



For comments or queries contact the editor: [zani.kutumela@palabora.co.za](mailto:zani.kutumela@palabora.co.za)



# PMC Safely Demolishes Its Smelter Converter Stack After 65 Years of Service

**PMC’s Smelter team have after engaging in consultations and considering technical evaluations with key stakeholders resolved to demolish the Smelter Converter Stack after 65 years of service due to age and irrecoverable deterioration.**

Constructed in 1960, the stack played an integral role in smelter operations for over six decades. It was originally designed for a 50-year service life, however, it withstood the harsh conditions of smelting far beyond that. Over the years, several reinforcements were carried out which included:

- In 1986, the upper 40 metres were thickened, and steel tension rings were added at 61m and 102m to enhance structural stability.
- In 1989, a full brick lining replacement was completed, along with core bell and rock well refurbishment.

Despite these efforts, visible signs of deterioration were evident as age caught up with the structure. In a response to mitigate the aging, a comprehensive condition assessment was carried out between October 2024 and February 2025. The assessment team used a combination of advanced tools and inspection methods including:

- Visual and ground-based inspections
- Azimuth 3D scanning
- Drone-based aerial surveys by Sky Riders
- Thermal imaging using the DJI H20T camera

**The assessment outcomes provided evidence of:**

- Cracks at both top and ground level of the stack
- A 6-degree deviation from vertical, indicating a structural lean
- The stack’s inability to return to a natural rest position
- Material fatigue after decades of thermal cycling and weather exposure

After considering the evidence and consultations with the assessment engineering team, Department of Mineral Resources and Petroleum (DMPR) and other stakeholders, a decision was reached to safely demolish the stack with precise toppling.

On Tuesday, 17 June 2025, at precisely 12:00 midday, the 107-metre converter stack, a long-standing feature of the Palabora Mining Company, Smelter Operations skyline was safely demolished. The controlled event marked the end of the existence of a structure that stood tall for 65 years, serving as a vital exhaust channel for gases from the copper converting process.

The converter stack stood not only as a functional part of the smelter but also as a symbol of the plant’s long industrial history. Its demolition reflects a responsible and forward-looking approach to asset integrity and operational safety. We acknowledge the contribution of all teams — engineering, operations, safety, project management, authorities and contractors, who ensured the safe execution of this milestone.

*Its legacy will live on as we continue to modernize and maintain excellence within our operations.*

## FUN FACTS

- Constructed in 1960.
- 107 meters tall.
- Refurbished twice to enhance structural stability in 1986 & 1989.
- Deterioration persisted and a comprehensive condition assessment was conducted between 2024 & 2025.
- Demolished 65 years later, on 17 June 2025 at 12:00 due to the following:
  - Cracks at ground level & top of stacker.
  - A 6-degree structural lean.
  - Vertical deviation- stacker inability to return to rest position.
  - Material fatigue due to thermal cycling & weather exposure.

2025 A YEAR OF EXCEPTIONAL CARE



# EDITOR'S NOTE

Greetings PC Family

*Happy July!!*

As we head into the month of July, safety remains our top priority. This month, we also celebrate Nelson Mandela Day on July 18th, honouring the legacy of our beloved leader. We are proud to highlight our teams's expertise in safety with the demolition of the Converter stack, showcasing our meticulous planning and execution. We are also rejoicing over the efforts of our teams that progressed into the ZHC Semi-Finals.

it is still winter,let us remember to keep warm and ward off the chills. Furthermore, let us prioritize mental health , especially for MEN, and encourage open conversations.

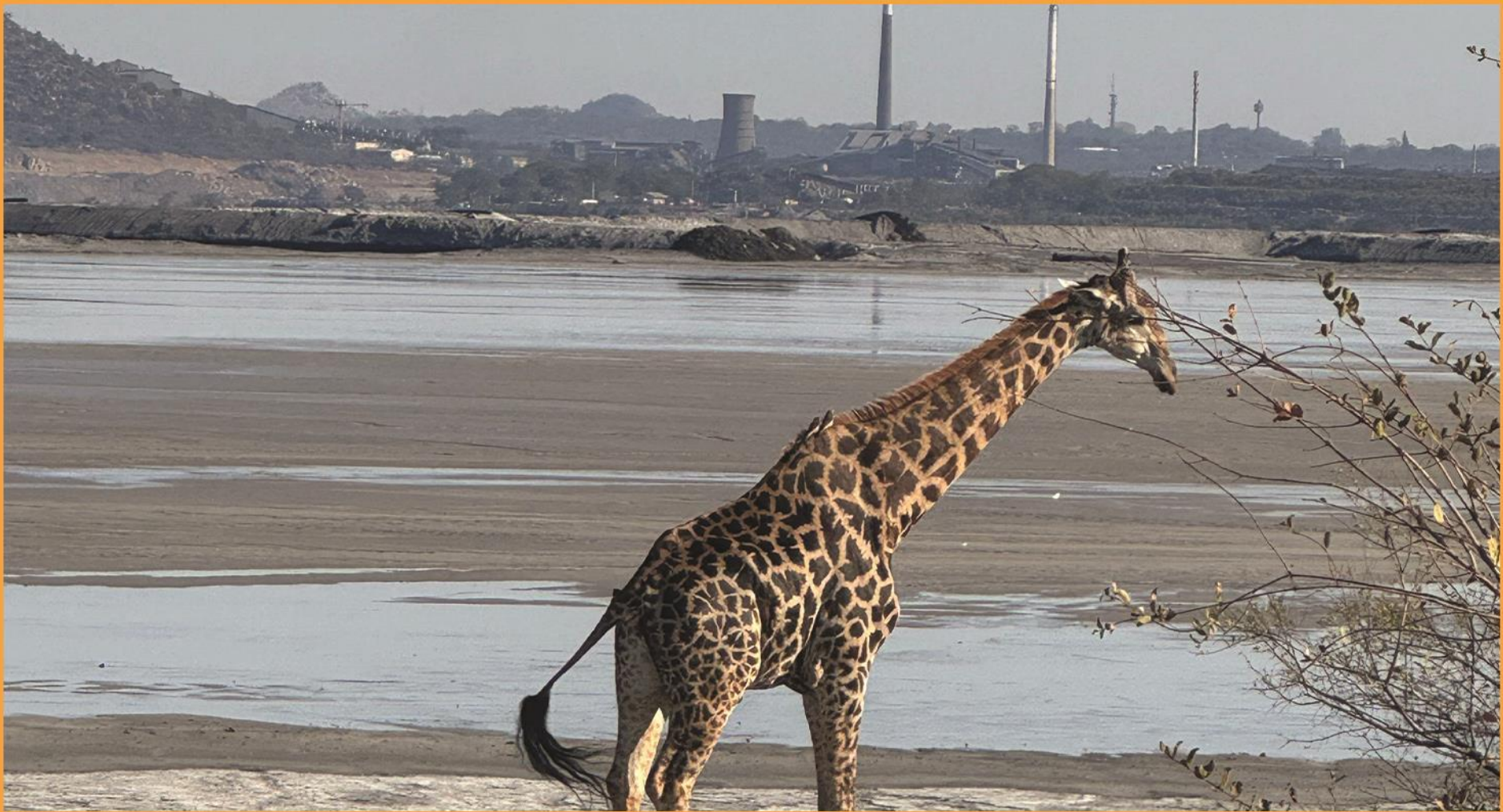
*Goal in Mind - 10 000 tons a day*

**#HLAYISEKA**



*Special thanks to : Ehleketani Mbhungele, Linah Rabothata, Abigail Shai & Reitumetse Mashigo. Your invaluable contribution has made this issue possible.*

**SPECIAL THANKS TO WANGA RAMATHUTHU FOR SENDING THIS BEAUTIFUL PHOTO  
SEE ANYTHING SPECIAL OR QUIRKY ON SITE  
CAPTURE IT AND SHARE TO ZANI.KUTUMELA@PALABORA.CO.ZA**



**2025 A YEAR OF EXCEPTIONAL CARE**



2022 FIRST BLAST

2025 LAST BLAST



Lift II Underground Celebrates Last Draw Bell Blast Of Block One

Palabora Mining Company is gaining significant strides towards the attainment of its future mine through the successful completion of Block 1. Block 1 is a section of the Lift II footprint which is broken down into three blocks. It is made up of 78 draw bells and stands the potential to deliver 15 kilo tons of Copper Ore by year end through Crusher 5.

Lift II Underground team led by Sam Ngidi, Executive Manager Mining Operations and Lift II Project completed Block 1 three years later after their first draw bell blast in April 2022. On the 28th of May 2025, the team gathered on surface, eyes fixed on a live video feed as the 78th final draw bell was blasted. Beyond the “bang” and the achievement of the last draw bell point rich in Copper Ore, lay the moment they had worked tirelessly for, the realization of completing Block 1 and handing over to production.

This achievement goes beyond just being a technical accomplishment, but also represents a significant safety milestone which is the completion of a complex phase without a single Lost Time Injury (LTI). In an industry where every shift presents potential risks, such an outcome reflects the personal accountability, strong safety culture, discipline, and dedication of all teams who were involved in the process.

The mining industry is inherently risky and the journey to this point was far from easy. The team encountered numerous technical, logistical, and environmental challenges, all while working in demanding underground conditions. Through thousands of hours of hard work, problem solving, determination and teamwork they achieved a seamless transition from development into production.

*With Block 1 in production, this lays solid groundwork for the success of the broader Lift II project, promising lasting value and sustainability for the local communities, stakeholders and life of PMC.*

“Thank you! I am proud of you, and I am also proud of the work you have done. I am also a miner, and I know that nothing gives us greater joy than seeing small pieces scattered around after hearing the loud bang.” - **Sam Ngidi**, Executive Manager Mining Operations and Lift II Project.



IMPLEMENTED

VIP

PROJECT CHECKLIST

CREATIVE

SOLUTION

TEAMWORK

COST EFFECTIVE

INTERNAL RESOURCES SKILLS

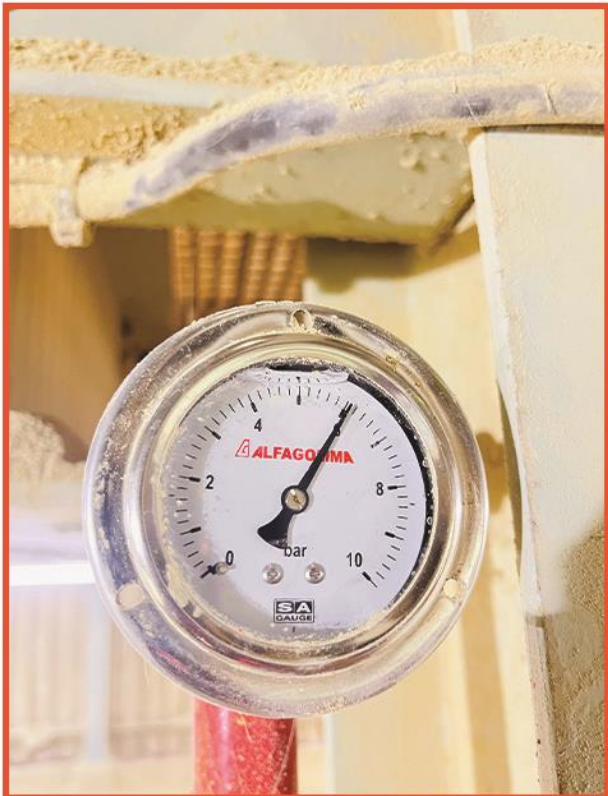


# Vermiculite Maintenance Team sets the bar high with Innovation – Plant Fireline Water Distribution Project

The Vermiculite Maintenance team is impressive! Their work ethic and commitment to excellence makes them the team and a true benchmark for others. Their latest Plant Fireline Water Distribution conquest is a significant contribution to overall organizational success and proves that VIP is effective.

Following the successful commissioning of the dedicated Fire Water Pipeline from Fridge Plant to VB Plant, the Vermiculite Maintenance team has taken yet another proactive step to enhance fire safety and ensure legal compliance by completing the construction and installation of the Plant Fire Water Distribution Project.

Previously, the Vermiculite area operated using a standard raw water line presumed suitable for use in case of fire emergencies – a system that, while practical, lacked sufficient water pressure. This shortfall was identified during a comprehensive compliance audit conducted in collaboration with Insurance and safety teams. The verdict was clear: the current setup left the Plant vulnerable and non-compliant with key fire safety and Insurance standards.



To address this issue, In 2023, a Capex Project amounting to R3.2m was registered and approved for 2024 Implementation, however, the journey wasn't smooth due to business pressures and budget constraints that threatened to derail the Initiative. Undeterred, the Maintenance team, led by Simson Tekane (Manager Vermiculite Operations), and Jan Mashele (Maintenance Superintendent) turned the challenge into an opportunity by registering the Plant Fireline Water Distribution Project with VIP In 2025 as a smart way to positively support the business financial cash flow.

The Project was Internally executed and commissioned by the Vermiculite Maintenance Team at a minimum cost of R0.59m, which is 81% cost saving from the initial budgeted project cost by applying Innovation, tapping into Internal team's expertise and scavenge material from other areas in the mine to bring the vision to life – all without waiting for external solutions. The result? A fully functional, cost-effective Plant Fireline Water Distribution, proudly installed by our own people (VB Maintenance team).

The red Fire Water Lines are now "snaking" visibly through the Vermiculite Plant from the Fridge Plant extending into the Plant with 11 flame-stop hose reels placed strategically for optimal coverage. The system includes a foam generator for advanced fire suppression and maintains a steady 6-bar water pressure to ensure immediate response in case of fire emergencies.



"I am proud of this team! They are game-changers. What began as a non-compliance risk turned into an opportunity for them to innovate from within. Limited resources did not limit their commitment to safety. With this system now active and fully operational, the Plant is better protected, better prepared, and fully aligned with industry best practices. They truly embody what it means to be your brother's keeper.

'What is now proved was once only imagined.' – William Blake" – Simson Tekane, Manager Vermiculite Operations.

## Halala! Vermiculite Maintenance Team - We see you!

CREW

Douglas Hanker

Thomas Sekgobela

Emanuel Buthelezi

Raymond Mongwe

Victor Monyela

Collen Mkhonto

Pieter Steyn

MINEWIDE PROJECTS COMPLETED

- Roof parking inhouse at a cost of R250 000 avoiding spending R1.2M.
- Controlling of Spillage at lugger bins
- Design and build a new platform at Drier 2, with a new enlarge access to reduce shutdown cost, resources and time
- Inhouse fabrication and installation of the D2 scrubber steel and concrete base which saved costs
- Cost reduction by rebuilding the current Furnace bed nozzle to ensure effective fit for purpose replacement during the Plant shutdown
- Extend Vo Furnace platform extension, to ensure the creation of an alternative emergency exit
- Refurbishment of Finance Car Parking
- 808 Crusher Replacement - Commissioning





# Concentrator Team Installs Froth Sensor Cameras at Flotation Tanks to Enhance Digital Process Monitoring and Decision-Making



In a forward-thinking move to improve operational efficiency and process control, the Concentrator Team has completed the installation of high-speed froth sensor cameras at the flotation tanks. This initiative is part of a broader strategic effort to integrate technology into mineral processing and deliver better, data-driven results. This installation marks a major step toward real-time visibility and control in mineral processing, where froth behavior directly correlates with metal recovery and selectivity.

These froth sensors capture continuous visual data from the froth surface of the flotation cells. Operators can now assess critical froth parameters such as bubble size, color, velocity, surface stability, and froth depth in real time. This allows for early detection of process inefficiencies, such as over-aeration, unstable froth, or unplanned pulp carry-over, factors that can negatively impact recovery and concentrate grade.

Beyond visual monitoring, the long-term vision includes machine learning and image analytics, tools that can learn from the froth's behavior and automatically flag abnormal conditions. With time and consistent use, these intelligent systems could help predict process deviations, recommend adjustments to air or frother dosing, and enable fully automated flotation control. This aligns with global best practices where smart sensing and AI-driven monitoring are revolutionizing how mineral plants detect inefficiencies, reduce reagent usage, and enhance copper recovery in a sustainable way.

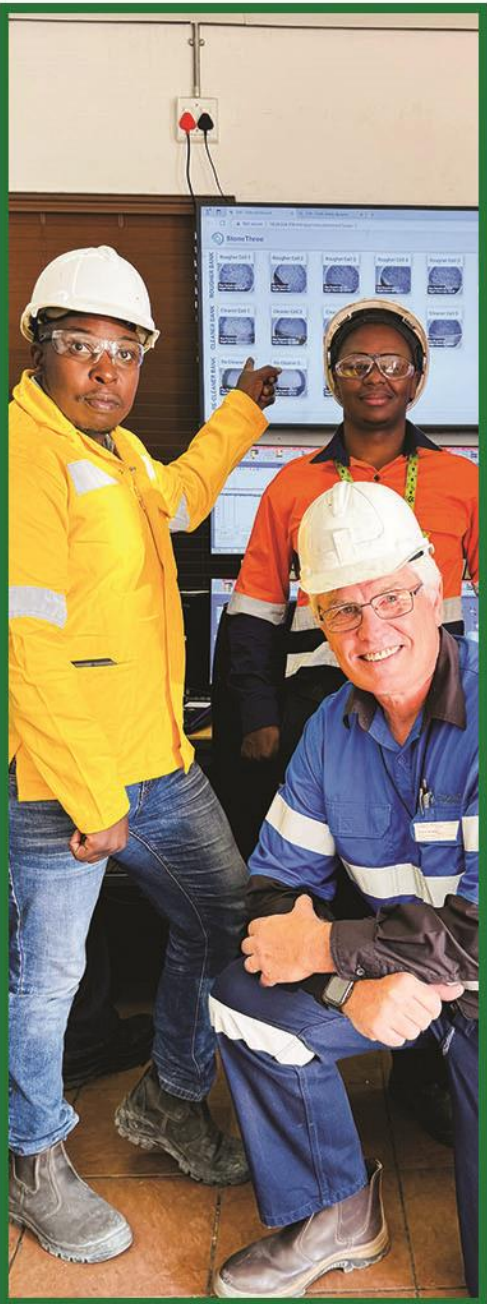
"This project started with a simple idea: to create tools that add real value," said a team representative during the official handover event. "We now have the ability to make quick, informed changes to the process based on real-time insights. That is a game-changer." This technology installation reflects a significant investment by the business, aimed at driving both short-term results and long-term capability. The presence of the communications team on-site demonstrates the importance of documentation, transparency, and accountability throughout the process.

*"The business has put its trust in us by investing in this project," added the spokesperson. "It's our responsibility to ensure that we deliver not just results, but measurable value."*

The press event also served as a moment of reflection. Members of the team remembered that the vision for this innovation began nearly two years ago, when one team member raised concerns about gaps in monitoring at the flotation tanks. His call for better visibility planted the seed for what has now become a reality.

"If Sam was here today, we would tell him: your voice made this happen. You dreamed it, and today we see it in action. The project is now officially complete, with final documentation signed and a site walkthrough held to mark the occasion. However, the real success lies ahead: using the system consistently to inform operations and improve performance. This technology is only valuable if we use the data, it gives us. Let us provide results, let us create value, and let us keep pushing boundaries." Said Eric Mualusi operations recovery manager at Lift II Projects, Concentrator & VIP.

*As the system moves from commissioning to full integration, the focus now shifts to training, response protocols, and using the data as a strategic advantage. The flotation circuit is one of the most energy, and reagent-intensive areas of the plant, even though a small improvement in recovery delivers measurable value to the business*



SEE SOMETHING! SAY SOMETHING AND SAVE SOMEONE



# PMC Athletics Club Takes On The 2025 Comrades Ultra-Marathon

## The Palabora Way



**Standing left to right:** Adolph Nziyane, Samuel Maenetja, Vutomi Munyai, Johannes Matlala, Doctor Mncwabe, Neil Kelder, Sandy Mdaka, Sophie Mokumo, Peng Wang, Elvis Mkhabele  
**Kneeling left to right:** Andy Riba, Julient Mgiba, Thabang Malatji, Emogen Semetjane, Vincent Munyai, Makhura Mabitsela, Andrie Mabunda, Tribe Mashaba  
**Absent:** Mpho Maloma, Rethabile Gumede, Jetro Mampane, Happy Ubusi, Masilo Moremi, Oupa Mongwe, Muxe Ndlovu, Charlize Engelbrecht, Thandeka Mhula, Vhangangwele Mukhakhuli, Nduduzo Mabaso, Phaswane Mashilangwako, Lutendo Mapoto, Mildred Mathebula, Hlulani Shivambu

On Sunday, 8 June 2025, the streets of Durban came alive with energy, anticipation, and excitement as 35 proud members of the **PMC Athletics Club** joined over 20 000 runners to participate in the legendary Comrades Marathon. This year marked the 98th edition of the world-renowned ultra-marathon, a grueling down run stretching approximately 90 km from Pietermaritzburg to the scenic coastal city of Durban.

From the break of dawn, the atmosphere at the start was nothing short of electric. With thousands of runners from around the globe gathered at the Pietermaritzburg City Hall, the air was filled with excitement and nerves. True to Comrades tradition, the crowd joined together to sing Shosholoz, the South African National Anthem, and Chariots of Fire, a powerful moment before the gun went off signaling the beginning of a long and emotional journey to Durban.

Among the 35 PMC athletes, their depth in talent varied from novice, back-to-back and lifelong runners – resembling a pedigree of champions, a true testament of the club’s growth and diversity. Nine runners laced up for their very first Comrades, while others proudly returned to earn their prestigious back-to-back medals. Amongst them were legendary lifelong runners like **Makhura Mabitsela** who PMC is most proud of for attaining his 10th race green card.

The race found our runners equal to the best. Despite the 12-hour race demanding everything: mental strength, physical endurance, and emotional resilience, our hero - PMC community runner and silver medalist - **Thabang Malatji** - showed grit, determination, and camaraderie by helping carry a fatigued runner (a stranger) when his legs were cramping making both their dreams to complete the 2025 Comrades Marathon come true.

Months of disciplined training came to life on race day, as the runners’ endurance and technique carried them across some of the toughest sections of the route especially Botha’s Hill. However there were sweet moments as they shared the road with Comrades legends, elite runners, and none other than South Africa’s running icon, Gerda Steyn, whose presence added even more inspiration to an already unforgettable day.

Rallying behind the runners was a strong support system of over 30 dedicated colleagues who travelled to the event and played a vital role in their race-day performance. Strategically positioned at six critical waterpoints, they not only lifted morale with cheers and encouragement but also provided much-needed hydration and handled the runners’ personal race-day supplements.

PMC congratulates all its athletes for their outstanding achievements, and it is still hopeful that we will bring back the number one tag next year. **(Fingers crossed that Tete Dljana does not enter).**

Special recognition to :  
**Makhura Mabitsela** - for attaining his green card,  
**Lutendo Mapoto** - Community runner - for his exceptional 6-hour completion time (06:08:54) and  
**Thabang Malatji** - for earning the PMC brand media interest and live coverage by living out our PMC Values. **OUR TRUE HEROES!!!**



SEE SOMETHING! SAY SOMETHING AND SAVE SOMEONE



# Palabora’s Eagle Nesting Initiative : Where Conservation Meets Operations



As the saying goes, “Palabora is not only a mine, but a wildlife sanctuary.” This ethos is reinforced by the Nature Conservation Standard [MS4.6-STD-170], which mandates that all operations take necessary precautions to protect the natural environment and preserve biodiversity. In alignment with the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act No. 10 of 2004), the harm or destruction of any protected species or their habitat is strictly prohibited. Each department and operational section at Palabora Mining Company (PMC) shares the responsibility for promoting wildlife conservation and ensuring safety in areas where wildlife intersects with our activities.

In a remarkable blend of environmental responsibility and operational ingenuity, an artificial eagle nest has been installed in a strategic location on-site—specifically where a pair of eagles had previously chosen to nest atop a Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) camera mast. This proactive initiative not only provides the birds with a safe and suitable nesting environment but also helps protect critical surveillance infrastructure vital to the mine’s security and operations.

For some time, African Hawk Eagles had been nesting on a mast used for monitoring key mining zones. While their presence added a touch of wilderness to the industrial landscape, it also brought challenges: nesting materials and droppings frequently obscured the camera lenses, compromising visibility and disrupting essential maintenance and security functions. Furthermore, this posed a safety concern for employees working near the equipment. By providing a custom-built nest nearby, Palabora has turned a potential conflict into a win-win scenario. The eagles, known for their territorial nature, are expected to defend their new nesting site, which may deter other raptors from occupying nearby camera masts—effectively offering a form of “natural surveillance.”

This initiative reflects Palabora’s ongoing commitment to environmental stewardship, demonstrating how industry and nature can coexist through thoughtful, sustainable solutions. As the eagles adapt to their new home, our employees can take pride in knowing that their workplace contributes not only to economic value but also to ecological harmony. By integrating conservation into its operational model, Palabora sets an inspiring example of how responsible mining practices can enhance, rather than compromise, the environment we share.

**PALABORA NOT  
ONLY A MINE,  
A WILDLIFE  
SANCTUARY  
TOO**



SEE SOMETHING! SAY SOMETHING AND SAVE SOMEONE





# PMC Wears Green Ribbons For A Good Cause: Standing Up for Child Protection

PMC has proudly once again in the year 2025, joined the national observance of Child Protection Week by launching a heartfelt awareness campaign led by the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) team. The initiative, which ran throughout the week, aimed to raise awareness about the importance of safeguarding children and promoting their rights to safety, care, and dignity against the heightening crimes against children. Children need protection from both men and women.

As part of this campaign, the EAP team reinforced awareness and distributed green ribbons to employees on Monday, 02 June 2025, as a conscious pledge of support for child protection and a visible symbol of the collective responsibility we all share in creating a safer world for children. The campaign resonated deeply with employees, many of whom proudly committed to wearing the green ribbons throughout the week showcasing their solidarity with the cause and acceptance of accountability towards the protection of children.

Nandi Nkosi, EAP lead at PMC, shared the motivation behind the initiative. "Child Protection Week is more than just a campaign; it is a call to action. As a company and individuals, we all have a role to play in protecting the most vulnerable members of our society. By handing out green ribbons, we are not only raising awareness but also encouraging each other to be mindful, protective, and proactive when it comes to children's well-being",

The campaign included brief educational sessions, informative posters, and meaningful conversations about the rights of children and the importance of creating safe spaces at work, home and within communities. Employees were encouraged to reflect on how their actions, words, and attitudes can contribute to a culture of care and protection.

Mfanelo Mabunda, EAP Graduate in training, appreciated the enthusiastic response from PMC employees. "It was truly inspiring to see employees embrace this initiative. The green ribbon may be small, but it carries a powerful message of hope and responsibility. Our colleagues showed that they care deeply about this cause, and that makes a real difference."

"The success of this campaign would not have been possible without the support and engagement of our employees. We are incredibly grateful for the support we received. Every ribbon worn, every conversation sparked, and every moment of awareness helps build a better, safer environment for children, not just during this week, but every day," said Abby Ledwaba, Manager Employee Relations and Communications.

PMC remains committed to promoting child protection and advocating for the rights of children in our communities. Together, we can make a lasting impact, one ribbon, one voice, and one child at a time!



SEE SOMETHING! SAY SOMETHING AND SAVE SOMEONE





# PMC Supports Youth Sports Development At The 7th Annual Matome Day Tournament

On Friday, 20 June 2025, Palabora Mining Company (PMC), through its Stakeholder and Engagement Department, proudly donated soccer and netball kits, medals, trophies, soft drinks, and water in support of the Matome Day Tournament hosted by the Maseke Tribal House.

The Matome Day Tournament is a vibrant annual event that brings together youth and sports enthusiasts from Maseke and surrounding villages. It celebrates unity, talent, wellness, and healthy competition through sports. This year's tournament was no exception—drawing energetic crowds and showcasing remarkable athletic talent on both the soccer field and netball court.

As part of PMC's ongoing commitment to community upliftment and youth development, the donation added great value to the event and enhanced the overall spirit of the tournament. The winning teams received full kits, trophies, and medals in recognition of their performance, dedication, and teamwork, turning sporting aspirations into proud memories.

To ensure the well-being of all participants and supporters, PMC also provided soft drinks and water, helping everyone stay refreshed and hydrated throughout the event. This gesture reflects the company's continued dedication to building resilient communities and fostering youth development living up to its vision of *Together Building a Sustainable Future*.

"We believe in building strong communities and investing in the potential of our young people. Sport is not only about fitness and fun; it's a powerful tool for bringing people together and teaching values like teamwork, discipline, and leadership." **Tonic Ngwenya, Superintendent: Stakeholder Relations ER**

"We are truly grateful for PMC's generous support, which played a vital role in making the 7th Annual Matome Day celebration a success. PMC has once again demonstrated its dedication to our community. This marks the third consecutive year of their partnership with us, a sign of their consistency and commitment to local development." **Maseke Tribal House Representative**

PMC remains committed to supporting initiatives that celebrate local culture, promote wellness, and empower young people across the Ba-Phalaborwa region. The company values its growing partnership with traditional leadership and is proud to be an active, visible presence in the communities it serves.



SEE SOMETHING! SAY SOMETHING AND SAVE SOMEONE

