

West African Group integrates

Boost for diversification as new businesses utilize existing shared services platform

WEST African Group is busy integrating the activities of a number of its new ventures with the specific aim of enabling the new entities to gain advantage from its existing shared services platform.

West African Group (WAG) has been diversifying its activities over the past few years, with the intention of spreading both the concentration of activities and risk involved. Due to the scale of working capital involved, the incumbent risk factor is significant. At the same time, the group is utilizing existing skills and logistics abilities built up over the past three decades to boost the new ventures.

A patron member of the IOM³, WAG launched its

West African Group's CEO with Natalie Conde, financial manager for West African Group



Performance Chemicals business at the beginning of this year, through which it is supplying chemicals from a number of offshore principles into the coatings and adhesives industries in Southern Africa.

The recent additions to the WAG portfolio include:

- **CAT™ lubricants** from ExxonMobil group, which are supplied into the motor and engine sectors;
- dunnage bags and moisture absorbing desiccants from Bates Cargo-Pak of Denmark and Absortech of Sweden respectively.

African Group Lubricants (AGL, a subsidiary of West African Group) was last year awarded the distributorship for the CAT™ branded lubricants in Southern Africa.

The Absorb Products (a division of WAG) range

includes dunnage bags for containers as well as moisture absorbing desiccants for the safe and dry transportation of materials. This is quite literally a new venture for the WAG team, in the sense that raw material is not involved, but the moisture-absorbing properties and cargo securing abilities achieved by the bags offers safer transport and protects

Ray Raath, based in Johannesburg, was recently signed up to handle sales of the Performance Chemicals for West African Group



World-winning lecture in PE

SA scientist outlines how various materials challenges were overcome

TUESDAY 24 February marked the start of the IOM³ year for the Eastern Cape branch, when they held their AGM at the Walmer Golf Club. Tertius de Ridder chaired the meeting, where he discussed the past year's activities, plans for 2015, and noted that no changes were to be made to the EC committee.

The well-attended evening was kindly sponsored by Envande (formerly known as ENV&E).

Raphael Smith, winner of the IOM³ World Lecture Competition 2014, was invited to present his winning lecture. The World Lecture Competition is a prestigious annual international event which follows various regional and national heats and is aimed at young scientists around the world. It began in

the UK as a way of encouraging young scientists to develop their communication and presentation skills, and has grown substantially over the past ten years to what it is today.

The 2014 final was held in California and showcased ten competitors from America, England, Ireland, Brazil, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Singapore and South Africa. The lecture, entitled 'The Design, Construction and Testing of a Hermetically Sealed Breast Platform for Dual-Modality Mammography,' describes how various materials challenges were overcome in the



Jaco Smith of Carst & Walker (and IOM³ national chairman); Tertius de Ridder of Bridgestone Tyres (vice-chairman of the IOM³ Eastern Cape vice-chairman); Raphael Smith of Cape Ray Medical (the WLC 2014 winner) and Rosalie and Gareth Akerman of Envande, who sponsored the function in Port Elizabeth

creation of this world first.

The 2015 competition will be held in Dublin, with Brazil and Australia next on the list. Announcements will be made soon regarding the commencement of the SA regional heats, ahead of the SA Final later this year, and the World Final in Dublin.

- For those who have not had the opportunity to hear Raphael's winning lecture, it has been confirmed that he will present it at the IOM³ conference in the Drakensburg in June 2015.