

## **AfriSam launches southern Africa's most advanced cement mill**

Leading black-controlled construction materials group, AfriSam, has unveiled its brand new Vertical Roller Cement Mill (VRM), the first of its kind in southern Africa, at its cement plant in Roodepoort.

The cement mill, costing in excess of half a billion Rands, will more than double the plant's milling capacity, improve operational efficiency and significantly reduce energy consumption.

The new facility consists of a materials handling system, additional clinker silo to store, extract and transfer clinker to the new mill; a VRM to grind clinker to cement; a cement silo which can store up to 15 000 tons of cement and a second blending plant to convert pure cement into a number of different cement blends.

"We are proud to unveil this new state-of-the-art facility and to be the first cement producer to bring this technology to the region," says Charles Naudè, CEO, AfriSam South Africa.

"The additional capacity will enable us to improve our turn-around times and, in turn, offer better customer service, while reducing the impact of our operations on the environment."

VRMs have a number of advantages over traditional ball mills. These include lower energy consumption, increased grinding capability and lower noise levels.

"Energy-efficiency and minimum environmental impact are constant areas of focus in our business. The new mill will result in a 20 to 30% energy consumption reduction for every ton produced, more consistent product quality and improved operational efficiency."

Construction of the new mill commenced in early 2007, following a rigorous consultation process between Holcim and Loesche, the supplier of the mill.

“We worked closely with the Holcim Group from the beginning and throughout the duration of the project. The Group’s global experience in the installation and operation of these types of mills made for an invaluable partnership in the transferring of skills,” says Naudè.

At the peak of the project, there were 822 workers and 17 cranes on site, making safety a key consideration.

“Providing a safe working environment for all stakeholders is high on our priority list. The Mill 8 project achieved an exemplary safety record with only a few minor injuries and no serious injury to any of the workers during the entire construction period, which is quite an achievement for a project of this magnitude,” says Naudè.

The mill, commissioned in May 2009, brings the total production capacity of the Roodepoort plant to nearly 1.5 million tons per annum, enabling it to better service its customers, mainly in the retail and civil construction sectors in Gauteng and adjacent provinces.

As part of the upgrade, AfriSam and Eskom installed a new internal sub-station to receive and distribute power throughout the facility. A computerised new plant control system was also installed to cater for the new mill and all existing plant sections.

AfriSam’s Roodepoort plant commenced production in 1936, under the name Anglovaal Portland Cement Company Limited. It started as a cement factory, complete with clinker producing kilns. Today, it is only a grinding station and sources the cement clinker from its sister plants, Dudfield in North West and Ulco in the Northern Cape. The plant employs 80 permanent staff and produces three core products – AfriSam All Purpose Cement, AfriSam High Strength Cement and AfriSam Rapid Hard Cement.

AfriSam is the only cement producer in South Africa to produce specialised cement blends, and its blending plants at Roodepoort can provide customers with fit-for-purpose cement types.

The plant is ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 accredited and holds a total of twenty-eight NOSCAR awards for its exceptional safety, health, environment and risk management systems.

### **About AfriSam**

Founded as Anglovaal Portland Cement Company Limited in 1934, AfriSam is today the leading black-controlled building construction materials group in southern Africa. With operations in South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland, the company has total assets in excess of R3.7 billion, nearly 2 000 employees and an annual production capacity of over four million tons of cement.

It has six cement production facilities, eight cement depots, 16 quarries and aggregate operations, 42 readymix concrete plants and a Ground Granulated Blast Furnace Slag (GGBFS) milling plant. The company also has a 62.5 percent interest in Tanzania-based and listed, Tanga Cement Company.

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