

# Scaffolding contractor sets the standard for safety

Rapid Scaffolding & Formwork Free State cc has demonstrated a firm commitment towards its customers in terms of occupational health and safety management in the workplace. The company has been awarded the prestigious OHSAS 18001:2007 accreditation – making it the first scaffolding contracting company in the industry to do so.

**R**apid Scaffolding has a proud history of over 30 years' service to the construction, engineering, manufacturing and petrochemical industries, dating back to the early 1970s. It expanded its operations into the Vaal Triangle some 25 years ago, to supply the former AECI and Iscor groups, and is currently involved in work for DCD-DORBYL and ArcelorMittal, among others.

Addressing guests and key customers at the recent handover of the OHSAS 18001 certification held at Stonehaven on Vaal, Rapid Scaffolding member Terry Kelly said he had a smile on his face for two reasons. "One is for achieving our certification and the second is because to our knowledge, we are the first scaffolding contracting company in the country to have achieved this prestigious award."

Giving a brief background to the certification, he said this started two years ago, when ArcelorMittal graded the company as a Category A service provider, which meant stringent compliance in terms of safety.

Rapid Scaffolding teamed up with SHEQ/Risk specialist GSRC Management, a leading safety consulting, training and compliance organisation. Thanking CEO Sarel Allers and his team at GSRC, for putting in many long hours of invaluable training and assistance in identifying Rapid Scaffolding's unique safety requirements, Kelly said the certification would not have been possible without this partnership. "I'd also like to thank our contracts manager Sean Murphy and his staff for their hard work. It's not just a case of handing this over to the consultants and saying, this is your baby, just give us the flag at the end of the process; we had to put our shoulder to the wheel, and the team's hard work is appreciated. This is a continuing process, and we aim to work hard at ensuring that safety is key in everything that we do.

"We bought into ArcelorMittal's vision of safety as a priority in the plant and want to emphasise from our side, that we would rather erect a scaffolding, and check and inspect it thoroughly before handing it over,

and if this takes more time, safety is the winner here.

"With the representation we have today at our handover, from ArcelorMittal, DCD-DORBYL and Air Products, I can see that we are all on the same page as far as safety is concerned.

"This is a partnership with all of you and Rapid Scaffolding would like to assure you that we will continue with our efforts to ensure a safe environment in the workplace," he confirmed.

Handing over the OHSAS 18001 certification, SABS Business Unit: environmental health and safety manager Pieter Haasbroek, thanked the company for choosing the SABS as its certification partner. "To achieve certification is not done by an individual, but with everyone's input from within an organisation. I'd like to congratulate each and everyone at Rapid Scaffolding for achieving this certification," he said, adding that the first surveillance audit would be in the last week of October.

And GSRC's Sarel Allers agrees: "You and your crew have done a great job, and let's hope that the next audit will be a walk in the park. What we try to do is to change working relationships into partnerships, and safety is exactly the same. As Terry mentioned, implementation is one thing, but the maintenance thereof is key. Likewise, we at GSRC couldn't have done this by ourselves."

ArcelorMittal has 21 Category A contractors on its Vanderbijlpark plant, all of which have to be accredited in terms of OHSAS 18000 and/or ISO 14000 certification. "I'd like to congratulate Rapid Scaffolding on their achievement. From our side safety is paramount in everything that we do, and



this certification is good news indeed," said Arcelor Mittal's maintenance workshop manager Frans Jacobs.

And he was joined by DCD-DORBYL's health and safety manager Piet Jordaan, who said the accreditation had given his company piece of mind. "We know that accidents can happen on heights, and the fact that Rapid Scaffolding, a company that does all our scaffolding is OHSAS 18001 certified, means a lot to us."

Rapid Scaffolding & Formwork is a BBBEE company. Its members, Terry Kelly and Clive Abourizk have over 50 years combined experience in the scaffolding sector. The company erects, hires and dismantles scaffolding to customer specification on a contract basis. Its hire and sales division is managed by competent and well-trained staff.

Employees are trained extensively in the handling and erection of scaffolding, carried out on an ongoing basis through in-house training and certification at a Seta-accredited training facility.

Through constant research and development in scaffolding technology, and together with its recent OHSAS 18001 accreditation the company is well equipped to provide a safe and efficient service to its customers. At the time of writing, this scaffolding contractor had achieved 1 042 LTI-free days. □