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Expertise And Quality Focus See Actom Turbo Machines Expand

The drive by end-users to achieve longer lifespans from rotating equipment and to reduce their total cost of ownership has seen many customers implement component refurbishment programmes instead of simply replacing parts. This has placed ACTOM Turbo Machines in the ideal position to provide a full spectrum of specialist services across a broad range of industries.

Chris Bezuidenhout, managing director of ACTOM Turbo Machines, says that it has a solid reputation for its depth of experience and expertise, and can point to an extensive reference base of completed projects. ACTOM Turbo Machines is a subsidiary of ACTOM (Pty) Ltd and together with Marthinusen & Coutts, a division of ACTOM, offer a complete electro-mechanical solution to the market.

“Our services cover a wide sector of industries that use similar equipment; however, turbo machinery is used differently in the varying applications and therefore requires both technical and application related expert knowledge when it comes to maintenance, servicing, repair and most importantly, refurbishment,” he says.

“For instance, a mechanical drive turbine in a petrochemical plant driving a process compressor via a gearbox will need a vastly different approach to a turbine running a generator directly in a power plant.”

Recognised as the largest privately owned non-OEM mechanical rotating machinery specialist in Africa, ACTOM Turbo Machines operates a comprehensively equipped facility in Sasolburg. Bezuidenhout says that everything from engineering work for general overhauls through to specialised repair and refurbishment work including the manufacture of components is done here.

The large CNC machining capability facilitates the rapid turnaround of work while the state-of-the-art laser measuring equipment enables the accurate measurement of all components ensuring the final quality in terms of tolerances and alignment.

All work undertaken at this 2000 m² operation, of which 1600 m² is under crane, is in accordance with ISO 9001 quality standards.

Mark Gulbis, project engineer at ACTOM Turbo Machines, is quick to point out that it is all very well to have access to the correct machinery and equipment, but what really differentiates it from others is that it can count among its people the most experienced turbine technicians on the continent.

ACTOM Turbo Machines has the in-house skills sets required to deliver quality workmanship, and also operates the largest field service team in Africa.

“We recognise that our customers’ operations are 24/7 and that breakdowns could occur at any stage,” Gulbis says.

The breakdown of a turbine at a power station could result in loss of production and electricity to the grid, and in the event that such a breakdown occurs, ACTOM Turbo Machines would send out a full field service team. A single team would include engineers, turbine technicians, turbine fitters, mechanical fitters and assistants.

“Loss of production can have a significant financial impact on a plant and it is critical that the root cause of equipment malfunction or breakdown is identified as soon as possible and rectified to minimise this unscheduled downtime,” he says.

A major service offering from ACTOM Turbo Machines is its long-term services agreements that see it providing ongoing maintenance and service support to customers to ensure that unscheduled downtime is kept to an absolute minimum.

What is significant is that within the petrochemical sector, ACTOM Turbo Machines has consistently secured repeat business not only in terms of repair work but also long-term service agreements with blue chip customers. Under this agreement, it is in charge of the complete centre line overhaul and repairs.

“This is most significant, because traditionally this type of work is undertaken by OEMs and we believe that by ACTOM Turbo Machines offering this value-for-money solution we have secured this repeat business setting a new benchmark in this industry sector,” Gulbis says.

Among ACTOM Turbo Machines' customer base are the major power utilities across Africa, blue chip mining operations and petrochemical operations.

ATM 01 : The ACTOM Turbo Machines fitting and inspection workshop.

ATM 02 : A reverse engineered impeller and pinion for an integrally-gearred compressor.

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