

Press release:

A really 'refined' solution: Rand-Air Durban supplies Class-0 oil-free air to oil refinery shutdowns

07 August 2019

While Durban is one of South Africa's major industrial hubs, it is also home to some of South Africa's major oil refineries. The fuel and oil from these refineries keep much of South Africa and its economy on the move and flowing smoothly every day.

A refinery is a very large and highly complex operation which has been designed to run most of the time with a minimum of supervision. However, usually every two years, oil refineries need to be shut down for a period of intensive maintenance, replacement or repair. Naturally, this disruption to fuel supplies has to be very carefully planned and timed.

This is according to Rudi de Vry, Rand-Air's Area Manager in Durban.

"During oil refinery shutdowns, thousands of subcontractors are hired to carry out the many maintenance procedures which are required. These subcontractors need to be supplied with temporary compressed air and power - as well as with other equipment – in order to carry out their allotted tasks. This is where Rand-Air comes in," de Vry explains.

Over its 46 years of operation, Rand-Air has become the preferred rental equipment partner to South African oil refineries, including those in Durban.

"We have built up these relationships over many years, on the back of service which invariably goes beyond what the customer expects of us," he says.

The Durban branch has recently completed just such a project, partnering with South Africa's largest oil refinery during a shutdown which extended from 15 May until 15 July this year.

During the shutdown, the refinery needs dozens of equipment items. All of these have to be sourced and if necessary transported to Durban. The equipment then has to be checked by our technicians to make sure that it is as reliable as they it can possibly be, and then dispatched to the refinery site.

De Vry observes that with a small but highly motivated and efficient team in Durban, for Rand-Air during the refinery shutdown it was a case of 'all hands on deck', and extended working hours.

“Fortunately, we have an excellent, committed team here in Durban on both the sales and the service side. They always have a positive attitude and work well together as their aim to achieve a common goal,” he adds.

Recently, the Durban branch was pleased to be able to rent out one of the larger oil-free compressors in Rand-Air’s range to the same customer.

“Ironically, even though it was for an oil refinery, the customer required Class 0 oil-free air to keep its systems operational during a maintenance shutdown!

We have furthermore found that being able to supply Class 0 oil-free air - which is absolutely free of contaminants - has created a very nice niche for us with the various refineries in the region. These refineries therefore regularly hire our oil-free compressors. In this particular instance, the refinery concerned rented the PTS 1600 for a period of two weeks. When the compressor was returned to us, the customer feedback we received was very positive,” de Vry remarks.

Renting equipment to any refinery has to be done with considerable care, due to the nature of the business, and safety regulations are therefore stringent.

“When it comes to refineries, safety is their number one concern,” emphasises de Vry.

Rand-Air’s Durban team works closely with the refinery to meet their safety obligations.

“Before our equipment is delivered to a refinery site, there are a number of procedures we need to carry out on the units to ensure that our standards are aligned with those of our customer. This involves close consultation with the refinery’s safety officials,” he explains.

“If, for example, a refinery needs to have a compressor pressure-tested, we fully understand why this is needed and what the legal implications are. Once the equipment is on site, Rand-Air technicians continue to monitor it to ensure it delivers faultless performance,” he comments.

“Our refinery customers really do appreciate the effort we put into keeping them safe.”

Of course, during a refinery shutdown, even though we might be very busy, we still continue with our normal day-to-day rentals, which are to a wide variety of industries.

At present, we are looking forward to the rest of the year because there are some exciting opportunities coming our way. And, in spite of the tough economy, the Durban branch has been performing exceptionally well,” he concludes.

Ends

(729 words)

Note to Editors

About Rand-Air

With several depots, branches and substantial representation across Southern Africa, Rand-Air continues to expand their footprint to service a diverse market. Since 1973, Rand-Air has been driven by an ethos to exceed customer expectation and satisfaction. This is complemented by a product offering that adheres to the highest quality standards in the industry. Rand-Air's products portfolio includes oil-free compressors, industrial air compressors, diesel compressors, electric air compressors (all screw compressors), diesel generators and lighting towers.

As the market leader in portable air compressors and generator rental, Rand-Air upholds its reputation through regular training and upskilling in business related and product-specific matters.

Rand-Air is part of the Atlas Copco group and is a Level 3 B-BBEE contributor.

Editorial Contact

Kendal Hunt

Managing Director

Kendal Hunt Communications PR and Media Liaison Agency

+27 - 11 462 6188

+27 - 82 823 6533

kendal@kendalhunt.co.za