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**AFRISAM CONCRETE USED FOR NATIONALLY IMPORTANT DURBAN
HARBOUR PROJECT**

AfriSam (South Africa) is supplying the requisite concrete to the Dredging International/Group Five Consortium for the project to widen and deepen the Durban Harbour entrance. This project is considered to be of national importance, and AfriSam, through its total project offering, was able to guarantee security of concrete supply.

Pieter Uys, sales manager AfriSam Aggregate & Readymix KwaZulu-Natal, explains that the harbour mouth is being widened by approximately 150 metres and the depth is being increased from minus 12 to minus 19 metres. This was necessitated because the modern container ships are not able to enter the current harbour mouth which in turn means that the Port Authorities are not able to offer a full harbour service to these shipping fleets.

The harbour mouth is being widened in a northerly direction towards uShaka Marine World and work is being undertaken concurrently on the north groyne (quayside) and the south breakwater. This has necessitated the erection of a batching plant on both the south and the north banks of the harbour mouth by AfriSam.

The one plant is based at the Point Berth and the other is adjacent to the Central Waste Water Treatment Works on the Bluff side. Both are mobile plants which will be removed once the contract has been completed.

The plants are both 36 m³ per hour plants and can produce 300 m³ in an 8 hour shift.

The concrete being produced by AfriSam is used in two precast yards operated by Group Five to manufacture 5-, 10-, 30- and 45-ton antifers and 20- ton dollos units. The total volume of concrete to be supplied is 124 000 m³. The precast yards are situated adjacent to the AfriSam readymix batching plants.

“On the new North Groyne, once the core has been placed and side slopes protected against wave action by armour rock and concrete antifers, the concrete capping will be placed as the final finish. On the South breakwater, the existing concrete cap is being widened and increased in height and this will account for some 30% of the total concrete being supplied,” Uys says.

“Started in May 2007 and scheduled for completion in March 2010, this is a fast track project which requires dedicated plant and capacity with absolutely no risk in terms of traffic,” Uys says. “Because the access routes are on major arteries, the consistency of supply was critical and this was the primary driving force for us to install two plants. By road, from the Point to the Bluff is

25 km which would have resulted in excessive delays due to traffic congestion. Now the furthest distance travelled is 1.5 km.

“The hours worked are in accordance with the project schedule and to facilitate concrete as required,” Uys says. “This level of flexibility is extremely important to the overall success of the project.”

Uys explains that all work is taking place without the harbour mouth being closed. “This means that vessels can continue to move through the harbour mouth while the major civil and marine works is being simultaneously conducted.”

Added benefits

Group Five chose AfriSam for a number of reasons. “We have a long, established relationship with Group Five and our total concept offering of putting plants on site, of dedicating trucks to the plants, and of placing dedicated people at these plants, provides a winning combination,” Uys says.

Uys adds that the plants on this project are automated to the same extent that AfriSam’s fixed plants are in terms of batching automation. This ensures consistency and guaranteed quality of the mix design.

Along with AfriSam’s excellent BBBEE compliance status, Group Five’s prerequisite for stringent quality specification adherence was a given.

"AfriSam is ISO accredited and complies with both ISO quality systems as well as the various SANS specifications for concrete," Uys says.

Another advantage provided by AfriSam was that the company could secure raw materials for this project because it operates its own quarries in the region and managed to secure the volumes of cement required from NPC.

"The contingency plan was to secure additional cement from AfriSam should any problems be experienced so we basically guaranteed a continuous supply by securing the raw materials, putting up the dedicated plants, trucks and expertise on site," Uys says.

"Add to this the fact that we have three backup plants – Coedmore, River Horse Valley and Isipingo – all within a 12 km radius of the harbour," Uys says. "So in the unlikely event that one of the on-site plants breaks down, we would be able to back up from one of the other three plants."

PROJECT INFO

In the Dredging International/Group Five Consortium, Group Five Civil Engineering is responsible for the R1.1-billion civil portion of the Durban Harbour Entrance Widening.

The width of the channel will be increased to 220 metres at its narrowest point, flaring into 300 metres beyond the south breakwater. The depth will vary from 19 metres in the outer channel to 18 metres in the inner channel, and 16 metres in the inner port channels and basins.

The widening and deepening of the Durban harbour forms part of several new projects identified by the National Ports Authority through the Ports master plan.

CAPTION FOR HARBOUR 01: Offloading and placing of the 5t antifers on the New North Groyne.

CAPTION FOR HARBOUR 02: The placed 5t antifers on the lee slope of the New North Groyne.

CAPTION FOR HARBOUR 03: The North side pre-cast yard showing the casting yard, 20t dollos units and the 5t and 10t antifers ready for transportation to site.

CAPTION FOR HARBOUR 04: The placement of the 45t antifers to the sea side of the South Breakwater.

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