

Transnet Port Terminals' Iron Ore and Manganese growth speaks volumes

Transnet Port Terminals' Saldanha Terminal has seen a drastic rise in the number of employees by three-fold over a five-year period and this is largely due to a rise in the export of commodities such as manganese and iron ore, amongst others. Having first handled manganese in 2014, the Saldanha Terminal has seen the amount of manganese handled increase 30-fold to the end of the 2017/18 financial year. In the first month of the current financial year, more than 5 million tons of iron ore were handled compared to the same period in the past financial year, which is an increase of more than 21% year on year.

"Despite an economic downturn globally over the past five years, manganese and iron ore commodities that have shown resilience and growth based on the volumes handled through our Saldanha terminal. This in turn has had a positive impact on job creation at our Saldanha facility, with staff numbers having almost doubled for the combined facilities over the past five years", stated Velile Dube, TPT's General Manager: Cape Channel.

These figures position TPT as one of the biggest exporters of these two commodities with Saldanha being recognised as the fourth largest exporter of iron ore to the Eastern market and Africa's largest iron ore exporter. With 80% of the world's manganese coming from South Africa, the huge uptake of this commodity is largely due to the world going green to reduce the world's carbon footprint and the need to lithium, zinc carbon and alkaline batteries used in, amongst others, cellular phones, electric cars and domestic geysers. Dube added that as a direct result of this growth other investments by Transnet Port Terminals have been made to improve operational efficiencies and capacity with some of the most recent projects including the receipt of new 32t Forklifts earlier this year with an additional six 32ton forklifts and three 18ton forklifts being delivered by the end of 2018. These forklifts, which totaled R30 million, perform a crucial function in the movement and loading of manganese at the facility in Saldanha, which handles various break-bulk cargo via a skip process. On the iron ore front, the refurbishment of tippers is required to extend the life of this important equipment at the terminal and ensure the machinery is also safe for operating. TPT has embarked on a project that involves the iron ore facility's Tippler 3 to sustain a capacity of



60mtpa during the imminent refurbishment of Tippler 2 and the eventual shut down of Tippler 1 due to it reaching its end-of-life. This project is due to be completed in 2020.

“These investments will ensure more efficient and effective handling of cargo and ultimately help us to meet the demands of our clients and grow the region’s economy. We believe the combined efforts and results in Saldanha are key to assisting TPT achieve our goal of becoming one of the top five terminal operators globally in five years,” concluded Dube.

In the past 5 years, TPT has spent in excess of R1,1 billion on empowering suppliers as part of their Black Economic Empowerment spend within the Western Cape region, which the Saldanha Terminal is a part of. This is out of a R1,55 billion total procurement spend over the same period. Amongst the beneficiaries of the BEE spend include businesses owned by women, youth, qualifying and micro enterprises.

Boasting the largest natural, deep-water port in South Africa, TPT’s Saldanha Terminal has an average draft of 17.5 across its combined 5 berths with an ability to accommodate Panamax and Cape-sized vessels. The terminal remains the largest iron ore export facility in Africa loading between 31 vessels per month. Saldanha is water-scarce and to ensure sufficient fresh water, TPT invested in a reverse osmosis plant that uses the existing seawater, which sifts it of brine for use in dust control management at the terminal. In August of 2016, the terminal handled its one billionth ton of iron ore, which coincided nicely with the 40th anniversary of the first export of the commodity in 1976.

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Notes to editor:

Transnet Port Terminals (TPT) is South Africa's leading terminal operator responsible for loading and offloading cargo aboard vessels calling the seven South African ports. Boasting a staff compliment of over 9000 across 16 cargo terminals, TPT's operations target four major market sectors namely: automotive, containers, bulk and break bulk. Nozipho Sithole is the Chief Executive responsible for realising the new Transnet 4.0 strategy which is aimed at repositioning the business as a facilitator of trade and among the world's top five in the next five years. Current plans are focused on geographic expansion, service innovation and diversification aided by competitive approaches hinted by the fourth industrial revolution.

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