

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Crane Expert Calls For Infrastructure Spending

While South Africa has enjoyed a period of sound private investment into large building projects, focus also needs to be placed on the civil infrastructure that is needed to support them.

This is the view of SA French's managing director, Quentin van Breda, who is concerned that spending on important services has struck worrying lows in the country, and that this will eventually thwart existing and future building projects in the country.

SA French, a division of Torre Lifting Solutions, is the sub-Saharan African agent for the reputable Potain range of tower cranes, which are operating on a number of building projects in South Africa.

"We have supplied cranes and turnkey support services to a host of private sector property development projects over the years. This includes the rapidly growing Sandton district, which is home to some of the most impressive international trends in building designs and methods. However, we are not seeing adequate investment into the water, sewage and energy infrastructure that is needed to support them, or any new projects in the pipeline," says van Breda.

SA French is also no stranger to public-sector driven infrastructure projects and over the years, the company has supplied many cranes for important civil construction activities. More recently, the company supplied Potain units to the Clanwilliam Dam expansion programme, complementing its involvement in other such flagship projects, such as the De Hoop Dam and Eskom's power station fleet expansion programme.

He praises the South African government's National Development Plan (NDP), which has placed infrastructure development firmly on the agenda, but warns that the execution of these very important projects needs to be accelerated as soon as possible.

“The NDP has enjoyed much international acclaim, including from our international principal, Potain and the larger Manitowoc group in France. It highlights the importance of upgrading essential infrastructure, and it is imperative that these projects start gaining momentum,” says van Breda.

While the NDP focuses on an array of important infrastructure segments, he says that water systems are in urgent need of upgrading and expansion to avoid a crisis. These range from large augmentation projects to essential water and sewage treatment plants at national, provincial and local levels.

Van Breda says a positive signal from central government that it will commence spending on these projects very soon will also see an increased appetite from the private sector to bolster its spending in property development.

He also supports the South African government’s focus on boosting beneficiation in South Africa, and encourages a similar plan for the local “brick and mortar” sector as the much acclaimed Motor Industry Development Plan (MIDP), the forerunner of the Automotive Production and Development Programme.

The MIDP was critical to the success of the South African motor vehicle manufacturing industry, a major exporter of its output and a significant employer.

Van Breda is optimistic about the future of the South African construction sector - an outlook that is needed to help resolve the challenges the industry is facing, at present.

CALL FOR SPEND PIC 01 : Potain tower cranes are used on infrastructure projects all over the globe.

CALL FOR SPEND PIC 02 : Potain tower cranes have moved material on many important civil engineering projects in South Africa.

CALL FOR SPEND PIC 03 : Materials handling on large infrastructure projects is made easier using tower cranes.

CALL FOR SPEND PIC 04 : Potain tower cranes allow contractors to manage materials handling with ease on large sites.

CALL FOR SPEND PIC 05 : Potain tower cranes have been a common site on civils and infrastructure projects in South Africa.

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