

Creating capacity ahead of demand

South African companies in the quarrying industry should consider investing in the growth of their businesses as the local economy drags itself out of a prolonged slump and edge towards improved growth, says Nico Pienaar, director of the Aggregate and Sand Producers Association of Southern Africa.

Pienaar says at the back of the positive data from leading economists, it makes sense to invest in

an industry that ultimately supports all future building and construction projects, and supplies more than 80% of the raw materials required for structures and roads.

"It is imperative that especially sand and aggregate mining operations are able to respond to increased future demands for construction materials," says Pienaar. "Government and the private sector have

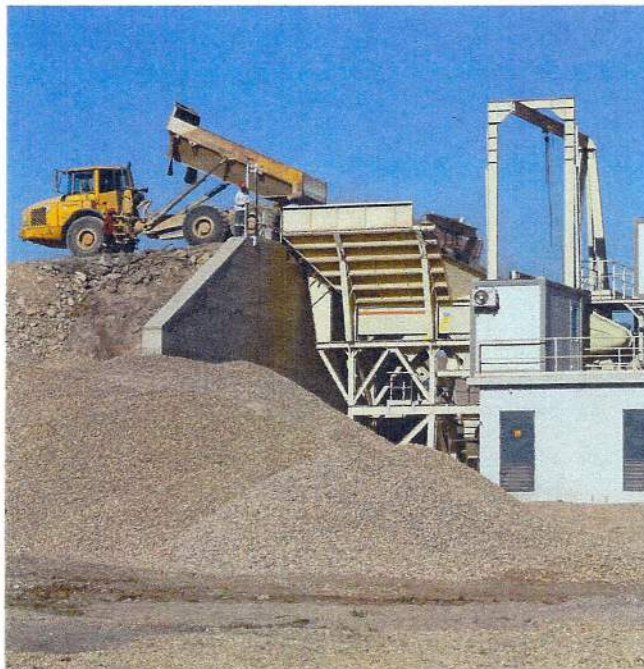
investment backlogs in physical infrastructure. With elections out of the way, governmental heads have received a fresh mandate and will want to be seen to be delivering on their campaign promises. Likewise, businesses are seeing the first real 'green shoots' of a revival in world economies, and that translates into increased demand for South African exports and commodities," says Pienaar.

THE AGGREGATE AND SAND PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN AFRICA (Aspasa) is holding workshops on the Mine Health and Safety Act (MHSA) in all major centres in South Africa. Nico Pienaar, director of Aspasa, says the workshops are aimed at giving the organisation's members and non-affiliated companies a basic understanding of the MHSA.

ATHI RIVER MARBLE AND GRANITE, a Nairobi-based firm, has applied for exclusive rights to prospect for granite in Machakos and Makueni counties in Kenya. Moses Njeru, acting commissioner of Mines and Geology, tells the Kenya Gazette that the company will prospect for the precious construction stone over areas stretching 15 square kilometres (km²) and 20km² in Machakos and Makueni respectively.

Deep borrow pits close to Chikanga Extension suburb in Mutare, ZIMBABWE, are said to be a health hazard to hundreds of residents in the area amid fears they could become a death trap to locals. The pits, which now resemble small dams filled up with water, were dug years ago by companies that were constructing roads in Mutare, and never rehabilitated the area before allocating stands to beneficiaries.

Overcoming power shortages



Munesu Shoko

A quarry in Mozambique has taken delivery of a customised modular crushing and screening plant from Metso adapted to its requirements.

Working in challenging energy conditions of Mozambique where rampant power cuts limit production to only two and a half days of operation a week, the customised modular solution supplied by Metso

has helped JRC to surpass its targeted throughput despite a limited number of days of production.

When *Quarry Southern Africa* visited the site in Maputo, Mozambique, the new plant achieved 300t per hour of four different types of aggregate, surpassing the targeted 220t per hour production, giving the customer a 20% throughput bonus.

Effective training makes quarrying safer

Nico Pienaar, director of the Aggregate and Sand Producers Association of Southern Africa, says effective training to reduce accidents and to maintain healthier workforces involves all levels of employees on a mine or quarry, and should positively influence their attitudes towards health and safety.

Pienaar says it is vital to note that only about 10% of what is learnt on a normal training course is retained and applied by employees once they return to their workplace, a situation he says is unacceptable in health and safety "as every single aspect of this type of training should be applied to make a difference.

"This clearly indicates that the type of training offered to workers should, therefore, not be 'standard', and needs to appeal to people on an individual basis to provide them with a deeper understanding of topic and how it relates to themselves and their colleagues in the workplace," says Pienaar.