

New geology software version due for release next year

Mining solutions developer Maptek will release the latest version of its mine-planning software suite, Vulcan 10, in the first quarter of 2016.

Vulcan incorporates a dedicated geology package that features tools that enable geologists to access and view drillhole data, define geological zones and accurately model ore-bodies and deposits.

These tools comprise geology-specific bundles, including Vulcan Explorer, Vulcan GeoModeller and Vulcan GeoStatModeller.

Vulcan Explorer provides an interactive three-dimensional (3D) visualisation and modelling environment to test and validate exploration models. Vulcan Modeller, GeoModeller or MineModeller creates block models and 3D triangulated surfaces for assessment.

Vulcan GeoModeller is ideal for creating geological, structural and grade/quality models for stratigraphic and nonstratigraphic applications.

The software can also be used for geological modelling, face map-

ping, statistical analysis and preliminary resource calculations.

Vulcan GeoStatModeller is a complete configuration for performing geostatistical analysis to create models and accurately determine geological resources.

Tools for variograms and grade estimation are used to augment grid and block modelling, geology and plotting.

Vulcan 10 will introduce further enhancements, including new tools for splitting pit solids into scheduling blocks, for variogram analysis, enhanced implicit model-

ling and when working with large block models.

The new version will also deliver additional support for multi-threaded processors for up to ten times better performance over the current version.

The upgrades will see a significant improvement in the speed of block model scripts, block slicing, implicit modelling, grade estimation, attribute reporting and simulations.

Industry Origins

Maptek recently showcased its expanded range of solutions at the Bowen Basin Geology Group Symposium, in Brisbane, Australia, in October.

During the symposium, Maptek stratigraphic solutions development director **Peter Odins** described the event as an ideal plat-

Laboratory solutions provider expands despite commodity price slump

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CREAMER MEDIA WRITER

Laboratory solutions provider Tramecon is extending its service offering and warehouse capacity, in line with increased demand from the mining industry and despite the current industry slump brought on by the downturn in commodity prices.

The company embarked on three main expansion programmes in July – the acquisition of a larger warehouse, the commissioning of additional equipment and the employment of two more analytical scientists to increase and enhance its laboratory capability.

The company's new 400 m² warehouse in Kya Sands, Gauteng, is double the size of its previous facility; this has enabled Tramecon to acquire a 1 t blender, which is currently being commissioned.

Tramecon MD **Hannelie de Beer** tells *Mining Weekly* that the new blende rallows the company to pro-

cess larger amounts of reference material batches for mining clients.

She says participation in Tramecon subsidiary Qotho Laboratory Services' proficiency testing (PT) schemes is improving with every round of the process and, coupled with greater demand for preparation and reference materials, has prompted Tramecon to acquire the larger blender. Qotho is also extending its reference materials offering to meet the growing demand for laboratory services in South Africa.

De Beer explains that, of late, clients are requiring laboratories to focus more on quality and, in doing so, demand for products and services from Tramecon and Qotho has increased, with Qotho's core business being to assist with quality improvements.

To improve quality management, Qotho will be applying to the South African National Accreditation System for accreditation to the International Organisation of Standardisation (ISO) for ISO 17043:2010. This standard specifies the general require-

ments for the competence of proficiency-testing scheme providers, as well as the development and operation of such schemes.

De Beer notes that the process of obtaining the accreditation, is progressing "very well", but the application and granting of the standard are taking longer than expected. Nevertheless, accreditation is expected during the first half of 2016.

Through Qotho, Tramecon also aims to expand its reference material business in 2016 by launching new products and embedding itself in the analytical services market.

It will also focus on furthering the global expansion of its PT schemes to attract all those involved in the commodity value chain, from explorer to end-user.

Meanwhile, in terms of the development and retention of laboratory and analytical skills, De Beer tells *Mining Weekly* that analytical techniques are increasingly becoming "equipment driven", thereby retarding the process of removing human intervention and, in turn, decreasing the expertise



GREATER PROCESSING CAPACITY
Tramecon acquired a new 1 t blender, enabling it to process larger amounts of reference material batches

of skilled technicians.

"There is less of an understanding of fundamental scientific and chemical principles among laboratory staff." This is where Tramecon can play a key role, says De Beer, adding that the company can assist clients in identifying and eliminating the root causes of problems associated with the quality of laboratory data. ■■

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