

Babcock expands its Volvo footprint across southern Africa

The construction of Babcock's brand new bespoke facility in Middelburg, Mpumalanga, being developed to serve its yellow metal customers in the area, is one of the Babcock International Group's biggest expansions into this sector to date. Once completed in August this year, the R100-million facility will offer world class product support across Babcock's entire Volvo Construction Equipment product range to local customers, primarily those in the coal sector.

Babcock is the exclusive regional distributor of Volvo Construction Equipment and its Volvo footprint is also seeing expansion in other parts of southern Africa. The company recently established a more robust presence in Windhoek, Namibia, and Gaborone, Botswana, by taking over the management of Volvo facilities previously operated by sub-dealers. It has also increased its existing footprint in Zambia and Mozambique.

Babcock's David Vaughan, Sales Director – Equipment, says this expansion is a response to market demand for a local presence in specific geographic locations and is also intended to enhance service levels by offering sales and a full aftermarket capability from each of these sites.

The company has a well-established base in Kitwe, Zambia, on the hub of the Copperbelt, but has now also moved into Lusaka, the capital, and to Solwezi in the North-Western Province. In Mozambique, in addition to its existing facility in Tete, Babcock now services customers in Matola in Maputo. In South Africa, a new depot was recently opened in Kuruman to serve customers in the North Western Cape area.

“Although the local market has been static for some time, judging from recent movement in the markets of neighbouring countries, we feel that recovery is

imminent,” Vaughan comments. “We will be well positioned to take advantage of this upturn when it happens.

“We had a successful end to a challenging financial year, complete with mining strikes and labour unrest, and I attribute this to our premium product range and our trusted to deliver mindset. In a market where cost of ownership is a major factor that influences purchases, our products are ideally suited, because they meet this requirement. Today cost per ton and cost per hour are more important to our customers than ever before, and our products are well recognised for their high productivity and low operating cost/fuel consumption. This gives us the competitive edge and our honest belief is if we support our customers well, we earn the right to broaden our customer base in all our territories.”

Vaughan adds that based on the popularity of the current range of Volvo machines in the southern African market, customers can look forward to the introduction of some exciting new products during the course of this year. The introduction of new models is expected to grow Babcock’s market in the region even more.

As the exclusive distributor for Volvo Construction Equipment in South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Zambia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and Lesotho, Babcock offers a full aftermarket support capability including maintenance, repair and overhaul utilising comprehensively equipped workshops. Babcock backs the Volvo brand with experienced staff to support customers quickly and efficiently – wherever they are.

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On behalf of: Babcock

Editorial contact: Loll Thomson (011) 467 2133 / Mail to: lol@sepe.co.za

Client contact: David Vaughan Mail to: david.vaughan@babcock.co.za

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