



Robert Hart

Principal Risk Engineer

Robert joined IMIU’s engineering team as Principal Risk Engineer in January 2022. He is South African, and prior to joining IMIU he spent 21 years with Harmony Gold, South Africa’s largest gold producer, which owns and operates the very deepest hard rock mines in the world, as well as an open pit and surface re-mining operations. At the time of his resignation he held the position of Executive: Engineering & Technical Services.

Although born in Pretoria, Robert spent some of his early years growing up in a mining town where his father was an engineer and where his affiliation with mining was established. His family subsequently moved to the Kwa Zulu Natal south coast, where he completed his schooling in the beach resort town of Margate.

The mining heritage was running rich in his blood though, and at the end of high school, Robert was granted a study bursary from the Anglo American Gold & Uranium Division (later to become AngloGold). He enrolled at the University of Pretoria and graduated with a B.Eng. (Mech) degree in 1998.

After completing his studies, he joined the AngloGold Engineer-in-Training programme for two years and passed the Government Certificate of Competency (GCC) examination at the end of 2000. During this period he also qualified as a brigadesman with the Mines Rescue Services (“Proto”).

Robert joined Harmony Gold in 2001 where he assumed the role of legally appointed Engineer at the President Brand No.2 Shaft. Here he was thrown in the deep end to manage the very aged infrastructure of a marginal mine.

A year later he formed part of the due diligence team that assessed the assets of an acquisition target and subsequently became the Engineer at the newly-acquired Joel Mine, helping to integrate that asset into the Harmony Gold portfolio. Robert’s primary function was to manage the maintenance and operation of the infrastructure of the mine, but in later years he became intimately involved in initiating and designing a project to extend the life of the mine.

In 2005 Robert was moved to Target Mine, the company’s newly acquired underground trackless mining operation, and was tasked with taking over the entire maintenance function of the TMM fleet which had, until that point, been outsourced to the OEM. This entailed recruitment, training, workshop resourcing and fleet recapitalisation. It is here where he acquired his “yellow fleet” management skills. He was also responsible for deep-level pumping and refrigeration systems.



His exposure to deep-level hoisting, pumping, refrigeration and compressed air systems was further expanded when in 2008 he was moved to the Bambanani Mine, the deepest mine in the Free State province (over 3,000m deep).

2009 saw the start of his senior management career when he was appointed as the Group Engineer for the Harmony (South) operations - a role that was expanded in 2012 when he became Group Engineer of all the South African operations. In these roles he took technical responsibility for all the company's SA assets and was the functional head for all Engineers at the South African operations.

In 2018 the role was further expanded when he was appointed to the executive team of the South African operations. In this role he retained his Group Engineer responsibilities, but was also responsible for Technical Services, which included the running of two subsidiary entities (Margaret Water Company and Covalent Water Company) which had previously been established to dewater underground basins in order to keep their respective regional mining areas dry.

Robert also carried responsibilities outside of the borders of Harmony Gold. From 2013 he was a member of the Consulting Mechanical & Electrical Engineers committee of the Chamber of Mines (later the Minerals Council South Africa), later becoming Chairman from 2015 - 2018.

From 2018 to 2021 Robert served on the board of the Midvaal Water Company, a regional water utility, as representative board member for the mining industry.

At the end of his career with Harmony he was the functional head of Engineering over 10 underground and one open pit mine, 12 processing plants and three surface re-mining operations. He also carried direct responsibility for four pumping shafts and all surface rehabilitation of the company. In this role he carried technical responsibility for 69 Engineers and approximately 11,000 Engineering employees.

The wide spread of his responsibilities over the years gives him the ideal perspective on infrastructure risk management, from both an operations and executive management point of view. In his Executive role, Robert had extensive experience in cross functional teams, so that his understanding of all related disciplines with the mining business is well developed.

As a long-time client of IMIU, he has built up an excellent understanding of risk mitigation management and oversaw significant improvements in Harmony's insurance risk rating indicators over the years. Therefore, when Robert decided to embark on a new career direction in risk engineering, IMIU was an obvious choice and in this new role he is perfectly positioned to assist clients in the management of their risk and insurability.

Awards & Qualifications

- B.Eng. (Mech) - University of Pretoria
- Master's Degree in Business Administration (MBA) - GIBS
- Government Certificate of Competency (GCC) in mine engineering, South Africa

Professional Membership

- Member of the Association of Mine Resident Engineers (AMRE) of South Africa