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**MURRAY & ROBERTS CEMENTATION TRAINING ACADEMY AT BENTLEY PARK  
PROVIDES TRAINING ON 95% OF ALL SHAFT SINKING ACTIVITIES**

The Murray & Roberts Cementation Training Academy at Bentley Park has adapted its conventional shaft sinking infrastructure to accommodate the latest shaft sinking methodology introduced to the South African mining industry from Cementation Canada. “We are currently equipped to provide 95% of all shaft sinking activities, having taken a unique look into what is required in terms of unpacking the cycles and the related activities, and then actually looking at cost-effective ways of being able to simulate the practical demonstrations,” Tony Pretorius, Risk Manager, says.

Murray & Roberts Cementation, in conjunction with Cementation Canada, has adopted the new shaft sinking methodology, which is safer and features reduced cycle times. The traditional approach to shaft sinking, in terms of using cactus grabs and jumbo drill rigs, has been updated, with all activities in the sinking cycle now handled sequentially.

The traditional sinking methodology requires more than twenty employees to be in the shaft performing concurrent work whereas the latest methodology has drastically reduced this number to a third. The secret lies in the revised cycle arrangements, use of safer and more effective technology and the multi-skilling of workers.

“Our programme is actually an intensive three-month programme, whereby learners are trained in all shaft sinking-related activities, and not just the select few that we cover traditionally in South Africa. It is very comprehensive, with learners typically having the capability to drill, charge, load and line the shaft,” Pretorius says.

Prior to learners engaging with the mock-ups, they pass through a comprehensive theoretical training programme on an e-learning platform, in conjunction with multimedia such as video, diagrams and picture, narration and literature. “Then they move into a visual-based training environment, where they get to understand why they need to carry out tasks in a certain manner. Once they pass through the mock-ups, they are licensed to practice. Usually within a period of 60

days, having been given workplace exposure and experience, they are assessed again in terms of their competence, whereupon they will be issued a licence to operate.”

The Murray & Roberts Cementation Training Academy at Bentley Park commenced with the updated training in mid-2014. “Our first crew, which is busy with the production shaft at the Venetia Underground Project for De Beers, graduated from the Academy towards the end of last year. Currently we are only assisting with our own needs and have not gone into the external market.” Bentley Park has a capacity for 450 learners, with accommodation for just over 400 on-site. “Our capacity in terms of shaftsinking training alone can be anything up to 80 learners at a time.”

The service offering at Bentley Park includes trackless mechanised mining, mining services, conventional mining and basic engineering. The shaft sinking component encompasses the presink as well as the main sink. In terms of the physical set-up at Bentley Park, Pretorius explains that the existing shaft sinking infrastructure has been “changed over” from the conventional set-up. There are four shaft mock-ups, with an average diameter of 8 m, varying from 14 m to 18 m in depth.

With the Murray & Roberts Group promoting its STOP.THINK.ACT.24/7 ‘Zero Harm through Effective Leadership’ approach, Pretorius adds that Bentley Park provides First Aid and rope rescue training for rescuing any workers who may have fallen from height. Another feather in the cap of the Academy is being approved as a training centre by the British Safety Council (BSC).

“This certification allows us to offer training in the BSC’s international Level 3 Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety. We have also designed a Level 2 National Qualification in Occupational Health and Safety, which we want to take to the external market this year,” Pretorius says.

BENTLEY PARK UPGRADING OF SHAFTSINKING SHORT PIC 01: Tony Pretorius (far right) instructs trainees at the Murray & Roberts Cementation Training Academy at Bentley Park.

BENTLEY PARK UPGRADING OF SHAFTSINKING SHORT PIC 02: The Murray & Roberts Cementation Training Academy at Bentley Park now offers training in the latest shaft sinking methodology introduced to the South African mining industry from Cementation Canada.

BENTLEY PARK UPGRADING OF SHAFTSINKING SHORT PIC 03: The shaft sinking component at the Murray & Roberts Cementation Training Academy encompasses the pre-sink as well as the main sink.

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