

Wearcheck International meets in France

THE TOWN of Munster in France will be the scene of this year's Wearcheck International (WCI) conference in July to be hosted by the Belgian operation. Gary Brown, Set Point divisional director of Wearcheck will attend the meeting along with representatives of the WCI

companies in Canada, the USA, the UK, Hungary, Belgium, Germany and Spain.

A major focus will be the further development of WCI's plan to offer an integrated service to international customers and so capitalise on the increasing globalisation of world markets.

New technologies and trends in the oil analysis industry worldwide will also be on the agenda, along with ways of enhancing the group's round robin sample testing programme which aims to standardise laboratory results and diagnosis among all member companies.

A highlight of the conference will be a presentation by Liebherr and a tour of their plant in Colmar, France. Gary is also hoping to organise a visit to Liebherr's engine development centre across the border in Switzerland.

'Apart from affording us the opportunity to forge closer links with our associates in other parts of the world, the annual WCI meeting gives us a short but intensive update on global trends in the industry which is both cost-effective and extremely valuable to the company,' Gary said. ✓

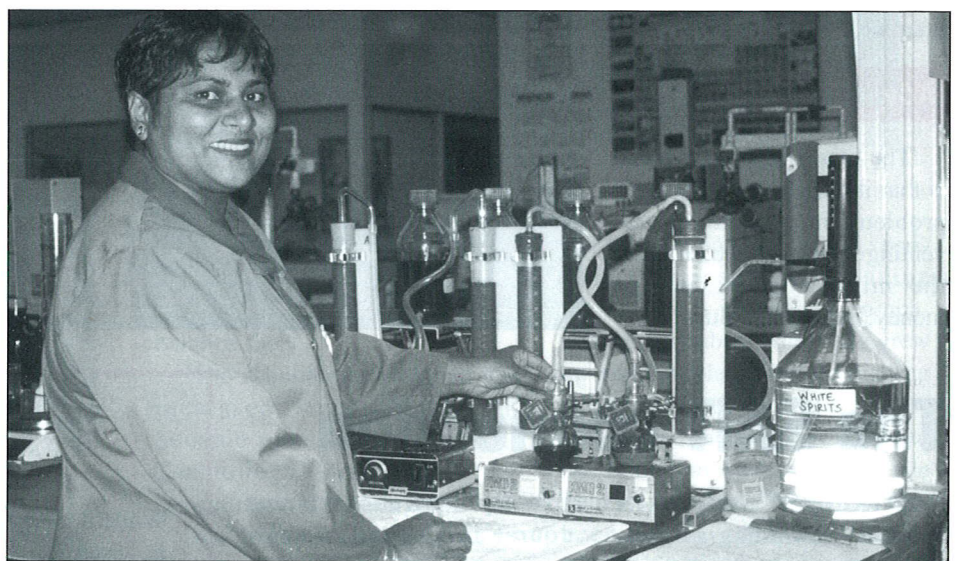
Faster sample turnaround increases lab efficiency

SAMPLE turnaround time has improved substantially at Wearcheck over the past year due to a number of initiatives in the laboratory aimed at improving overall efficiency.

'One of our standing objectives is to provide a value for money service,' says Lesley Crawford, Set Point divisional director of Wearcheck. 'To do this we are constantly upgrading equipment and systems. Some of them are relatively small changes but collectively they have made a big impact, which many of our customers have remarked on.'

Mike Koen, engineering manager of Optimum Colliery near Middelburg has noticed a definite improvement in Wearcheck's turnaround time in recent months.

'The main benefit of this is that it saves us money,' says Mr Koen. 'Our machines work around the clock, so the sooner we get sample results back, the better our chances are of preventing a failure. Major cost savings can be realised without taking into account pro-



Vigie Manikum operates the additional water testing stations.

duction losses caused by downtime, so quick sample turnaround is essential for us.'

Some of the many developments in the laboratory which have contributed to this improvement are listed below:

- ◆ Wearcheck's Biorad FTIR installed last year has enhanced the processing

of engine samples enormously, almost doubling sample throughput to 60 samples per hour.

- ◆ A Saturday shift was introduced in November, greatly facilitating the

Turn to Page 4

Wearcheck helps keep costs down at Douglas Colliery

WEARCHECK's oil analysis programme has been helping to reduce maintenance costs and extend the life of equipment at Douglas Colliery's Wolwekrans opencast coal mine outside Witbank for the past 16 years.

Says Marks Mdluli, engineering superintendent (diesel) of the opencast section, 'Wolwekrans has benefited a great deal from using Wearcheck over the years. We no longer drain the oil from components unnecessarily and generally only do so when it is indicated on the Wearcheck reports. This means that many of our components have passed the benchmark hours set by OEM by far. This makes a substantial contribution to our cost saving programme.'

Advantage

'The other major advantage is that it enables us to identify problems in good time, preventing failures that could cost the mine a great deal of money,' says Mr Mdluli.

'A recent example is a Caterpillar D11N dozer whose engine protection system kept tripping. The artisan took pressures on the fuel and oil systems as well as the hydraulics, but these came up normal. When the tripping continued, we sent a sample through to Wearcheck for analysis. The results showed fuel dilution above 12% so we replaced the fuel transfer pump and injec-

tors immediately.'

'If we had not pinpointed and corrected the problem so quickly, we could easily have lost the engine which would have cost the mine about R 680 000. We have also been able to extend the service interval way beyond the standard 14 000 - 16 000 hours, and the machine has now run for more than 23 000 hours without an overhaul.'

About 90% of the mine's pumps and drills and its fleet of 26 mainly Caterpillar earth-moving machines are on the Wearcheck programme. They also commission RPD ferrogram analysis when necessary and make extensive use of Wearcheck's technical training courses.

'All our artisans, servicemen and service truck operators have been on Wearcheck's training courses,' says Mr Mdluli. 'They now all have a good understanding of the basics of clean oil and the importance of working and topping up cleanly.' ✓

Marks Mdluli, engineering superintendent (diesel) at Douglas Colliery's Wolwekrans opencast coal mine.



The SAIT connection

WEARCHECK continues its mutually rewarding association with the SA Institute of Tribology (SAIT). Technical consultant Gary Blevins was elected to the SAIT committee in Johannesburg during May and John Evans, diagnostic manager: mobile equipment, was co-presenter of the final day of SAIT's

five-day lubrication training course in Durban in early June for the third year running.

Last year, Wearcheck won the Louw Alberts Award which is presented by SAIT annually to recognise and reward outstanding achievements in this field. ✓

Lube Tips

- ◆ While it is thought that viscosity is how 'thick' a fluid's film is, viscosity is actually the measurement of a fluid's resistance to flow. This, of course, influences oil film thickness.
- ◆ The most common type of wear mechanism is abrasive wear. Abrasive wear occurs in sliding contacts, usually due to particle contamination.
- ◆ Poor crankcase ventilation prevents water from vaporizing out of the oil in the sump. ✓

- Courtesy of Noria Corporation

Making Headway

Wearcheck's Johannesburg office is expanding as two long-serving Pinetown staff members, Jill Durant and Devi Armugam, swop Durban's beaches for the City of Gold.

FORMER quality manager, Jill Durant, has been promoted to Johannesburg branch manager.

'As a large percentage of our samples come from Gauteng, it is important that we have a strong managerial presence in the region,' says Jill, who plans to focus on customer support and to adopt a visible, frontline approach in her new position.

'Gary Brown is currently heading up the sales team from his Pinetown base,' says Jill. 'I will gradually take over this responsibility, visiting customers on the Reef with the sales staff.'

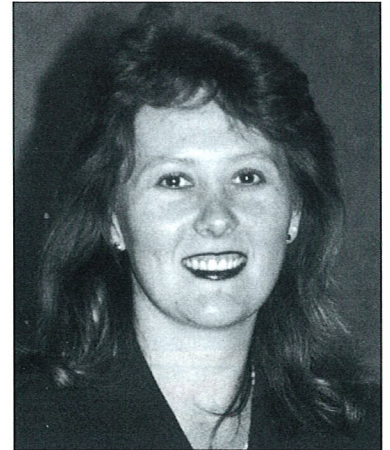
'We believe the Johannesburg office will benefit from having a manager on hand with comprehensive knowledge of the entire

Jill takes the lead in Johannesburg

Wearcheck operation and that this will be a valuable resource to back up the efforts of the sales force.'

Since joining the company eight years ago, after completing a BSc in microbiology and biochemistry, Jill has been closely involved with most Wearcheck departments. Starting off supervising the data processing section, she has worked in information systems, conducted InfoCheck training, headed up customer services and, most recently, managed Wearcheck's highly regarded quality system which will now revert to Lesley Crawford.

Jill will also take over responsibility for the general administration of the



Jill Durant is Wearcheck's new Johannesburg branch manager.

Johannesburg office, working closely with existing staff.

'I have always enjoyed visiting our customers in Gauteng and, now that it is to be my home, I look forward to developing Wearcheck's service in the region.' ✓

NEW BASE FOR SOFTWARE SUPPORT

DEVI Armugam and her family have relocated to Gauteng. Devi will continue to provide software support for all Wearcheck's NetCheck and InfoCheck customers from her new base.

'As most of my work is conducted on the phone, or by e-mail, it will make very little difference to my customers which office I work from,' says Devi. 'The important thing is that they know they can call me in the Johannesburg office anytime they need my help.' ✓



Devi Armugam now provides customer software support from Johannesburg.

The NetCheck support desk can now be reached on telephone (011) 392-6322. NetCheck users can also access the NetCheck manual online on Wearcheck's web site: www.wearcheck.co.za/netcheck/page1.htm

NEW FACES

Keeping an eye on cash flow

SENIOR bookkeeper Margaret Blaylock has settled into this newly created position with ease.

Reporting to administration manager Karen van Staden, Margaret controls cash flow and general ledger reconciliation to balance sheet.

'The accounting workload has increased since Wearcheck became part of the Set Point Technology Group, hence my appointment,' says Margaret.

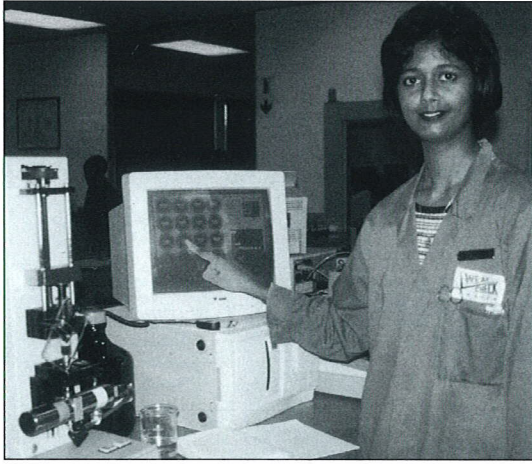
'My biggest challenge is to ensure constant accuracy when reporting and to meet deadlines. This is becoming easier as I become more familiar with the company and their systems. Being au fait with Wearcheck's Pastel accounting system has been a big help.'



Margaret Blaylock, senior bookkeeper

Margaret has extensive experience as a bookkeeper, having worked for a number of companies in Zimbabwe where she grew up and completed her accounting training, and later for Estée Lauder in Johannesburg. She and her family moved to Durban ten years ago, since when she has been employed mainly in the building industry.

Her three children take up most of her leisure time and the family enjoys camping holidays together. When she has a spare moment to herself, Margaret fills it with sewing, gardening or working out at the gym. ✓



Shireen Brijlal tries out the new touch screens in the lab.

From Page 1

processing of sample volumes.

- ◆ A new weekday swing shift has also speeded up sample throughput. Four laboratory assistants start work an hour earlier so that all sample preparation is completed when the full staff complement arrives at 8am, enabling them to begin processing samples without delay.
- ◆ The night shift provides further flexibility. The number of laboratory assistants on duty is increased when sample numbers demand it.
- ◆ Touch screens have been introduced on most of the laboratory computers. This means that laboratory staff have a limited number of very specific options to choose from when conducting tests, saving time and reducing the possibility of error.
- ◆ Laboratory staff have been issued with computer identity discs, another timesaver which eliminates the need for them to log in manually at each work station, and allowing for greater control of sample results.
- ◆ The installation of a more powerful vacuum pump enables viscometer tubes to be cleaned faster and more efficiently, resulting in greater throughput.
- ◆ The number of stations for water testing has been doubled, permitting twice as many tests each day.
- ◆ A new computer system for tracking filter pads around the lab conveys information directly to the data processing section electronically, eliminating the use of paper and enhancing accuracy.

'We will continue to upgrade laboratory instruments and systems wherever possible as part of our ongoing quality drive,' Ms Crawford said. ✓

Where to find us

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Wearcheck Technical Training Courses July - December 2000

OIL ANALYSIS

Date	Course	Venue
24 July	2	Pinetown
26 July	3	Pinetown
27/28 July	4	Pinetown
14 August	2	Johannesburg
16 August	3	Johannesburg
17/18 August	4	Johannesburg
11 September	2	Pinetown
13 September	3	Pinetown
14/15 September	4	Pinetown
16 October	2	Johannesburg
18 October	3	Johannesburg
19/20 October	4	Johannesburg
20 November	2	Pinetown
22 November	3	Pinetown
23/24 November	4	Pinetown

Course 1 : A practical introduction to oil analysis

By arrangement. Cost: R2954,90 per day for the course held on site.

Course 2 : The application of analysis and an introduction to troubleshooting

(08h30 - 16h30). Cost: R517,10 (Wearcheck customers), R718 (others).

Course 3 : Troubleshooting series

(08h30 - 16h30). Cost: R517,10 (Wearcheck customers), R718 (others).

Course 4 : The technical management of oil analysis and lubrication

Day 1: 08h30 - 16h30, Day 2: 08h30 - 12h30. Cost: R985 (Wearcheck customers), R1292,80 (others).

NETCHECK

24/25 July	Pinetown
14/15 August	Johannesburg
11/12 September	Pinetown
16/17 October	Johannesburg
20/21 November	Pinetown

Cost: R1140 including refreshments

All prices include VAT

For bookings phone Melanie Hynd on (031) 700-5460

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