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ON THE COVER

Following the introduction of the new generation Volvo excavator range last year, Babcock reports a strong uptake of the EC210 and EC220 models in general construction and plant hire. In a fiercely competitive 21-22 tonne (t) market segment, the two models combine premium quality and competitive pricing, pushing boundaries in performance, efficiency and total cost of ownership. Despite the seemingly improved infrastructure project rollout from government, construction contractors in South Africa are generally navigating a challenging operating environment marked by high inflation, rising material costs and fuel price volatility, resulting in squeezed margins.

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I recently visited Durban for the Institute of Quarrying Southern Africa annual conference and saw the Moses Mabhida Stadium all wrapped in scaffolding and renewal. This prompted me to think about the national question: what became of the infrastructure South Africa built to impress the world during the 2010 FIFA World Cup?

Fifteen years on, the answer is neither triumphant nor tragic. It is uneven, shaped by intent, geography, and the often harsh economics of maintenance. Some of the country's most iconic venues have evolved into living, adaptable assets. Others hover in a grey zone between usefulness and burden, not quite failures but far from the catalytic investments once promised.

A handful of stadiums have endured by refusing to remain what they were in 2010. FNB Stadium has retained its status as a flagship venue. Its continued relevance is no accident. Positioned within Gauteng's dense sporting and commercial ecosystem, it hosts everything from international fixtures to major concerts and national ceremonies. It was never just a stadium; it was always part of a broader urban rhythm.

In the Western Cape, Cape Town Stadium has carved out a more complex identity. Rugby, concerts, and tourism have helped sustain it, even as debates over cost recovery and long-term financial viability persist. It works -but not effortlessly.

And then there is Moses Mabhida itself. Few World Cup venues anywhere have been as imaginatively repurposed. The SkyCar gliding along its arch, the bungee swing, cycling races, and community events have transformed it into more than a monument to football. Its current refurbishment signals something important: not decay, but reinvestment. It reflects a recognition that infrastructure of this scale must evolve continuously or risk irrelevance.

Yet beyond these relative success stories lies a more sobering reality. Stadiums such as Mbombela Stadium and Peter Mokaba Stadium struggle to sustain consistent demand.

Others - including Free State Stadium and Royal Bafokeng Stadium - exist in a kind of intermittent relevance. On match days or during occasional events, they come alive. But in the long stretches between, they feel like relics of a singular national moment.

Ironically, the most enduring legacy of 2010 may lie beyond the stadium gates. Infrastructure that attracted far less global attention has delivered far more consistent value. King Shaka International Airport fundamentally reshaped access to KwaZulu-Natal, enabling long-term growth in tourism and logistics. The Gautrain redefined urban mobility in Gauteng, becoming an integral part of daily commuting patterns. Upgraded road networks across host cities continue to carry the quiet, relentless traffic of economic life.

This is the paradox of South Africa's World Cup legacy. The most visible investments - the grand arenas designed for a global audience - have required the most adaptation to remain relevant. The less glamorous systems - transport, logistics, connectivity - have embedded themselves seamlessly into everyday use.

South Africa's World Cup infrastructure reveals uneven long-term planning: where relevance, funding, and reuse aligned, assets endure; elsewhere, they stagnate. Renewals like Moses Mabhida Stadium signal hope, but consistent, practical reimagining is essential to sustain meaningful legacy.

Wilhelm du Plessis
Editor

EDITOR & PUBLISHER
Wilhelm du Plessis **constr@crown.co.za**

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER
Erna Oosthuizen **ernao@crown.co.za**

LAYOUT & GRAPHIC ARTIST
Katlego Montsho

CIRCULATION
Karen Smith

MANAGING DIRECTOR
Karen Grant

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AVX Engineers completes key STUDY IN THE EASTERN CAPE

Access to reliable roads remains a critical challenge for many rural communities in South Africa, particularly in the Eastern Cape. Addressing this need, multidisciplinary consultancy, AVX Engineers, has completed a detailed geotechnical investigation and road design study to support the upgrade of gravel access routes into safer, more durable surfaced roads linking communities to markets, schools, healthcare facilities and agricultural centres.

Camagu Xintolo, MD of AVX Engineers, explained that the report assessed traffic patterns, pavement conditions, geometric alignments, drainage systems and environmental factors, while integrating a community-focused training and skills development programme.

With support from the South African National Roads Agency, detailed assessments of access roads were conducted to identify potential routes for development. Xintolo highlights that the project employed extensive test pits and Dynamic Cone Penetrometer (DCP) testing across multiple roads to map subgrade strength, layer thicknesses, and failure mechanisms, in line with TMH1 and TRH14.

"This data-driven approach ensured pavement designs were tailored to actual ground conditions, preventing under-design that leads to premature failure or over-design that inflates costs," he said. Xintolo emphasised that intrusive investigations should be prioritised early in the design phase of any road project, especially where more than 50% of the surface exhibits severe defects.

The study further identified that the project site is located within a moist sub-humid climatic region, with a Thornthwaite index value between 0 and 20, which has significant implications for material selection in road construction. "Careful consideration must be given to surfacing materials, particularly regarding their sensitivity to temperature fluctuations. This is especially important when using hot mix asphalt, as the incorrect material selection could lead to performance issues under varying climatic conditions," he stated.

Blocked culverts, overgrown vegetation, informal earth drains and insufficient cross-fall were also identified as primary contributors to continued erosion and rutting. "In our view, protection against these elements must be treated as a structural priority, as it directly contributes to the longevity of the road surface," Xintolo added.

Proposed interventions included culvert repairs and replacements, stone-pitched drains and adherence to velocity guidelines to protect structures and soil stability. This underscores that effective drainage, designed with topographic and hydraulic considerations from the outset, is as critical as the pavement itself in climate-vulnerable regions.

Conservative geometric design enhances safety and longevity

"Even at a modest design speed of 40 km/h, inconsistent horizontal and vertical alignments compromised safety and operational efficiency on this project. As a result, non-compliant curves were realigned, cross-sections optimised with proper side drains and chambers and used elevation profiles to guide improvements," Xintolo highlighted.

Camagu Xintolo, MD of AVX Engineers.

These measures demonstrate that rural roads benefit from geometry aligned to recognised standards, reducing the risks of accident and improving operational performance without requiring high-speed design specifications.

Risks such as land acquisition needs, for widening, environmental sensitivities, statutory compliance, and budget overruns were also identified at an early stage. "Mitigation measures included landowner engagement, environmental screening, occupational health and safety audits, and stakeholder mobilisation through a Project Liaison Committee. Early and inclusive risk planning is essential in rural settings where social and regulatory complexities can significantly impact project timelines," he said.

Upgrading rural gravel roads to surfaced standards delivers benefits that extend well beyond the immediate project footprint. "Durable surfaces reduce long-term maintenance costs thus freeing up public funds for further infrastructure investment, while improved geometry and drainage enhance road safety for all users, including pedestrians and non-motorised transport. Improved connectivity resulting from road upgrades also supports agricultural productivity in the region, and market access and essential services to the community, which will continue to drive local economic growth in underserved communities," Xintolo concluded.

SANS 51992-1-1 IS HERE – ARE YOU READY?

The Concrete Society of Southern Africa (CSSA) national seminar roadshow will equip engineers, consultants, and contractors with the essential knowledge and practical tools to confidently implement the newly adopted ***SANS 51992-1-1: Design of concrete structures - Part 1-1: General rules and rules for buildings*** *during the critical transition period.*

The shift to SANS 51992-1-1 represents a significant evolution in structural concrete design across South Africa. The roadshow will address the practical application of the new code, highlight key differences from the outgoing SANS 10100-1, explore design implications, and examine its broader impact on concrete practice nationwide.

Aligning South African concrete design with global best practices

Published in 2025, SANS 51992-1-1 replaces the long-standing SANS 10100-1 and represents a major advancement in structural concrete design across South Africa. The new standard introduces updated approaches to material properties, structural analysis, ultimate and serviceability limit states, detailing, durability, and shear design – including the Variable Strut Inclination Method.

A dedicated South African National Annex provides locally calibrated parameters tailored to South African materials and conditions.

As such, it brings local practice in line with international best practices. Key advancements include updated approaches to material properties, structural analysis, ultimate and serviceability limit states, detailing, durability, and shear design — notably the Variable Strut Inclination Method. A South African National Annex provides locally calibrated parameters tailored to South African materials and conditions.

The seminar series will be hosted in three major centres:

- Cape Town – Tuesday, 9 June 2026
- Durban – Thursday, 11 June 2026
- Johannesburg – Tuesday, 23 June 2026

Practical insights from academia and industry

Dr Kim Timm, Senior Lecturer in Civil Engineering at Stellenbosch University, will deliver the keynote address. With over 20 years' experience as a practising structural engineer and a strong academic focus on concrete design, structural optimisation, and sustainable infrastructure, Dr Timm brings a unique blend of industry expertise and research insight. She is widely recognised for her commitment to mentorship and knowledge transfer.

She will be joined by a panel of respected local industry professionals who will share valuable technical and practical perspectives.

In addition to the technical presentations, the seminars provide an excellent platform for networking and knowledge exchange among professionals across the concrete and construction value chain.

Your roadmap to confident implementation starts here

The introduction of SANS 51992-1-1 marks a major milestone for the South African concrete industry. Don't miss this opportunity to gain clarity, build confidence, and stay ahead in a rapidly evolving regulatory landscape.

The CSSA cordially invites all industry stakeholders – engineers, contractors, material suppliers, consultants, and academics – to attend and actively participate in this important initiative. ⊙

Gavin Morrow, the newly-elected president of the Master Builders Association (MBA) North.

Construction industry in crisis: MBA NORTH CALLS FOR URGENT ACTION

Following at least four fatal construction site accidents in 20 months, the Master Builders Association (MBA) North has called for urgent measures to improve oversight and accountability in the construction sector.

Gavin Morrow, the newly-elected president of the Master Builders Association (MBA) North, describes the current situation in the local construction industry as a crisis. This follows incidents such as the George building collapse in which 34 people died in May 2024, the death of two people in a structural collapse in Phoenix, KwaZulu-Natal, in March 2025, the collapse of a temple under construction in Verulam, KwaZulu-Natal that left five people dead and several injured in December 2025, and the Ormonde, Gauteng, building collapse in which nine people died and three were injured this month.

These incidents offer further evidence that systemic reform cannot wait, the MBA North says.

Shrinking margins squeeze out quality and controls

Morrow says: "These incidents reflect the state of the industry – it has been in decline for many years. Construction investment has dropped, there are now many more smaller and unregistered players competing in the sector, going in with razor thin margins. When the margins reduce, business owners start looking to cut non-essential operational activities, and among the first things that get cut are quality; and health and safety. Many contractors view these as a nice-to-have – not as essential."

He notes adhering to the industry health and safety protocols can be costly and time consuming, so some contractors are tempted to cut corners.

Quality is another key area where contractors may attempt to cut costs, he says.

"Construction companies should have quality departments and onsite quality controllers to design and monitor onsite method statements and quality checks. As the project runs through its life cycle, there must be checks and balances: Has the concrete cured to the correct strength? Has the rebar been placed as per design and checked? Are the right materials being used?" Morrow says. "Unfortunately, as the margins reduce, business owners start looking at ways to extract more from each project. That is where the quality gets impacted, and this is what could cause incidents like structural collapses."

He adds: "Another factor is that as the industry gets more competitive, contractors start cutting back on project staffing allowables, impacting the calibre of resources they put on the project. Quite often they won't put the correctly skilled, competent, knowledgeable site agent on a project because that level of experience costs more. Instead, they might put more junior people on site and hope the project gets through."

By having skilled, knowledgeable site agents and contractors onsite, the chances of potential design errors or oversight could be picked up, whereas inexperienced staff might not.

"Adding to this, you've got government and regulatory bodies like the NHBRC and CIDB who are supposed to do the inspections and investigations and ensure compliance from a contractor perspective, yet they are not effective," Morrow says.

"You might register a project with the NHBRC and never see an inspector on site, yet their mandate is to check that things are being done properly. Likewise, the Labour

Department is not on-site checking, not just whether undocumented foreign nationals are working on the site, but also that the project is compliant with health and safety regulations and that the labour is being looked after," he says.

Proliferation of non-compliant builders

Jose Correia, MBA North member and Managing Director of Tiber Construction, points to another key issue impacting quality and safety on construction sites: "Few serious incidents occur on projects by registered, compliant contractors and MBA members. Many of these incidents occur where clients have opted for the lowest cost contractors who are not registered with recognised industry bodies," he says.

He notes that formal compliance requires certain systems to be in place, supervision and recurring training that raises costs, making their services more expensive.

"Many companies now operate in an unregulated environment – they are non-compliant, and this increases the risk of accidents resulting in fatalities," Correia says.

"The moment reputable contractors submit documents to the Department of Labour indicating that they intend commencing works, that is the department's ticket to audit you. But the sites that aren't registering aren't inspected. There's no real way to regulate them unless the DOL has got feet on the ground that physically drive around and look for construction sites and implement audits and inspections, which is what I think they are trying to do going forward," he says.

Correia adds: "Another big problem we are currently experiencing is the low margin environment; developers are struggling to make feasibilities work and thus not reaping the rewards of the past. Developments are highly dependent on how quickly you can deliver a product to market. So automatically, you push the timelines, and that creates another problem altogether, because that's where shortcuts are taken and problems happen."

Turning the tide

Morrow says "To address these challenges, Master Builders South Africa is busy putting together a dashboard action plan around what needs to be done now, and this is focused on putting pressure on bodies like the CIDB, NHBRC and the government to start acting. We need to acknowledge that the industry is in crisis and start behaving like it is in crisis."

Morrow believes that the government's planned R1,07 trillion infrastructure investment could be a significant turning point for the sector: "For the industry, it would be huge. It could push up the margins, contractors could be a bit more selective with what they are prepared to price on, and they would be more open to paying for better skilled staff to be on site."

Master Builders South Africa, along with its regions like MBA North, are working to help address the situation.

Morrow says: "As an industry association, we work to keep the pressure on regulatory bodies and the government to try and ensure that they do what they've been mandated to do. Our representatives sit on various boards with a mandate of trying to ensure that regulatory bodies improve their performance."

"MBA North is a voluntary organisation servicing members from the emerging contractor to larger established contractors. For the smaller and emerging contractors, it plays a role in upskilling, training and assisting with legal advice, health and safety and quality information. A large part of our mandate is to raise the flag of health and safety on site. In line with this, we have health and safety competitions every year, where contractors participate to indicate their commitment to health and safety. I think there's a direct correlation between those companies that participate in these types of competitions and the level of health and safety compliance on site. It is very rare to find a tragedy like a fatal structural collapse on site with one of those companies purely because they take health and safety so seriously. And invariably, if they take health and safety seriously, the quality will be there as well."

Gerhard Roets, Health and Safety Manager for MBA North, manages the MBA North health and safety competitions, occupational health and safety training, member site inspections, safety audits and facilitates webinars to discuss industry topics, like structural collapses and how to prevent future occurrences. Roets says, "Sadly, the industry is not learning from past experiences, and the Ormonde tragedy will unfortunately not be the last and final occurrence."

On the MBA North's role in enhancing health and safety and quality on site, he says: "Health and Safety is a key pillar of MBA North's work – we offer webinars, seminars and on-site training to help members continually improve health and safety on site. Our training is highly topical too – for example, we hosted a webinar on the reputational damage in the construction industry of a structural collapse barely a month before the George building collapse. We also work closely with FEM to host training sessions and the popular annual health and safety competition, which attracts up to 75 participating companies every year. We find that members who participate actively in our health and safety programmes are more aware of health, safety and quality concerns on site." ⊙

SA'S CONSTRUCTION RISK HAS CHANGED, AND THE INDUSTRY NEEDS TO CATCH UP

The recent building collapses in South Africa have forced a difficult but necessary shift in how the industry thinks about risk. ***By Morag Evans, CEO of Databuild***

For years, safety was often treated as a site-level responsibility. Something managed through compliance checklists, safety officers, and periodic inspections.
That view is no longer sustainable. Incidents such as the George building collapse and the more recent failures in Johannesburg have exposed deeper structural issues. These are not isolated events but symptoms of a system under strain.

What is becoming clear is that South Africa does not lack regulation. It is struggling with enforcement, accountability, and, in some cases, basic competence across the project lifecycle.

Regulation is tightening, but it is also shifting

The regulatory environment is evolving in response to these failures. The Housing Consumer Protection Act 25 of 2024, which came into effect in 2025, strengthens the National Home Builders Registration Council's role and introduces stricter accountability for homebuilders and developers. At the same time, the Department of Employment and

Labour has published draft Construction Regulations that signal a move toward more defined responsibilities for clients, designers, and contractors, as well as stricter requirements around permits and site management.

These changes are important. But they are only part of the story. The more significant shift is how risk is being allocated and understood.

Risk is moving up the chain

There is growing pressure, both from government and organised labour, to ensure that accountability does not stop at the contractor. Parliamentary statements following recent incidents have called for stronger enforcement and greater accountability across the value chain, including developers and project owners.

This reflects a broader trend. Risk is moving up the chain. Clients can no longer assume that appointing a contractor transfers responsibility. Designers cannot assume that compliance on paper guarantees compliance on site. And contractors cannot rely on fragmented oversight to shield poor decisions.

In practical terms, this means that regulatory risk is no longer separate from commercial risk. It affects insurability, approvals, programme certainty, and ultimately whether a project can proceed.

The real challenge is not regulation, it is execution

Much of the recent commentary has focused on the need for stricter rules. That is understandable. But it risks missing the underlying issue.

South Africa already has a relatively well-developed regulatory framework. The problem is that enforcement is inconsistent, municipal oversight is uneven, and the industry itself faces structural constraints.

There is a well-documented skills gap. Experienced professionals are leaving the sector, while less experienced individuals are being pushed into roles that carry significant technical responsibility. At the same time, project timelines and cost pressures are tightening, increasing the likelihood of shortcuts and poor decision-making.

The result is a breakdown in execution. As highlighted in recent analysis, South Africa's infrastructure challenges are not only about funding or policy. They are also about whether projects are being properly planned, monitored, and delivered.

This is where the risk becomes systemic.

When failure happens, the consequences are wider

A building collapse is not just a construction failure. It is a legal, financial, and reputational event.

Legal processes that follow can be complex and protracted, involving multiple parties across the value chain. Questions of liability extend beyond immediate contractors to include developers, professional teams, and, in some cases, regulatory bodies.

At the same time, the commercial consequences are immediate. Projects are halted. Funding is delayed or withdrawn. Confidence in the sector is eroded. For an industry already under pressure, these are not isolated setbacks. They are compounding risks.

What this means for the industry

If the regulatory environment is tightening and the risk profile is expanding, then the response cannot be limited to compliance. It requires better visibility, earlier engagement, and stronger coordination across the project lifecycle.

This is where I believe the industry needs to shift its focus. At Databuild, we see how projects move from concept to execution. We see where delays occur, where approvals stall, and where activity accelerates. That visibility matters. It allows teams to identify potential risks earlier, engage more effectively with project stakeholders, and make more informed decisions about where and how to participate.

Better information does not eliminate risk. But it does make it easier to manage.

A more disciplined approach to delivery

The reality is that South Africa's construction sector is entering a more demanding phase. In such an environment, success will depend less on navigating individual projects and more on managing the system around them. This means understanding where risk sits, knowing when to engage, and ensuring that decisions are informed by accurate, up-to-date information.

The industry does not need more rules. It needs better execution. And that starts with seeing the full picture. ⊙

When cheap becomes catastrophic: THE REAL RISK OF UNREGISTERED BUILDING CONTRACTORS

South Africa's construction sector continues to experience fatal building failures, including the George and Ormonde collapses in 2024 and 2026. While causes differ, these incidents consistently reflect weak oversight, fragmented accountability, and limited visibility of who is on site.

"Building collapses are often framed as engineering or safety failures, but we repeatedly see a breakdown in labour compliance and site control," says Danie Hattingh, spokesperson for business at the Building Industry Bargaining Council (BIBC). "When workers are not registered, documented, and traceable, the system fails."

According to the International Labour Organisation, up to 38% of South Africa's construction sector, of which the building industry is a significant part, operates outside formal systems, signalling significant non-compliance risk. For the BIBC, the implication is simple: if you don't know who is on your site, you don't know your risk.

Danie Hattingh, spokesperson for business at the Building Industry Bargaining Council (BIBC).

This risk is amplified by layered labour structures involving subcontractors and labour brokers, where multiple 'givers of work' operate without real-time visibility or control over who is on site. "Where systems are not integrated into a unified compliance framework, accountability fragments and traceability weakens," continues Hattingh, enabling non-compliant operators to undercut costs by bypassing wages, benefits, tax and protections.

This distortion reshapes the market, with non-compliant contractors undercutting compliant firms by an estimated 25% - 35%. "Cheap labour is not a competitive advantage. It is a liability that undermines compliant businesses and weakens sector resilience," he says.

In the Western Cape, BIBC non-compliance is often an early warning sign. "To avoid levies, contractors keep workers off the books," says Hattingh. "That triggers a domino effect: no UIF, PAYE, COIDA (Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act) or structured training and safety." The result is lower standards with workers lacking proper induction, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and skills verification, and where health and safety files are often generic rather than site-specific.

A key driver is the shift from master builder models to layered contracting, with reliance on subcontractors and labour brokers. While responsibility is delegated on paper, legal accountability remains unchanged.

"Principal contractors may think risk is shifted through these arrangements, but the law is clear: you can delegate work, not accountability." Under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Construction Regulations, they retain ultimate responsibility, with joint liability under the Labour Relations Act. "When things go wrong, the law looks past contracts. The principal contractor remains accountable."

The financial appeal of non-compliant labour is also short-lived. "A single audit can trigger back-pay, penalties and interest running into hundreds of thousands of rands," Hattingh says. "In fatal cases, unpaid benefit obligations can reach up to R500,000 and more, per deceased worker." When the subcontractor's business collapses as an outcome of a building collapse, for example, liability shifts to the principal contractor, developer, or giver of work.

The inability to account for workers in emergencies is a structural outcome of non-compliance. "Off-book workers don't appear on site registers," says Hattingh. "In a collapse, they become invisible, delaying rescue, complicating investigations, and deepening distress for families."

While the BIBC does not regulate health and safety, its compliance framework enables traceability. Registration ensures workers are identifiable, employment is recorded, and benefits can be activated when needed.

"What is required is an integrated system where labour records, contractor registration, and site access control are aligned, ideally digitally and in real time," he says. "Without that, oversight is fragmented from the start."

In response, enforcement is shifting to multi-agency High Impact Task Teams (HITTs) including the Department of Employment and Labour (DoEL), SARS, Home Affairs, SAPS and the BIBC, enabling coordinated enforcement that allows for immediate prohibition notices, including full site shutdowns for serious non-compliance. At the same time, compliance is being increasingly embedded in financial processes.

Looking ahead to 2026, enforcement is set to intensify, especially in private estates and high-value developments, shifting towards a system-based compliance model with stronger powers and penalties. A key shift is the end of the 'passive client' model, with developers and project owners carrying non-delegable responsibility for labour and safety compliance.

For the BIBC, compliance is not administration, it is protection. It ensures fair pay, benefits, death and injury recourse, and stronger site traceability.

For those appointing contractors, the questions are non-negotiable: is the contractor registered, are workers documented and compliant, and who is actually on site?

Because when cost-cutting replaces compliance, the consequences extend far beyond the construction site.

How underwriting can support SA's efforts against NON-PERFORMING CONTRACTORS

The recent announcement by Minister of Public Works & Infrastructure, Dean Macpherson, about blacklisting 52 construction companies for poor performance and corruption marks a turning point for how South Africa handles public infrastructure projects. This move is about more than just enforcement; it is a clear signal that the era of tolerance for non-performance and substandard work is ending.

While this intervention is both necessary and long overdue, it raises an important question: is blacklisting alone enough to prevent future project failures?

"At Credeq Africa, we understand the importance of strong risk management backing this initiative," says Oren Zukerman, Head of Construction Guarantees. "The government's firm stance sends a strong message: quality and reliability, as opposed to an emphasis on the lowest bid, must be at the core of every project.."

Construction guarantees, provided by licensed financial service providers, play a critical role in safeguarding project delivery. "Moreover, while bank and insurance guarantee wordings are identical and provide equivalent protection to the employer, insurance guarantees go a step further. At Credeq Africa, we provide a second opinion on a contractor's ability to perform through evaluating a contractor's financial strength, track record, operational capacity, character, business practices, and ability to deliver under real-world conditions. This creates an important layer of discipline before a project even begins," he says.

"Importantly, it goes beyond financial metrics alone. It includes a deeper interrogation of how contractors are currently performing, whether they are managing multiple projects effectively, and whether there are early signs of distress or delivery risk that may not be visible through traditional evaluation methods."

At its core, underwriting isn't just about risk management, it's about fostering trust, accountability, and sustainable growth in the construction industry.

"Underwriting introduces an independent, commercially driven assessment of risk. It ensures that only contractors with the appropriate capacity and resilience are supported, particularly on large-scale or high-risk infrastructure projects," Zukerman notes.

JABU SERITHI'S FIRST YEAR LEADING GVK-SIYA ZAMA'S GAUTENG BUSINESS

There are leaders who wait for the right conditions, and those who build them. In her first year as Managing Director of GVK-Siya Zama's Gauteng business, Jabu Serithi has proven that she belongs to the latter.

Stepping into the role in March 2025, Serithi inherited a business that had already come through its most difficult chapter, giving her, as she puts it, something many new leaders don't have: the space to build, rather than rescue. She arrived with a clear agenda: nurture the culture, sharpen commercial discipline, and invest in relationships.

The market, however, had its own agenda. A constrained Gauteng pipeline brought intensified competition, margin pressure, and persistent cash flow challenges, particularly on public sector projects. For Serithi, this became a catalyst. "Constraint breeds innovation," she says. "These challenges pushed us to look beyond mainstream construction for revenue opportunities, and that strategic shift is ultimately a healthier foundation for the future."

The MD seat also brought a shift in perspective that Serithi hadn't fully anticipated. A company of GVK-Siya Zama's size and complexity, she discovered, is truly the sum of all its parts. The support functions working behind the scenes, the teams that close the gaps between the visible, revenue-generating departments and everything that holds the business together, earned a new level of respect. "I don't think one can fully appreciate that until you're accountable for all of it," she reflects.

On the ground, the year delivered a portfolio of projects that speaks directly to what the organisation is capable of, and what Serithi's leadership has helped to unlock.

The completion of Soshanguve Mall is a defining achievement, welcoming 50 000 visitors on its opening day in November 2025 and marking the first time the company delivered a retail development exceeding R1,1-billion in value, a new precedent for the organisation.

Across Johannesburg, the construction business has been shaping the city, from the restoration of 5 Hollard Street, an Art Deco landmark originally completed in 1923, to the ongoing 85 Anderson development for the Deeds Office. This recently drew a visit from Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Dean Macpherson, who emphasised the importance of inner-city rejuvenation, a cause Serithi knows well. Under her leadership, the organisation has helped shape Johannesburg's built environment across multiple landmark projects, with the Transnet partnership in the CBD adding yet another chapter to that story. The picture that emerges is of a business that builds communities as much as it builds structures.

For Serithi, that belief in building with purpose extends beyond the project itself, to the kind of industry she is actively helping to shape. As one of relatively few women leading a major construction business in South Africa, Serithi is deliberate about using that position with purpose. She is candid about the challenges, construction's demands are relentless for everyone, but women continue to carry disproportionate responsibilities outside of work. Her response is to act, and to lead by example from within.

Looking at the industry more broadly, Serithi identifies skills development and an enabling business environment as the structural fault lines from which all other challenges flow. The skills pipeline, she warns, is moving in the wrong direction, experience walking out the door faster than new talent is coming in.

As year two begins, the tone is one of confidence. The groundwork has been laid, the team has been tested and has delivered, and a diversification strategy is opening doors that mainstream construction alone cannot. "The first year was about understanding the business, the market, the people," she reflects. "Year two is about building. And the team that showed up through one of the harder periods this industry has seen gives me real confidence in what we can achieve."

For an industry that has long needed more leaders willing to think boldly, speak honestly, and build with purpose, Jabu Serithi's first year is a powerful reminder of what principled, people-first leadership can achieve, even in the most demanding of conditions. ⊙

THREE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT RISKS SA CAN'T AFFORD TO IGNORE

South Africa's infrastructure pipeline - spanning transport, energy, water and urban development - is essential to economic growth and social resilience. But as projects increase in scale and urgency, they are also becoming harder to deliver. Cost pressure, skills shortages, constrained supply chains and growing reliance on technology mean that risks are no longer confined to construction alone.

By Philip Cronje, Business Unit Manager at Aon South Africa

Across the project lifecycle, three trends are emerging as decisive factors in whether infrastructure projects succeed or fail: design maturity, contractual clarity and technology integration.

Trend 1: Get the design right early

In South Africa, infrastructure projects are often accelerated to address urgent service delivery gaps. While understandable, this can result in projects breaking ground with incomplete or immature designs - a key driver of cost overruns, delays and rework.

Design risk is amplified locally by:

- **Scarce specialist skills**, particularly in heavy civil, tunnelling, energy and water infrastructure.
- **Evolving environmental, safety and regulatory requirements**, which can delay approvals or trigger redesigns if not addressed upfront.
- **Growing use of digital and AI-enabled design tools**, which offer powerful modelling capabilities but still require experienced human oversight.

Trend 2: Clarify contracts to allocate risk fairly

South African infrastructure projects often involve multiple public and private stakeholders, funders and contractors. When contracts do not clearly allocate risk across these parties, uncertainty compounds over the life of the project.

Poor contractual hygiene can lead to:

- Scope creep and cost escalation between construction and operational phases.
- Disputes around liability, delays and performance guarantees.
- Misalignment between contractual obligations and available insurance cover.

Local market conditions make this even more important. Insurance capacity is finite and coverage terms are influenced by global pressures such as inflation, climate events and reinsurance constraints. Contracts that are not structured with these realities in mind can expose project participants to uninsured or poorly priced risks.

Trend 3: Technology is reshaping infrastructure and its risks

Technology is transforming how infrastructure is designed, built and operated in South Africa. Digital modelling, automation, AI, IoT and smart-city systems are improving efficiency, safety and asset performance - particularly in energy, transport and municipal services.

However, these benefits come with new challenges:

- **Unclear liability** when AI-driven designs or autonomous systems fail.
- **Inadequate validation** of AI-generated outputs, creating technical or safety Skills gaps, where teams are not fully equipped to use advanced tools effectively.
- **Rising cyber exposure**, as connected infrastructure creates more entry points for cyberattacks.

Building resilience from day one

The most resilient infrastructure projects are those that embed risk management early - before construction begins. Yet many organisations still involve risk, legal and insurance advisors too late, once key decisions have already been locked in.

Resilience starts with:

- **Early risk and insurance alignment** during design and contract development.
- **Clear, fair contractual frameworks** that reflect local market realities.
- **Thoughtful adoption of technology**, supported by training, governance and cyber protection.

As infrastructure risks continue to evolve - from inflation and supply chain disruption to climate and cyber threats - proactive risk management is no longer a "nice to have". It is central to delivering infrastructure that is financially viable, insurable and fit for purpose for the communities it serves. ⊙

Philip Cronje, Business Unit Manager at Aon South Africa.

Lindie Fourie, Operations Manager at BCCEI.

Fair labour practices and strict compliance remain essential to protecting both workers and law-abiding contractors in the civil engineering industry.

Stronger enforcement and collaboration **SIGNAL SHIFT IN SOUTH AFRICA'S CIVIL ENGINEERING SECTOR**

Encouragingly, collaboration between public and private sector stakeholders in South Africa's civil engineering industry is strengthening - underpinned by a firmer stance on accountability across the construction value chain. According to Lindie Fourie, Operations Manager at the Bargaining Council for the Civil Engineering Industry (BCCEI), recent remarks by the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure that a number of contractors have already been blacklisted in 2026 for non-compliance and unethical practices send a clear signal that enforcement is gaining traction.

"The increased visibility of enforcement actions is an important step in restoring confidence in the sector," Fourie says. "It demonstrates a commitment to accountability and helps to protect those contractors who are operating responsibly and within the framework of the law."

Against this backdrop, South Africa's civil engineering sector is showing early signs of recovery, although ongoing economic pressures continue to constrain the pace and sustainability of growth. While anticipated increases in infrastructure investment and improving project pipelines are providing some optimism, contractors are still navigating tight margins, rising input costs and persistent uncertainty.

Activity in the sector has been supported by renewed focus on infrastructure development, particularly in roads, energy and water projects. However, the benefits are not yet evenly distributed across the industry. Many contractors, especially small and medium-sized players, remain under strain due to delayed project rollouts, payment bottlenecks and limited access to consistent work.

Cost pressures continue to weigh heavily on operations. Escalating fuel prices, material cost volatility and labour-related expenses are eroding margins, leaving little room for inefficiencies. In this environment, disciplined project management, accurate pricing and stringent cost control have become critical for business sustainability.

Amid these challenges, the BCCEI continues to play a central role in promoting stability, fairness and compliance across the sector. Fourie emphasises that a structured regulatory environment is essential to building a sustainable and competitive industry.

"Labour compliance is not just a regulatory requirement - it is a cornerstone of a stable and competitive civil engineering sector," she says. "When all contractors operate on a level playing field and meet their obligations in terms of wages and conditions of employment, it creates an environment where businesses can compete fairly and projects can be delivered more effectively."

Strengthening collaboration and firmer enforcement are helping to restore confidence in South Africa's civil engineering sector.

The Bargaining Council for the Civil Engineering Industry continues to play a vital role in promoting compliance, fairness and long-term sustainability across the industry.

She adds that the industry must also condemn the abominable practice of some contractors that attempt to exploit the most vulnerable purely to secure a tender and undercut their law-abiding fellow contractors who tender on BCCEI rates.

She notes that economic pressure often places strain on both large contractors and smaller subcontractors, making compliance more challenging but even more critical. "In difficult economic conditions, there can be a temptation to cut corners. However, non-compliance undermines the entire industry and ultimately impacts project delivery, worker welfare and investor confidence."

Fourie adds that enforcement alone is not sufficient to achieve long-term stability. "Alongside enforcement, there must be active support for contractors to understand and meet their obligations," she says.

To this end, the BCCEI continues to support contractor development and compliance awareness, working closely with both established firms and emerging contractors. This includes providing guidance on collective agreements, labour obligations and administrative processes, helping smaller businesses especially to build sustainable, legally compliant operations while remaining competitive in a challenging economic environment.

Despite these positive indicators, challenges remain. The sector continues to face skills shortages, administrative complexity and the lingering effects of historical underinvestment. For meaningful, long-term growth, consistent infrastructure spend, streamlined approvals and reliable payment practices will be essential.

While the sector remains under pressure, there is growing confidence that stronger enforcement and improved collaboration are laying the groundwork for a more stable and sustainable industry.

Fourie emphasises that consistency will be key. "Sustained infrastructure investment, combined with firm but fair enforcement of compliance, will be critical to unlocking the sector's full potential. When the right structures are in place and consistently applied, the civil engineering industry can deliver meaningful economic growth, support job creation and contribute significantly to South Africa's development," she concludes. ⊙

Left: ***Stronger collaboration between public and private sector stakeholders is laying the foundation for sustainable growth and job creation in South Africa's civil engineering sector.*** *Right:* ***Increased accountability across the construction value chain is creating a more stable and competitive environment for civil engineering contractors.***

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DELIVERING NEW LEVELS OF POWER AND FUEL EFFICIENCY ON INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Following the introduction of the new generation Volvo excavator range last year, Babcock reports a strong uptake of the EC210 and EC220 models in general construction and plant hire. In a fiercely competitive 21-22 tonne (t) market segment, the two models combine premium quality and competitive pricing, pushing boundaries in performance, efficiency and total cost of ownership.

Despite the seemingly improved infrastructure project rollout from government, construction contractors in South Africa are generally navigating a challenging operating environment marked by high inflation, rising material costs and fuel price volatility, resulting in squeezed margins.

To run profitable operations, contractors are placing value on cost-effective strategies, including the adoption of fuel-efficient and highly productive equipment – a vital approach to reducing total cost of ownership (TCO) and maintaining competitiveness.

With specific engineering upgrades that deliver enhanced power, durability and fuel efficiency, the EC210 and EC220 from Volvo Construction Equipment (Volvo CE) directly address these operational needs across general construction, plant hire and earthworks applications.

"The 21-22 t excavator segment is a major volume driver in South Africa, but it is very competitive, with a large number of suppliers competing for market share. A key differentiator for us with the new Volvo EC210 and EC220 is that we have brought to market a premium Volvo product that is competitively priced," explains Quintin O'Reilly, Head of Sales at Babcock's Equipment business.

Part of the larger five-model range that also includes the EC260, EC300 and EC360, the 21-t EC210 replaced the previous EC200DL, while the 22-t EC220 replaced the old-generation EC210DL. By combining a stronger frame, a more efficient powertrain, intelligent hydraulics and a superior operator environment, this new generation of Volvo excavators is built to deliver greater uptime, lower running costs and higher productivity on demanding jobsites.

Efficiency and productivity

At the heart of the EC210 and EC220 models are the Volvo D5E or D6E motors that integrate engine-pump optimisation technology, contributing to the machines' exceptional fuel efficiency – getting more work from every litre of diesel.

The new range features increased hydraulic flow for responsive, accurate control in digging and loading operations. Operators benefit from smoother, easier movement when digging as well as travelling and lifting simultaneously, due to the harmonised boom and arm movement.

In recent tests conducted by Volvo CE, the EC210 delivered an up to 7% productivity edge and 14% better fuel efficiency over competitor offerings in a similar weight class – even when operated at lower RPMs.

For contractors in Africa, juggling performance expectations with fuel economy and uptime, the EC210's results suggest it is more than capable of punching above its weight – particularly in applications such as road construction, site preparation and utilities.

The new EC220 was tested against the EC210, delivering 32% greater productivity, while maintaining similar fuel efficiency at a similar RPM. This highlighted its value in high-volume operations such as materials handling and bulk excavation. The EC220 therefore makes a strong all-rounder, marrying power and precision for work that demands both.

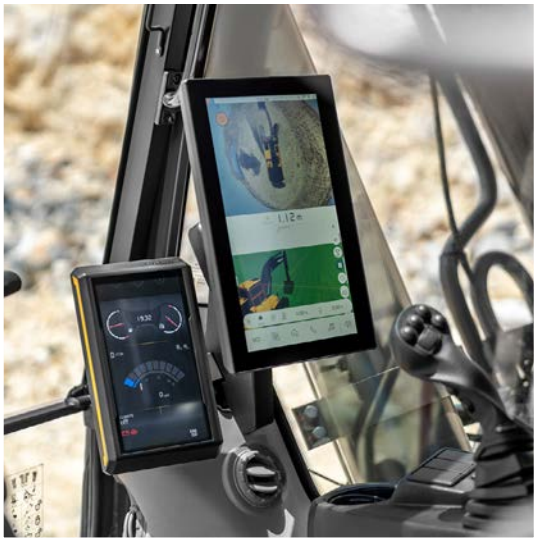
Precision in operations

To help contractors meet the complex demands of modern projects, the new generation EC210 and EC220 excavators can be equipped from the factory with Volvo Dig Assist – a suite of tools designed to deliver excavation accuracy in a fraction of the time compared to conventional methods.

Dig Assist delivers exceptional accuracy and eliminates the need for time-consuming manual site marking and depth checks. Key functionalities include 2D for easily setting depth and slope on simpler jobs, In-Field Design for using satellite technology to design and excavate complex shapes with centimetre-level accuracy, and 3D functionality for uploading complex engineering plans for large infrastructure projects.

"With Dig Assist, we are giving contractors a powerful tool to execute complex projects with maximum precision. In modern projects, margin for error means that even minor deviations in excavation depth, slope, or alignment can lead to costly re-work and resultant heavy penalties," says O'Reilly.

In addition, the optional On-Board Weighing feature provides real-time data on the bucket's load, preventing overloading of



Volvo Co-Pilot boosts productivity, efficiency and safety by providing real-time, data-driven insights to the operator.

The EC210 and EC220 form part of the larger model range that includes the EC260, EC300 and EC360.

trucks and ensuring every vehicle is filled to its optimal capacity.

Operator comfort

The design of the new generation Volvo excavator range places a huge focus on operator comfort. The revamped cab offers improved ergonomics, intuitive controls and advanced human-machine interface (HMI) systems, providing operators with a comfortable, productive working environment, with enhanced visibility, reduced noise levels and efficient HVAC systems.

A standard rearview camera and an optional three-point seatbelt enhance site safety, a growing priority on major projects across South Africa and southern Africa at large.

Structural strength

Moving beyond offering heavy-duty as an option, Volvo CE has engineered the entire new generation as an 'HD lineup'. The upper frame has been significantly redesigned for increased robustness and strength.

This means every machine that rolls off the production line is built from the ground up for the toughest jobs, whether that is working in the hard rock quarries or on large-scale infrastructure projects.

"The robust undercarriage is the 'backbone' of the EC210 and EC220 excavators, enabling stability during heavy operations, and enduring harsh conditions. Given that an excavator's undercarriage can account for up to 50% of its ownership and operating costs, buying an excavator that comes with a durable, high-quality system not only minimises downtime, but also maximises long-term performance and reduces TCO," says O'Reilly.

Aftersales and financing

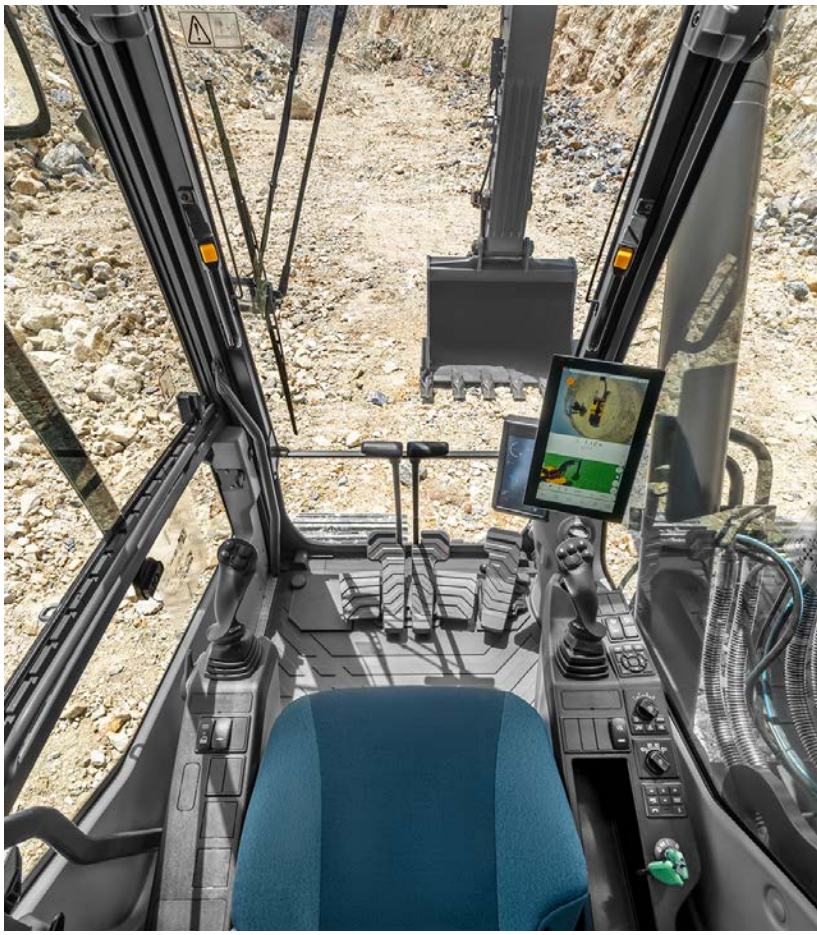
Over and above the modern design of the machines, strong aftersales support from Babcock ensures efficient operations for contractors by minimising machine downtime, maximising productivity and extending equipment lifespan through proactive maintenance and expert technical assistance.

"Our robust aftersales programme, which hinges on high parts availability and a comprehensive geographical footprint across all major construction hubs, helps customers reduce unplanned downtime through scheduled maintenance, as well as immediate, on-site support to resolve any technical issues," says O'Reilly.

In addition, the availability of flexible funding options from Volvo Financial Services (VFS) makes the buying process quick and easy. VFS offers competitive, tailored funding, designed to match each customer's operating needs. Key benefits include flexible payment plans and competitive interest rates.

"A combination of fuel efficiency, operator comfort, an unmatched structural strength, complemented by strong backup service and financing, makes this range one of the most cost-effective to run per hour in this size class. This holistic approach lowers operational costs, minimises downtime, increases productivity, and improves cash flow, providing a sustainable competitive advantage in such a demanding market," concludes O'Reilly. ⊙

In recent tests conducted by Volvo CE, the EC210 delivered an up to 7% productivity edge and 14% better fuel efficiency over competitor offerings in a similar weight class.



The design of the new generation Volvo excavator range places a huge focus on operator comfort.

ENGINEERING THE POLIHALI TRANSFER TUNNEL IN LESOTHO HIGHLANDS WATER PROJECT PHASE II

The 34 km underground tunnel enables water transfer between the Polihali and Katse reservoirs, forming a critical link in the system.

Polihali Dam incorporates a 5 m-diameter TBM tunnel with intake works, gate shaft, and outlet connecting to Katse Reservoir.

Multinational, buildings and infrastructure engineering consultancy Zutari is contributing to one of the most technically complex components of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) Phase II through its role in the Metsi a Senqu-Khubelu Consultants (MSKC) Joint Venture for the design and construction supervision of the Polihali Transfer Tunnel.

The project is being undertaken in the Kingdom of Lesotho by the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA), the implementing and management authority of the LHWP, on behalf of the governments of Lesotho and South Africa.

Stretching approximately 34 km beneath Lesotho's mountainous highlands, the Polihali Transfer Tunnel forms a critical link between the Polihali and Katse reservoirs, strengthening the water transfer system that supports regional water and hydropower security.

The tunnel incorporates a sophisticated design comprising a five-metre-diameter segmentally lined hard-rock TBM bored tunnel, intake works and gate shaft upstream of the new 165 m high Polihali Dam, as well as outlet works and lake-tap into the Katse Reservoir. Additional access tunnels and associated infrastructure support the construction and future operation of the system.

Engineering beneath the Highlands

Unlike visible infrastructure such as bridges or dams, the Polihali Transfer Tunnel represents an engineering achievement largely hidden from view. Yet the underground system is among the most significant elements of the entire LHWP Phase II programme.

Freddie Laas, Project Manager for the MSKC Joint Venture overseeing the tunnel's implementation, says the project requires a high level of coordination, planning and technical precision. "The Polihali Transfer Tunnel is one of the most technically demanding components of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project Phase II. Delivering infrastructure at this scale requires careful coordination across engineering disciplines, contractors and project stakeholders to ensure that safety, quality and environmental stewardship remain central throughout the construction process."

Laas adds that projects of this complexity extend beyond engineering alone. "Large-scale infrastructure programmes

involve many moving parts, from geological conditions and environmental considerations to social and economic responsibilities. Successfully managing these elements is what ultimately ensures that the project delivers long-term value for both Lesotho and the broader region."

Strengthening regional water security

The LHWP is a multi-phase bi-national initiative between the Kingdom of Lesotho and the Republic of South Africa designed to harness the water resources of Lesotho's highlands through a network of dams, tunnels and associated infrastructure.

While the project supports water supply to South Africa's economic hub, it also generates substantial economic benefits for Lesotho through royalties, infrastructure development and long-term employment opportunities.

Projects of this scale also create opportunities for collaboration between international engineering specialists and local professionals, contributing to skills development and long-term technical capacity within the region.

Zutari has been involved in infrastructure development in Lesotho for decades, supporting projects across water, transport and environmental sectors. The company's participation in the Polihali Transfer Tunnel forms part of its broader contribution to the LHWP programme and to infrastructure development across the region.

Engineering partnerships that deliver impact

Tlhabeli Ralebitso, Chief Executive Officer for Africa at Zutari, says projects such as the Polihali Transfer Tunnel highlight the importance of collaboration in delivering infrastructure of national and regional significance.

"The LHWP is one of Africa's most important examples of infrastructure delivered through partnership. Complex engineering programmes such as the Polihali Transfer Tunnel require the combined expertise of governments, engineering firms and local professionals working toward a shared goal. Through these collaborations, infrastructure can deliver lasting benefits, strengthening water security, supporting economic growth and building technical capacity across the region."

Although largely invisible once completed, the Polihali Transfer Tunnel will play a vital role in the long-term operation of the LHWP, ensuring the efficient transfer of water through the system while supporting the continued development of water infrastructure across Southern Africa.

As construction progresses on Phase II of the project, the tunnel stands as a powerful example of the engineering innovation and strategic collaboration required to deliver infrastructure on a truly regional scale. ⊙

Tlhabeli Ralebitso, CEO of Zutari, Africa.

The Polihali Transfer Tunnel is one of the most technically demanding components of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project Phase II.

SPAN THE SENQU: LHWP II IN ACTION

The 825 metre Senqu River Bridge spans the Senqu Valley at an elevation of over 90 metres, maintaining critical road access along the A1 route.

Multinational buildings and infrastructure engineering consultancy Zutari has played a leading role in the design and construction supervision of the Senqu River Bridge, one of the most ambitious high-altitude infrastructure projects undertaken as part of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) Phase II.

The project is being executed in the Kingdom of Lesotho by the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA), the implementing and management authority of the LHWP, on behalf of the governments of Lesotho and South Africa.

The Major Bridges Project, which includes the Senqu River Bridge, is being delivered by Zutari Lesotho, together with a Lesotho sub-consultant (White Life Consultants) and a black-owned South African sub-consultant (Leporogo Specialist Engineers). This reflects a collaborative engineering partnership and a long-standing commitment to infrastructure development in the Kingdom of Lesotho.

Spanning 825 metres across the Senqu River valley, the bridge is the longest and highest in Lesotho, rising more than 90 metres above the valley floor. Designed as an extradosed cable-stayed structure, the bridge has been engineered to withstand the extreme conditions of Lesotho's mountainous terrain while ensuring uninterrupted connectivity along the national A1 route.

The new crossing forms part of a series of major bridges required to maintain road access once the future Polihali reservoir is filled. Sections of the existing A1 route will eventually be submerged as the dam reaches full capacity, making the Senqu Bridge a vital long-term replacement that safeguards regional mobility and economic activity.

Engineering for a changing landscape

The bridge was designed to address the complex environmental and geographic challenges associated with infrastructure development in Lesotho's highlands. Construction required foundations anchored on rock, as well as advanced construction techniques to navigate the steep valley terrain.

The bridge deck was incrementally launched from both sides of the valley, with precast segments pushed outward until the two sections met at mid-span. This method allowed contractors to construct the bridge safely across the deep gorge while minimising environmental disturbance.

Work on the bridge continued throughout challenging mountain conditions, including winter construction periods, requiring round-the-clock engineering supervision and close coordination between contractors, engineers and project authorities. Louis Joubert, Resident Engineer on the Senqu Bridge project, says the structure represents both technical ambition and long-term national value.

"The Senqu Bridge reflects the engineering ambition behind the LHWP. Beyond the technical achievement, these structures carry real legacy value for Lesotho. As the Highlands landscape evolves, the bridges being built today will stand as enduring symbols of infrastructure excellence and the long-term impact of the project for communities across the region," comments Joubert.

Supporting national connectivity

Beyond its engineering significance, the Senqu Bridge will play a critical role in maintaining access to the north-eastern region of Lesotho, including the regional capital of Mokhotlong. Once the Polihali reservoir is impounded, the existing low-level crossings will be submerged, making the new bridge essential for maintaining this strategic national route.

The project also forms part of a broader infrastructure programme supporting the development of the LHWP Phase II, which is designed to enhance regional water security while generating long-term economic benefits for Lesotho.

The project has also provided significant opportunities for local engineers and technical professionals. Most of the supervision team on the bridge project consists of Basotho engineers and young professionals who have been mentored throughout the construction process. Through partnerships with the LHDA and other project stakeholders, the initiative contributes to building long-term engineering capacity within the country.

The Senqu Bridge is expected to become a landmark structure within Lesotho's evolving infrastructure landscape. As the surrounding reservoir fills and the region's development accelerates, the bridge will continue to serve as a critical transport link while supporting new economic and tourism opportunities.

As part of the broader LHWP, infrastructure investments of this scale demonstrate how strategic engineering partnerships can deliver lasting benefits for both Lesotho and the wider Southern African region.

Tlhabeli Ralebitso, CEO: Africa, Zutari, says projects like the Senqu Bridge demonstrate how strategic infrastructure investment can deliver long-term value for both Lesotho and the broader region. "The LHWP stands as one of Africa's most significant examples of infrastructure delivered through partnership and shared vision."

Ralebitso concludes: "The Senqu Bridge reflects not only engineering excellence, but also the long-term impact that infrastructure investment can have in strengthening regional water security and hydro-electric power generation, enabling economic growth and supporting communities. Zutari is proud to contribute our expertise to projects that help shape sustainable futures for Lesotho and Southern Africa." ⊙

SMARTER COMPACTION FOR STRONGER SOUTH AFRICAN INFRASTRUCTURE

Compaction is a critical process in road construction, forming the foundation of durable transport infrastructure across South Africa. In simple terms, compaction is the mechanical densification of soil or asphalt by reducing air voids between particles, thereby increasing strength and stability. This process is essential for preventing settlement, improving load-bearing capacity, and ensuring that roads can withstand traffic and environmental conditions over time.

In the South African context, compaction technology has evolved significantly, driven by the need to construct resilient roads across diverse geotechnical conditions - from sandy coastal soils to clay-rich inland terrains. Modern compaction technologies combine traditional mechanical methods with advanced control systems to optimise performance and efficiency.

At the core of compaction technology are various types of compaction methods, each suited to specific soil conditions. The most widely used method in road construction is vibratory compaction, which uses vibrating rollers to rearrange soil particles into a denser configuration. This method is particularly effective for granular soils such as sand and gravel. Static compaction, which relies on the sheer weight of heavy machinery, is typically used for cohesive soils like clay. Impact compaction, involving repeated blows from rammers or dropping heavy weights, is used where deeper densification is required, such as in embankments.

The most visible technology on South African road construction sites is the road roller. These machines, ranging from single drum rollers to pneumatic tyre rollers, are specifically designed to compact soil, gravel, and asphalt layers. Padfoot (sheepsfoot) rollers are commonly used in the early stages of road construction to compact cohesive soils, while smooth drum rollers are used to achieve a uniform, level surface. Pneumatic tyre rollers add a kneading action that helps seal the surface, improving durability.

In recent years, the industry has seen the introduction of intelligent compaction (IC) systems. These systems use GPS, onboard sensors, and real-time data analytics to monitor compaction levels as work progresses. Operators receive immediate feedback on parameters such as stiffness, temperature (for asphalt), and the number of passes completed. This ensures uniform compaction and reduces the risk of weak spots in the road structure. Intelligent compaction is particularly relevant in South Africa, where inconsistent material quality and varying site conditions can pose challenges.

Another important technological advancement is the use of laboratory and field testing to guide compaction efforts. The Proctor compaction test, for example, determines the optimum moisture content at which a soil achieves maximum density. This is crucial because both under-compaction and over-compaction can lead to structural failures. Field density tests and proof rolling further ensure that compaction meets design specifications before construction progresses.

Material stabilisation technologies also play a growing role in compaction practices. In South Africa, where marginal materials are often used due to cost constraints, additives such as lime, cement, or bitumen are used to improve soil properties before compaction. These stabilised layers provide better load distribution and reduce long-term maintenance requirements.

Automation and data-driven approaches are also beginning to influence compaction practices. Machine learning models are being explored to predict optimal compaction parameters based on soil type and environmental conditions, potentially reducing reliance on time-consuming laboratory testing. While still emerging, these technologies point to a future where compaction processes are increasingly precise and efficient.

Ultimately, the effectiveness of compaction technology in South Africa depends on selecting the right method, equipment, and moisture conditions for each project. With ongoing advancements in machinery, digital monitoring, and material science, compaction is becoming more reliable and cost-effective - ensuring that the country's road infrastructure can meet growing economic and mobility demands. ⊙

WHEN INDUSTRY LEADERS MOVE FORWARD AS ONE

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INTEGRATED COMPACTION SOLUTIONS RESHAPE CONSTRUCTION EFFICIENCY IN AFRICA

In an environment where downtime, rework, and fragmented supplier networks continue to erode margins, integrated compaction solutions are no longer a luxury, they're a necessity. ***Wilhelm du Plessis compiled this report***

The 2017 acquisition of Wirtgen Group by John Deere marked a decisive shift in the global construction equipment landscape - one that continues to influence project delivery in markets such as South Africa. By integrating Wirtgen's five specialist road-building brands into its portfolio, Deere effectively created a full-line construction offering without internal product overlap. The result is a complementary ecosystem of technologies, strengthened global reach, and streamlined distribution and support capabilities.

In the African context, this global integration finds practical expression through the partnership with AFGRI Equipment. The collaboration brings together advanced compaction technologies and a robust local support network, offering contractors a single, integrated supplier. For an industry often constrained by fragmented supply chains and inconsistent aftersales support, this alignment delivers tangible value: improved access to equipment, faster service response times, and dependable parts availability across South Africa and into the broader continent.

The implications for project delivery are significant. A broader, well-aligned equipment range enables smoother transitions between construction phases - from

earthworks through to final asphalt compaction. This continuity reduces downtime, enhances operational efficiency, and supports consistent achievement of compaction specifications. In an industry where delays and rework can quickly erode margins, such efficiencies translate directly into improved project timelines and cost control.

At the centre of this offering is HAMM, widely recognised for its precision engineering and durability and the benchmark in compaction performance. Its equipment is designed to perform reliably across both asphalt and soil applications, even under demanding site conditions typical of many African projects. The HAMM HD Series tandem rollers, for instance, prioritise versatility and operator usability, with compact designs for easier transport, intuitive controls, and strong visibility - features that contribute to both productivity and safety on site.

For more demanding earthworks, the HAMM HC Series delivers high line loads and adaptable drum configurations, enabling effective deep compaction across varied soil conditions. This flexibility is particularly relevant in large-scale infrastructure projects where material variability and site complexity are common challenges.

Technology integration is another defining feature of the modern compaction landscape. Machines such as the HAMM HC 110 G incorporate John Deere engines alongside JDLink™ telematics, providing real-time insights into machine performance, utilisation, and location. This level of visibility supports proactive maintenance and improved fleet management - critical factors in maximising uptime and controlling lifecycle costs.

Beyond telematics, innovations such as oscillation compaction and digital monitoring systems are reshaping how contractors approach quality assurance. Oscillation technology reduces the number of passes required while minimising the risk of over-compaction, particularly near sensitive structures. Meanwhile, systems like Smart Doc and Smart Compaction provide real-time data and documentation, enabling contractors to verify compaction quality and streamline project handovers. In a regulatory environment that increasingly demands measurable compliance, these tools are becoming essential rather than optional. The shift is clear compaction is no longer just mechanical. It's becoming a data-driven discipline where every pass is measured, verified, and optimised in real time.

Local industry dynamics are accelerating this shift toward advanced technology. South African contractors face a combination of challenging ground conditions, stricter quality requirements, and a shortage of highly skilled operators. As a result, there is growing demand for equipment that can standardise outputs, assist operators, and deliver verifiable results.

Equipment selection itself is evolving accordingly. While upfront price remains a consideration, contractors are placing greater emphasis on total cost of ownership - factoring in fuel efficiency, maintenance costs, reliability, and aftersales support. Specifications such as vibration frequency, centrifugal force, and drum width are no longer abstract technical details; they are critical determinants of productivity, influencing how quickly and effectively compaction targets can be achieved.

Equally, operator experience is gaining prominence. Ergonomics, visibility, and ease of use are now central to equipment design, reflecting the reality that machine performance is closely tied to operator capability. Well-designed machines reduce fatigue, enhance safety, and enable consistent results - even in environments where highly experienced operators are in short supply.

Ultimately, the convergence of global manufacturing strength, local support infrastructure, and advanced technology is redefining compaction in Africa. The John Deere-Wirtgen-AFGRI ecosystem illustrates how integrated solutions can address longstanding industry challenges - improving efficiency, ensuring quality, and delivering long-term value in a sector where margins are tight and expectations continue to rise. ⊙

PUMPING UP PERFORMANCE ON MODERN BUILDS

In an increasingly complex construction environment, specialist contractors are playing a more critical role in delivering projects efficiently and safely. Foxcrete Concrete Pumping is one such player, steadily expanding its footprint and capabilities to meet rising demand for precision concrete placement. ***Wilhelm du Plessis compiled this report***

Founded in 2007 in Kempton Park, the company initially focused on concrete boom pump hire. Over time, it has grown its fleet and operational reach, adding a second base in Mbombela and evolving into a service provider capable of supporting large commercial and infrastructure projects. Its fleet now includes boom pumps ranging from 36 m to 43 m, alongside static pumps, positioning the business to handle everything from multi storey slabs to complex structural work.

Specialised pumping has become essential on modern construction sites. The ability to place concrete quickly and continuously, even in constrained or elevated areas, significantly improves productivity. It reduces reliance on manual labour and shortens project timelines, while also enhancing quality through consistent flow, better compaction and reduced risk of material segregation.

This efficiency is particularly valuable on high rise developments and infrastructure projects, where access constraints and tight schedules leave little room for error. By enabling continuous pours, pumping helps contractors avoid cold joints and inconsistencies that can compromise structural integrity. It also supports better coordination between site teams, ensuring that concrete delivery, placement and finishing processes remain aligned.

The economics of pumping equipment further reinforce the case for specialist providers. Concrete pumps are costly to acquire and maintain, making outright ownership impractical for most contractors. Hiring offers flexibility and eliminates maintenance burdens, although large contractors with sustained demand may still find ownership viable across multiple sites.

Demand for pumping services has risen sharply as projects become larger, denser and more technically demanding. Urbanisation and infrastructure development are driving the need for efficient placement methods, particularly where traditional approaches are no longer practical.

Foxcrete attributes its competitive edge to reliability, equipment capability and on-site support. A well-maintained fleet ensures uptime, while a versatile mix of boom and static pumps allows the company to adapt to varying project conditions. Experienced operators and a solutions driven approach further support efficient and safe execution on site.

In addition, close collaboration with contractors and engineers enables better planning of pours, helping to anticipate site challenges before they arise. This proactive approach reduces downtime and contributes to smoother project delivery, particularly on complex builds where sequencing and timing are critical.

Safety remains central to operations. The company operates under a comprehensive HSE management system, with a strong focus on risk management and competency. Operators undergo rigorous theoretical and practical

training, followed by supervised, hands on experience. Regular equipment inspections and strict site protocols help maintain high safety standards and minimise delays.

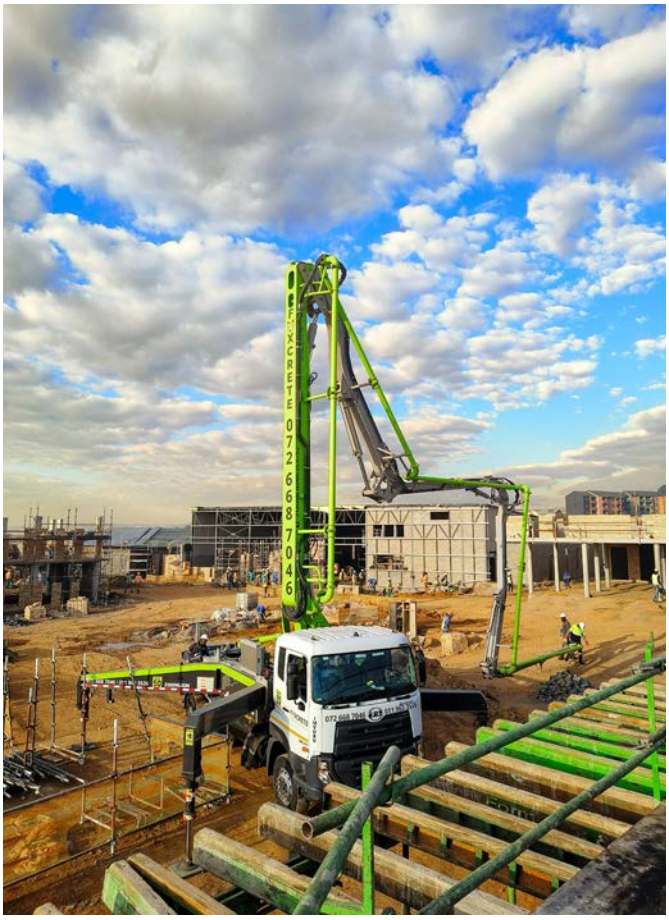
Investment in technology is another priority. New generation pumps equipped with advanced sensors help reduce operator error and improve site safety. The company continues to replace older equipment, building a modern fleet capable of delivering up to 160 m^3 of concrete per hour, enabling faster and more accurate placement on complex projects.

Efficient pumping also supports sustainability goals. Precise placement reduces spillage and material waste, while continuous pours minimise rejected batches and rework. Reduced equipment movement and shorter pour times contribute to lower fuel consumption and a smaller carbon footprint.

Cleaner sites, improved material usage and reduced rehandling further enhance environmental performance, aligning with stricter compliance requirements across the construction sector. As sustainability becomes a greater priority, these efficiencies are expected to play an increasingly important role in project planning and execution.

Foxcrete is aligning its strategy with anticipated growth in infrastructure investment across South Africa. The company plans to continue upgrading its fleet and developing its workforce, while refining safety systems to meet tightening industry standards.

As construction projects demand greater speed, accuracy and compliance, specialised concrete pumping is no longer optional. It is a critical enabler of modern building performance.



MEMBRANE SOLUTIONS FROM CHRYSO DELIVER PROVEN PROTECTION FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Within the Saint-Gobain group, GCP's internationally recognised waterproofing membrane technologies are setting the standard for reliability and performance in demanding construction applications. Across Africa, these solutions are available through Chryso Southern Africa, offering contractors and engineers a range of advanced products for below-ground and above-ground protection.

Among the leading solutions in the range are BITUTHENE® 3000 and low temperature membrane, PREPRUFE® 120S pre-applied membrane and PREPRUFE® DLM (Detailing Liquid Membrane) - each engineered for specific site conditions to ensure long term waterproofing integrity.

BITUTHENE® 3000 is a self-adhesive high-performance membrane designed for critical waterproofing applications in basements, retaining walls and substructures. It combines a robust cross-laminated HDPE film with a self-adhesive rubberised asphalt layer, providing excellent adhesion, tear resistance and durability. Its proven track record in both commercial and infrastructure projects makes it a go-to choice for challenging environments.

For projects where colder conditions can impact installation, BITUTHENE® Low Temperature Membrane offers the same reliable performance with a special adhesive formulation designed to allow easier handling and application in lower ambient temperatures. This ensures quality results year-round.

The PREPRUFE® 120S Membrane is a fully adhered, pre-applied waterproofing system that forms a permanent bond to concrete, preventing water migration and protecting against ingress even if the membrane is damaged during construction. This feature is particularly valuable for deep basements, tunnels and other below-grade structures where water pressure can be significant.

PREPRUFE® DLM (Detailing Liquid Membrane) has been developed to deliver the same pre-applied fully bonded performance in horizontal applications, offering high durability, chemical resistance and consistent protection for waterproofing details.

"These membranes are proven in projects worldwide and have been extensively tested in the harsh conditions often encountered locally," said Andries Janse van Rensburg, Specialty Materials Head Infrastructure BU at Chryso Southern Africa. "Choosing the right membrane is critical to ensuring the service life and performance of a structure, and our technical team works closely with customers to specify the best solution for each application. With these products, contractors benefit from both ease of installation and long-term protection."

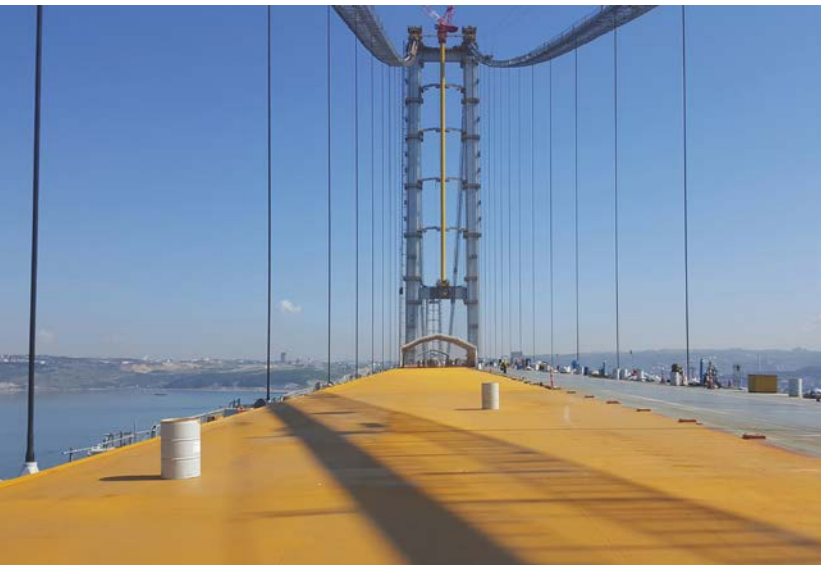
Through Chryso Southern Africa, customers gain access to not only the GCP range but also the technical expertise needed to ensure correct specification, detailing and installation - all essential for avoiding costly failures later in a project's life.

From commercial basements to large scale civil works, the combination of Chryso's local support and GCP's proven technology is providing the South African construction sector with waterproofing membranes that deliver dependable performance in every application ⊙

Andries Janse van Rensburg: Specialty Materials Head - Infrastructure BU, at Chryso Southern Africa.

PREPRUFE® 120S provides fully bonded waterproofing that effectively prevents water migration.

BITUTHENE® 3000 is engineered to deliver reliable waterproofing performance for basement and substructure applications.



Left: GCP's waterproofing membrane technology, available from Chryso Southern Africa, is trusted globally for use in demanding applications where long-term protection is critical. Right: PREPRUFE® DLM is a durable liquid membrane solution specifically designed for demanding horizontal applications.

FAW TRUCKS SOUTHERN AFRICA UNVEILS FLAGSHIP J7

FAW Trucks Southern Africa has launched the new J7 heavy-duty performance truck tractor in South Africa, introducing its newest premium flagship model purpose-built for the realities of long-haul transport, fleet productivity, safety and operator comfort in demanding African conditions.

Engineered for long-distance efficiency, reliability, safety and world-class performance, the J7's extensive technical and design enhancements bring a genuinely modern long-haul technology stack – from a high-output powertrain, automated transmission, advanced safety systems, connected-driver comfort to Total Cost of Ownership-led engineering - into a value proposition that seriously challenges all competitor brand assumptions.

"The launch of the J7 in South Africa marks an important step in our strategy to bring world-class heavy-duty transport solutions to local operators moving goods over extended distances, across varied road conditions, and under tough commercial pressures," said Jian Yang, CEO of FAW Trucks SA. "This vehicle is designed for the demands of modern logistics businesses that need dependable performance, lower operating pressure and a truck that supports both business productivity and driver comfort and safety on long-distance routes, backed with a B10 service life of 1,5 million kilometres."

The J7 enters the local market as a premium 6x4 tractor designed to serve the needs of the long-haul and cross-border freight sectors. Its streamlined aerodynamic cab supports improved efficiency on extended journeys, while intelligent fuel management and a high-capacity dual-tank setup are designed to help operators maximise range and reduce refuelling interruptions on major transport corridors.

Importantly, the J7 arrives on the back of the strong market success of FAW Trucks Southern Africa's flagship JH6 500FT, a model that has built a solid reputation among operators for reliability, fuel efficiency, driver comfort and cost-effective long-haul performance. The success of the JH6 500FT has helped establish FAW as a serious contender in the heavy-duty segment and creates a powerful foundation for the J7, which represents the next generation of FAW's premium long-haul offering for Southern Africa.

A major differentiator of the J7 is its clear emphasis on the driver experience and safety. In a market where driver fatigue, retention and safety remain critical considerations, the J7's premium sleeper cab has been configured to support comfort and productivity over long distances. Features such as a spacious high-roof cab, flat-floor layout, extra-wide sleeper berth, air suspension seat, integrated fridge and automatic climate control create a more practical and comfortable on-road living environment for drivers spending extended periods behind the wheel.

The truck includes a reinforced all-steel cab structure and a suite of advanced driver-assistance and safety systems designed to support safer, more controlled operation in demanding transport environments – from AEBS, ESC, FCW, LDWS, TPMS technology and an integrated camera and monitor system that enhances safety and convenience, keeping the driver focused on the road. FAW Trucks Southern Africa is also offering the J7 with a suspension choice tailored to different operational requirements - Rear Air Suspension for sensitive cargo or Parabolic Leaf Springs for maximum durability and strength - giving fleets flexibility depending on route conditions and cargo type.

"The J7's technical and design enhancements deliver a value proposition especially relevant in South Africa, where freight operators must manage long distances, variable infrastructure conditions and the constant need to protect both drivers and cargo," added Xin Huang, COO of FAW Trucks Southern Africa. "Building on the proven success of the JH6 500, the J7 takes FAW's premium heavy-duty offering to the next level, giving operators access to an even more advanced long-haul solution designed for modern transport demands."

Beyond the vehicle, FAW Trucks Southern Africa says the J7 is backed by the support infrastructure operators need to keep fleets moving, with a broad dealer footprint in Southern Africa, 24/7 roadside assistance and an industry-standard warranty of up to 36 months or 600 000 km.

The J7 is positioned as a premium long-haul solution built not only for performance, but also for peace of mind and lower total cost of ownership. The arrival of the J7 reflects FAW Trucks Southern Africa's continued investment in bringing globally competitive commercial vehicles to the region, while remaining sharply focused on local operating realities. ⊙

SAFETY AND VERSATILITY: BENCHMARKS FOR WORKING AT HEIGHTS

In the demanding landscape of Southern African heavy industry, from the sprawling mines of the Northern Cape to the rapid infrastructure developments in Gauteng, the phrase "working at heights" has evolved. It is no longer just about reaching a point; it is about what you can do once you get there, and how safely you can return.

For fleet managers and site supervisors, the challenge is twofold: maximising the return on investment (ROI) of every machine on site while ensuring that every operator works within a "zero-harm" environment. Manitou believes the answer lies in three pillars: Versatility, Simplicity, and Safety.

Versatility with telehandlers

In traditional site management, "working at heights" often required a fleet of single-purpose machines. A crane for lifting suspended loads, a telehandler for picking and placing loads, and an access platform for personnel. This approach is not only capital-intensive but leads to congested, high-risk work sites.

Manitou's MXT and MT-X ranges are designed to challenge this status quo. It provides more than just a lifting machine, but a versatile tool carrier. By utilising a wide array of available quick-change attachments, including jibs, winches, buckets, and dedicated man-baskets, a single telehandler can transition from a rough-terrain loader to a high-reach access solution in minutes.

Why does versatility matter for your bottom line? When a machine can perform various roles, your Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) drops significantly. You aren't just saving

on the initial purchase price; you are reducing maintenance schedules, transport costs to site, and the logistical headache of managing multiple operators for different machine types. In the current economic climate, simplicity in fleet management is a competitive advantage.

Safe and Simple: Designing for the Operator

Safety is often discussed in terms of "compliance," but Manitou believes safety is more than just “ticking the boxes”. By listening to those who spend eight hours a day in a cab, Manitou has learned that a safer machine is a more productive machine.

When working in a demanding environment, operator fatigue can set in. On average, an operator will go in and out of the cab 10 to 30 times per day. This generates back fatigue for cab entry and a safety risk when exiting the cab (non-visible step). This is why its MT-X and MXT ranges feature the Easy Step footboard. By lowering the entry point and providing a clear, ergonomic path into the cab, Manitou reduces the physical strain on the operator’s knees and back.

Furthermore, 360-degree visibility is a big advantage. Whether you are manoeuvring a 4-ton load on an MXT 1740 or positioning an access platform, the ability to see the entire environment without blind spots reduces the potential of on-site accidents. Manitou’s high-visibility cabs ensure that the operator always has line of sight, so that they can confidently carry out their tasks in a simple, safe manner.

Precision at height: access platforms

While telehandlers offer incredible reach and capacity, dedicated Aerial Work Platforms (AWP) remain the standard for intricate maintenance and construction tasks. In Southern Africa’s industrial sectors, the demand for stable, precise, and rugged platforms is high.

From the compact electric models for indoor warehousing to the heavy-duty electric and diesel booms, Manitou’s range of platforms are built on the principle of fluidity. When an operator is 20 metres in the air, they need controls that are intuitive and movements that are smooth. Jerky movements at height cause stress and can easily lead to errors. Manitou’s proportional controls allow for precise movements, ensuring that the platform moves exactly where the operator intends, every time.

The “oxygen” perspective

As the global and local markets shift toward sustainable practices, working at heights is also becoming "greener". Manitou’s commitment to innovation is evidenced by its Oxygen range. Low-emission or zero-emission electric platforms allow companies to work in confined, indoor spaces or noise-sensitive environments without compromising on power or reach.

This is more than just being "eco-friendly"; it’s about expanding where and when you can work. Night-time maintenance in a retail centre or working inside a food-grade manufacturing facility, without the risk of exhaust fumes, is now obtainable. That is the kind of versatility that changes a business's capability.

Manitou’s ATJ e range of articulated booms brings electric power to challenging environments. These 100% electric machines carry the same rugged DNA as our diesel models, featuring four-wheel drive, active oscillating axles, and generous ground clearance to navigate the harshest South African construction sites. By eliminating exhaust fumes and significantly reducing noise, this range provides a high-performance, low-TCO solution that proves sustainability and "rough terrain" power can coexist without compromise.

Handling your world

Working at heights will always carry inherent risks, but with the right partner, those risks can be minimised, and the rewards can be maximised. Whether you are utilisng the rugged power of the MT-X range, the cost-effective versatility of the MXT range, or the pinpoint precision of its Access Platforms, Manitou is dedicated to making your operations safe and easy.

Manitou doesn’t just sell machines; it provides solutions that reflect its values: it listens to your needs, it challenges the limits of what a machine can do, and it keeps its technology simple enough to be used effectively every single day. In the world of capital equipment, don’t just reach for new heights, stay there with confidence. ⊙

An artist's early impression of the new Winelands Airport.

BOOGERTMAN + PARTNERS APPOINTED AS LEAD ARCHITECTS FOR CAPE WINELANDS AIRPORT

Cape Winelands Airport has announced that Boogertman + Partners has been appointed as lead architects overseeing the architectural vision and design integration of the Cape Winelands Airport Development. Boogertman + Partners, one of Africa's largest architectural practices, will collaborate with amd.sigma, a strategic airport development company based in Berlin. Together, they combine international expertise with deep local knowledge, insight and proven capability.

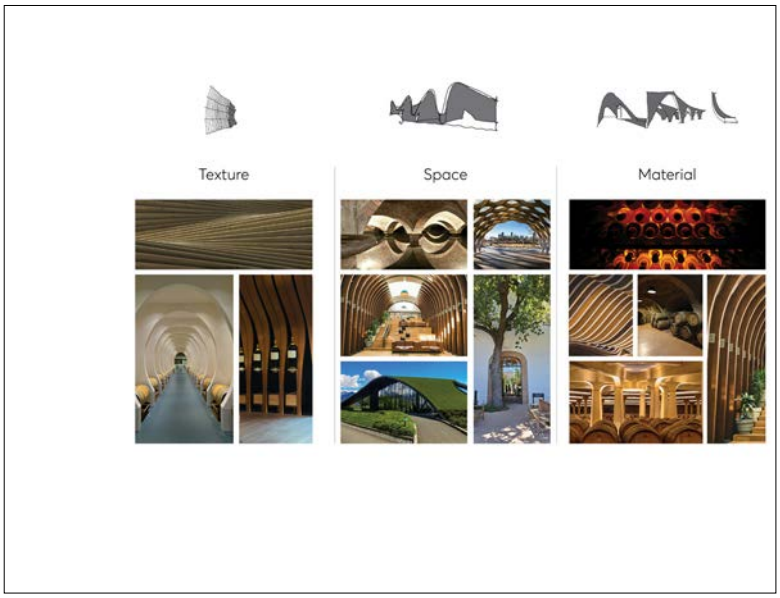
The Cape Winelands Airport development will establish an airport city precinct designed to support economic growth, attract new investment and enhance regional connectivity, bringing together aviation, commerce and community. Long-term plans for the airport will include the construction of a new boutique terminal, runway infrastructure, upgraded airside systems, enhanced cargo and logistics operations, and a modernised general aviation precinct. The development represents an expected initial investment of approximately R8-R10 billion in Cape Town, which will deliver the terminal buildings, runway and a 450-hectare developable estate. The airport is expected to sustain approximately 35 000 direct and indirect jobs and could sustain just over 100 000 direct and indirect jobs during its initial 20 years of operation.

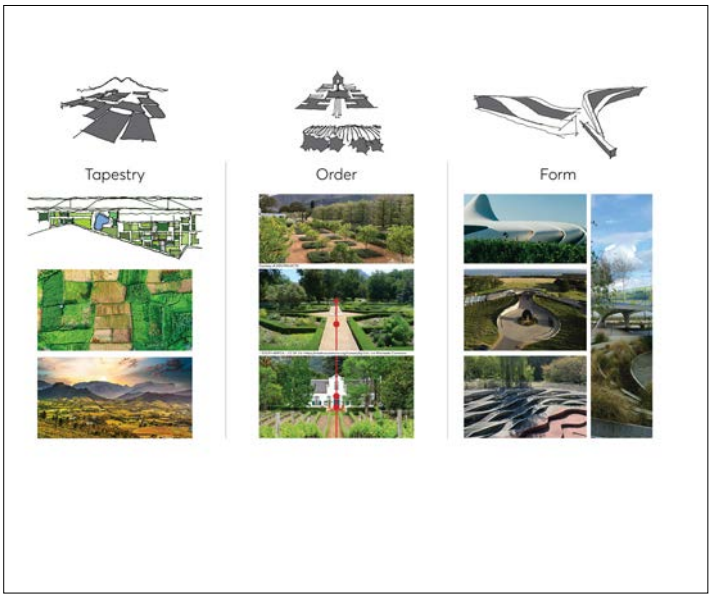
"Boogertman + Partners' track record of award-winning, contextually responsive architecture and their ability to connect infrastructure with human experience makes them the ideal partner in a landmark project of the scale of the


Cape Winelands Airport


THE WINELANDS
THE SWARTLAND
THE CITY OF CAPE TOWN


THE WINELANDS
THE SWARTLAND
THE CITY OF CAPE TOWN





Cape Winelands Airport," said Nicholas Ferguson, Managing Director of RSA Aero, owner and operator of Cape Winelands Airport. André Wright, Director at Boogertman + Partners said, "We are delighted to have the opportunity to design Cape Winelands Airport, which will establish a new gateway to the Cape Winelands region, adding a vital world-class facility that will set new standards for design innovation in the country and on the continent. Our mission, as always, is to deliver world-class, human-centred design solutions that are contextually grounded, socially impactful and environmentally responsible."

Wessel van Dyk, Director at Boogertman + Partners in Stellenbosch and Cape Winelands Airport creative lead, said, "The Cape Winelands Airport will impart a powerful visual identity profoundly rooted in its place. Our vision for the new airport will offer its users an experience unlike any other. We also plan to target the highest environmental standards and ratings." Adam Symalla, Managing Director of amd.sigma, adds, "We are proud to contribute our extensive expertise in airport and terminal planning and development to the Cape Winelands Airport project. Cape Winelands Airport represents a truly unique opportunity: a next-generation regional gateway that combines world-class infrastructure with the distinct identity and landscape of the Western Cape. By blending state-of-the-art passenger processes, intuitive terminal design, and a carefully curated commercial offering, the project sets a new benchmark for regional airports – where efficiency meets sense of place, and functionality enhances the overall journey."

The architectural vision for the airport complex blends harmoniously with the natural topography and agricultural tapestry of the winelands and Swartland region. The airport terminal is envisioned as a striking, undulating, sculptural glass and steel form that appears to rise organically from the ground – an abstracted interpretation of the terrain that blurs the boundary between landscape and built structure. The design of Cape Winelands Airport is guided by an ethos of environmental stewardship, aiming to be one of the greenest airports in the world. It will target leading environmental ratings and certifications. The layout of the development is designed to support phased expansion. Its urban design constitutes a flexible framework that can evolve with local conditions, stakeholder input and future mobility trends. The appointment of Boogertman + Partners marks another milestone for Cape Winelands Airport following the announcements of key strategic partnerships with Growthpoint Properties and WBHO Construction at the end of 2025. "Our vision is for Cape Winelands Airport to be a destination in its own right; a gateway that reflects the character, beauty and heritage of the region. Capturing that strong sense of place is central to how the airport's design will be approached," concluded Ferguson.

Cape Winelands Airport adds to Boogertman + Partners' growing portfolio of aviation infrastructure projects, which includes the design the Chief Dawid Stuurman International Airport in Gqeberha. Past projects in the field include expansions to the OR Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg. ⊙

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