said.

Automated digital process control and historian capability further reduce operator dependence and provide full traceability. “The plants can also produce BME's high-viscosity dual-salt formulations, including INNOVEX 300™ which is designed to perform reliably in dynamic water and variable ground conditions,” he noted.

The plants can process used oil as a fuel agent, supporting circular economies and progress toward mines' ESG targets. “On-site manufacturing shortens transport distances, cuts the carbon footprint of long-haul logistics, and creates opportunities for local sourcing of raw materials and community-linked SME development,” he said. “Structured training and digital learning materials further build local technical skills.”

Operating across Africa

Voogt reported that BME has deployed these systems successfully in some of Africa's most demanding environments, including Mali, Mauritania, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Angola. “In each case, they have operated reliably under extreme temperatures, dust-laden atmospheres, limited infrastructure and constrained specialist support,” he said.

The modular plants integrate with BME's broader blasting ecosystem, namely INNOVEX™ emulsions, AXXIS™ electronic initiation systems, digital tools such as XPLOLOG™ and XPLOCHARGE™, and mine-to-mill optimisation solutions. “This allows customers to align product formulation, blast design and downstream processing for measurable gains in fragmentation, recovery and energy efficiency,” he said.

In an environment where agility, resilience and responsible performance are non-negotiable, the modular plants turn a traditional supply challenge into a lasting competitive advantage. “This gives mines greater control, lower logistical risk and a stronger foundation for long-term productivity,” he concluded.

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MORE THAN A DECADE IN THE MAKING: JOHNATHAN KALULA TAKES OVER AS MANAGING DIRECTOR AT VEGA CONTROLS SA

More than a decade after he first walked through the door as an intern, Johnathan Kalula has been appointed managing director of VEGA Controls South Africa, effective 1 October 2026.

Kalula joined VEGA for in-service training after earning his diploma from the Vaal University of Technology (VUT). Soon afterwards, he was seconded to customer Safripol in Sasolburg, where 18 months in the field shaped his approach to instrumentation.

A turning point came when then managing director, John Groom awarded him a bursary to complete his BTech. Rather than moving into a technical role, Kalula joined VEGA Instruments, the company's African export business, as an external sales engineer. "That opportunity opened doors I never imagined," he says.

Over the next eight and a half years, he travelled to more than 20 African countries, working with customers in mining, water, food and beverage, and oil and gas. "Those experiences taught me as much about people and business as they did about instrumentation. The previous Managing Director, Frikkie Streicher, appointed Kalula as Africa Sales Manager approximately 18 months ago, prior to Kalula being interviewed for the Managing Director position.

For Kalula, this journey reflects what has kept him at VEGA. "Opportunities aren't determined by age or title. If you're willing to take responsibility, learn and deliver results, the company backs you."

Putting people first

Over the next 12 months, Kalula's first priority is the team. "Strong teams build great businesses. When challenges arise, you need to know the people around you have your back," he says. He wants employees to feel empowered, supported and trusted to make decisions.

Customers are equally important. Many have supported VEGA since its days in a Roodepoort residential house and have watched it grow into the Lanseria facility it is today. "I want our customers to know that our commitment to supporting them has never been stronger," he says. Across the continent, Kalula sees further growth potential.

VEGA's local presence and the group's global strength position it to support customers wherever they operate. In South Africa, his focus is on maintaining stability and value amid rising competition.

Turning data into action

VEGA's flagship 80 GHz radar has become an industry benchmark, Kalula says. He also highlights the company's pressure range, which uses ceramic measuring cells developed and manufactured in-house. Kalula is particularly enthusiastic about the new VEGASWING X. "Customers once saw level switches as simple on-or-off devices, but today, more is required from instrumentation," he says. VEGASWING X provides the improved diagnostics, safety, easier commissioning and instrument-health visibility they demand, while helping reduce unplanned downtime.

Autonomous, cloud-connected IoT sensors offer another opportunity. By operating without conventional power or communications infrastructure, they enable continuous monitoring in remote locations while lowering installation costs. "VEGA is no longer simply providing measurements," says Kalula. "We're helping customers turn data into action."

German engineering, African support

Kalula believes an instrument's support is as important as the product itself. "In Africa, business is built on customer relationships. A world-class product can only take you so far; the support behind it defines the value VEGA delivers," he says. VEGA has invested in sales engineers and technical experts across Africa, supported by its Lanseria team.

He plans to strengthen this support through training, faster response times, a greater presence in strategic markets and local talent development. "I'm a product of that philosophy. VEGA gave me opportunities early in my career and trusted me with responsibility. I want future generations of engineers and leaders to have the same opportunities."

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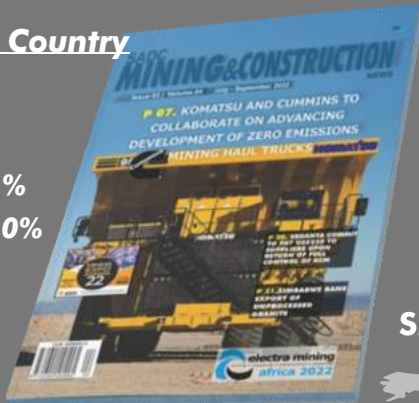
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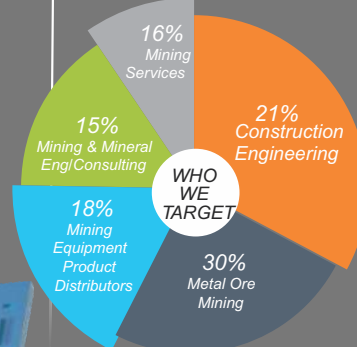


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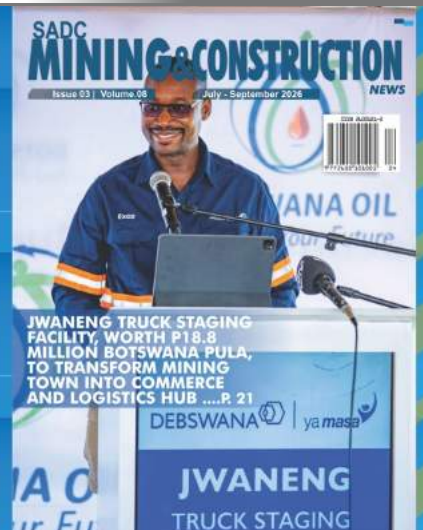
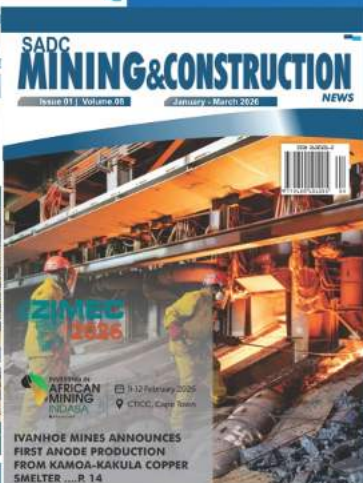
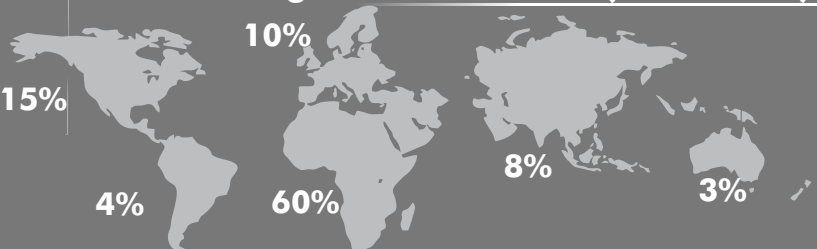
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