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Department:
Trade, Industry and Competition
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Press Release from Skye Advance Africa (Pty) Ltd

Cape Town, South Africa

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Marine composites get a scientific boost from the South African government.

Skye Advance Africa (Pty) Ltd, a Cape Town-based advanced composite technology company, is the 2021/2022 beneficiary of support from the **Aerospace Industry Support Initiative (AISI)** through the Marine Manufacturing, Maintenance and Repairs, and Associated Services Development Programme's Technology Enhancement Intervention.

The AISI is an initiative of the **Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (the dtic)**, and is hosted within the **Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)** in Pretoria.

The support provided by the AISI allows Skye Advance the opportunity to test and evaluate the individual and consolidated material mechanical values of locally produced technical fibres and polymers for future use in the commercial marine sectors.

New emerging marine workboat technology, with high-performing, lightweight, fuel efficient and modern design composites relies on high modulus process technology and materials that use minimal amounts of material in construction. **The performance values of South African materials in this sector are unknown.** It is Skye Advance's intention to test these values as they are critical for finite element analysis to allow international designs to be manufactured in South Africa using local materials.

"Scientific evidence provides a good baseline for new technologies based on local materials and manufacturing to enter the market in Africa. Localisation is key, skills development critical and advanced composites provide opportunities as they are a future engineering material choice. Composites will create long-term skills development for Africa as the technology can be learned quickly. What we need to know is the local supply chain quality and what the actual mechanical values are, so that we can have confidence in the local product before we start construction of international workboats," says Ewen Niske, CEO for Technology and Innovation at Skye Advance Africa.

Blue Africa is a reality, and we are fully involved in creating a technical baseline of materials manufactured in South Africa to raise confidence in the local product, while focusing on creating manufacturing opportunities for export from South Africa for Blue Africa workboat demands. Based on these products and advanced international designs, Skye Advance is filling a much-needed gap for competitive and modern

marine craft of high modulus design in composites for the commercial, defence and workboat sector demand in Africa based on Scandinavian design and technology.

With **the dtic** project, Skye Advance Africa, will bring greater awareness of the commercialisation of composites for marine safety in defence, offshore and commercial applications as a challenger performance material to steel and aluminium in the workboat sector. Various and varying maritime aspects where composites can be applied will, as a direct result of the commercialisation of composites, be established and developed and skills with long-term benefits can and will ensue.

South Africa's rich maritime heritage and well-established marine sector has a thriving future, where Skye Advance intends to partake with new international maritime technology applications that will create additional longterm skills and development using the market demand for commercial marine composites as a vehicle.

Skye Advance Africa is conducting these tests at a special purpose facility in a technical innovation cluster at Westlake, Western Cape.

For more information, media can contact the CEO of Skye Advance at refaan@skyeadvance.com

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