

Ruthcon makes progress at Impala Plats

The concrete division of civil contractors, Ruthcon, is progressing well on the concrete work on the silos and conveyor trestles at Impala Platinum's No 20 shaft. The contract, valued at R13-million, is the largest sliding concrete operation yet for Ruthcon.

The two silos are 30 m high, with a 12 m internal diameter, and a wall thickness of 400 mm. Each has nine metre high internal columns supporting a 1,25 m thick diaphragm slab, while the six concrete trestles vary in height from 30 m to 9 m.

The work also includes the foundations and plinths for the take-up tower and transfer tower and other miscellaneous concrete work.

James Cane, Ruthcon concrete divisional head, and one of South Africa's industry stalwarts, says that it was a challenge to design and fabricate a new slipform system in time to undertake this project.

"The silos, including the internal columns, were constructed on a 24 hour basis using our own independently designed specialist slipform and hydraulic jacking system. Each silo consumed about 80 m³ of concrete and nine tons of reinforcing a day and each was constructed in eight days. It was quite a logistical challenge, which I am pleased to say, we handled as planned," says Cane.

Cane adds that the conveyor trestles will also be constructed using the sliding procedure.

The project was awarded in June 2006 and Cane says the company is well placed to complete it, to the client's required quality and safety standards, as planned by February 2007.

Ruthcon is an all-encompassing civil engineering contracting company that has the expertise and experience to tackle any construction project. Established in 1994, Ruthcon is at the forefront of black economic empowerment with majority black ownership, bringing to market a civil contractor committed to transformation and a new level of service excellence. CEM



The changing of the guard: (L to R) Ruthcon MD, Archie Rutherford, Conform shareholder John Cubley and Concrete division general manager, James Cane.

Ruthcon acquires Conform Construction

Civil engineering contracting company, Ruthcon recently acquired Conform Construction, taking over both the company and its existing contracts for an undisclosed sum. The full transfer of contracts and assets became official in January.

Conform, a concrete slidings and slip-form construction specialist, based in Chloorkop, has been in the industry for 26 years, having opened its doors for trading on February 29, 1980. It has established itself as a strong and reliable brand in the construction industry. Keeping its current name, it will merge with Ruthcon's Concrete division, to form a consolidated division headed up by Ruthcon's, James Cane.

"We believe that there is value in the brand and it is therefore important not to change the name. This was also one of the factors which contributed to our eventual decision to proceed with the acquisition. The Conform shareholders wanted to align themselves with a respected company that would keep the name and enhance the brand image. Added to this was

James' excellent reputation in the industry and his affiliations with a number of high profile contracts over the past 30 years," says Archie Rutherford, MD of Ruthcon.

The purchase is in line with the company's strategy to expand into the sliding industry, an offering Rutherford and Cane feel is important to have in Ruthcon's portfolio.

"Since establishing the concrete division, we have been looking at opportunities to bulk up on resources and grow this division. This division is the perfect opportunity for us to increase our resources and expand on a well known brand with an established customer and contract base," Rutherford adds.

The call for concrete slip-form construction has grown tremendously recently and the market feeling is that this trend will continue into the foreseeable future. This acquisition will offer the market a well established, experienced and progressive black empowered company in the concrete sector of the construction industry. CEM



Slip form construction of columns.



Silo 1 at Impala Platinum's no. 20 shaft in progress.