

LAUNCH OF THE AFRISAM-SAIA AWARDS FOR SUSTAINABLE ARCHITECTURE

Leading black-controlled construction materials group, AfriSam, is sponsoring the first-ever South African Award for Sustainable Architecture.

The AfriSam-South African Institute of Architects (SAIA) award is aimed at recognising outstanding achievement in sustainable architecture and was launched at the Green Building Council of South Africa (GBCSA) convention which took place from 21-23 October 2009 in Cape Town.

"Architecture, as the most visible and public art, is also now expected to serve as a vehicle of embedding and communicating the delight in sustainability. An important function of SAIA is to recognise and promote excellence in architecture and to create public awareness and debate on architectural issues. The awards programme is in support of these goals," says Al Stratford, current President of SAIA.

A leading producer of building materials in southern Africa, AfriSam places high emphasis on conserving the environment within which it operates. This principle is in line with the company's value of 'Planet'.

"We have committed ourselves to protecting the environment through conscientious and responsible manufacturing processes and a responsible attitude towards the impact of our business operations on the community and the environment. As sponsors of this award, we are proud to be associated with SAIA in recognising outstanding achievement in sustainable architecture," says Victor Bouguenon, Marketing Manager for AfriSam.

Entries for the competition open on 1 November 2009 and close on 26 February 2010.

The detail appraisal will use four criteria adapted from the five-point definition of sustainable construction as per the Holcim Awards (www.holcimfoundation.org).

These are:

- Paradigm shifting - focusing on the development of innovation in responsible design;
- People upliftment - addressing the creation of a socio-economic environment that is inclusionary, humane, self-sustaining, and maximises the financial viability and impact;
- Planet rejuvenation - exhibiting conservation and efficiency in the use of resources;
- Placemaking performance - enhancing the architectural landscape and contextual urban environment.

The panel of adjudicators is made up of Al Stratford (Convener - SAIA President), Daniel Irurah (Academic on Sustainable Architecture), Gerrit Jordaan (Sustainable Architect), Andy Horn (Sustainable Architect), Mike McDonald (Product Development Manager for AfriSam Cement) and Dr. Wally Serote (Eminent author and poet).

The adjudication process will culminate in the announcement and presentation of the awards at the end of September 2010.

The competition is open to all paid up corporate SAIA members. More information and conditions for entry may be downloaded from SAIA's website (www.saia.org.za).

Note to editors:

ABOUT AFRISAM (SOUTH AFRICA) (PTY) LTD

AfriSam is the leading black-controlled construction materials group in southern Africa. With operations in South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland, the company has total assets in excess of R3.7 billion, over 2000 employees and an annual production capacity of 4.6 million tons of cement. It has 6 production facilities, 9 cement depots, 16 quarries and aggregate operations, 40 readymix concrete plants as well as a dedicated Slagment plant. The company has a 62.5 percent interest in Tanzania-based and listed, Tanga Cement Company.

The company is committed to the reduction of emissions and pollution, the reduction of energy consumption, research into the use of alternative energy/fuel sources, reduction of its mining footprint and rehabilitation of mined areas as well as reinvesting in the communities affected by its operations.

AfriSam recently launched an 'environmentally friendly' mark which indicates the relative carbon footprint for each of its cement products. This initiative is based on the Greenhouse Gas Protocols developed by the World Resources Institute and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development. The actual value of CO₂ associated with manufacturing and transporting each individual product will soon be printed on all AfriSam cement bags.

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ABOUT SAIA

The South African Institute of Architects (SAIA) is a voluntary association of affiliated and regional institutes. The Institute is a member of the Africa Union of Architects, the Commonwealth Association of Architects, the International Union of Architects and the International Commission on Monuments and Sites.

Membership of SAIA is open to all architects, the only prerequisite being a recognised academic qualification, a minimum of 24 months practical experience and registration in South Africa as a professional architect. The fundamental principles of equality and justice are implicit in SAIA's Constitution. In terms of the constitution, the SAIA is committed to the principle of striving to be an outstanding professional organisation, which upholds the dignity of the profession and its members. It aims to promote excellence in architecture and it seeks to contribute to the enhancement of society and the environment.

SAIA and the Regional Institutes are committed to maintaining the highest standards of professionalism, integrity and competence. Members are required to uphold and subscribe to these objectives

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