



Iron Ore Line Re-Opened for Business

[Johannesburg; 10 December 2019] The Saldanha iron ore export channel has been re-opened two days earlier than scheduled owing to the vigorous and quick response led by Transnet engineers.

The railway bridge which forms part of a critical transportation channel of the iron ore and manganese commodities to the Port of Saldanha in the Western Cape, was closed on 28 November 2018, after a truck carrying an abnormal load collided with the bridge.

The impact of the collision resulted in the bridge shifting and compromising its integrity.

Initial reports emanating from technical investigations on the ground showed that the closure of bridge could be anything between 2 to 4 weeks. However, Transnet engineering team quickly mobilised a reconstruction plan that was set in motion immediately, curbing a devastating mining volume losses that could have crippled the company, customers and the economy at large.

The site where the incident took place was visited by both Transnet's management team and key customers. A joint over-sight partnership between Transnet and customers was formed through face to face engagements and digital platforms for timeous updates.

Transnet is excited to share that, exactly 9 days after the incident, a newly constructed temporary steel bridge passed all technical assessments and that the line is now opened for business. Tests were first carried out on an empty train on Friday, 7 December, followed by a heavy laden train the same day.

The construction of the temporary bridge was led by a team of highly skilled Transnet structural engineers who carried out a 24-hour operation to get the line back.

The temporary structure was built in readily available modular sections which could be compiled to meet any bridge span and load bearing required in the event of an emergency. Some of the state-of-the-art applications were the casting of cement blocks for the elevation of the temporary bridge structure. The blocks had to be moulded, casted and cured with a catalyst in the cement mix, and placed in a steam chamber to fast track the hardening process.

Transnet Chief Business Development Officer Gert De Beer said: "When the incident took place, the first people we involved were customers. Our engagement meant that we gave updates on all the developments in getting the line re-opened and operational. Pace and agility as well as experienced personnel resulted in positive partnerships which could be used in future events of similar nature."

The Transnet team has been receiving good feedback from leading customers on a job well done.

**Issued on behalf of Transnet SOC Ltd
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