

JV completes package in time for World Cup

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The Siyavaya joint venture (JV), comprising construction companies Group Five, Liviero, Power Group, Bophelong and Umso, was awarded two contracts for the Gauteng Freeway Improvement Project, which aims to upgrade and improve the capacity of the freeway network in Gauteng.

The contracts comprise package A, which is complete despite some significant weather delays in the first quarter of 2010, and package E, which is 65% complete. The deadline for the completion of package E is August 2011, says Siyavaya JV project director for packages A and E **Richard Evans**.

The package A contract was a 24-month contract, between June 2008 and May 2010. This particular project was required to be complete for the FIFA World Cup to facilitate easy traffic flow to the Soccer City precinct, he says.

As a 36-month contract, package E started in August 2008 and will continue to July 2011. Both contracts entail the addition of lanes to the freeway, and the upgrading of inter-



MEN AT WORK

Construction under way for the new tunnel and bridge

sections, major and minor structures and the resurfacing of the carriageway, he adds.

He explains that the value cost for package A amounts to R1,2 billion, while package E is worth R1,8 billion, of which R900-million has been spent to date. The balance is being spent on asphalt surfacing, specialised bridge construction, electrification, drainage and minor concrete structures.

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The successful completion of package A for the FIFA World Cup has been a milestone for the JV, he says. He points to significant challenges on both contracts, including traffic accommodation and the movement of staff, equipment and materials to and from the various work sites. This resulted in several areas of work being limited to work between 9:00 and 15:00 to ensure that disruption to peak-hour traffic was kept to a minimum.

This prevented a full day's work and the planning of operations was critical. To handle the high traffic volumes flowing through the construction sites, teams dealing with barriers and signage, as well as flag people, worked day and night shifts to ensure a continuous presence on the site, he explains.

Further, he says that, in most cases, the JV performed services normally rendered by the emergency services, as teams on site are available immediately. High-visibility traffic safety vehicles were deployed to various areas to ensure mobility of staff.

Evans points out that the JV enforced strict safety measures, particularly regarding crossing of the existing freeway. Despite this safety precaution, there was one fatality, in which an employee was struck by a motorist.

The JV reports that between

the two contracts, about 450 core employees were sourced from the parent companies. Local staff employed for the duration of the contracts amounted to 800 employees. He says that raw materials were sourced from the road reserve, which is the strip of public land between abutting property boundaries, specifically gazetted for the provision of public right of way, and which includes the road carriageway, as well as footpaths and verges, where possible. This reduced project costs, and the use of external commercial sources of raw materials. This included bulk filling and high-quality road-building aggregate for the pavement layers.

Further, Evans points out that asphalt products for the overlays were sourced from local company Much Asphalt and ready-mix concrete was provided by Afrimix and AfriSam. A number of other suppliers were used to ensure that the benefit of external procurement was spread as widely as possible, ensuring compliance with the broad-based black economic empowerment targets specified in the contracts. Specialised incremental launching equipment is being employed on the bridge works and sonic levelling beams were used on the asphalt pavers to improve the rideability of the asphalt overlays.

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