**PRESS RELEASE**

Rope access systems and rescue teams deployed to Petrochemical facility

***17 April, 2015:*** *Two teams of expert rope access technicians from Skyriders have been contracted to install access and safety systems on large civil structures, in addition to providing standby rescue services.*

Skyriders was commissioned in early-2015 by the appointed contractor, a large listed multi-disciplinary construction and engineering group. Skyriders marketing manager **Mike Zinn** notes that an eight-man team is responsible for establishing, inspecting and maintaining the access systems, while a four-man team will provide standby rescue for all personnel at the petrochemical plant over the next 14 months.

According to Zinn, Skyriders has been involved in similar projects at power stations nationwide, and this experience has helped the teams to overcome the challenges they now face with confidence. “The men are working in hazardous conditions accompanied by high winds and heavy rain from time to time. Given their past experiences, they are working flexible shifts to avoid any weather disruptions.”

Zinn points out that rope access is a safer and more cost-effective alternative to the more traditional means of access in a number of applications, especially on tall structures at industrial sites, including; smoke stacks, cooling towers and boilers. “Rope access applies practical rope work to enable workers to access difficult-to-reach locations, without the use of costly and time-consuming alternative means.”

Suspended in their secure position, Zinn states that rope access technicians are able to carry out numerous tasks relating to inspection, protective coating, maintenance and surveying. With regards to safety, he indicates the four-man Skyriders team is responsible for numerous rescue tasks in any application over 2 m above ground.

“Large construction projects like Kusile and Medupi for example have hundreds of workers operating high above ground on tall structures such as the cooling towers, boilers, inclined conveyors – which they gain access to via numerous means, including; cranes, cherry pickers, lifts and scaffolding. As a result, there is always the inherent risk of a fall or entrapment, or mechanical breakdown, and the highly-skilled and experienced Skyriders teams of rope access technicians are on call to rescue workers in the quickest, safest and least distressing manner possible,” Zinn explains.

A rope access technician with Level 3 certification, the highest level of rope access training, forms part of the Skyriders rescue team. Obtaining Level 3 certification is a rigorous process that requires a minimum of 1 000 working hours to be logged at Level 2 before qualifying for training. This ensures that, in the event of an at-height emergency, the safety of all onsite workers is in more than capable hands.

Due to the large-scale nature of the project, Zinn reveals that Skyriders is committed to providing the safest and most cost-effective method of accessing the work site, in the most non-intrusive manner for workers. “The project is going well and we look forward to undertaking similar jobs in the future,” he concludes.

**Ends**

**Notes to the Editor**There are numerous photographs specific to this press release. Please visit <http://media.ngage.co.za> and click the Skyriders link.

**About Skyriders**Skyriders (Pty) Ltd, established in 1998, is a leader in the South African rope access industry, providing cost- and time-saving solutions to clients in the power generation and petrochemical industries who require rope access aided inspection, NDT and maintenance work to be done in difficult to reach, high-up locations.

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