

Engineering active transformation

Bluhm Burton Engineering attracts Black Economic Empowerment partner, Agile Capital. Established in 1990, Bluhm Burton Engineering (BBE), is internationally recognised as a world leader in mine ventilation and cooling systems. Being a 'proudly' South African company, and acknowledging the needs of the country, BBE has long had an in-house employee development programme. This has included full-time bursaries, professional development and a share participation scheme. However to meet the time-frame of the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Act it was decided to search for an empowerment partner.

After being introduced to Agile Capital, the parties soon recognised the merits of the partnership. "The benefits for our company in securing the right BEE partner cannot be underestimated" says Dr Steven Bluhm, CEO: BBE Group.

This transaction will take the BBE Consulting, BBE Projects and BBE Laboratory business units to an empowerment shareholding of +30% and the BBEnergy unit to an impressive +51% black-owned as measured by the BBBEE scorecard, with significant women ownership. "We were actually ahead of the Mining Charter until the recent revisions," notes Richard Gundersen, Managing Director: BBE Projects; "And BBEnergy is now up to level 3 on the BEE scorecard" adds Chris Nell, Managing Director: BBEnergy

The Group continues to drive skills transfer and education through the development of young engineers. The firm regularly conducts training courses for the mines, mining companies and the various associations and societies affiliated with the mining industry. The BBE Group is registered with ECSA for the ongoing development of in-house professionals.

"We are pleased to be moving towards goals set in the NDP, which calls for greater transformation and inclusivity in this sector. We believe it can only strengthen our position in the industry." notes Wynand Marx, Managing Director: BBE Consulting. "With an experienced management team, in addition to existing contracts with several major players across the industry, the growth prospects of the Group are good."

"We are exceptionally pleased to partner the BBE Group," says Tshego Sefolo, CEO: Agile Capital. "Given the team's industry expertise and track record, coupled with Agile's acumen and solid entrepreneurial team, this is a partnership geared for considerable growth."

South Africa's engineering abilities remain world class, delivering complex mining and infrastructure projects. The BBE Group's new equity partners will enable greater transformation and inclusivity in both the EPCM sector and consulting engineering sector. "We look forward to this new chapter in the BBE Group and driving the changes in our industry," concludes Bluhm.