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CORPORATE BROCHURE



Structures and infrastructure

2010 was South Africa's year of pride: it was never going to be easy to get back to business as usual following the World Cup but building world class infrastructure is still a work in progress for Goba, the country's leading consulting engineering firm

South Africa has been somewhat shielded from the global downturn thanks to a number of factors, including its conservative fiscal policies and sound banking system. But there's no doubt that the 2010 FIFA World Cup was a terrific boost to the economy in general and the construction industry in particular. Goba is a name that seems to crop up in connection with almost every major project in South Africa—from mines and tunnels to transportation, roads, dams and pipelines and port development—so it was hardly a surprise to find it was involved in the design and construction supervision for the outstanding football stadia that fronted the contest.



Goba was fortunate to have been involved in the conceptualisation, design and construction management of no less than four of the world cup stadia—the multiple award-winning Moses Mabhida Stadium in Durban; the Greenpoint Stadium in Cape Town; the Nelson Mandela Bay stadium; and as lead designers for the Mbombela Stadium. In addition Goba was involved in the preparation of transport operational plans for the World Cup event in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Mbombela.

Founded in 2001 through the merger of two established companies, Goba Moahloli & Associates and Keeve Steyn Incorporated, Goba has built up a unique reputation for professional integrity linked with the ability to deliver complex specialised projects effectively. Its executive chairman Trueman Goba is one of two civil engineers on the 26-strong National Planning Commission headed by the minister for National Planning, Trevor Manuel, since its foundation in April 2010.

Talking to Andy Griffiths, a director and executive committee member of the firm, based in Johannesburg, you get a real sense that working for Goba is more than just a job because its people are involved in the construction of history making infrastructure projects for the nation. When Griffiths left his native Wales 30 years ago to join Keeve Steyn, he soon found himself involved in the Lesotho Highlands Water Project, which now supplies 20 per cent of Gauteng's water needs. It was, he says, the opportunity of a lifetime for a young engineer to design and supervise construction of a massive 185-metre high concrete arch dam and create 115 kilometres of hard rock tunnels using tunnel boring machines, and it occupied him for nearly 15 years!

More recently, Goba engineers have had the satisfaction of being able to work on projects just as vital to national growth, such as the Berg River Dam that brings water to Cape Town, and the Gauteng Freeway Improvement Project (GFIP) as well as managing the recent widening and deepening of the entrance to the Port of Durban. The main contract for this last project was awarded in May 2007 to a consortium of Dredging International of Belgium and Group Five of South Africa, while project management was carried out by Transnet Capital Projects and its joint venture EPCM (engineering, procurement and construction management) contractor HMG





(Hatch, Mott MacDonald and Goba).

The ability to work well in a joint venture or consortium is one of Goba's key strengths, says Griffiths. "We were fortunate to be able to get involved through HMG in the five-year Transnet Capital Works Programme, which included the Durban Harbour project." The same joint venture was responsible for improvements to the 861 kilometre-long railway line from Sishen to Saldanha, and refurbishment and expansion of the iron export facility at Saldanha, South Africa's deepest port, among other works for Transnet, the state-owned rail and ports authority. Says Griffiths: "The Durban Harbour project followed on nicely after the Durban Harbour Tunnel, for which Goba won a number of South Africa's prestigious design and construction awards. This new tunnel under the harbour entrance, some 35 metres below sea level, saw the first use of a mixed-shield slurry tunnel boring machine in South Africa."

These may be dramatic projects, but 40 per cent of Goba's turnover comes from the Transportation Division, the largest of Goba's four divisions. Here Goba has been involved in several multi-million rand projects throughout the country, including the Gauteng Freeway Improvement Project Phase 1, a R23 billion (US\$6 billion) project, which saw a major upgrading of the main freeway network in Gauteng and the introduction of electronic toll collection in the country. In addition, Goba is at the forefront of the national initiative to restructure public transport services within South Africa through its involvement in the planning and operation design of integrated rapid public transport networks in three of the five major metropolitan areas in the country.

The second largest division at around 30 per cent is the Mining Division, says Griffiths. "We do a lot of work on mine surface infrastructure—things like materials handling, haul roads, water

and power reticulation, polluted water dams and control systems, as well as the offices, workshops and buildings on the surface. We are currently involved in two very large new mines for Sasol." Working in a joint venture with RSV Enco, Goba has been providing EPCM services for the multi-billion rand Thubelisha mine shaft development, a new mine designed to produce 10.6 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) of coal starting from the first quarter of 2012.

The same joint venture carried out the techno-economic feasibility studies for another Sasol project, the Impumulelo mine, and was then awarded the EPCM contract. Construction will start at Impumulelo this year, with production expected to start early in 2014 with an eventual target of 8.5 mtpa expandable to 10.5 mtpa.

Recent months brought a concept study for another coal mine at Emalahleni, 200 kilometres to the east of Johannesburg. The Zonnebloem Project, as it is known, is being developed by Xstrata, while United Manganese of Kalahari (UMK) has brought Goba in to assess a new manganese mine at Hotazel in Northern Cape. "Generally mining work is keeping a good number of our 500 permanent staff pretty busy at the moment," says Griffiths.

On the water side, Goba is involved with supervision of the 85 metre-high De Hoop Dam in Mpumalanga, the 40 metre-high Thune Dam in Botswana and the 120 kilometre VRESAP pipeline and abstraction works designed to augment water supply to the Mpumalanga coalfields, as well as the new Mokolo-Crocodile Water Pipeline, another mega water transfer project design to augment water supplies to the Medupi power station and the Waterberg coalfields.

Having such a variety of different specialisms under one roof makes it difficult to guarantee continuity of work, Griffiths points out. "People have



to be flexible and adaptable and have a range of skills; but even so it is important for us to select our joint venture partners judiciously. If you have two or three firms pooling their resources you have the breadth of skills and capacity to undertake these large projects. Because these projects are not always continuous it is not always possible to maintain a large dedicated team all the time, and I think one of Goba's successes has been that we work very well in such partnerships; we pride ourselves on our integrity and the way we do business and I think partners enjoy working with us."

Goba's ethic is well summed up by its mnemonic EQUIP (excellence, quality, ubuntu [respect], integrity and professionalism). "We try to hit the right balance, and promote BEE through training and mentoring as well as maintain social responsibility without compromising technical excellence and quality." Each of the company's offices in Gauteng, KZN, Eastern Cape and Western Cape is treated to a weekend away once a year where current strategic issues are explained to staff, and external speakers arranged to give advice on personal development and motivation. The weekends also include team building sessions and give all staff a chance to socialise with one another as well as getting the chance to meet Trueman Goba and the other Exco directors on equal terms. It does a great deal to advance cohesion and mutual respect, he says.

South Africa has been comparatively sheltered from the global storm, concludes Griffiths, who is confident that Goba will continue to expand. "In 2011 we expect the government to continue to put funds into infrastructure. There are a number of big projects we have our eyes on at the moment in transportation, water and power. And we have the feeling the mining houses are starting to get more positive and will be making investments in new mines and mine expansions." www.goba.co.za ●

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