

PRESS RELEASE

Diversification, drone technology sees Skyriders soar in 2018

11 December 2018: A focus on diversification and making customers aware of the benefits of rope access in combination with drone technology paid off well for Skyriders Access Specialists (Pty) Ltd. last year. In 2018, it completed some of its largest and most technically-challenging projects to date.

These ranged from the first-ever boiler inspection at Medupi Unit 6, to a routine silo inspection at a prominent Delmas colliery completed in record time, to a full suite of maintenance services deployed at a major petchem producer in the Free State, to a unique project for Dundee Precious Metals Tsumeb in Namibia.

Skyriders Marketing Manager **Mike Zinn** comment that, with both Medupi and Kusile Power Stations anticipated to be completed within the next 12 to 18 months, the rope access specialist would be on the lookout for its next mega projects in 2019.

“Our main goal at present at Medupi in particular is to ensure we maintain the highest standard of service delivery, safety, and quality on-site until the contract ends. Adding significant value and ensuring we adhere to all standards will place us at the forefront of securing any future work in this sector,” Zinn points out.

Skyriders enters 2019 with both a strong and diverse order book, including work for a glass manufacturer and inspection of grain silos for a large agricultural cooperative. Both projects represent new markets and potential further growth in the New Year, Zinn notes.

A particular highlight has been the successful combination of drone technology with traditional rope access methodology. Zinn explains that the strategy for Skyriders going forward is to increase market awareness of this unique value-added service offering, and to make clients aware of the full potential and diverse applications.

“When we started out with the Elios collision-resistant technology, it was perceived as being quite progressive and advanced. Now it has almost become a standard operating procedure. What is readily apparent is that this has become a key element of all the work we do,” Zinn highlights.

With the drone technology being highly applicable to the mining industry, from inspections of coal silos to confined and restricted space work in minerals-processing plants, Zinn foresees huge scope in the African mining industry. “There is limited access to such hi-tech solutions on the continent, which places us in a strong position to be able to provide such a service throughout Africa.”

Zinn attributes the ongoing success of Skyriders not only to it keeping up with the latest trends and developments, but due to the fact that it has a highly-trained and experienced core team of experts, managers, and technicians. Not only does Skyriders provide in-house training, it also plans to extend this training by offering it to both external customers and the industry at large.

This is partly also to raise work-at-height and general safety and quality standards in the industry, which is being plagued by smaller players that lack the necessary accreditation and proper equipment. “Maintaining a full quality and service department in order to ensure compliance with ISO 18001, for example, represents a major investment. However, it gives customers the assurance that our work is carried out in strict accordance with all necessary standards and regulations,” Zinn asserts.

Looking to 2019, Zinn predicts that Skyriders will continue to assist its customers to reduce costs and optimise their shutdown and maintenance periods. “What we have noticed is that a lot of customers

across a range of industries are struggling with constrained budgets due to the generally depressed business environment. This means that maintenance and inspection are even more crucial in reducing operating costs and maximising profits. It is a niche market where we have a unique value proposition, and we will continue to refine this going forward,” Zinn concludes.

Ends

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Notes to the Editor

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About Skyriders

Skyriders (Pty) Ltd, established in 1998, is a leader in the South African rope access industry, providing cost- and time-saving solutions to clients in the power generation and petrochemical industries who require rope access aided inspection, NDT and maintenance work to be done in difficult to reach, high-up locations.

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