

## FIRST EVER SIMULATION TRAINING CENTRE FOR NAMIBIA!



The Minister of Mines, Hon. Obeth Kandjoze, inaugurated the first ever Simulation Training Centre at the Ohorongo Cement Sargberg Plant on 29 July.

The Centre forms part of the N\$ 150 million total investment which was made into a Composite Cement Plant, a new packaging line and the Simulation Training Centre for control rooms, a first for the Namibian market.

Ohorongo Cement (PTY) Ltd is a world class producer of high quality cement to the Namibian market, and has one of the most technologically advanced cement plants. The Company currently has a 98% Namibian workforce, but there are critical areas where specialized skills are needed, and because this is the only cement factory in Namibia, such highly specialized skills are not yet available in Namibia. Essentially, cement and heavy mining industrial expertise is a vital skill necessary to establish the operational structures of the factory. One of these critical areas identified is the availability of cement experienced and skilled supervisors and control room operators.

The training of supervisors and control room operators specific to the cement industry remains a huge challenge, because Ohorongo Cement is the only cement producer in Namibia, and the skills and knowledge needed can only come from training provided through a combination of simulation training, and continuous on-the-job training. Further to this, to date there was no simulation training facility in Namibia, and therefore the establishment of such a training centre will be beneficial to the total Namibian industry.

The Company makes use of a SIMULEX® cement plant simulator to be used for the online training at the plant for local Namibian production supervisors, foremen and control room operators, in a newly constructed training centre. This specific simulator was developed by KHD Humboldt Wedag, in cooperation with VDZ Research Institute of the Cement Industry. This system currently has over 200 applications worldwide, and it provides a very realistic reconstruction of the behavior of the production plant, combined with a Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition system (SCADA).

During simulator training, the learner is exposed to the dynamic behavior of a cementation plant, in a real time based environment. The simulator provide a huge scope of process variables, providing the learner the opportunity to simulate grinding raw material, coal and clinker, and to handle and optimize kiln and cooling processes, without being connected to the real plant.

As part of the second phase, in order to ensure formal recognition, the Company plans to involve the Namibian Training Authority in the certification of the Training Centre, as well as the Chamber of Mines of Namibia. Preliminary discussion with the industry utilizing SCADA systems was conducted, and a positive response was received. Although positive responses were received from external parties, they will not contribute towards the cost of implementing this project. A certificate of successful completion will be issued by Ohorongo Cement, with the future possibility to have the course accredited.



Training would be provided for 20 employees initially where-after it will be rolled out to include instrumentation artisans and selected artisans, in total targeting an estimated 30 – 35 employees during the first phase, excluding any fluctuations in employee numbers due to employees leaving the Company. Staff turnover due to shortage of resources in Namibia is a current reality. This phase estimated to be 2 years.

The broader roll out during the second phase to the industry includes mostly mining and manufacturing, working through the Namibia Manufacturers Association (140 members), and the Chamber of Mines Namibia (112 members).

The implementation of this simulator project and the up-skilling of Namibians will also contribute towards to achievement of Namibia's Vision 2030.

In 2004, Namibia adopted Vision 2030, a document that clearly spells out the country's development programmes and strategies to achieve its national objectives.

Since the future is about the people, Vision 2030 concerns itself with the population in relation to their social, economic and overall well-being.

The Vision is also designed to promote the creation of a diversified, open market economy, with a resource-based industrial sector and commercial agriculture, placing great emphasis on skills development. The Vision will also promote competitiveness in the export sector in terms of product quality and differentiation.

Capacity building will be pursued with the utmost vigor by both the private and public sectors to support the objectives of Vision 2030.

The country will, furthermore, operate a totally integrated, unified, flexible and high quality education and training system that prepared Namibian learners to take advantage of a rapidly changing global environment, including developments in science and technology. The capacity building will transform Namibia into a knowledge-based society and changes in production and information technology will revolutionize all aspects of the manufacturing process.

Being fully committed to support the Namibian government in their drive towards Vision 2030, the Company also aims to make the simulator training available for training of Namibians not employed by the Company.



***Hon. Minister Obeth Kandjoze, Minister of Mines (middle) and Ms Penny Akwenye (Chairlady of the DBN Board of Directors tested out the new facilities with Mr Hans-Wilhelm Schütte, MD of Ohorongo Cement.***