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Sun Shines On Johnson Renew

Johnson Crane Hire has added impetus to its growing presence in the South African wind farm market by establishing Johnson Renew. This new division houses all the experience garnered over the years undertaking heavy lifts in both the construction and maintenance of wind farms in the country.

The first related project took place in 2008 when Johnson Crane Hire lifted wind turbines for Darling wind farm in the Western Cape, South Africa. These were very humble beginnings for the country in terms of private wind farm projects, as well as Johnson Crane Hire's operations in the renewable energy sector.

Now, this leading crane hire operation is a prominent contractor in the South African government's very successful Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement (REIPPP) programme where it is working alongside multi-national specialists in "green" energy projects.

Cornelis Grotius, general manager of Johnson Crane Hire's heavy lift division, says the establishment of Johnson Renew provides the group with the focus it needs to grow its presence in the wind energy market, as well as other key renewable energy projects.

This includes Concentrated Solar Power (CSP) projects, where the company's transport solution as part of its full turnkey capability is expected to add significant value.

Already, Johnson Crane Hire has undertaken lifts for Vestas and Siemens and, more recently, it mobilised its team to the Gibson Bay Wind Farm construction site. Here, it is also supplying support cranes for the loading and offloading of various components making up the wind generators, complementing its main crane lifting solutions on site.

He says Johnson Renew has access to the largest Liebherr crane fleet in southern Africa through Johnson Crane Hire, ranging from eight ton units all the way through to the 750 t LR 1750 crawler crane. Strategically, Johnson Crane Hire also owns one of two LG 1750 lattice boom truck mount cranes in the country, procured specifically to work on wind projects.

The group's long standing business relationship with Liebherr includes technical support and operator training from the leading German original equipment manufacturer. This is complemented by the group's own in-house technical maintenance capabilities that keep these cranes in top condition.

Another major differentiator is the group's strong safety and quality track record in the arduous petrochemical, mining, heavy industry and construction sectors where it has undertaken many heavy lifts.

The group's focus on safety and quality are enshrined in its ISO 9001 certified policies, and these are already deployed by its engineering department in the extensive preparation for lifts, before any of its cranes are mobilised from its yards to site.

Grotius is pleased by the progress made by South Africa to diversify its energy mix to include cleaner alternatives, and believes that the REIPPP programme will continue to create immense opportunities for local companies, such as Johnson Renew, who have the necessary capabilities to meet very demanding project requirements.

JOHNSON RENEW PIC 01: Johnson Crane Hire deploys its Liebherr LTM 1750-9.1 (750 ton) all terrain crane for a wind farm lift.

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