

EDITORIAL SUBMISSION from SJC Creative

Rocla Launches Thuthukisa Sanitation Initiative

The Rocla Thuthukisa Sanitation Initiative (TSI) has launched its 'Community Cast' system which has been established to empower local communities, entrepreneurs, contractors and SMME's to become manufacturers and suppliers of the most innovative and highest quality concrete toilet structures in Africa, in their own right.

Andre Labuschagne, Product Development Manager at Rocla, said "The communities that urgently require toilet units are often found in the rural and outlying areas of the country. Access to such areas by delivery trucks and bakkies carrying traditionally manufactured precast toilet units is extremely difficult, whilst the high cost and lack of concentrated volumes affect the viability of establishing traditional manufacturing facilities. Many of these areas also have no infrastructure or access to electricity; therefore we at Rocla developed this unique TSI in order to overcome these obstacles while at the same time creating community empowerment."

"Thuthukisa means 'to share', and it is with this philosophy in mind, that we developed the 'Community Cast' toilet unit that can be simply manufactured by local community entrepreneurs or SMME's and be ready for use within two weeks. The resulting waste material can be recycled into practical items for everyday use."

'Community Cast – Taking the Factory to the People'

Experimentation with a concept called 'pancake casting' led Rocla to offer a real on-site manufacturing capability that requires only a small piece of land with no infrastructure needed. This unique process simply involves casting one item on top of another in frameless single use moulds of a similar size in a planar form. The end product requires stiffening on the edges by forming an angle or adding a stiffening rib.

The panels are continuously cast one on top of another until typically full stacks of four toilets or twelve pit covers are reached. The product is left to cure for two weeks, but new castings can continue to be made during this curing process at other locations, using the same tools.

The company's patented textile sandwich concrete is utilised in the planar panels, giving the very lightweight panels a hard-wearing strength and finish. The stiffening columns, which also serve as vent columns or service conduits, are tied together using Rocla's G Lock system that utilises proprietary "shoulder head screws" that fit into specially made receiving sliders. Vertical jointing is achieved using the Rocla H-strips which allow the attachment of various bathroom related items. The final toilet structure can accommodate a zinculum or polyethylene door, fitted with Rocla's renowned heavy duty lock system.

This simple process enables community members or SMME's to manufacture concrete toilet units exactly where they are needed. They are lightweight enough to easily be transported to their final site placement or can be manufactured right there where they will be erected. "This unique process also removes the capital requirement usually associated with a manufacturing facility, no matter the project size" said Labuschagne.

Labuschagne continued "We believe that communities thrive when they are empowered. Removing obstacles such as finance, the need for factory facilities, or a high-skill base all contributes to not only the provision of much needed high quality toilet units to a vast number of communities, but also develops skills, localised manufacturing capability and increased local employment, all necessities for growing and innovative communities to help themselves and their colleagues."

“The ‘Community Cast’ project was recently demonstrated in Qumbu, the OR Tambo DM, Jane Furse in Sekhukhune DM, Thornhill in Chris Hani DM and at Mooiplaas in the Amathole DM. In all instances the communities were surprised and then elated when they realized that with this system, once training has taken place, they as the community would be truly empowered to independently manufacture their own high quality toilet units. The benefit is how broad based within the relevant community the benefits are without compromising product quality.

“For local entrepreneurs and SMME’s it is very compatible with the Expanded Public Works programmes. The transferring of skills and skills upliftment opportunities are second to none due to its simple methodology. We will partner with municipalities/communities to erect local factories for very large projects, no matter whether the need is centralized or dispersed over a large area.” said Labuschagne.

Recycling the Waste

After the moulds have been stripped and cleaned, the waste can be recycled into useful items such as bean bags, pillows, blankets or duvet covers. Each ‘Community Cast’ unit comes with a free bean bag shell that will accommodate the recycled waste.

Rocla is ISO9001/2008 certified and has the applicable SANS mark as well as following the SABS guidelines for product quality and manufacture

“Since 2012, we at Rocla have been investigating how we can share our vast wealth of experience and knowledge with communities, entrepreneurs and SMME’s that will not only uplift health and hygiene facilities within communities, but that can economically benefit all. We believe our TSI ‘Community Cast’ sanitation product is a perfect, practical initiative with applications not only in South Africa but Africa at large. We have been developing, refining and trialing our ‘Community Cast’ units and now we can jointly identify, train and develop the skills required by the communities and accredit those skilled on a recognised sliding scale. We are literally encouraging the ‘pop-up factory’, and giving the factory to the people’ Labuschagne concluded.

Rocla is part of the IS Group of companies which includes Technicrete ISG and Ocon Brick.

Further information is available from: Guinevere Thomas, Group Marketing and Communications Manager, the IS Group Tel: 011 670 7733 Cell: 078 803 9863 email:

Guinevere.Thomas@isgroup.co.za

Issued on behalf of the IS Group by: SJC Creative, Contact Sue Charlton Tel: 011 794

8170 Cell: 082 579 4263 email: sjc@worldonline.co.za