

Press Release:

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Mitak's capacity, technology and local manufacture underpins the quality of its high chrome white iron mill liners

The Johannesburg-based company Mitak, which exhibited for the first time at this year's Electra Mining 2018, ranks among the world's majors in terms of high chrome white iron (HCWI) foundries. Since its founding in 1973, the company has developed and capitalised on its extensive experience in casting this range of alloys.

"The year 2014 was a milestone for Mitak, as we invested R200-million in upgrading the foundry with new equipment; and also expanded our manufacturing facilities," explains Graham Anderson, Business Development Director of Mitak.

Since 2014, the foundry has been sustainably 'growing into' this new capacity; and is now able to cast up to 1,000 tons a month. Mitak employs more than 500 people and has made major investments in most areas of its production.

"We are also one of the few foundries internationally that can manufacture HCWI castings of up to 18 tons finished mass," Anderson adds.

When the company was founded 45 years ago, a decision was taken to focus its expertise on HCWI as the alloy of choice.

"Although this alloy was a difficult one to master at the time, the founders realised that a dedicated focus on HCWI would give them an important competitive advantage – even over competitors in the lower-cost regions of the world. Key to this advantage was the expertise Mitak has subsequently developed in manufacturing hard metal alloys. This has been reinforced through greater efficiency, economies of scale and consistently stringent standards of quality," he adds.

Due to its exceptional wear-resistant qualities, HCWI is well-suited for manufacture of mill liner castings for tube, rod, ball and fully autonomous grinding (FAG) mills. "Apart from wear resistance, we also have the alloys in our range to manufacture corrosion-retardant mill liners," Anderson asserts.

Because every aspect of the manufacturing process has always been under one roof, this facilitates rigorous quality control checks at every step of the production process. At Mitak, the role of its quality inspectors is crucial in maintaining and further improving the foundry's high levels of manufacturing excellence. More than 50 well-trained quality inspectors do

more than simply carry out final inspection, but carefully monitor each phase of the production process.

"Mitak's quality systems are widely respected in the foundry and mining industries both locally and internationally," he adds.

Mitak today employs the latest foundry technology to support its quality drive. With the use of laser and optical technology, the company is able to reverse-engineer existing liners. The company has also brought the latest technology to bear in the production of casting patterns, an example being the installation of one of the largest CNC-controlled five-axis pattern millers. Mitak also uses 3D additive printing to produce certain patterns. Once a component has been cast, cutting-edge digital technology checks for absolute dimensional accuracy.

Uncompromising quality is the reason why some 75% of Mitak's production is exported, most of this going to major OEMs of process equipment in Europe. Many of these relationships date back more than 35 years; and are testimony to the trust that these world-leading OEMs have placed, and continue to place, in the South African foundry.

"In addition, our export drive has compelled us to develop our infrastructure, capabilities and systems so that our products conform to the highest international standards," he continues.

"Historically, Canada, the US or Far East were the regions from which most mill liners used in sub-Saharan Africa were imported. With the successful expansion of Mitak and the latest foundry technology, the local and pan-African mining sector now has a local foundry which can confidently provide a very competitive mill liner offering in terms of quality, price, service and spares," he adds.

Regarding the South African market, Mining Charter 111 procurement legislation will compel local mines to source 60% of their products locally. This will be audited by the authorities to ensure that they are compliant.

"In the light of this – not to mention our exceptional HCWI expert manufacturing expertise and casting technology – we believe Mitak is the most suitable choice for the supply of mill liners to the regional mining sector.

"Not only do we offer unmatched quality and consistency in our product, but our geographical proximity makes for simpler, faster supply of critical wear components," Anderson asserts.

"We are able to put world-leading facilities and technology at our customers' disposal and, in an ongoing process of consultation, are able to arrive at optimal solutions that will truly benefit them," he says.

"We pride ourselves on being a local manufacturer and employer, and we have an excellent understanding of the requirements of the local mining market, where we strive to provide consistent levels of innovation and quality," Anderson points out.

"In terms of recent successes, we are currently supplying HCWI liners to one of the largest platinum mining groups in the country; as well as to one of the largest rod mill installations in South Africa. In this last instance, we have been supplying this mining operation for the past five years."

"However, our service does not end with the delivery of liners to our customers as we remain involved in monitoring our product quality and performance on an ongoing basis in order to provide our customers with accurate data on overall wear patterns in their mills. This data invariably demonstrates that our liners provide improved wear life for better grinding performance and a lower cost-per-ton milled."

"Ultimately – as showcased and communicated by our presence at this year's Electra Mining exhibition – our aim is to supply the mining sector with mill liners of exceptional quality, which will grind more effectively for longer, and in so doing, greatly improve our customers' profitability," he concludes.

Ends

(953 words)

Note to Editors

About Mitak:

Mitak foundry was established in 1973 and has developed into one of major high chrome white iron (HCWI) foundries globally.

Mitak's experience in HCWI has laid the foundation for the company's competence and capability. The company has three key strengths. First of all, it comprehensively understands HCWI and is dedicated solely to HCWI casting. Secondly, it controls the entire process under one roof at its plant in Alrode. Thirdly, in terms of scale, Mitak employs more than 500 people and is one of the world's major HCWI foundries in that it currently casts 850 tons a month with a maximum casting capacity of 1000 tons a month. In particular, it is a leader in the manufacture of HCWI mill liners for tube, rod, ball and fully autonomous grinding (FAG) mills.

The company also specialises in producing and casting abrasion resistant HCWI alloys. Allied with this, Mitak has strong metallurgical understanding of corrosion and the manufacture of corrosion retardant mill liners.

Mitak is ISO9001:2008 accredited and is a Level 4 BBBEE supplier.

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