SABS re-introduces petrographic testing services

The South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) laboratory has re-introduced petrographic testir services to the coal and minerals industry.

Accurate petrographic analysis is an important tool to evaluate bituminous coals and coal blends and their ability to produce blast furnace coke.

"The SABS laboratory is well placed to offer a strategic service to businesses across the Southern Africar mining region particularly the Waterberg and Botswana coalfields," says Heinrich Williams, general manag for mining and minerals at the SABS. "The re-introduction of petrographic services will stimulate foreign direct investment by renewing trust in the region's capability to offer world-class services to the mining anc mineral testing industry."

Analysis determines characteristics

Coal petrography is a microscopic technique used to determine a coal's rank (degree of coalification) and type (amount and class of macerals). The analysis of minerals by optical mineralogy is critical to understanding the rock's origin, as well as determining coal characteristics including coke strength which inevitably lends itself to prime coal market end-users. Petrography guarantees the highest standard possit for customers seeking services from a testing and certification requirement relevant across the mining sector.

Internationally, coal is currently the most widely used primary fuel, accounting for approximately 36% of the world's electricity production. This situation is likely to remain until at least 2020. South Africa's coal reserv are estimated at 53 billion tons, and with the present production rate there should be almost 200 years of coal supply left.