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Epiroc affirms its automation expertise with unveiling of new Regional Application Centre

Epiroc proudly introduces its new Regional Application Centre (RAC), which aligns with the OEM's ongoing focus on meeting customers' growing pursuit to elevate uptime, boost productivity, improve safety and shrink operating costs through the implementation of technology.

Based in five key cities around the world (Denver, USA; Toronto, Canada; Santiago, Chile; Perth, Australia and Johannesburg, South Africa), the RAC will focus more closely on supporting customers through its mandate, which would include addressing regional specific demands, customer requests for enhanced productivity and first line technical troubleshooting over the complete range of Epiroc 'smart' equipment.

The growing turn by the global mining industry towards the inclusion of automation and digitalisation has seen companies investing time and resources to introduce cutting-edge technologies. "The Regional Application Centre is committed to building a specialised team positioned on the customer's doorstep to deploy appropriate expertise, automation products and digital tools," comments newly appointed Regional Automation Centre Manager, Kumeshan Naidu. "By bringing automation capabilities, technical competencies and automation engineering closer to the customer, the RAC team will be able to build application knowledge, react immediately to their requests, and fast track response time for customisation, troubleshooting and systems integration."

Taking the position of improvement supplier, RAC will also collect benchmarking data to assist customers in meeting requirements as well as develop and maintain a local capability of automation projects supporting the capital equipment divisions and offering guidance on complying with legislation and standards.

According to Naidu, the drive towards autonomous equipment is fueled by many different motives and he highlights two major benefits - operator safety and improved productivity. "Moving operators from a potentially hazardous and uncomfortable environment to a safe controlled remote location, reduces the risk of injury and improves overall productivity."

In offering a portfolio of proven hardware and services technology solutions, Epiroc focuses on three distinct areas namely data collection /analysis, automated mining equipment and most importantly interoperability and systems integration. “The continuous mention of the importance of data in our modern world extends to the complete mining operation, whereby the more information you commit to collecting, the more operational efficiencies you could realise,” notes Naidu. “However, it is important to have a clear understanding of what you are going to do with the terabytes of information gathered and how confident you are that the data collected is a true representation of the real world environment.”

The implementation of digitalisation and automation results in immediate benefits for a connected fleet. Automated technology users in the mining industry continuously show increased real-time visibility of operation and machine availability, shorter shift changes, and consistent production values from within an on-site control room or remotely via cloud services or web-based Apps. Understanding the health status of machines enables customers to conduct specific servicing that addresses critical notifications, rather than a generic approach. Effective servicing potentially reduces the risk of critical failures and maintenance costs, realising lowest overall total cost of ownership for end-users.

Naidu underlines the fact that automation and digitalisation in mining and industry are set to grow exponentially. “The introduction of these technologies which we showcased at Electra Mining 2018 is calling for the drastic rethinking of roles as commitment from all levels within the organisation, support from the technology supplier i.e. Epiroc and a continuous focus on change management are needed. With the introduction of RAC, Epiroc, as a leading global productivity partner for the mining, infrastructure and natural resources industries, is committed to keeping abreast of the latest technological advances that are applicable to their operation and in line with the local legislation,” concludes Naidu.

Naidu holds three engineering qualifications from the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, and is currently studying towards a Master of Philosophy, International Business at the University of the Pretoria, Gordon Institute of Business Science. With his tenure at leading global companies combined with the execution of numerous projects at a number of blue chip mines in Africa, Naidu brings invaluable engineering expertise, knowledge and experience to the RAC table.

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Press release from Epiroc South Africa (Pty) Ltd

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Epiroc is a leading productivity partner for the mining, infrastructure and natural resources industries. With cutting-edge technology, Epiroc develops and produces innovative drill rigs, rock excavation and construction equipment, and provides world-class service and consumables. The company was founded in Stockholm, Sweden, and has passionate people supporting and collaborating with customers in more than 150 countries. Learn more at www.epiroc.com.

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