

ANNEXURE 2(a)

Stainless-steel heat-treatment furnace completed

A specialised heat-treatment furnace will be commissioned by Salchain, a Baughan subsidiary, this month.

This is the final stage of a R10-million investment put into the company over the last eight years.

The stainless-steel heat-treatment furnace is designed for heat treatment of stainless-steel and therefore operates at very high temperatures.

It has a sealed quench and state-of-the-art atmosphere control.

The furnace is being produced by Wadeville-based specialist manufacturer Prestige Furnaces. The investment programme has included the acquisition of Finwood Engineering's modern press and machine shops. Additional machinery has been bought, including a carbon steel heat-treatment furnace, a pin induction machine and new Cad computers. The facilities have been upgraded and a second mobile spectrometer was bought for in-house testing.



The spectrometer, bought in July this year from a German company has facilitated the in-house testing of all incoming steel to order specifications and for chain development work. "The upgrading of facilities and new equipment will allow Salchain to match and exceed any first-world supplier in the world," comments Derek Anderson, MD of Baughan. He adds that the investment programme will allow Salchain to be on a level playing field with any internationally recognised competitor from Japan, the US or the UK.

Salchain locally manufactures large, specialised engineering chains and imports smaller mass-produced chains from the East. Importing from the East allows Salchain to "pass the savings onto the local market", says salesperson Brian Tillie.

Australia is the largest export market and receives 15% of annual chain production, to the value of about R4-million, for use in coal mines particularly.

The US imports 10% and a 10% portion is distributed between the UK, Indonesia and the African continent, including Madagascar, Mayotte, Reunion and Mauritius. The remainder is sold locally to various markets. Sugar mills, pulp mills and coal mines constitute the largest South African market for Salchain.

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