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Construction company's quarrying projects progressing well

SINETTE GOOSEN | FEATURES REPORTER

Industrial, commercial and residential development and construction company Renico Construction reports its most recent Free State quarrying project is progressing on time. The project costs more than R9-million.

Renico Quarrying & Crushing division MD **Gert Brits** says 250 000 t of G4 material, an aggregate obtained from natural gravel and boulders that can, after crushing, pass through a 37.5 mm sieve, will be mined and crushed at the quarry.

The G4 will be supplied to the South African National Roads Agency Limited (Sanral) for use in the construction of tar roads across South Africa.

Brits explains the aggregate is recovered from the quarry by drilling and blasting, after which, excavators are used to move the

material. The material is then passed through a jaw crusher and cone crusher, before being loaded onto trucks.

“Renico uses all its own equipment for this process, but the blasting work is outsourced to explosives professionals,” adds Brits.

In total, the company still has seven to eight months of work on the project, which is estimated to take nine to ten months to complete.

Further, the company has almost completed a quarrying project in Vryburg, in the North West. About 20 000 t of G5, a gravel used as a subbase layer in road construction, that can pass through a 53 mm sieve, will still be mined at the site. Initially, the company would have mined 160 000 t, but the order later changed to only 100 000 t.

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FREE STATE QUARRY

In total, 250 000 t of G4 material will be mined and crushed at the Free State quarry



Picture: Bloomberg

NATURAL GRAVEL AND BOULDERS

Aggregate is obtained from natural gravel and boulders that have been mined and crushed

“The amount of product needed by the client is not precisely predetermined, and often the desired amount of gravel increases, but it sometimes declines as the client’s needs change,” explains Brits.

The company started mining the construction aggregates in March.

Meanwhile, the company has also completed an 80 000 t G5 quarrying project in Lanseria, in Gauteng.

“Our equipment will now be moved from this quarry to KwaZulu-Natal, where we plan to start on our next quarrying project,” he notes.

Challenges

Brits says downtime is the biggest challenge facing projects of this nature.

“Equipment occasionally needs maintenance work and, if one machine is unavailable, then all the other machines in the process are also shut down,” he adds.

Poor weather conditions can also prevent production, as quarrying cannot be undertaken in wet conditions.

He says the company is not heavily affected by poor road infrastructure, as its product does not need to be transported.

“We mine the product in the area where it is needed, by moving our equipment to the various locations,” he says.

Brits expresses his concern about the lack of competitiveness in the industry. “Companies providing high-quality products and good customer services are sometimes overlooked by customers, as they opt for the cheapest available option, without considering the quality of the product and the assistance that they might need,” says Brits.

He adds the quarrying, earthmoving and crushing industries have no real standards to regulate the pricing of rental equipment.

This means companies that urgently want to increase their cash flow, simply offer rental equipment at any price that sounds appealing to customers. This results in an industry that has an unhealthy balance between cheap offerings and genuine customer service.

“The overall wellbeing of these industries will increase once pricing standards are set, which will ensure that competitiveness is determined by the level of expertise and customer service, and the quality of products,” he notes.

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