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Tangible results for largest ever Jersey delegation at major South Africa mining event

Jersey's growing reputation as a centre for the operations of international mining companies was showcased to an audience of thousands at one of the world's largest mining industry events recently.

Locate Jersey led a Jersey delegation of legal and finance professionals to the major Mining Indaba conference which took place in Cape Town, South Africa, between 8th and 11th February. Having been run for more than 20 years, Mining Indaba is the world's largest mining investment conference and Africa's largest mining event, regularly attracting over 7,000 attendees from more than 100 countries and territories.

It was the fourth successive year that Locate Jersey had attended the event and Jersey was also represented by Assistant Chief Minister Senator Philip Ozouf, who had a speaking slot at the conference. During his speech he highlighted the results of recent research commissioned by Jersey Finance and published by Capital Economics entitled 'Jersey's Value to Africa' and discussed Jersey's potential role in facilitating inward infrastructure investment into Africa.

This year, Locate Jersey secured a more significant presence at the conference, whilst the Jersey delegation was the largest to ever attend the event, with 16 representatives from 12 intermediary firms in the legal, trust and banking sectors attending. They included Alex Picot, Carey Olsen, Crestbridge, Elian, First Names Group, Hatstone Lawyers, JTC Group, Moore Stephens, Mourant Ozannes, Ogier, UBP and Vistra. In addition, Jersey mining companies Randgold and Centamin featured heavily in the conference programme.

In recent years, Jersey has seen an increase in the number of mining, natural resources and related businesses setting up a corporate operation in the island, with over 20 such companies now established in total. Two businesses have relocated to Jersey following introductions to Locate Jersey at Mining Indaba in previous years, including the recent arrival of Digby Wells. In addition, a growing

number of those companies are employing local staff, with 40 jobs for entitled individuals now having been created in the natural resources sector.

During the event, Senator Ozouf also attended a number of trade and inward investment development meetings, held discussions with both the British High Commissioner to South Africa, Judith Macgregor, and Lord Livingston, UK Minister of State for Trade and Investment, had the opportunity to meet former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, and was invited to attend the State opening of Parliament in Cape Town, before travelling to Johannesburg for meetings with financial services sector businesses. He said:

“Jersey has a useful role to play in assisting African mining companies. It is a highly competitive industry and island businesses have the expertise to facilitate investment and provide wealth management services which can assist African businesses in keeping their assets secure. This area offers Jersey business exciting prospects and there is clearly real potential for the island as we look to grow the economy and create jobs for local people.”

Mike King, CEO, Economic Development, commented:

“Yet again we saw significant interest in Jersey from mining sector businesses at Mining Indaba this year. Mining executives are impressed by the financial and wider business expertise Jersey has to offer and, as the uptick in recent relocations shows, we are finding that Jersey increasingly fits the bill as a credible jurisdiction to locate the headquarters of exploration and mining companies. This in turn is creating additional job opportunities for the local workforce, and we are aware of firms who have recently appointed graduates in a range of exciting roles.”

Paul Martin, Partner, Mourant Ozannes, added:

“There is real potential in the emerging natural resources sector for Jersey, and we are already working hard on tangible business leads from our attendance at Mining Indaba. The overriding response from the mining and natural resources professionals we spoke to was that the Jersey proposition aligns well with their administrative and headquartering needs, with the availability of high quality administration, legal, tax and ancillary support, the time-zone, and the lifestyle all being key factors in attracting these companies, and the individuals that run them, to the island.”

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