

Operations & maintenance MAST MINOPEX goes global, and

Outsourced minerals processing plant operations and maintenance specialist **Minopex** has embarked on a major new growth and diversification strategy, aligned with sister company **DRA**, that will see the company “double the value of the business” by 2020, writes **LAURA CORNISH**.

Since its establishment 20 years ago Minopex has established itself as a leading specialist in the field of outsourced operation and maintenance of metals and minerals processing facilities.

The company currently operates and maintains 15 minerals processing plants in the coal, platinum, gold, iron ore, phosphate, iron ore, magnetite and diamond industries in South Africa, Lesotho, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania and Saudi Arabia.

New focus

DRA’s appointment of Wray Carvelas as CEO in October 2016 has resulted in some exciting changes for the company and all its divisions, including Minopex. A new management structure, incorporating a global executive team appointed to drive the business globally, alongside a major new shareholder, will thrust the companies into a new era of growth with a focus on emerging new business strengths and an expanding footprint across the globe. “This has culminated in a 2020 strategic vision that will double the value of all DRA divisions and in doing so deliver significant return on investment,” says Minopex Executive Vice President Gerhard Hendriksz.

Having revised its own strategy and how best to achieve its new target in November last year, Minopex is ready to take its core competency and skills sets to the world – from Africa and the Middle East to Australasia and the Americas (including Canada).



Situated in Mozambique, Ensermo was established to further develop and foster Minopex’ long-term presence in the country

“We have subsequently re-established our own management structure to ensure we deliver on the Group’s commitments and expectations,” Hendriksz explains. The Minopex management team now incorporates a new approach, a South Africa and Africa-focused executive group and an international executive group.

The business development approach has also been split into two different areas – one that focuses on maintaining and building on existing business (mainly in South Africa and Africa, including Mozambique, Tanzania, Botswana and Lesotho) and the other focused on new growth. “In December last year we successfully registered an office in Saudi Arabia under the DRA name. It incorporates two licenses – operations and maintenance, and design and construction. This will open new doors and position us to grow our business in the Middle East region.”

Speaking more in-depth about Minopex’s growth strategy, Hendriksz outlines key objectives which the company will focus on over the next three years, and beyond.

ERMIND diversifies

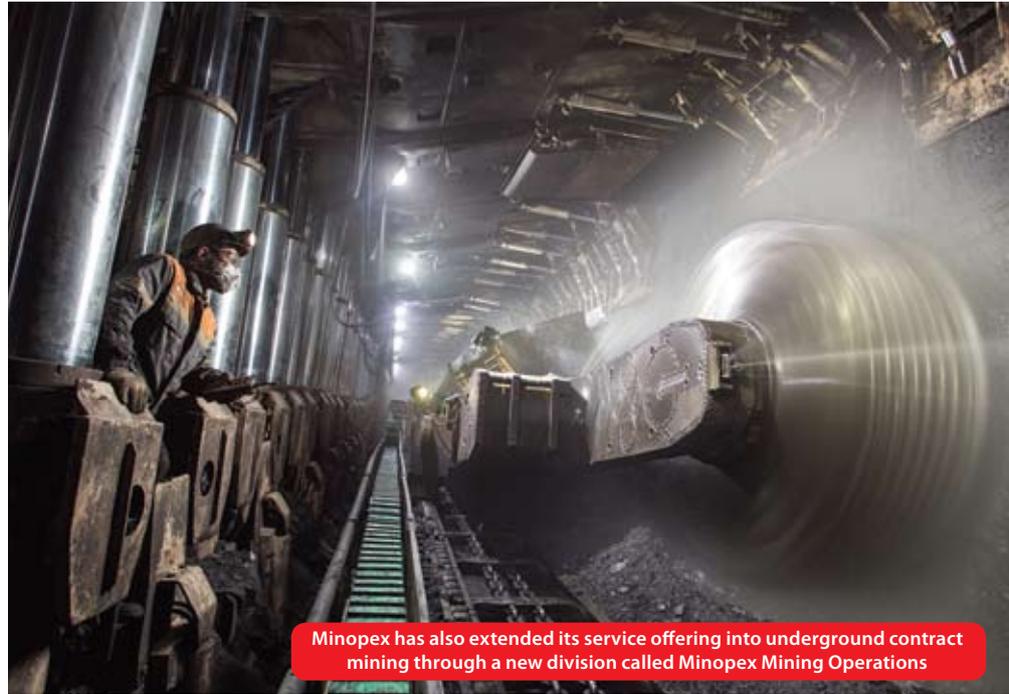


Minopex Mining Operations specialises in the maintenance of underground mining equipment and actual underground mining operations

Enhancing existing business excellence

Minopex has built long standing relationships with its clients and as much as the company is in the process of expansion and growth, it remains a top priority to nurture its client relationship and not neglect its existing clients.

"As mentioned, we want to maintain our current business in areas where we are well known and grow these existing businesses further as well," he notes. On the back of this focus, the company is also looking to expand its engineering (workshop) and laboratory capabilities – or basically replicate its Ensermo business model. Situated in Mozambique, Ensermo was established to further develop and foster Minopex' long-term presence in the country. Operating out of a locally based workshop in the Tete province, Ensermo



Minopex has also extended its service offering into underground contract mining through a new division called Minopex Mining Operations

provides quality engineering services to mines and industries in Mozambique including ports, harbours, steel works and production facilities.

Its capabilities expand a full array of engineering services as and when clients need them, including motor rewinds, civil construction, pipe installations, steel fabrications and analysis activities and pump refurbishment.

"There is a strong market gap for these services and skills in various African territories and we are intent on establishing similar commercial entities to service various mines in specific countries and areas."

Diversification reduces risk

With a variety of solid ambitions in play, Minopex is also looking to develop its core competency operations and maintenance strength outside of the minerals sector to diversify its risk profile. "We have identified the water, agriculture and energy sectors as lucrative new business areas to explore and demonstrate how we can apply our skills sets to these new industries. We will further look to diversify our production and manufacturing facilities as well."

Going global

Growing in the Australasia and Americas regions (and Europe as well) is a priority

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that will be delivered fastest through partnership establishments with local specialists – and through DRA a number of joint venture agreements in Australia have already been secured.

"There are a vast number of junior mining companies in need of these outsourced skills and capabilities to quickly deliver minerals processing projects, we believe the opportunities in these territories are plentiful. "Most importantly, the establishment of relationships in Australia, America's and Canada, will provide quick access to new project work in Africa as well," Hendriksz highlights.

"And because our capabilities are based in South Africa, we are able to offer a very cash competitive, Rand-based costing model when moving east and west of our borders."

Going underground

Minopex has also extended its service offering into underground contract mining through a new division called Minopex Mining Operations. It specialises not only in the maintenance of underground mining equipment, but also in actual underground mining operations.

In charge of developing and growing the business is





Minopex operates a major coal process plant in Mozambique



Operating out of a locally based workshop in the Tete province, Ensermo provides quality engineering services to mines and industries in Mozambique

mining executive Jacques Pretorius, a specialist in underground mining, who believes that the division is a good fit in the existing Minopex service offering and that of the DRA group. It fulfils a part of the value chain that has been missing within the Group offering.

In line with the global mining industry's move to that of mechanised mining over conventional mining, Minopex Mining Operations' expertise lies in servicing the operations and maintenance needs of trackless and semi-trackless mining operations – specifically the development and mining of underground hard rock, tabular and bord and pillar mines using mechanised and semi mechanised mining machinery and equipment.

The reason this partnership model between DRA and Minopex works so well is that the synergies benefit the client greatly in terms of reducing the costs as a result of shared services – a cost that would be duplicated if sourced from different contractors, all while improving the overall value chain between plant and mine. This model also acts as an enabler for smaller mining companies with smaller operations – greatly assisting them get

their operations off the ground.

“With a variety of senior personnel on board, all the supporting head office arms in place and a training centre equipped to deliver the necessary underground skills sets, Minopex is ready to transform this unit into an active, business-generating establishment,” Hendriksz enthuses.

Emerging in the Middle East

Having entered the Middle East two years ago when it was awarded a contract by Saudi Arabian gold and base metals miner Ma’aden Gold and Base Metals Company,

for the operation of its gold mine in Saudi Arabia, Minopex has recognised the region's potential as the mining industry takes precedence in light of a suffering oil industry.

The fully registered office in the Saudi Arabian capital of Riyadh is now equipped to service not only Saudi Arabia but also the entire Middle East region – including Oman, Iran and Turkey. “Establishing an office was a lengthy process but demonstrates our commitment to fully developing ourselves in the greater region,” Hendriksz points out. **MRA**



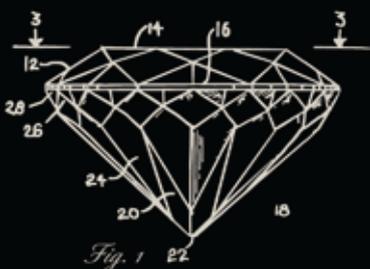
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