**PRESS RELEASE**

Anti-runback rollers improve inclined conveyor belt performance

***15 January, 2014:*** *Leading conveyor equipment manufacturer Melco continues to gain market share through its range of uni-directional anti-runback conveyor rollers, which are designed to prevent an inclined conveyor from running backwards in the event of a belt break.*

Standard steel and high density polyethylene (HDPE) rollers are fitted with bearings that enable them to turn in both directions. The Melco anti-runback roller, however, is fitted with a patented mechanism that only allows the roller to turn in a single direction.

Melco managing director **Gavin Hall** points out that the company's anti-runback roller has been particularly popular in platinum, gold, coal and copper mining applications in various African countries, as well as in Australia and Canada.

"The product is appealing to engineers because of the inherent safety features of the anti-run back rollers, and because incline conveyors fitted with the product may experience less downtime in the event of a belt snap.

"Conveyor belts with inclines of between six and 18 degrees, which are commonly found in mining applications, are most prone to running back in the event of a belt snap. Some of these belts are as long as 1 km, and could cause unprecedented damage if breakage occurs," he explains.

The majority of conveyor belts in mines are run through confined spaces, and Hall reveals that the consequences of conveyor failure could be immense. "Downtime related to clearing the tunnel and repairing the belt may result in significant lost production, resulting in crippling financial effects."

In the event of a belt snap, Hall claims that the Melco anti-runback roller reacts instantly. "We have received positive feedback from numerous mining customers, who have revealed that the anti-runback rollers, if correctly installed to the pattern recommended by Melco, bring the snapped belt to a standstill within a short distance, which substantially reduces safety risks, the risk of any damage and associated costs," he continues.

The Melco anti-runback roller looks identical to the company's range of standard steel and HDPE rollers, and is identifiable only by a unique plastic directional arrow disc on each side of the roller. Melco, with the assistance of the supplier of the patented mechanism, assists its customers in determining the exact ratio of standard to anti-runback rollers required for a specific application.

"Each conveyor belt is unique to its specific operating environment and, using the technical details of the conveyor belt, Melco is able to recommend to the customer precisely how many anti-runback rollers, and the installation pattern they require for a particular application," Hall states.

Due to their identical physical dimensions, Hall points out that standard steel and HDPE rollers with 25 mm, 30 mm and 40 mm shaft diameters can be replaced with the equivalent anti-runback rollers with minimal effort. "The rolls can be interchanged with ease. The anti-runback rollers will last as long as the standard rollers fitted on the conveyor, thereby providing peace of mind with regards to durability and reliability."

The Melco range of anti-runback rollers have been installed at numerous mines and plants in South Africa, Australia and Canada since first being introduced to the market in 2007. Hall says that demand for the range is steadily rising across the rapidly developing African mining sector too.

"Having already developed a tried and trusted reputation in South Africa, the Melco anti-runback roller range continues to gain market share particularly in Southern Africa. With this in mind, we are currently supplying the product range at a major copper mining operation in Zambia," he adds.

Despite their numerous advantages, Hall does admit that Melco anti-runback rollers are more capital intensive than their standard counterparts. "The uni-directional mechanism fitted into the anti-runback roller is expensive, and therefore adds to the overall costs associated with the installation or upgrade of a conveyor belt. However, engineers that have installed the Melco anti-runback roller agree that the extra cost is justified when weighed up against the safety and operational benefits that the product provides.”

Hall stresses the fact that overall lifecycle costing should be taken into account when making a final purchasing decision. "Long and steeply inclined conveyors that carry heavy loads could be more prone to snapping. In applications such as this, it is important to weigh the initial and more expensive once-off cost against a failure further down the line, which could result in possible injuries to personnel, lost production and additional repair costs."

As health and safety legislation continues to become more stringent across the African mining sector, Hall believes that Melco can expand its market share across all mining sectors in Southern, East and West Africa throughout the course of 2014 and beyond.

***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 Companiessince 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 product range is comprehensive, comprising steel rollers ranging from 89mm to 215mm in diameter, with bearing and shaft arrangements from 25mm to 60mm diameter, HDPE rollers, idler frames and underground structure, and Rulmeca Motorised Pulleys.

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