

CABLES

Feature-Rich Hoists For Very Wide Cranes

Crane and hoist manufacturer Condra is to supply feature-rich lifting equipment for ongoing expansion at Aberdare Cables' Port Elizabeth facility.

The modernisation and expansion programme calls for two 23-metre-span overhead travelling factory cranes with capacities of 30 tons and 15 tons, and one 20-ton all-weather portal crane with a span of 26 metres.

An order worth some R5½-million was placed early in December on Johannesburg headquartered Condra for all three machines to be designed, manufactured and delivered by end February.

The cranes, which will be used to handle newly filled power cable drums, are both robust and feature-rich, sporting hand-held remote controls for operation from factory floor, control cabins for alternative operation from elevated vantage points (open cabins on the factory cranes; closed on the portal machine), variable frequency V-belt drives on the hoists, and load cells to protect design limits and warn operators via LED lights when these limits are being approached.

The portal crane additionally features Condra's patented storm brake.

Three companies competed for the order. Though prices were similar, lower overall operating costs achieved through rapid spare parts delivery and an effective and efficient maintenance service tipped the scales in Condra's favour.

Condra holds substantial stocks of locally manufactured spares, routinely delivering these parts to any point in South Africa within 24 hours.

By contrast, European companies with local representation need several weeks to ship spare parts to South Africa.

Aberdare Cables has experience of Condra's service through Load Mass Crane Services, the Port Elizabeth-based company behind the trouble-free operation of an initial Condra crane installed some years ago, and the company which will also install, commission and maintain the three new machines.

Two of these cranes will lift completed cable drums coming off the production lines into a covered storage area. Outside, a portal crane will manage the open air storage facility.

The first machine to be delivered, a 30-ton double-girder electric overhead travelling crane with a span of 23 metres, was tested and inspected this week ahead of road delivery by Transcon Haulers, a Condra affiliate.

The remaining two machines, a 15-ton crane of identical span and similar configuration, and a 20-ton double-girder portal crane with a wider span of 26 metres, are at an advanced stage of manufacture.

Commenting on the order, a Condra spokesman noted that a lead time of just six weeks caused by the Christmas shutdown period enjoyed by South Africa's engineering sector, was made possible by straightforward girder and cabin design, standardised optional features, and a lift height of eight metres on all three cranes.

Asked about incorporated technology, the spokesman pointed to variable frequency drives on all hoists, adapted and set to allow lifting speeds that can be altered at will from very slow to very fast, maximising productivity by minimising handling time.

Condra routinely supplies variable frequencies drives of up to 100Hz across its hoist range, the spokesman explained.

The spokesman additionally pointed out that European crane manufacturers are only this year beginning to introduce V-belt drives such as those incorporated in the Aberdare Cables hoists, whereas Condra has for more than five years offered the reliability and lower maintenance costs afforded by this type of drive.

Condra is tipped to secure further orders resulting from the Aberdare Cables expansion programme, when open ground is converted into additional factory space.

ENDS *(photo details on following page)*

## PHOTOGRAPHS SHOW:

Photo #1: Aberdare Cables' 30-ton, 23m span double girder electric overhead crane under test ahead of delivery

Photo #2: Aberdare Cables' 30-ton, 23m span double girder electric overhead crane under test ahead of delivery

Photo #3: Collage of Aberdare Cables' double girder crane, with insert of cabin under manufacture for a portal crane for the same company

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