

CANDEV

### Rugged Reliability A Boost To Crane Exports

South African crane manufacturer Condra has reported an increase in exports to Canada, the result of increasing awareness of product capabilities in that country.

The company's agent in Saskatchewan believes that Canadian engineers are gradually accepting the long term advantages of installing robust, durable cranes instead of the more delicate machines of some northern hemisphere manufacturers.

Orders mainly comprise hoists up to 60 tons, overhead cranes up to 40 tons, and spares, delivered predominantly to customers in mining.

Although the Canadian export increment is small as a percentage of total manufacturing volume, the upward trend is seen as significant by management.

Condra entered the Canadian market at the beginning of 2011 in response to initial orders from expatriate South African engineers familiar with Condra's combination of a rugged, reliable and robust hoist and crane design enhanced by innovative drive and control technology to deliver an impressive overall capability.

In the same year, a local agent was appointed to manage sales, installation and servicing across the product range.

Over the four years since, word of the reliability of these South African manufactured machines has spread beyond the expatriate engineering fraternity, mainly because the cranes continue to work in hostile mining environments when their European and American equivalents have broken down because of skipped services.

The Condra service interval is generally longer than those of competitors' machines.

Condra's technology is based on modular design, an approach which allows application flexibility without a disproportionate increase in price to the end-user.

An example of this is the use of standard hoists as a platform from which modifications to customer specification can be accommodated. For high-lift applications, the company regularly adapts units to deliver a 15-metre lift, more than twice the average lift height of 6,8 metres.

Condra's mandate to continually drive down product maintenance costs is ongoing, two examples being the use of live-axle drives in place of ring-gear designs, and the introduction of adapted V-belt technology which has already been tested and proven in the motor vehicle industry.

In this way, the total cost of the crane over a typical useful life is lowered.

For some years now, Condra has incorporated very high quality materials in component manufacture. Gearboxes have been up-rated to deliver additional power, and the company is using a 36B case-hardened material on most pinions. This material, though expensive, is beneficial in extending crane lifespan.

Hoists are also usually fitted with high tensile-strength ropes. The resulting reduction in rope diameter enables use of a reduced drum diameter and a smaller gearbox and motor, all of which help contain costs.

Compliance with ISO and other international quality standards have also helped Condra to drive export sales to Canada.

Company management expects high product quality, lower maintenance costs and lower overall useful lifetime costs to continue to contribute to Condra's sustainable competitive advantage in markets worldwide.

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PHOTOGRAPHS SHOW:

1. Condra hoists mounted on crab unit
2. Condra units being crated for export

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