

LOCAL COMPANY SET TO REVOLUTIONISE MINING INDUSTRY

Stellenbosch-based technology company Blue Cube Systems (Pty) Ltd introduced an additional model to their range of instant mineral quantifiers. The company specialises in providing hi-tech solutions for mineral processing plants. Their Blue Cube MQi in-line mineral quantifiers allow process operators in mineral separation plants to access minute-by-minute mineral composition information. The data provided by the in-line mineral scanners assist operators in optimising the recovery of valuable minerals by providing immediate feedback. The latest model, the MQi Spot Mineral Quantifier, addresses the need for a versatile unit, able to accept batch samples from different streams.

The new MQi Spot Mineral Quantifier is available in two versions. The MQi Spot Pour Through model is suitable for dry, free flowing ores and has been successfully tested in the heavy minerals industries in South Africa. The MQi Spot Universal model is suited to both dry samples and wet filter cake. It has already proved its worth in a base minerals plant and on furnace slags. Positive tests have also been concluded on chromite and silica.

The MQi Spot system relies on the proven technology of Blue Cube's MQi in-line mineral quantifier in terms of embedded software, spectrometer and data processor components. Sample presentation has been changed from in-line to batch presentation. Sample preparation is uncomplicated and fast. A graphical user interface (GUI) has been added to provide a suitable operator interface. Output data is channelled directly to a client's database for immediate use by operators. The technology provides consistent and accurate information on actual mineral composition information; not only the elemental components.

The MQi technology can be installed at relatively low capital cost and imposes almost zero operating costs. It provides instant information in a format understood by plant operators and can thereby enhance their ability for rapid stabilisation and tuning of a mineral separation plan.

The technology for Blue Cube's MQi In-line Spectral Mineral Analysers is the result of a three-year research and development project, which was funded by the Innovation

Fund Trust. The grant was allocated amidst heavy competition and was one of only three successful applications in its category. The aim of the project was to provide the minerals industry with the means to quantify minerals in motion, through automatic, continuous, real-time, non-contact mineral identification capability.

All installations of the Blue Cube MQi technology is linked to the company's facilities in Stellenbosch by a data link. This enables remote operational supervision and calibration. The physical build quality is very robust and is specified to operate under the harsh conditions prevailing in mineral separation plants.

According to Blue Cube Managing Director Francois du Plessis, the project was successfully completed within budget and on time. "This was a great opportunity for Blue Cube to work together with the Innovation Fund Trust in creating a value adding product that has already lead to increased export opportunities.

The existing installations and repeat orders have already proven the value of the MQi technology to our customers. We are confident that this hi-tech, innovative product will assist many more mineral separation plants to improve process control and gain stable operations, consistent grade, higher recovery and improved productivity."

"It is also possible to link the output of the MQi directly to the control circuitry of some types of separation equipment. This was proven in our pilot plant and is already being implemented in the separation plant of one of our customers. Automatic control of mineral separation processes has become a reality," mentions Du Plessis.

For more information, visit www.bluecube.co.za.

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