

# Axis bridging the digital divide

Axis Communications SA, a subsidiary of Swedish parent company, Axis Communications, recently won a R9m contract to supply equipment processes to a copper mine in Lusaka, Zambia, which is replacing its current analogue cameras with Internet protocol (IP) high quality cameras. Nelendhre Moodle spoke to Axis country manager, Roy Alves, about the necessity for security in the mining industry.

Roy Alves.



**Alves says that the project is being rolled out in phases - the first phase involves replacing existing CCTV cameras of poor quality and installing network cameras in new areas. "Not all the analogue cameras are being replaced, some, however, are being encoded to IP video."**

The company is already well established globally, with a significant IP camera market share of about 44%, having sold over one million network cameras.

Axis offers a wide range of network cameras for securing people and property, remote monitoring equipment and facilities, and for sending live images and sounds for remote learning, troubleshooting and Web broadcasting.

Alves says that the mining sector, which accounts for about 20% of the company's business, started showing interest in network cameras and IP videos, used in process control, particularly on conveyor belts in 2003.

Network cameras and IP videos provide real-time information which is highly beneficial, as "kinks in conveyor belts can be rectified as soon as the problem is identified," he explains.

Although Axis has a great focus on expanding significantly into Africa, its primary focus remains on South Africa, where

the company has been involved in installing network cameras for Xstrata Coal's South Witbank colliery. To date, the colliery's technician has installed 14 fixed network cameras and three pan, tilt and zoom (PTZ) network cameras.

The challenge for the colliery was to maximise productivity and monitor the output levels of three separate conveyer belt sections, says Becker Electronics sales consultant, Donovan Roberts.

Becker Electronics, the systems integrator for Axis products, initially provided South Witbank with four network cameras.

A total of 17 network cameras have been installed since 2004 to monitor productivity levels and the output levels of the three conveyer's belt sections at the colliery.

Becker Electronics has completed a number of similar implementations at mines throughout Mpumalanga. "I would say 75% of the mines we work with here in the Mpumalanga area are running on a seamless IP backbone," says Roberts.

Mine owners prefer to invest in the latest IP-based systems, with a long term view to integrate their communications systems. "In the future we will see all mines running on IP integrated into the SCADA," he says. ○