**PRESS RELEASE**

New range of Melco retractable V return idlers are well received in SA

*07 November, 2012: Internationally-recognised conveyor equipment manufacturer Melco has expanded its product offering following the highly successful May 2012 launch of the new range of state-of-the-art retractable V return idlers to the South African mining market.*

The Melco retractable V return idler design consists of a permanently installed main frame, sloping at a 10° angle to the incline belt, with end plates and a cut out. Melco sales and marketing director **Craig Warmback** explains that the roller is located in a retractable frame that slides into the main frame at a 6° angle, which ensures that it drops away from the belt as it is retracted, thereby ensuring improved safety due to the fact that the belt does not have to be lifted.

“This innovative design enables a single workman to change out rollers, which can be more than 1m-long, while standing on a standard 750 mm walkway. In order to undertake this process, the workmen simply need to unbolt the sliding frame from the end plates of the main frame and pull out the sliding frame. After replacing the roller, the sliding frame is returned to its operating position,” he says.

Melco managing director **Gavin Hall** highlights the fact that the company’s range of retractable V return idlers have been adopted by Grootegeluk coal mine, which is installing a conveyor system to supply Medupi Power Station in Limpopo province. “The stringent safety requirements at the mine’s elevated gantries necessitated the need for a range of return rollers to be safer to replace when damaged or worn,” he explains.

Hall notes that Melco was approached to design a retractable idler that would make it easier and safer for workers in this previously challenging working environment. “To replace a roller, a team of workmen wearing safety harnesses has to climb inside the gantry, lift the return belt clear of the roller, then uncouple and remove the heavy roller. There may also be other complications to take into account, like underpans, which prevents any material from the loaded belt falling to the ground, making access to the roller even more difficult. The process of changing rolls in this environment is very complex and challenging indeed."

In addition to improving its safety standards, Warmback points out that Grootegeluk will also save on overhead costs in the long-term, due to the fact that the Melco range of retractable V return idlers reduce the risk of unscheduled downtime and maintenance. “The elimination of belt lifting during the changeout task saves a significant amount of time and consequently money, due to the fact that only one worker is required for the entire process. What’s more, the only tool required is a spanner – so the risk of belt damage and roller falls are substantially reduced,” he continues.

Looking to the future, Hall is confident that the Melco range of retractable V return idlers will gain popularity, especially as mining operations becoming increasingly safety-conscious. “Melco is able to install the retractable idler system to any existing conveyor belt that has access walkways on both sides of the conveyor. Retrofitting to an existing structure that is being modernised or upgraded to handle larger tonnages is actually very cost-effective, and Melco has the capacity to manufacture retractable V return idlers up to 2 100mm belt widths that are operating on gantries with walkways as narrow as 750 mm,” he concludes.

Founded in 1970 with the aim of supplying world-class equipment to the South African mining industry, Melco is today one of the largest suppliers of idlers and rollers in Africa. Melco is an ISO 9001:2008 approved company that operates a highly-specialised testing facility, where products are tested under laboratory-controlled environments prior to field-testing, full-scale manufacture and supply. This process ensures that Melco products are among the most advanced in the world. Melco also operates quality management systems which control every aspect of the company. These systems are audited regularly to ensure compliance with the highest standards.

***Ends***

**Notes to the editor**
There are numerous photographs specific to this press release. Please visit [http://media.ngage.co.za](http://media.ngage.co.za/) and click the Melco link.

**About Melco**Melco is one of Africa’s major conveyor equipment manufacturers. Melco has been a proud member of the Rulmeca Group of Companies since 2006. Melco idlers have been successfully utilised in many bulk materials handling applications in over 75 countries throughout the world, and installed on belt widths from 200mm to 3000mm. The Melco roll product range is comprehensive, ranging from 89mm to 215mm in diameter, with bearing and shaft arrangements from 25mm to 60mm diameter.

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