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Contractor to be registered as accredited trainer

■ Luxolo Tyali
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Mining contracting company Shaft Sinkers is soon to become what is reportedly the first contracting company to receive Mining Qualifications Authority (MQA) accreditation for the training it offers to its workers.

The company, which is wholly-owned by the UK-based Amco, provides its staff with specialised skills training in all fields related to shaftsinking.

"The company trains every employee to MQA standards, including those who are employed on limited duration contracts of employment," says quality management services manager **Hein van der Merwe**.

This equips the workers with skills that they can use even if they join other companies.

He says that his company has a good record of specialised skills training and the accreditation will be a recognition of that.

In its central training facility in Welkom, Free State, the company has a mock shaft, development tunnels, stoping, trackless equipment and



Shaft Sinkers' training shaft in Welkom

loco-driver facilities, specifically for training purposes.

Initially, the facility offered only induction training, but has, since 1994, introduced other skills training programmes.

"We identified the need to fully-equip our workforce with all the skills needed by the company, hence we offer training in a number of fields," Van der Merwe says.

Among other things, the company is involved in shaftsinking, mining contracting, underground construction, large underground excavation, tunnelling, design, consulting and



draughting, engineering, procurement and contract management.

It offers training in engineering, development, management, safety and strata control. In addition to specialised mining training, the company trains its workers in the basics of electrical, fitting, boilermaking and rigging.

Blasting and on-setting training is also offered. For strata control, workers are trained in roof-support mechanics.

Management training comprises courses in management functions, communication and human resources management. Workers are given

refresher training every 12 months.

In May last year, the company became the first company of its nature in this country to offer behavioural-based safety training, reports Van der Merwe.

"The focus of this training is on changing the behaviour of employees towards safety, and the second phase of this programme will involve changing their behaviour towards hearing conservation," he says.

The company, which has trained over 30 000 people since it started training its own personnel in 1992, has also provided skills training for other mining companies.

Shaft Sinkers' current clients, Lonmin, AngloGold's Moab Khotsong, Impala Platinum, Palabora Mining and Anglo's Black Mountain, have all accredited the training that the company provides for the work they perform at their respective sites.

The company has in place an equity training programme, through which it trains people from previously disadvantaged groups for jobs in higher occupations.

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