**PRESS RELEASE**

Skyriders provides concrete solutions to structural problems

*Leading rope access specialist, Skyriders is fully equipped to provide a comprehensive range of concrete inspection, maintenance and repair services to a number of industrial applications.*

**15 August, 2011:** Industrial operations across Africa can ensure that their high reaching concrete structures are safe for operation and in good condition, by making use of the inspection services provided by Skyriders, a market-leader in the provision of expert rope access aided inspection and high-elevation safety solutions.

Skyriders boasts a zero fatality record throughout its 22-year history, and employs a team of highly trained and experienced rope access specialists, who are trained to perform a variety of concrete inspection services for the power generation, petrochemical, offshore, steel, concrete manufacturing and general engineering industries.

Skyriders marketing manager **Mike Zinn** points out that the company specialises in providing rope access aided concrete testing services to the South African power generation and construction industries. “Rope access aided concrete testing provides industries with significant savings related to cost and time, due to the fact that tall structures such as cooling towers, silos and chimney stacks often have limited or zero means of access. In the case of high rise buildings, the scaffolding access option is costly and time consuming, and the cost can often be disproportionate the actual work that needs to be done,” he explains.

Using various industrial rope access techniques such as bolting and aiding, Zinn notes that these structures can be swiftly ascended or descended by the Skyriders team of rope access technicians. “Once access has been gained, temporary and permanent platforms can be installed for use in wide range of other services. What’s more, rope access allows for increased manoeuvrability in confined spaces; thereby, enabling technicians to carry out challenging tasks at height such as core drilling and thorough inspection, with relative ease.”

Zinn points out that Skyriders offers three main concrete-related rope access services; namely, inspections, repairs and maintenance. “Working closely with relevant engineers, Skyriders rope access technicians conduct structural integrity and protective coating surveys – in order to determine the extent of any damage to the actual concrete, the reinforcement steel and the paint or other coatings that cover the structure.”

Zinn notes that combination testing is the most effective method of destructive testing, whereby technicians remove sections of concrete using an angle grinder, before spraying a solution which reacts to the pH in the concrete by changing colour. “Over time, reinforcing steel eventually corrodes and weakens, and it is important to check for these signs, as reinforcing is critical to the structural integrity of the concrete,” he continues.

Once a sample has been obtained, Zinn explains that Skyriders technicians will take the necessary measurements and photographs to give to the engineers. “If the engineers require more information, Skyriders technicians are able to undertake a cover metre survey, which enables them to detect the depth and mapping of the reinforcing steel in the structure.

Following the identification of a problem in the concrete, Zinn notes that Skyriders has the ability to carry out comprehensive repairs on the structure where necessary, in order to prevent further deterioration. “Skyriders is recognised as an industry-leader in Africa, as we are equipped to perform cosmetic repair and protection, in addition to structural strengthening and repairs.”

In order to ensure that concrete structures are able to withstand the elements, Skyriders also offers a comprehensive strengthening and maintenance service, which involves the application of barrier coating systems and corrosion inhibitors. “After determining how much reinforcing steel must be treated, Skyriders technicians will remove any rust and replace corroded sections, before coating the steel with epoxy and covering it with cement. In order to protect reinforcing steel from the effects of carbonation, the barrier coating and corrosion mitigating inhibitors are applied to the structure from a bulk pack which is on the back of a Skyriders technician - who then sprays it over the concrete.”

Looking to the future, Zinn notes that Skyriders plans to increase its market share in the water infrastructure market of South Africa. “We are looking to market our services and capabilities to South Africa’s water authorities, as a number of local dam walls and reservoirs are currently in poor condition, and we have the ability and resources to help improve this situation – by inspecting every millimetre of the walls in less time than it takes for scaffolding to be installed,” he concludes.

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**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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