

Thickeners at IFM Plant Commissioned

London listed International Ferro Metals (IFM) has commissioned its second ferrochrome furnace in South Africa three months ahead of schedule, significantly increasing production at its Buffelsfontein ferrochrome smelting facility near Brits. Last year IFM commissioned the first furnace at Buffelsfontein, also three months ahead of schedule. The beneficiation plant is now running at full capacity six months ahead of schedule. IFM plans to produce 267 000 t/y of saleable ferrochrome from its mine, ore beneficiation plant and two ferrochrome furnaces.

Part of the commissioning process involved Roymec Technologies commissioning the thickeners supplied to the project. Roymec received orders for all the plant thickeners from Project Manager and design consultant Pyromet Technologies. As part of the order four High Rate thickeners were supplied, comprising two 12m diameter units treating the furnace wet scrubbing dust water, a 21m diameter unit treating the plant tailings and an 8m diameter unit clarifying underground mine water.



"We selected the Roymec thickeners for the project because they were keenly priced, included for the design of the systems integral to the units, and offered superior control and operating methodology," said Pyromet's Project Engineer André Esterhuizen. "We are happy with the performance of the units and the support from Roymec.

Mr. Esterhuizen added that the increase in global stainless- steel production had further strengthened the demand for ferrochrome globally. Low chromite and low ferrochrome stockpiles had resulted in a tight ferrochrome market, adding that the price of charge chrome increased in April 2007 to \$0,75/lb. This general shortage of ferrochrome has created an ideal time for the IFM's entry as a producer.

"The Roymec order included design, fabrication, supply, delivery to site and installation of all units," said Sales Manager Hoosen Essack. "The contract was completed ahead of schedule and within budget, despite the difficulties experienced with steel pricing presently experienced on the local market. These thickeners are part of the several thickeners units being currently supplied to various ferrochrome plants in SA, with the others being units to Xstrata Ferrochrome in Lydenburg and the currently in-construction Tata Ferrochrome plant in Richards Bay".



The success of the thickener technology offered is in its robust design, efficient operation, integral safety features and unrivalled support by the experienced Roymec team. Roymec Technologies is a wholly locally owned supplier of solid liquid separation technologies, with projects completed across the globe.

In addition to thickeners Roymec Technologies offers a wide range of process equipment including filter presses, vacuum belt filters, belt screens, flocculant and reagent plants, ion exchange units, and coalescing and dual media filters.