SEIFSA NEWS

SEIFSA Training Centre

ON A JOURNEY TO RESHAPE METALS AND ENGINEERING TRAINING LANDSCAPE

A SOLUTION THAT SAVES LIVES

THE SOUTH AFRICAN ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE

FROM METALS & ENGINEERING SECTOR PERSPECTIVE

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY CHANGES LOOM

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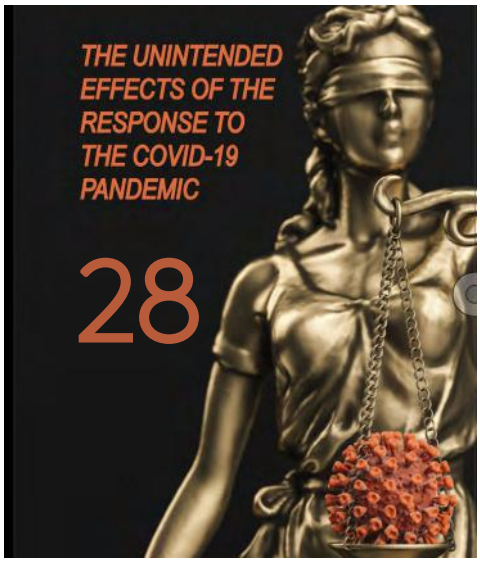
Cover

The SEIFSA Training Centre is poised to become a centre of excellence for training within the Metals and Engineering industry

10



The partnership which currently exists between the Government and business on fighting the pandemic is crucial. It is to be hoped that, once it has beaten this pandemic, that partnership will find expression in other aspects of our lives, including in the management of our economy

As the authorities had feared, the 2020 festive season proved to be a golden opportunity for the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. Notwithstanding necessary – but unpopular – decisions by the Government to declare some of the country's beaches closed and to proscribe alcohol sales and consumption, the number of COVID-19 infections shot through the roof during the holidays and claimed many lives in the process.

This year started with the number of infected and affected compatriots at its highest ever. While last year there were still people who could claim not to have personally known of anybody who had been infected or felled by COVID-19, there are not many who can make that claim now. By late January 2021, most of us knew of many individuals, some of whom are close to us, who had been infected and/or affected.

Coming as it did on top of our various challenges as a country, this pandemic compounds our economic woes and significantly strains the country's meagre resources. Quite correctly, vast amounts of money must now be re-directed towards a speedy acquisition of vaccines, without which we are in even worse trouble. By far the most urgent priority right now is the acquisition of the vaccine and the mass vaccination of South Africans to cover the 67% that would lead to herd immunity.

Until then, it will be important for everybody to comply fully with the various COVID-19 regulations, starting with the regular washing of hands, sanitising and wearing of masks. It will be vital that we all adopt a zero-tolerance approach to those who flout these and other regulations and encourage them to embrace them fully.

The partnership which currently exists between the Government and business on fighting the pandemic is crucial. It is to be hoped that, once it has beaten this pandemic, that partnership will find expression in other aspects of our lives, including in the management of our economy.

Since last year's negotiations on wages and conditions of employment in our sector were deferred because of the COVID-19 pandemic, these are now scheduled to take place this year. Once again, we encourage all companies that are members of Associations affiliated to SEIFSA to become active within their respective Associations and to be part of the process of the formulation of the mandate for our negotiating team. To be led by Operations Director Lucio Trentini, the negotiating team will operate strictly within the mandate given to us by our member Associations, through the assembly of Associations called the SEIFSA Council.

We will again publish regular updates on the process, in the 2021 Wage Negotiations Update, which will be sent out to all member companies and posted prominently on our website. Please look out for it.

Kaizer M Nyatsumba
Chief Executive Officer

STATE OF THE METALS AND ENGINEERING SECTOR REPORT

26 FEBRUARY 2021

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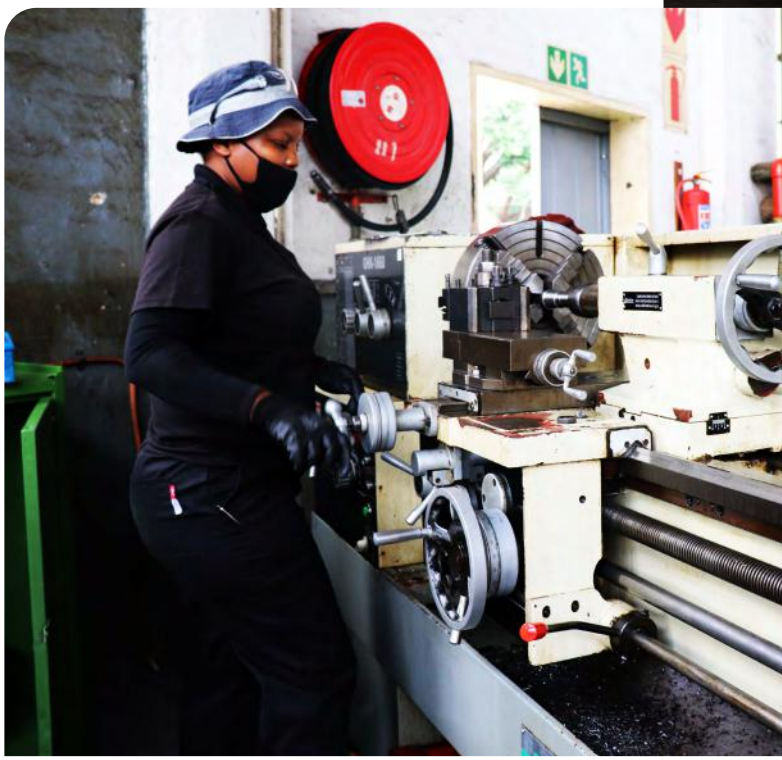
SEIFSA
Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of Southern Africa
OUR PASSION, YOUR SUCCESS

SEIFSA Training Centre on journey to reshape Metals and Engineering training landscape



Deep in the industrial heart of South Africa in Ekurhuleni – in Benoni to be exact – is the unassuming building that houses the SEIFSA Training Centre (STC), owned by the Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of Southern Africa (SEIFSA).

Not quite as grand as, say, the Great Hall of Wits University – or the famous entrance of Rhodes University. But within its walls lies the potential to churn out hundreds of the much-needed artisans who will be the ones to literally roll up their sleeves and rebuild the economy of South Africa.

However, there is a dire shortage of artisans despite the Government's stated intent to produce 30,000 artisans per annum by 2030. While the most recent figures, according to the government, show some progress – from 4,500 per year in 2005 to more than 20,000 per year by 2016 to 2017, it is clear that more needs to be done to ensure this pipeline if this country is to recover from the ravages of COVID-19 through President Cyril Ramaphosa's Infrastructure build programme.

The STC represents SEIFSA's commitment to producing quality artisans to not only build the economy, but to also reduce unemployment in the country and has been part of the Metals and Engineering Industry's training landscape since it was established 34 years ago as the Benoni Training Centre. Two name changes later – from Benoni Training Centre to Fundi Training Centre in 2008 and to SEIFSA Training Centre in 2020, it was in January relaunched under Thuthukisa Advisory and Consulting.

Thuthukisa is a specialist advisory, consulting, project management and skills programmes delivery company which has over the years become a trusted Alliance Partner, collaborating with SEIFSA on several projects in the Human Capital and Skills Development Division.

There are big and exciting plans in place for

The centre currently offers nine programmes, but Thuthukisa will be introducing new programmes, including refrigeration, robotics and 4IR

STC, said Preggy Chetty, Thuthukisa's Marketing and Sales Director. "There is so much potential in this centre that has not been realised and we intend to unlock it," he said.

He told SEIFSA News that the centre currently offers nine programmes but Thuthukisa will be introducing new programmes, including refrigeration, robotics and 4IR.

While apprenticeships and artisan training will remain core offerings, the STC is poised to become a centre of excellence for training within the Metals and Engineering industry and is being repositioned to become a premier comprehensive, high-quality skills development solutions centre, with offerings starting from entry-level artisan training to advanced skills-based post apprenticeship artisan development programmes. In addition to this, Mr Chetty said, the STC will offer accredited and non-accredited courses and other training to equip students with the non-technical skills needed for career progression.

Mr Chetty said Thuthukisa believes the STC can offer more than training, which is why their management team has decided to also offer a

> Vocations have the potential to address the unemployment crisis

range of coaching and mentoring programmes, along with entrepreneurial support initiatives. This is because, he said, vocations have the potential to address the unemployment crisis in South Africa. "Someone who trains to be a plumber or mechanic or electrician can go out and start his own business – he does not have to go out and look for employment," he said.

The training centre has been open since the beginning of January – right in the middle of the second surge of the COVID-19 pandemic. This has meant that the management, staff and learners at the STC have had to be extra vigilant and ensure they observe carefully COVID-19 safety protocols. The centre has a strict regime of screening that

includes monitoring of students' oxygen levels in addition to temperature screening.

Despite this, there has been a few positive cases since the start of the year. Paulos Mahlangu, Thuthukisa's Engineering and Technical Director, said the management decided to minimise the down time that results from forced shutdowns whenever a positive case is identified. "We have procured our own sanitising system, so when a case or suspected case is identified, we identify the individual, isolate them and then immediately deep sanitise the premises," he said. "This has reduced our down time to only 30 minutes as we cannot afford to lose productive hours," he said.

As with the rest of the world, the STC too has sought our digital solutions to ensure business continuity while minimising the spread of the disease. From February, the STC will be offering blended learning using through Amatrol, a global provider of skills-based, interactive technical learning. "Learners will be able to learn the theoretical component of their course online and then come to the centre for practicals," Mr Chetty said.

Thuthukisa is excited about the changes they are bringing and the road ahead. "We would like to see the STC become the trusted training partner for the Metals and Engineering Sector and we can't wait to help chart a course towards that achievement," he concludes.

For more information about the SEIFSA Training Centre and its offerings, visit https://training.seifsa.co.za.

How cheap and abundant material may be the answer to SA's rail transport challenges

Simon Norton, International Zinc Association Africa desk

Simon Norton

Last year, Business for South Africa outlined 12 key initiatives that they said would accelerate SA's economic recovery – possibly growing our GDP by R1-trillion and creating 800,000 jobs .

For one, the group has already called for the Government to implement Transnet's road-to-rail strategy which, in its simplest form, is the shifting of freight from road to rail.

Transnet's road-to-rail strategy has been on the public enterprise agenda for some 20 years now and has the potential to accelerate SA's economic recovery, which is why it's crucial that it should be implemented and acted upon now with no further delay. Furthermore, a project to widen the rail gauge on South African rail links would allow for high-speed intercity travel and fast movement of goods.

The shifting of freight from road to rail has many benefits. For one, rail transport systems are six times more energy efficient than their road counterparts, and four times more economical, which further drives the case for a safe, reliable cargo rail system as being fundamental to a country's economic growth. Shifting from road to rail will obviate the need to spend so much on roads and road repair and, in turn, make use of the road far more pleasant for the everyday motorist.

But to really understand why this needs to be a top priority, we must unpack the benefits in more detail, focusing specifically on the environmental impact, the opportunities for creating employment, the cost concerns, and how a modern, sophisticated rail network can help to make South Africa more competitive in the global arena.

Environmental best practices

The environmental case for a modern, sophisticated rail transport system speaks for itself - rail is six times more energy efficient than road, and four times more economical. According to a study by the Department of Environmental Affairs, 90% of the transport sector's greenhouse gas emissions is from road transport. Considering the global drive for a sustainable future, and given that rail is among one the most climate-smart transport options, it makes for the obvious choice.

Employment opportunities

The upgrade and expansion of our rail networks and infrastructure also has the potential to create employment opportunities on a larger scale. The unemployment statistics in the country have reached frightening levels that now call for urgent action.

Widening the rail gauge in South Africa has significant potential to create more jobs. Let's consider the impressive Gautrain rail project in its first phase of development. It created 34,000 direct jobs during construction alone and some 87,000 indirect jobs, according to a KPMG study. What's especially interesting is that a further 245,000 jobs were made available stemming from developments associated with the Gautrain project. In a country with a staggeringly high unemployment rate, these are the kinds of initiatives that we should be pursuing as a nation if we are to curb unemployment levels while contributing to a stronger economy.

Levelling the global playing field

Beyond creating employment opportunities here at home in SA, a modern and reliable rail network can afford the country a sharper competitive edge when it comes to international trade. Transport bottlenecks, together with the high cost and security concerns of road transport, are a key challenge in this arena.

The all-important how

While the benefits of upgrading our rail infrastructure is clear, we must caution against forging ahead with a quick-fix plan which isn't built on a sustainable, long term growth plan. We must calculate an approach that prioritises long-term successes versus short term profiteering, and understand that focusing on quality and performance in the present will yield fruitful dividends. This means investing in skill and quality materials.

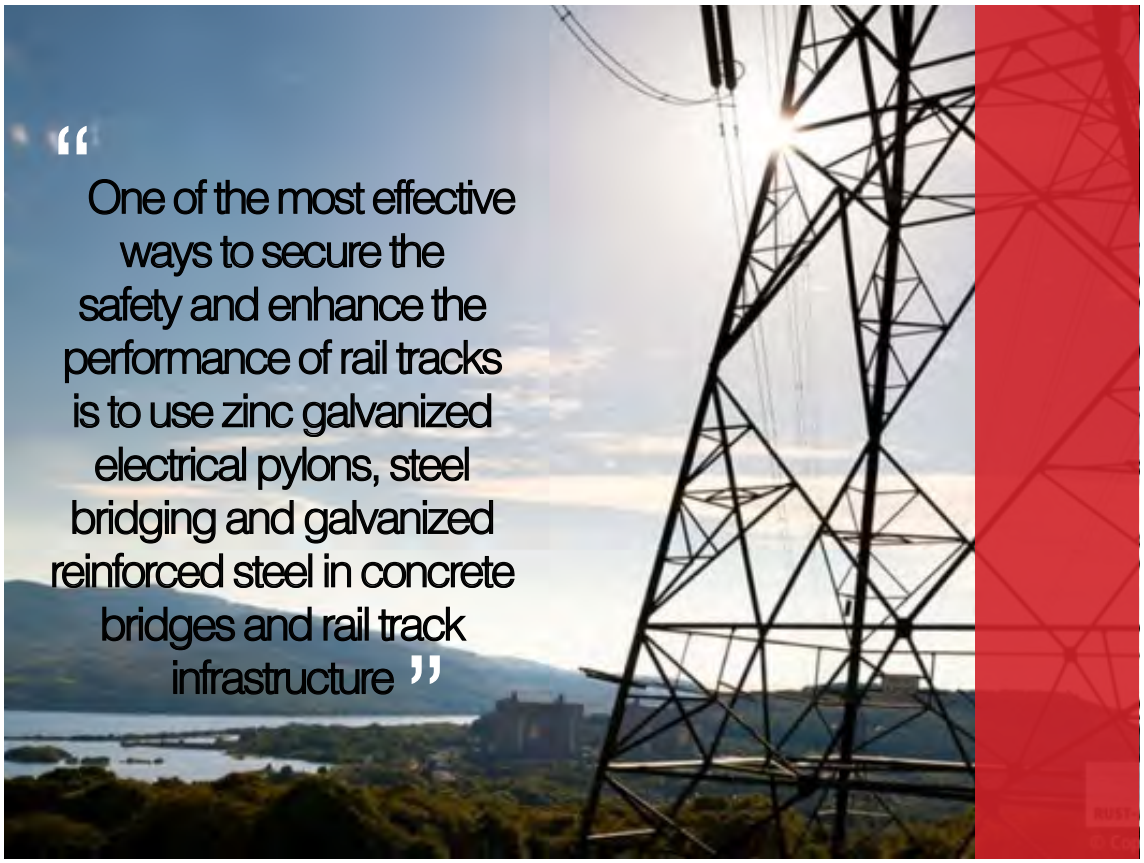
Which brings me to the importance of corrosion protection specific to the rail sector. Steel that has been improved through the hot dip galvanising process using zinc coatings must become standard practice in this arena. Notably, the use of zinc coatings does not increase the cost substantially, particularly when long-term savings on maintenance are taken into account. Rail tracks typically need to be replaced due to either mechanical wear or naturally occurring corrosion. In South Africa's coastal regions, the prevention of corrosion needs to become a key priority so that the expense of premature maintenance is managed effectively, as failure to do so could even result in the breakdown of the entire system.

Any effort to modernise our infrastructure needs to consider the value of galvanizing as an investment that adds to the lifespan of the infrastructure, makes the option a safer one, and holds the potential to save billions of rand in maintenance costs or purchasing replacement items and scrap materials, particularly near the coast.

One of the most effective ways to secure the safety and enhance the performance of rail tracks is to use zinc galvanized electrical pylons, steel bridging and galvanized reinforced steel in concrete bridges and rail track infrastructure. Beyond the modernisation of the rail track, rail station refurbishment efforts also need to consider ways to extend the lifespan of structures such as stairs, signs, bridges and the like. Enhancing the structural integrity of these makes them safer, less prone to vandalism and generally makes them more attractive.

What's more, the zinc required for hot dip galvanizing is widely and abundantly available around the world. In fact, the US Geological Survey estimates the world's total zinc reserves at 225-million tonnes, which is more than vastly significant. The new Orion zinc mine in Prieska in the Northern Cape, for example, will on average, produce 59,130 tonnes of zinc annually in concentrate compared to SA's output of 115,000 tonnes in 2019, according to Minerals Council SA data. Not forgetting that Vedanta at Gamsberg in the Northern Cape is also processing zinc concentrate for further refining into pure zinc.

If the USA's and Europe's impressive rail goods systems, as well as those of Japan and China, are anything to go by, we can take note that a reliable cargo and passenger rail system is fundamental to significant economic growth. Here on local shores, we need to ensure that we view our plans for rail growth holistically; this means prioritising longer term yields versus quick wins in the here and now.



Sick Pay Fund eases COVID burden of employers

South Africa welcomed 2021 with a second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, mostly driven by a variant strain of the virus. As the country battles the second strain and the continued impact of the lockdowns, businesses will continue to face financial constraints aggravated by COVID-19 cases in the workplace.

To assist companies in these tough times and provide some relief when dealing with possible infections and quarantining, the Sick Pay Fund last year introduced a new COVID-19 sick leave rule.

This rule makes provision for special COVID-19 sick leave benefits from the Sick Pay Fund at 50% of remuneration for employees who are asymptomatic and are required to self-isolate after contact with a COVID-19 positive person/s.

In such cases, the employee would need to claim illness benefits from the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) as well as from the Sick Pay Fund. This will allow the employee time off to self-isolate for 10 days in order to determine whether he/she develops symptoms of COVID-19 and/or whether he/she tests positive for the virus.

In cases where the employee has not exhausted his/her company sick leave benefits, the first two days absence, for which no medical certificate is required, will be paid by the employer and the remaining eight days by the Sick Pay Fund and the UIF. In cases where the employee has exhausted her/her company sick leave benefit, the SPF will pay benefits for the entire 10 days' absence.

The Process

To apply for the Special COVID-19 Sick Pay Fund benefit, the employer must submit the Sick Pay Fund Sick leave application form and attach confirmation letters from both the employer and the employee as proof that the parties have agreed to the 10 days' absence (Specimen letters are attached).

A certified copy of the member's ID as well as proof of banking details must also be included with the application.

Duration of Special COVID-19 Rule

The special COVID-19 Sick Pay Fund rule came into effect on 1 November 2020 and will remain in force until 31 March 2021, but may be extended by the Sick Pay Fund Trustees depending

MIBFA

METAL AND ENGINEERING INDUSTRIES BARGAINING COUNCIL SICK PAY FUND

SICK PAY FUND COVID 19 SPECIAL SICK LEAVE APPLICATION

EMPLOYER DECLARATION

I , Identity Number
(Employer's full name & surname)

Employed of , Fund Ref Number

(Employee's full name & Surname)

Hereby declare that the Company and the employee above have agreed that the employee must self quarantine and not

report for duty as a measure to curb the spread of Corona virus from to

The application for Sick Pay Fund benefits lodged is for the period stated above.

Signed at: on the

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE

EMPLOYER SIGNATURE/EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVE

TO BE PLACED ON COMPANY LETTERHEAD

MIBFA

METAL AND ENGINEERING INDUSTRIES BARGAINING COUNCIL SICK PAY FUND

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TO BE PLACED ON COMPANY LETTERHEAD

PLEASE UPLOAD THE FOLLOWING FORM FROM MIBFA WEBSITE

WWW.MIBFA.CO.ZA

Ruby Gibson

South Africa's skills shortage of engineering professionals is well documented, with research showing that South African engineers are leaving the country to practice abroad even as engineering careers are listed on the South African Critical Skills List for 2021. This means South Africa is forced to import engineers despite the high unemployment rate.

SEIFSA as an employer Federation, is proud to play its part in helping reverse this shortage one candidate at a time through its bursary programme. Through the bursary programme, SEIFSA identifies deserving candidates to fund their studies, helping build up a pipeline of skilled professionals for the Metals and Engineering (M&E) industry.

The federation is therefore proud to have kickstarted one woman's journey to being a civil engineer by funding her first-year studies at the Stellenbosch University.

Skilling up the Metals and Engineering industry

Ruby Gibson, 19, from Kloof, Durban in KwaZulu-Natal, applied for a SEIFSA bursary after reading about it in one of the brochures sent to her by the university, where she was intending to enroll to study civil engineering. "My parents are divorced and with my brother soon to be going to university, I knew we definitely needed the financial assistance, so that along with my high mathematics and science marks prompted me to apply for the SEIFSA bursary," Ms Gibson told SEIFSA News in a telephonic interview.

"Applying was an easy process – there were no hurdles to jump over and apart from a few online phone calls, there were no difficult interviews to go through," she added.

Her application was successful and SEIFSA paid for her first-year tuition through a partial bursary.

For her, civil engineering seemed an obvious career choice. During school years, Ms Gibson had enjoyed mathematics and physical science and had particularly loved engineering graphics and design during her school. In addition to this, she had familial connections to the building and design. "My grandfather was an architect and my uncle studied architecture, but because I loved mathematics and science, I preferred the structural side of the engineering field she said.

But studying civil engineering is not for the faint-hearted, she said. "You really need to work hard to pass," she said.

Presumably, this was not made any easier by the Coronavirus. Ms Gibson's freshman year at university was cut short by the COVID-19 pandemic. "We had to go home in March and it was online learning for the rest of year," she said.

She adds that although studying at home was a huge adjustment, she managed to get through the year and is excited that this year she'll be going back to campus. "I am looking forward to experiencing varsity life, especially since I'm res, so it will be fun. I also can't wait for in-person classes," she said.

She said she has also been appointed as a mentor and will be helping this year's first-year students to adjust to university life.

On her future career ambitions, Ms Gibson said she definitely wants to work and stay in the engineering field. She mentioned that she has a new bursary for this year and one the requirements of that bursary is that she needs to work for them. "It is a global company so I am hoping to gain some international working experience," she added.

But her global ambitions have not blinded her to the role of engineers in South Africa. "I think his field plays an important role in building up the economy of not only South Africa, but the rest of the world as well," she said.

SEIFSA will once again be offering bursaries to deserving students wanting to study in the M&E industry. For more information on SEIFSA bursaries, please visit our website.

Duferco pumps millions into new technology

Duferco Steel Processing, the producer of cold-rolled and galvanised coils, has invested R70-million for the installation of new air knife technologies from Danieli in January.

Duferco selected Italian-based Danieli Kohler zinc-pot wiping technology to upgrade the galvanizing line in its Saldanha, Western Cape plant. The solution incorporates the Danieli Electromagnetic Strip Stabilizer and the Automatic Closed Loop Control, which will complement the well-established Danieli Kohler X-Jet system.

Duferco will be the first coating facility in Africa using Daniel's latest advanced coating technology. The technology allows ultra-low thickness coatings to be applied at high speeds, resulting in highest levels of competitiveness in terms of finish quality and production costs. The selected wiping system will be installed in the line producing galvanized coated products and Duferco envisages the technology to be fully operational by mid-February.

This spend follows the company's investment of R60-million in 2019 upgrade to replace electronic drives for the plant's reduction mill which had become obsolete. The dismounted drives are custom-built and could not be sourced generally. Keeping abreast of constantly changing technology is essential and comes not only with high capital costs, but also require the development of local skills and know-how for the operation and maintenance of such equipment.

Duferco said it is attuned to the negative effect of supply disruptions, especially for customers who are dependent on niche products that are not available locally or internationally.

"Although the steel sector is struggling and we are experiencing tough trading conditions, we cannot afford to remain static. We need to continue to offer our customers the best products produced with the best technology and we will continue to invest in our processes to stay competitive. The Danieli installation will allow us to produce a wider range of products, thus making our product range, which now includes non-exposed automotive grades for which we obtained European certification in 2020, more attractive. This upgrade will also allow Duferco to compete with imported products if we are able to obtain hot rolled coil at competitive international prices," said Ludovico Sanges, Duferco's Managing Director.

“Duferco said it is attuned to the negative effect of supply disruptions, especially for customers who are dependent on niche products that are not available locally or internationally”

A solution that saves lives

Tech Edge Group's Winches and Winders has successfully tested and launched its own Mobile Mines Rescue Winders (MRW).

Speaking to SEIFSA News, Winches and Winders Financial Director Barbara Moore said the company has designed and developed a deep-level mobile rescue winder that can accommodate depths of up to 1,5km and an Ultra Deep Level MRW that can accommodate depths of 3km.

Ms Moore said the catalyst for its design was the 2010 mining accident at Chile's San Jose gold mine, in which 33 miners were trapped underground at the mine for 69 days. South Africa was one of the countries that contributed to relief efforts.

The incident highlighted critical issues in the technology available to speedily implement relief efforts, prompting Russell Moore, who at the time was Managing Director of Winches and Winders, and himself a professional engineer to commence the design a mobile rescue winder that would address the need for rapid response, deployment and resolution of underground mining emergencies.

Winches & Winders offered the concept to South African Mines Rescue Services, which then contracted the company to design the MRW.

"We started development of both the Deep Level and Ultra Deep Level MRWs as soon as we could following the events in Chile in 2010. We contracted with Mines Rescue Services in 2011, and it has taken nine years of design, finessing and testing for us be totally satisfied with the product. Research and development of a revolutionary new product is expensive and time consuming, and had to fit in with our regular winder manufacture. We also wanted to hone the design parameters to ensure that, when completed, the MRWs would be world class," Ms Moore said.

She said that they wanted to ensure that the MRW would enable first responder teams to access remote shafts and reach depths of 3km. This is the greatest depth, by far, to which any rescue winder can operate, worldwide.

In addition to this, the design team also needed to ensure the MRW was engineered to improve mobilisation and efficacy of rescue efforts with design elements including:

- Rough terrain capability for off-road and rural access
- A self-contained system, including power supply and sheave wheel deployment
- Normal height vehicle so no additional road permits are required
- All normal statutory requirements for man-riding mining conveyances.
- 3200m length of wind for the Ultra Deep Level MRW. This capability is unique to the company's MRW as the coiling as well as the size of the winder had to be optimised given that the vehicle had to traverse motorways and fit under bridges. Normally, winders do not exceed four layers of rope. "Our rescue winder has 13 layers made possible by our coiling mechanisms," Ms Moore said.

She said, however, that one of the most exciting elements of the MRW is the sheave wheel deployment system, which is so novel that we have patented it. The self-contained sheave wheel means that no additional headgear or on-site rigging is required at the rescue site, saving valuable hours in rescue operations.

That Winches & Winders were able to able to patent their sheave wheel deployment system is testament to the company's innovation and excellence over the years. "With more than 80 years of operation in the international mining industry, we pride ourselves on our innovation and excellence in engineering. Our two Mobile Rescue Winders are truly the culmination of those ideals. We continue to work on engineering solutions to improve health and safety in mines, and will shortly announce further ground-breaking mine safety measures."

Mine Rescue Services, the owner of the first Ultra Deep Level MRW, collaborated with South Deep mine to test the MRW on 21 January at the mine's Twin Shafts, one of the deepest mineshafts in the world.

China to further reduce steel's carbon footprint

"It is urgent and of vital importance for the industry to further reduce energy and resource consumption and make more progress in low carbon development."

China will come out with an action plan soon to further reduce the carbon footprint of the steel industry in the country, a top industry association said in January.

According to the China Iron and Steel Association (CISA), the move came after the country vowed to peak its carbon emissions by 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060, as part of wide-ranging environmental protection efforts that envisage carbon reductions in industries like cement.

Qu Xiuli, deputy head of the CISA, said China will accelerate the application of non-fossil energy in the steel industry, especially the use of

hydrogen as fuel, while continuously optimizing the raw material structure and energy mix. More enhancements in steel production technologies and procedures will be made to ease the bottlenecks in carbon emission reduction.

The country will also encourage steel companies to adopt green development throughout the product life cycle, while vigorously promoting green steel product design among steel mills, as well as the use of high-strength, long-life and recyclable products in the downstream sector.

Besides, with a focus on public buildings in big cities, the country will also speed up promotion of steel frame building technologies to raise awareness about green steel consumption.

"Steel is one of the key sectors for reducing carbon emissions this year," Qu said.

"It is urgent and of vital importance for the industry to further reduce energy and resource consumption and make more progress in low carbon development."

Data from the association showed that the industry had achieved another round of improvements regarding the efficient use of energy and resources last year.

Average energy consumed for every metric ton of steel produced by the key steel enterprises was equivalent to 545.27kg of standard coal last year, down 1.18% on a yearly basis.

Water intake for every ton of steel produced fell 4.34% on a yearly basis, while sulfur dioxide emissions decreased 14.38%. The utilisation rate of steel slags and coke gas increased on a yearly basis, albeit slightly.

Qu said China will also strengthen efforts for supply-side structural reforms, including strictly obeying the "capacity swaps" rules, or banning addition of any new capacity unless a bigger volume of old capacity is eliminated, to ensure zero growth of unlawful capacity.

She said the country will encourage mergers and acquisitions led by big steel companies to form new steel giants that have influence over regional markets.

The association also estimated China's steel demand will increase slightly this year, due to stable macroeconomic policies shaped by the country's effective control of the COVID-19 pandemic and the steady rebound in economic growth.

In 2020, China produced more than 1.05 billion tons of crude steel, up 5.2 percent year-on-year, according to the National Bureau of Statistics. The actual consumption of steel increased 7 percent in 2020 from a year earlier, data from the CISA showed.

Source : http://global.chinadaily.com
www.metaljunction.com

India steel production declines by more than 10%

Bucking the global trend, China and Russia produced more steel in 2020 than in 2019. Among the top five nations, production declined in India, Japan and the United States by up to 17.2%.

According to World Steel Association (WSA), crude steel production fell globally by 0.9% in 2020 to 1,864 million tonne (MT) over the previous year; but China bettered its production to 1,053 MT, up by 5.2% over 2019. China's share of global crude steel production increased from 53.3% in 2019 to 56.5% in 2020.

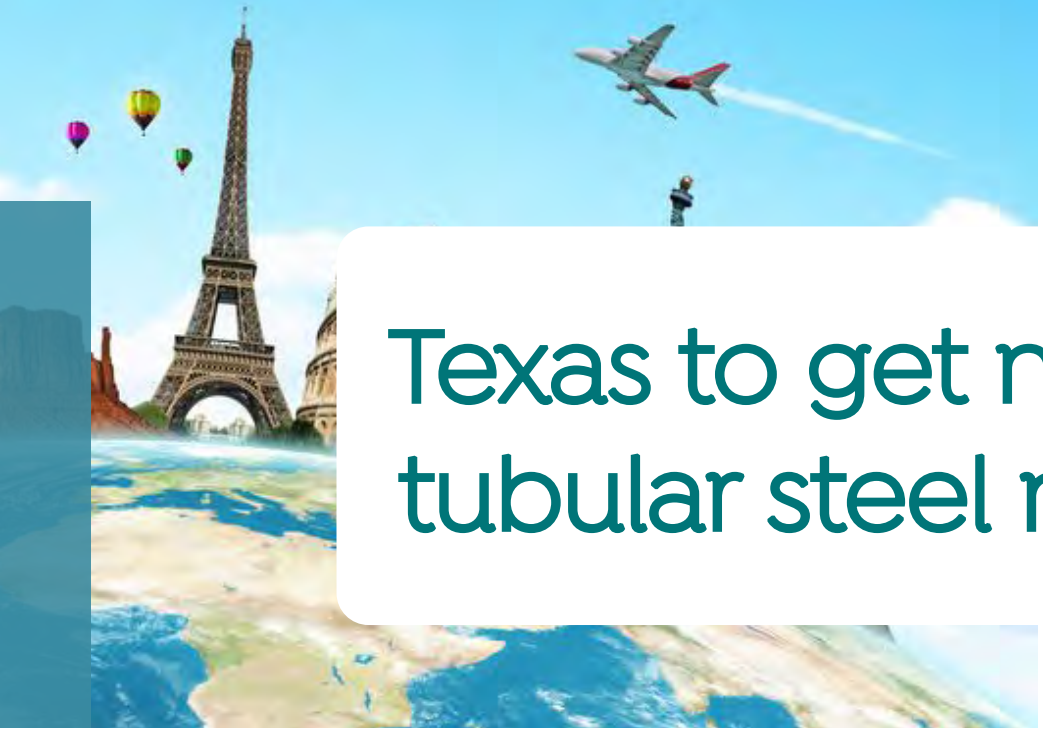
Russia's production also improved by 2.6% to 70.4 MT. Toppling the US, Russia also managed to improve its ranking by one notch to the fourth position among world's top five steel producing nations.

Though India retained its second spot, its production fell by 10.6% in 2020 to 99.6 MT from 111.4 MT a year earlier. India's share in the global output shrunk to 5.3% in 2020 from 5.9% a year ago. Japan also retained its third spot, but its production fell by 16.2% to 83.2 MT.

The US, the worst hit in the pandemic, produced 72.7 MT crude steel in 2020, down 17.2% over 2019.

Overall, Asia produced 1,374.9 MT crude steel in 2020, an increase of 1.5% compared to 2019; but production declined 11.8% in the European Union to 138.8 MT. Production in North America was also down 15.5% to 101.1 MT; the decline in South America was milder at 8.4%. Production in Africa remained unchanged at 17.2 MT.

Source : https://www.financialexpress.com/industry
www.metaljunction.com



Texas to get new tubular steel mill

Tex-Isle, which has headquarters in Houston, has announced plans to open a tubular steel mill in Robstown, Texas, in the third quarter of 2021. The provider of oil country tubular goods (OCTG), line pipe and associated services, says it embarked on a vertical integration initiative in 2009 that has included the creation of two new divisions: Tex-Isle Coating in George West, Texas, and Tex-Isle Processing in Robstown. The greenfield project will be adjacent to its current OCTG heat treating, inspection and threading facility in Robstown.

According to the company, the new mill will build on its Asset Based Distribution model and provide feedstock to its other facilities, bringing Tex-Isle's total capital investment in the region to nearly $100-million.

"A pipe mill is the natural progression of our long-term strategic plan, which started over a decade ago. Our Asset Based Distribution model of vertical integration combines the traditional benefits of distribution with the scope of a manufacturer, creating a unique blend of services for our customers. Once complete, the new mill will dive a level deeper into our cost structure as we continue our crusade against inefficiencies in the supply chain. Having these facilities, along with private ownership and a strong balance sheet, allows us to deliver customer-first service and flexibility. which I'm certain will pay dividends to our clients, our community, and our company for years to come," said Chris Kayem, President of Tex-Isle.

The mill is designed to produce steel tubes from about 6cm to 2.375 inches to about 21cm in outside diameter. It will be able to produce 350,000 tons per year, of which, 250,000 tons are slated for American Petroleum Institute material, with the remaining 100,000 tons reserved for structural products, according to the company. Tex-Isle says the addition of structural tubulars will deliver much-needed supply to Corpus Christi and south Texas more generally.

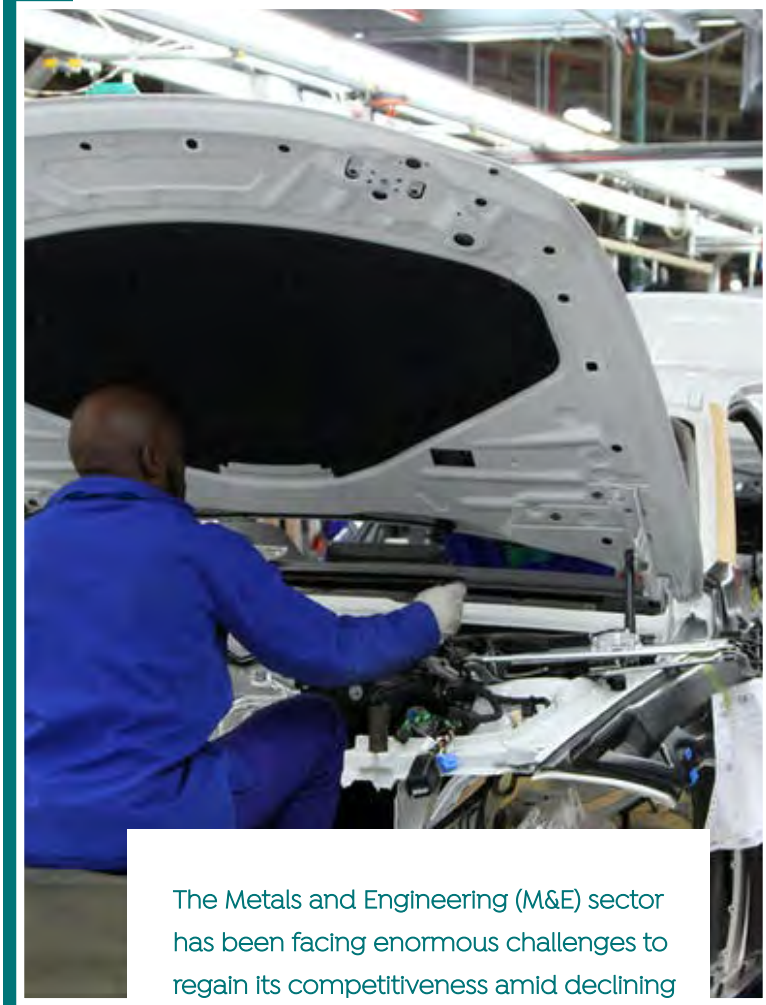
"The growth in the coastal bend area around Corpus Christi provides enormous opportunity for our company. Our growing facility in Robstown has numerous strategic advantages. We are an operating foreign trade zone, we are located on a Union Pacific mainline and we are within 20 minutes of the deep-water Port of Corpus Christi. At the port, we are developing property for a lay down and storage facility and have been one of the major bulk cargo customers over the past number of years. Lastly, Steel Dynamics will be opening a new state of the art electric arc furnace (EAF) steel mill right up the road in Sinton. We feel this is an ideal manufacturing footprint which tightens our supply chain," said Billy Sias, Tex-Isle's Business Development Manager.

The facility will run totally on electric technology, allowing for renewable energy to be used to power the mill, Tex-Isle says. In addition to all-electric manufacturing, the pipe mill's raw material, hot-rolled coil, will be supplied by manufacturers using electric arc furnace (EAF) technology from as much as 85 percent recycled material.

Kayem said: "This facility represents our ongoing commitment to expanding our manufacturing capabilities while also lowering our carbon footprint. We are constantly evaluating further opportunities to achieve both of these goals."

Source : https://www.recyclingtoday.com /article / www.metaljunction.com

THE SOUTH AFRICAN ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE



The Metals and Engineering (M&E) sector has been facing enormous challenges to regain its competitiveness amid declining demand conditions since 2010. This has been due to factors such as rising energy costs, unreliable energy supply, rising logistical costs, limited raw material supply, exchange rate volatility, capacity under-utilisation, subdued demand, declining margins, as well as rising imports.

The challenges of the M&E sector have continued in recent years, thereby impacting negatively on levels of production, sales volume and sustainability of operations, with low investment thus extended implications on job creation.

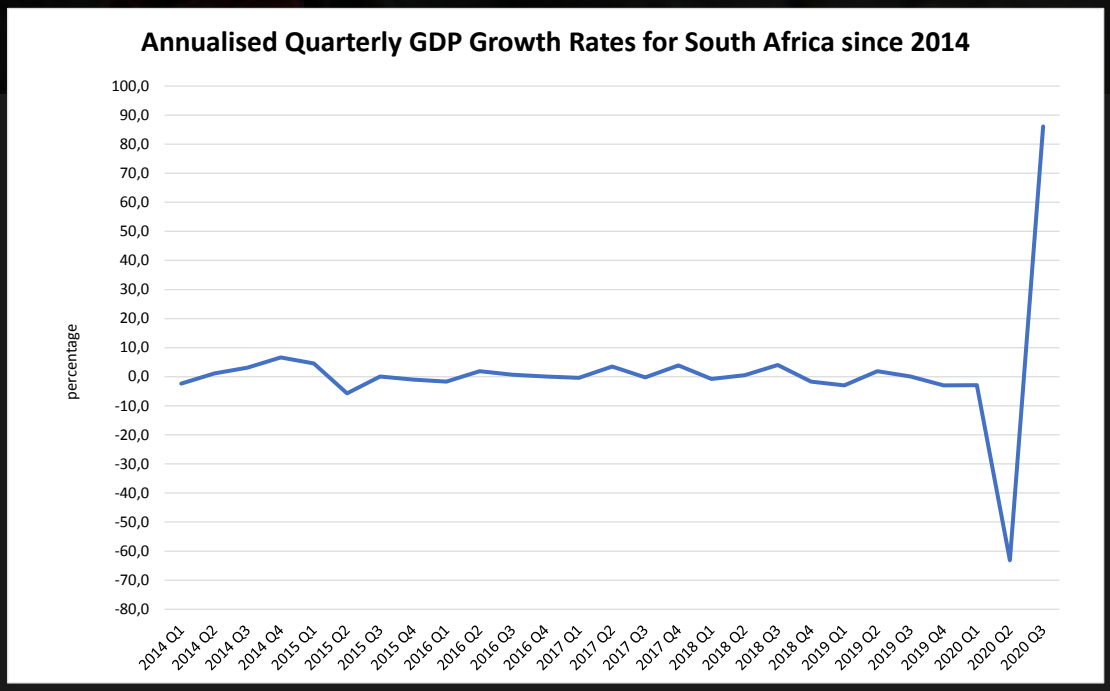
While the cluster of industries was able to weather economic difficulties and expand in 2017 and 2018, this was not the case in 2019 and 2020, which proved to be significantly difficult years for local businesses. Although it was clear that 2020 was still going to be a difficult year for local businesses, with ongoing pressure on margins, the (COVID-19) pandemic threw a spanner in the works in South African business activity from the end of the first quarter of 2020, leading to a drastic fall in industrial activity and worsening the demand conditions in relation to previous years.

The COVID-19 outbreak across South Africa and the rest of the world slashed production and sales forecasts as well as the overall economic outlook. Shutdown measures implemented by the South African government from March 2020, negatively impacted manufacturing activity.

The South African overall economic conditions were, therefore, challenging for the rest of 2020 from an M&E sector perspective. The sector is highly dependent on the performance of the overall South African economy. GDP trends in 2020, therefore, presented one of the worst environments for the sector as depicted in figure 1.

Figure 1:

South Africa's economy grew by an annualised 66.1% in the third quarter of 2020, recovering from a record 51.7% slump in the April - June period. This was the strongest



Source: StatsSA

pace of expansion since 1993, with manufacturing, trade and mining being the biggest drivers of growth following the easing of COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. Despite the rebound, the economy is still 5.8% smaller than it was at the end of 2019.

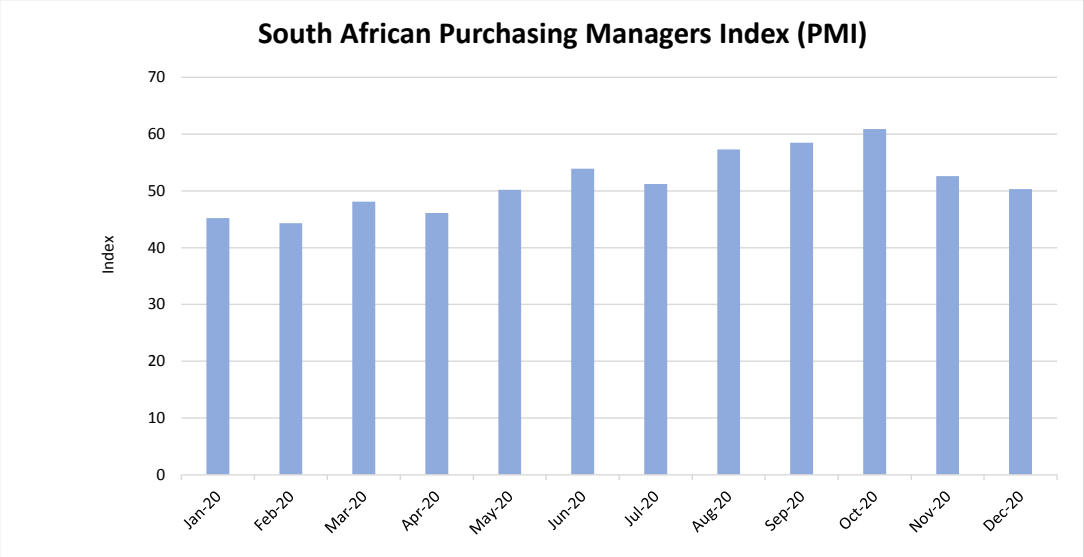
Manufacturing advanced at an annualised rate of 210.2%, mostly driven by increases in the production of basic metal products, petroleum, vehicles, and food and beverages; the trade, catering and accommodation industry increased at a rate of 137%; and mining and quarrying expanded at a rate of 288.3%. Expenditure on GDP increased at an annualized rate of 67.6% in the third quarter, as household consumption, exports and fixed investment recovered.

While the pace of decline moderated from second quarter of 2020 due to the gradual easing of lockdown restrictions, industrial output contracted relatively sharply in the quarter. Meanwhile, business sentiment remained entrenched in negative territory in the same period, likely holding back capital spending.

Turning to quarter four of 2020, however, the manufacturing PMI returned to growth for the first time in 18 months, hitting an over two-and-a-half-year high amid improved demand dynamics. Recently, the South Africa's Absa Manufacturing PMI fell further to 50.3 in December of 2020 from 52.6 in the prior month, pointing to near stabilisation in the manufacturing sector after four consecutive months of strong growth, as depicted in Figure 2. This was the lowest reading since July when activity contracted, as business activity and new sales declined amid the reintroduction of some lockdown restrictions to curb a second wave of infections

Moreover, despite a stubbornly high number of Covid-19 cases, authorities announced the reopening of borders to all international travelers on 11 November 2020, in a bid to revive the ailing tourism industry. On 28 October 2020, the government through the Minister of Finance Tito Mboweni tabled its medium-term budget statement, reaffirming its commitment to fiscal consolidation and debt stabilisation.

Figure 2:

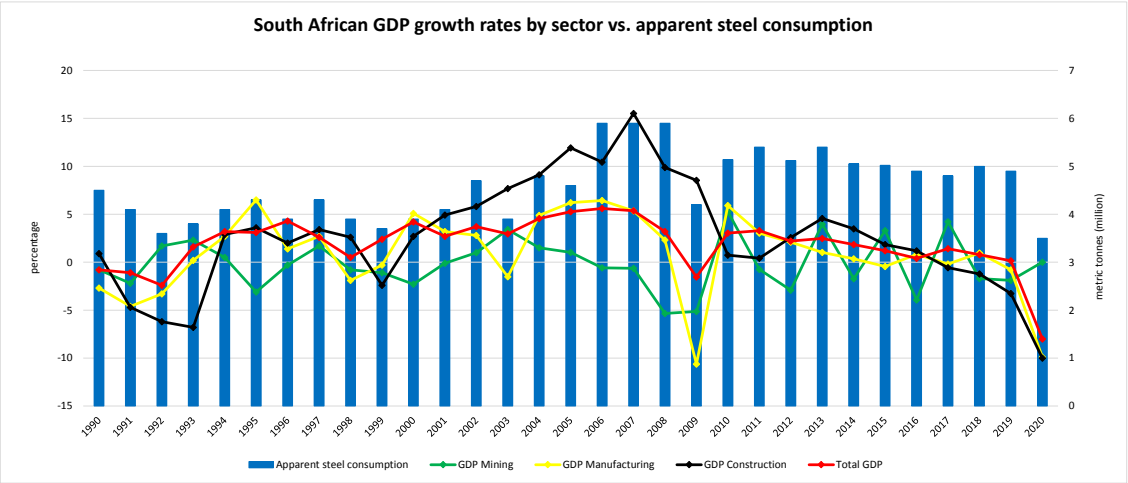


Source: BER

The M&E sector is heavily reliant on the performance of key sectors of the economy such as construction, mining, other manufacturing subsectors such as automotive industry as well as the agriculture sector in relation to its market segment. One of the key indicators to this is demonstrated in the graph below, showing overall GDP growth rates of the overall South African economy, key M&E market segments of construction, mining, and manufacturing; in relation to apparent steel consumption, a major sub-sector within the M&E sector.

As depicted in figure 3, it is disappointing to note that the construction sector is also under pressure, declining since 2017, thus demonstrating lack of activity to drive growth in steel demand. The other key sectors of manufacturing and mining have also been on a decline since 2010. Government infrastructure projects is a key demand driver for the Steel industry and overall economic activity, as can be demonstrated, during the period 2002 to 2010, massive infrastructure investments injection into the South African economy led to the construction sector growing at an average rate of 11% during this period, reaching a peak of 15% in 2007, while fixed investment growing by almost 12% on average.

Figure 3:



Source: StatsSA

Business confidence was also relatively high during this period, stimulating growth in other sectors of the economy such as the manufacturing and mining sectors. The South African economy was growing overall at an average of 5%, levels which have not been reached in recent years as infrastructure investment activities have slowed down.

These key infrastructure projects being implemented were mainly energy projects such as Medupi and Kusile, coupled with the Gautrain project as well as Soccer World Cup 2010-related projects. Since the completion of most of these infrastructure projects, demand for M&E sector products such as steel has also declined.

State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) have continued to drive public sector infrastructure spending implementation, with a total of R339.1-billion, representing a largest allocation in the last four years of 35.3%. The energy and transport logistics took up the largest value by sector, with total values of R211.7-billion (22.1%) and R311.2-billion (32.4%) respectively.

The South African Government has admitted to the challenges faced in implementation of infrastructure-related projects. Among other notable factors has been massive corruption in tender processes, insufficient capacity and skills especially at provincial and local Government level, as well as mismanagement of financial resources within SOEs

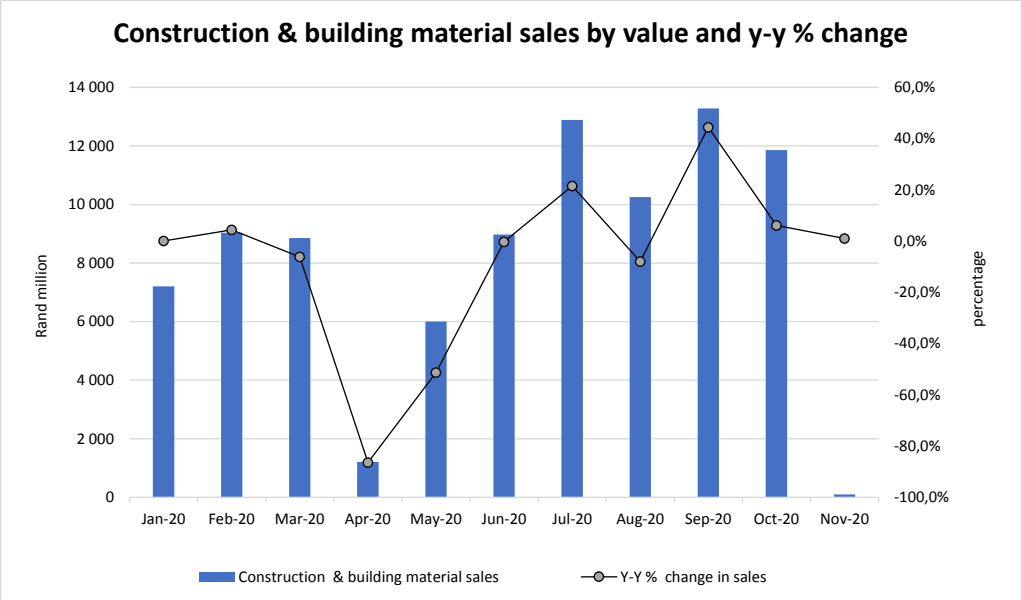
To address this, Government is resourcing project preparation facilities, reviewing regulation and policies and introducing reform. Such developments are imperative for the M&E sector as lack of project implementation has affected demand conditions. The construction sector alone accounts for 65% of the market for the M&E sector in South Africa and its performance is key to supporting the sector.

As can be depicted in Figure 4, after a dip in construction and building materials products sales in April 2020 to R1.2-billion due to COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, monthly sales started to improve into November 2020, reaching R12-billion, as depicted in figure 10.

From March 2020, sales for construction and building materials products were lower than 2019, with the exception of July, September, October and November 2020, in which year-on-year growth rates were positive, thus indicating improvements in business activity under eased lockdown levels.

Statistics South Africa data shows that year-on-year growth rate of construction and building materials sales since September 2019 into February 2020 averaged 2.5%. The impact of the lockdown was a massive year-on-year decline in sales of -86.4% and -54.3% in April and May 2020.

Figure 4: Construction and building material sales in 2020



Source: StatsSA

The analysis below is the current landscape of the M&E sector in relation to the broader dynamics facing the South African economy in 2020.

Strengths

- Projected improvement in over GDP growth into 2021.
- Business confidence picking up recently.
- Manufacturing PMI in expansionary territory.

Weakness

- Rising electricity costs.
- Unreliable electricity supply.
- Rising logistical costs.
- Rising imports.
- Insufficient demand.
- Declining price (intermediate and final manufactured goods).

Threats

- Low capacity utilisation.
- Raw material availability from supporting industries (export of scrap metal and minerals).
- A second wave of COVID-19 infections accompanied by new business activity restrictions in South Africa.
- Low economic activity in export destination due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Opportunities

- Government infrastructure stimulants package.
- Steel Master Plan drafted by DTIC to address challenges in the industry.
- Rising demand of construction and building material in SA since May 2020 (monthly average of R1-billion according to latest data though lower than 2019).

The road to recovery for the M&E sector, as depicted by the current landscape, will require targeted policy interventions, especially in an economy with a 30.8% unemployment rate.

SEIFSA through its Economic and Commercial Division will soon be releasing the *State of the Metals and Engineering Sector Report, 2021-22* in which several elements such as recommendations on policy interventions as well as an outlook for 2021 and beyond will also be covered.

Chifipa Mhango

Chief Economist and Executive Head of Economic and Commercial Division

The unintended effects of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged our perspective on every day life, and what our expectations are of service providers. These challenges were brought into sharp focus in the Guardrisk Insurance Company Limited v Café Chameleon (CC (Case No. 632/20) [2020] ZASCA 173) Appeal Court case.

Café Chameleon, a restaurant in Cape Town, had an insurance policy underwritten by Guardrisk. In terms of the policy, Café Chameleon was insured against loss from business interruption due to notifiable diseases, among other situations. The question that the court had to answer was whether Guardrisk was liable to indemnify it for any loss incurred since 27 March 2020, arising from the interruption of Café Chameleon's business due to the national lockdown imposed in response to the rapid spread of COVID-19.

The essential dispute between the parties centred around the clause "loss…resulting in interruption (of) the business due to notifiable [disease] occurring within a radius of 50km of the premises".

The definition of a notifiable disease in terms of the policy was "illness sustained by any person resulting from any human infectious or human contagious diseases, an outbreak of which the competent local authority has stipulated shall be notified to them…"

A State of National Disaster was declared on 15 March 2020. In response to the pandemic, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced a nationwide lockdown that commenced on 23 March 2020. From 26 March 2020 until 16 April 2020, everyone was required to stay at home, people were allowed to leave their homes for limited purposes to perform essential services, obtain essential goods and services or medical emergencies. As a result, restaurants such as Café Chameleon were forced to cease trading.

Like most businesses, Café Chameleon sustained devastating losses by the interruption of its business and sort indemnity for these losses from Guardrisk. Their insurance claim was rejected. In response, Café Chameleon approached the courts for relief.

The Appeal Court was called upon to answer two questions, firstly, was the imposition of the lockdown by government in response to the multiple outbreaks of a notifiable disease throughout the country covered by the infectious disease clause. Secondly, whether the outbreak of COVID-19 in Cape Town caused business interruption for Café Chameleon.

On the first question, the insurance policy covered specified defined events, which typically require physical damage to property, and events that do not cause damage to property, but occur within a specified radius of the insured premises. Guardrisk argued that the policy did not cover the insured, as no competent local authority had stipulated that the disease is notifiable. Secondly, the cover did not extend to a wider area, including countrywide or global events. Thirdly, the policy did not cover business loss due to a government order. Lastly that there was no causal link between the defined event and the interruption of the business, as the interruption was a consequence of the national lockdown and not the local occurrence of the disease.

On the first question, the appeal court considered whether the policy coverage under infectious disease would be triggered if the disease was notifiable. A notifiable disease is one which poses public health risks and has the potential to spread regionally or internationally, which was the case with COVID-19, and requires a government response. The appeal court accepted that a notifiable disease almost always carries the risk of a government response, and is therefore part and parcel of the insured peril/event.

On the question of whether the infectious disease clause covers the COVID-19 pandemic, Guardrisk submitted that the pandemic went beyond anything that the industry could have foreseen. In other words, no insurance company would have underwritten a policy where the risk of such a large scale and unimagined losses would materialise. The court found that there was no substance for such an argument, as an interpretation of a contract requires an objective analysis, examining the language, context and purpose. In this regard, a policy may include cover for an earthquake, but that does not mean that the parties realistically thought the risk of an earthquake would materialise.

Guardrisk argued that the policy requires the event to be within a 50km radius, therefore at a localised scope, excluding consequences of events within a wider area and global events. The government's response to a national occurrence of COVID-19, which causes business interruption and resultant loss is therefore not covered.

The court denied that submission and stated that the 50km radius acts as both a threshold or qualifying requirement for liability under that clause, and, a break against liability for far-flung occurrences and beyond it.

Guardrisk submitted that the lockdown was in response to several outbreaks in different parts of the country and was not limited to Cape Town. The court rejected the submissions, and maintained that a proper reading of the clause does not support that stance as, the rapid spread of the disease in Cape Town would have also motivated the relevant authorities in recommending the implementation of the national lockdown.

It is now established that a notifiable disease as envisaged in the clause necessitates a government response, it must then follow that the insured peril includes both its occurrence with the radius, and the government's response to it. Where the response is aimed at curbing the spread of the disease in multiple areas and the covered area, it must be covered by the policy. It follows then, that the government's response to COVID-19, which resulted in the interruption of Café Chameleon's business activities, and resultant loss, are covered by the policy.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant response by the government has had many unintended effects on citizens and business. In times like such, one would expect that an insurance company, would be amenable in indemnifying their clients against such consequential losses.

ACCREDITED
TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT
SERVICE PROVIDERS

Accredited Temporary Employment Service Providers as at 29 January 2021

- Adcorp Blu a division of Adcorp Staffing Solutions (Pty) Ltd
- Adcorp BLU a div of Adcorp Workforce Solutions (Pty) Ltd
- Alos Business Solutions (Pty) Ltd
- ALOS Holdings (Pty) Ltd
- AMT Africa Recruitment
- AMT Placement Services
- Bathusi Staffing Services (Pty) Ltd
- CAP Personnel Placements (Pty) Ltd
- CSS Labour (Pty) Ltd
- Eduardo Construction (Pty) Ltd
- EFS Labour Consultants cc
- ESG Recruitment cc
- Fempower Personnel (Pty) Ltd
- Gee 2 Kay (Pty) Ltd
- Impact Human Resources
- International Task Labour cc
- Ithemba Langemphela
- JLH Group (Pty) Ltd
- Lavoro Matkri (Pty) Ltd
- Lekang Projects & Security Services cc
- Mabhele and Associates cc
- Madobra (Pty) Ltd
- MECS Growth (Pty) Ltd
- On Time Boiler And Engineering Support Services cc
- Phakisa Holdings (Pty) Ltd
- Phakisa MSP (PTY) Ltd
- Primeserv Denverdraft (Pty) Ltd
- Primeserv Staff Dynamix (Pty) Ltd
- Quyn International Outsourcing (Pty) Ltd
- Scribante Labour Consultants (Pty) Ltd
- Sindawonye Services
- STAFFATACLICK (PTY) LTD
- Themba Njalo Camden
- Tributum Emawi (Pty) Ltd
- Vusithemba Mpumalanga
- Workforce Staffing (Pty) Ltd

Digital Occupational Health & Safety – Ensuring the health & safety of our employees in these turbulent times

By Leon Viljoen

The sudden onset of the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of companies taking care of the wellbeing of their employees in a holistic manner. Health and safety are two key pillars in doing this. But with lock-down and remote work many companies were left in the dark, and that is why it is important for companies to ensure that their occupational health and safety (OHS) offering is not left behind in this digital age.

With this came a rapid digital system influx into the market, causing a lot of uncertainty amongst companies, especially small and medium-sized (SMEs) companies. One of the biggest mistakes many of these companies make is seeing these solutions as something that only large size companies can afford, overlooking the cost-benefit that they will gain in employing a smart system to support their employees and even their daily reporting.

But with so many of these in the market, it is difficult to distinguish between the best, good and not-so-good other than by looking at the bottom line, meaning price. So, what should these systems comprise of and what functionality should they provide?

With over 19 years' experience in the manufacturing sector in senior management positions, I have seen a clear correlation between the execution of quality health and safety processes and systems. In my opinion, a digital OHS system that adds value to a company, saving time and money should encompass one single system that covers both health and safety.

Another feature is that it uses both a web interface and has a mobile application (both for Android and IOS) that can be accessed offline when there is no network coverage. This will ensure that every employee becomes part of the company's OHS system, making use of their own smart devices or with company tablets. With a secure log-in it allows for security, safety but also tracking and tracing of employees reporting and management of their mobility. It should also have an analytical capability that not only displays the data in dashboards, but also highlights trends and potential problem areas. Then the most important thing that provides ease of use is the integration of the financial system of the company such as SAP or Syspro into an OHS system like this. This will ensure full traceability of costs and procurement transparency.

Mr Viljoen is a business expert with 20 years' experience in project and business management. He can be contacted on via e-mail on leon.viljoen@healthfox.fi

The benefit of a digital OHS system over that of a paper-based system can be summarised as follow:

Overall

1. Enhanced OHS experience for management, practitioners and inclusion of employees.
2. Full traceability of all OHS events and incidents, streamlining reporting,auditing and assessments hassle free.
3. Management decision making will be enhanced with the availability of superior information, analytics and financial information.
4. Risk management will be improved and compliance can be driven as there will be full transparency of the usage.
5. Everyone is involved in OHS and kept informed and up to date as needed.
6. Inspections and audits can be scheduled. The system via the mobile app or Tablet can guide the inspector/auditor to ensure a comprehensive inspection/audit is done correctly and in the most time –and cost-effective way.
7. All data captured during the inspection will be uploaded automatically and an automated report generated by the system with editability features. The report can be e-mailed to the circulation list when the inspector/supervisor releases or saved depending on the company policy.
8. Calibrations of measurement tools can be scheduled and monitored for both health and safety.
9. The use of equipment with expired calibration certificates can be prevented.
10. Through the use of artificial intelligence (AI) trends can beobserved timeously, assigned for resolution and monitored until corrected. This will reduce the risk and cost associated with any OHS issue.
11. Every employee becomes part of the OHS team by using the APP that is loaded onto their mobile phones or tablets. This will ensure that the employees experience OHS in a more positive light than the norm.
12. Adherence to the Protection of Personal Information (POPI) Act is very important as personal information will be stored especially on the health part of the system.

Health

1. The company can ensure the health and wellbeing of their management and employees is looked after professionally by using the system.
2. General health and wellbeing suggestions can be communicated via the mobile app to improve employee's health and resilience.
3. Employees can record any symptoms and other medical related issues they are experiencing that can help monitor their health and timely intervention for prevention of further injury.
4. These can be shared with the occupational health team to decide next steps and they should be able to utilise the system to assign appointments, tests and other care instructions
5. Any specific treatment can be shared with the employee and monitored by medical professionals via the system and mobile app. This will ensure that employees feel appreciated and that the company has a healthier workforce.
6. On site medical facilities can form part of the system and if not available medical facilities in the vicinity of the site and external professionals can be incorporated into the system. This will ensure speedy response when time is of the essence such as when serious injuries occur.
7. Compliance to all regulatory requirements such as workman's compensation requirements.

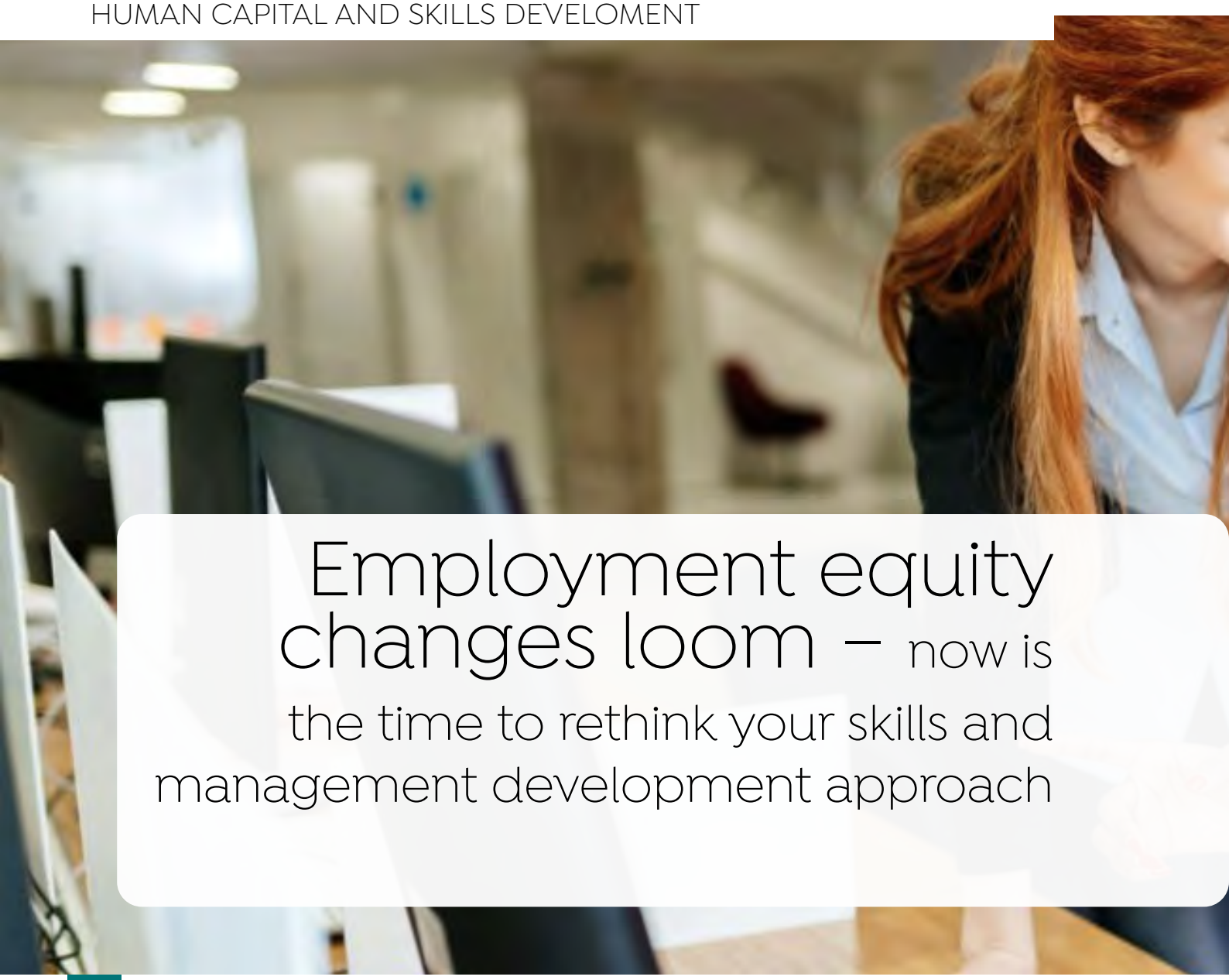
Safety

1. All hazards, near misses and incidents can immediately be logged onto the system via the mobile app.
2. The hazard/near miss/ incident is automatically assigned to the person responsible to resolve it and if it is of a serious nature alert management and medical facilities on their phones.
3. All, including the employee that logged the hazard/near miss/incident, can track the resolution thereof making it a very transparent system.

All companies, but especially SMEss can use a standard system that allows them to implement the system at a reduced cost. All the health and safety knowledge of experts are built into these systems and can be used with confidence. The implementation time will depend on change management. Any implementation that ignores change management is more than likely to fail.

In today's trying times, with employee numbers varying tremendously, it is important to look at subscription-based systems that will allow for these variances.

In the light of the above it is clear that no company, large or small, cannot afford not to transition over to a digital OHS system. The benefits totally outweigh the effort and in the end the savings and risk reduction completely outweigh the cost of implementation and running of the system.



Employment equity changes loom – now is the time to rethink your skills and management development approach

The workplace is set for a major shakeup this year, with efforts to enact the Employment Equity Amendment Bill gaining momentum. Parliament's portfolio committee on labour and employment has published the bill for comment until 19 February.

One of the important aspects of the proposed bill is that it empowers the Minister of Labour to determine sectoral numerical targets for the purpose of ensuring the equitable representation of suitably qualified people from designated groups (blacks, women and persons with disabilities) at all occupational levels in the workforce. However, the Minister will need to first issue a notice in a gazette, identifying the sectors concerned. He will also need to consult with the sectors and then, on the advice of the Commission for Employment Equity, set the targets. Any proposals will need to be published for public comment for at least 30 days.

The amended law also proposes that businesses will need to meet certain criteria before being issued with a certificate of compliance. Failure to comply will affect that company's ability to conduct business with the State. One of these is the achievement of equity targets set by the Minister of Labour.

According to Sumaya Hoosen, SEIFSA's Human Capital and Skills Development Executive, these proposed changes will force companies to change how they view management and leadership development. While one of the criticisms is that the Minister could potentially set targets with little regard for the circumstances or employment equity plans of individual companies, Ms Hoosen believes that this could be an opportunity to rethink the way companies approach employment equity and skills development.

"We all understand the skills development challenges facing, for instance, the Metals and

Engineering industry. In our industry, there is a shortage of women in the sector, and more especially women in senior and executive positions. Any employment equity plan will therefore prioritise the management and leadership development of women while also putting in place skills development initiatives to recruit, train and retain female talent," she said. "This would negate the perception that sectors cannot meet equity targets because there is a shortage of individuals from designated groups with the requisite skills."

Ms Hoosen said it is important to note that the industry does need to get more women and more black professionals into key decision-making roles. That is where transformation needs to happen in order for it to filter down the rest of the organisation – after all, an untransformed leadership will not be able to identify blind spots, that are hindering real transformation" she said.

However, she said, this means the industry needs to retain talent from designated groups. She said research had found that the retention of women in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics was a problem.

Female professionals in these fields who pursue careers at senior management level often eventually leave the industry because of the stress of working in a male-dominated environment, explained Ms Hoosen.

Research in 2018 by Teresa Cardador, an associate professor of labour and employment relations, and Brianna Caza, an associate professor at Manitoba's Asper School of Business had found that the stress could be a result of overt reasons, such as gender discrimination or harassment.

Ms Hoosen said it is important to take seriously initiatives aimed at making the world of work an easier place to navigate. The Government's proposed Code of Practice on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence and Harassment is just one such initiative and companies need to be aware of it and how to implement it when it does become part of legislation.

The code guides employers to ensure that workplaces are free of violence and harassment. They also have a duty to remove all forms of unfair discrimination in terms of Section 5 of the Employment Equity Act.

SEIFSA will be conducting a seminar and other specific training to capacitate organisations to legally and effectively prevent and manage violence and harassment in the workplace, including gender-based violence, sexual violence and bullying.

Visit www.seifsa.co.za for more information about this training.

The industry does need to get more women and more black professionals into key decision-making roles. That is where transformation needs to happen in order for it to filter down the rest of the organisation

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26 March 2021

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