

completion



R70m apron rehabilitation

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at OR Tambo nears completion

Specialist infrastructure development construction company Raubex is undertaking a R70m apron upgrade at OR Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg by making use of equipment supplied by Diamond Products – a specialist in the manufacture, assembly and sales of diamond tools and equipment for heavy industries.

An airport apron is the area outside the terminal where aircraft are parked for loading or unloading, refuelling and passenger boarding. Raubex Construction contracts manager Theuns Botha points out that the company was commissioned in July 2011 to remove and replace large sections of the existing concrete slabs, some of which have been in place for more than 40 years.

“Raubex is responsible for cutting the concrete slabs by making use of a range of Diamond Products saw blades



Inside OR Tambo Airport

varying between 350mm and 910mm in diameter. After the concrete is cut and sawed, it is demolished with hydraulic hammers before being removed from the works area, crushed and stockpiled for use elsewhere,” he explains.

Botha highlights the fact, that the project has been divided into twelve phases, as a certain number of stands have to be kept available at all times to minimise any potential disruption.

“To date, we have cut a total of 13 000m³ of concrete without any major setbacks, thanks to the durability of the Diamond Products range,” he continues.

Raubex Construction site agent Louis Myburgh notes that Raubex Construction is currently working on the final phase of the project.

“The high quality and durability of the Diamond Products range of saw blades has ensured that we have remained on time and within budget, having cut a total length of 8800m of full-depth concrete, in addition to a total of 18 175m of concrete joints – a feat that would not be manageable in such good time with any other brand in the local market.”

According to Diamond Products director Brian Clark, the company provided Raubex Construction with a range of its premium line of equipment, including; the LaserPro RC70D 102mm core bits, which were used for sample cores in the concrete slabs. “We also supplied a range of 300mm, 450mm, 750mm and 900mm LaserPro CC38 segmented blades. The CC38 blade is designed for specialised contractors for full depth slab cutting of very hard concrete, and has proven to be ideally suited to Raubex Construction in the application of this project.”

Myburgh points out that most of the challenges related to the project have been related to security access. “Modern airport security is very strict, and it has proven to be a challenge to get new machines on and off site. At the moment, we are using two excavators to remove the demolished concrete before re-dowelling the existing concrete, and eventually replacing the removed concrete with new concrete.”

The Raubex Group was established in Bloemfontein in 1974, and is listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, employing more than 6 800 staff members. Raubex Group is divided into two main divisions, namely; roads and materials.

In the mid 1990s, the Raubex Group began developing its SADC footprint and secured various projects in Malawi, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Raubex now generates an estimated 11% of its revenue outside of South Africa. The company’s main line of business is road-building, road-rehabilitation, concrete structures, pipelines, mining services and the production of construction materials.

Looking to the future, Botha remains optimistic of the outlook for Raubex Construction. “Although certain aspects of the economy remain sluggish, there is still potential for growth. We have managed to complete the rehabilitation of aprons at OR Tambo by making use of the Diamond Products range of equipment, which has been backed up by excellent after-sales service and technical support,” he concludes. ■