

West African Group buys Frontier

WAG expands service to rubber and tyre market

WEST AFRICAN Group (WAG) has expanded its materials portfolio for the rubber and tyre markets through its recent purchase of Frontier Industries (FI).

As one of South Africa's top suppliers of rubber-related raw materials, processing aids and additives, FI was established in 1981 in Durban by John Everitt. FI supplies both natural and synthetic rubber grades as well as a comprehensive range of processing aids and rubber/plastic-related raw materials and chemicals; it supplies the tyre and rubber/plastic industrial sectors across southern Africa.

WAG, set up by Jack Doherty in 1992, also in Durban, has due to the strategy adopted over the past two decades become a far larger entity with regional and offices and representation. Besides various natural and synthetic rubber grades, WAG also supplies a range of strategic polymers and other materials.

Frontier enjoys a good reputation in



West African Group's Jack Doherty (left) and Frontier Industries' John Everitt: WAG has purchased FI and will continue to supply the materials it provides and plans to expand the service

the marketplace, dating back to the time of John's father, the late Ray Everitt. Co-founder of the erstwhile Lewis & Everitt in 1948, one of the first national polymer material supply businesses in South Africa.

With the market having changed significantly over the past years, the viability of smaller operations supplying a national industry has been tested.

Prices for raw materials have increased substantially and financial commitments have proved risky, with smaller operations at times being exposed in the process.

"It will certainly be more suitable to supply the FI range on a national basis, in which respect WAG has greater resources and a far wider area of established representation and technical expertise," he added.

Doherty said some of the processing aids and other specialist materials supplied by FI are complimentary to the NR/SR materials that WAG offers and the tie-up hence offers a value-added benefit for customers.

FI will run as a fully-owned subsidiary of WAG, operating out of the group's office in Glenwood, Durban. As with long-serving FI secretary/PA Leslie Ogle, John will remain involved, but he will operate as an independent consultant with a renewable annual consultancy agreement from the same FI office premises in Umgeni Park, Durban North.

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