

Industry Insight clients visit Gautrain Rapid Rail Link Project

It was with great excitement that a group of Industry Insight clients met on Saturday morning, 24 October 2008, at the Gautrain Bompas road Station for a site visit underground.

I thought a hard hat, maybe even boots were a possibility, not realising that in fact we would be completely kitted out, hard hats, overalls, safety glasses, masks, ear plugs and finally miners boots! Once attired we were given a progress report for the Gautrain by **Nic Claassen the project manager at the Rosebank station**. He then explained how far we would be going once in the tunnel as well as what the conditions underground were.

We set off in the cage and went 61 meters down. The first thing to hit you is the smell, very ammonia like smells and then the humidity which is extreme. Once out of the lift area it appears to be extremely busy with construction vehicles and the like going on about their business. As expected it was noisy and wet thus the boots, but fortunately well lit. A concrete slab was built for the vehicles to travel on as you go further into the tunnel. Ventilation was not an issue and fortunately not at any stage did we feel out of breath. Once we had walked the 1.1km to the end of the tunnel Nic Explained that they were due to do blasting at midday so we were fortunate to witness first hand the holes that are drilled 4.5 meters into the rock face and the preparation of the explosives for blasting. We were also able to see the beginnings of the link up to the Marlboro tunnel.



Back on solid, elevated ground, our clients were able to ask Nic questions regarding all aspects of the train. It was amazing to have a one on one with the project manager standing on the very site! ***It is only once you have been underground and experience the sheer magnitude of the project do you understand why this is going to have such an impact on South Africa.***

I know that this experience for our clients who went along Crabtree, CIDB, Plascon, GSA and Deutsche Bank had felt that they had an experience of construction like never before. I would like to thank all involved that made this such a great morning.

We are hoping to set up another site visit soon, I encourage you all to try and attend you will have a new perspective on the Gautrain.

Cat McClure: National Business Development Manager

Next visit: 22 November 2008

With any luck we will take more clients to visit this extraordinary project on the 22 November 2008. for more information please contact our Cape Town office at 021 557 4168 or send an e-mail to Louise@industryinsight.co.za to secure your place.