

Top-quality concrete essential to SA construction market's future

As the South African construction industry starts to show signs of recovery, the need to produce the highest grade of concrete is more important than ever before, notes Pan Mixer SA director, Walter Ebeling.

PMSA is Africa's leading manufacturer of concrete block, brick and paving machinery, and the company has exclusive distribution rights to the European-manufactured Fiori self-loading concrete mixer that comes fully-equipped with an on-board weighing system, allowing the user to weigh aggregates before loading them into the mixer.

The mixer has, however, come under fire in recent reports claiming the electronic weighing system is prone to technical problems because the sensitive equipment cannot withstand the harsh South African climate and terrain.

In reply, Ebeling points out that PMSA has sold several Fiori self-loading mixers recently, and has not had any complaints about the weighing system.

He gives an example of two Fiori mixers that have stood up to the elements in the Thohoyandou region of the Limpopo province, where they are being used as part of a rural infrastructure development programme.

"The client, who owns two Fiori mixers and a competitor's mixers, is impressed with the reliability of the Fiori's. As a condition of supply for a recent contract, each batch of concrete produced had to be recorded, and calibration certificates supplied for each of the machine's weighing

systems. Had the client not had the facility to weigh and record each batch, they would not have been awarded the contract," he explains.

Ebeling notes that the Fiori mixers are currently being used for road infrastructure and the manufacture of concrete floors on two separate sites, located 10 km apart. "The road infrastructure project poses the biggest challenge, as the mixers are used for in-situ casting of roadside kerbs and storm-water channels, as well as concrete support beams for paving of the road surface," he says. "The mixers are pushed to the limit every day, they operate on steep inclines and in dry and dusty conditions caused by high temperatures. However, despite the hostile environment, the mixers have performed perfectly.

What's more, Ebeling explains that Fiori's advanced weighing system has pressure sensors in the hydraulics system for weighing, which makes it more robust and accurate. "Fiori is the top-of-the-range mixer on the market, and enables users to produce the highest-quality concrete. Although the weighing system is an optional extra, it is highly recommended to ensure that a top-quality end-product is produced every time."

"The Fiori self-loading mixer is the ideal way of bringing quality control to green-field and rural sites. Advanced technology developed by Fiori enables the mixer not only to weigh the raw materials, but also to calculate whether the material is mixed, and the slump value required – making it the only self-loading mixer in the world capable of producing world-class, CE quality concrete," says Ebeling.

He concludes by adding that the extra costs involved in purchasing a Fiori self-loading mixer are minimal compared to industry-standard machinery. "The difference in price is minor; however, the Fiori mixer provides contractors with the peace-of-mind that they are delivering the exact quality of concrete, where and when they want it. ■

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