

Trends Article

While the SA construction industry remains volatile, safety at heights is always a trend at A-OSH EXPO

A-OSH EXPO 2019 once again showcases best of working at heights sector

JOHANNESBURG – April, 2019 – For those who live or work in the Johannesburg area, the views of the Sandton and Rosebank skylines, which are both key business areas in the city, seem to be constantly changing. Blink twice and there is a new building going up – at least that’s how it sometimes appears. There will be many parents in traffic with their young ones who are able to play ‘Let’s count the cranes!’ as they drive past.



Discovery Health building, Sandton, under construction (source Sandton Times¹)

¹ <http://www.sandtontimes.co.za/visionaries-welcome-have-your-say-in-sandtons-skyline-of-the-future/>

The local construction industry is known to be a volatile sector - it was only in 2018 that two stalwarts of the construction world were placed in business rescue, namely Basil Read in June and Esor Construction in August² and more recently, Group 5 earlier in 2019³. And yet, Sandton and Rosebank can still be pinpointed as two examples in Johannesburg where it does seem as though this sector is still flourishing.

According to research company Fitch Solutions, the South African construction industry is expected to emerge from its recent recession during 2019, and even though growth is only forecast at 2.4 percent⁴ for this year, it does mean that the sector offers some hope in an economy that is struggling to find its feet overall. Against this background, it is interesting to look at a few other designated construction 'hot spots' in South Africa besides the business hubs of Rosebank and Sandton.

Cape Town International Airport is set for an R7 billion overhaul with a new runway, as well as new international and domestic departure lounges, due to be completed by 2023⁵. Construction has begun on Kerzner Estate, an exclusive luxury estate on the Atlantic Seaboard owned by South African entrepreneur Sol Kernzer and his family⁶. In Durban, construction began last year on the multi-

² <https://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/196/494/181245.html>

³ <https://www.iol.co.za/business-report/companies/cash-strapped-group-five-in-business-rescue-19853752>

⁴ <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/economy/2019-01-04-sa-construction-industry-to-grow-24-in-2019-says-fitch/>

⁵ <https://www.businessinsider.co.za/cape-town-international-airport-r7-billion-expansion-2019-2>

⁶ <https://www.property24.com/articles/luxury-homes-from-r20m-in-cape-towns-elite-kerzner-estate/27006>

million rand Durban Point Development project, which will extend the famous beachfront promenade and ultimately create around 6,750 permanent jobs⁷.

“These are just a few examples of where the construction industry is showing that it is poised to turn a corner in 2019,” says Sven Smit, portfolio director at Specialised Exhibitions Montgomery, which is once again running A-OSH EXPO - Africa’s largest occupational health and safety (OHS) expo - at Gallagher Convention Centre from 14 to 16 May this year. “While the construction industry remains volatile, we do still see some hopeful signs coming out of this sector overall. Against this background, this year’s annual A-OSH EXPO, which turns nine in 2019, will showcase a number of prominent exhibitors that are involved in construction safety, from personal and protective equipment to all the equipment necessary for working at height in a safe manner.”

Smit notes that working at height is an occupational hazard of the construction industry, whether an employee is driving a crane high above a site or working on scaffolding.

“Year in and year out,” he says, “it is sadly far too easy to find examples in the news of tragic accidents that have taken place while people were working at height, both in South Africa and around the world. And yet so often, just by following correct procedures and using the right equipment, such incidents can be avoided. For this reason, we always have great interest from our visitors in

⁷ <https://www.iol.co.za/dailynews/construction-begins-on-durbans-r35bn-waterfront-development-14126655>

the working at heights exhibits and safety features that are offered at AOSH EXPO.”



Protekta scaffolding (source: A-OSH EXPO 2018)

Smit adds that, in addition to various key exhibitors in this area, A-OSH EXPO will this year once again be offering the PASMA Working at Height Theatre, which will present content through all three days of A-OSH EXPO. The PASMA Working at Heights Theatre also offers an opportunity to gain Continued Professional Development (CPD) points with the South African Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (Saiosh).

“The PASMA Working at Heights Theatre provides a dedicated height safety hub for delegates to access expert speakers and live demonstrations, and is a strong annual drawcard. It’s organised by PASMA, the international not-for-profit authority for the mobile access tower industry, which is also joined by various organisations to cover a range of topics.

“If you are involved in the construction industry, whether as part of a small business or as a member of a large organisation, A-OSH EXPO has something to offer you from a workplace height safety perspective, both through our exhibitors as well as the excellent free seminar content on offer,” he concludes.



Working at Heights theatre (source: A-OSH EXPO 2018)

As an additional bonus, A-OSH EXPO 2019 is co-located this year with two other shows: firstly, Securex South Africa 2019, Africa’s biggest security trade show, now in its 26th year, and secondly - for the first time - the Facilities Management Expo 2019, the show that brings together all aspects of facilities management, is also co-located, thereby bringing you access to the entire supply chain under one roof – and all at no charge. Find out more at www.aosh.co.za

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