



SOUTH AFRICAN IRON AND STEEL INSTITUTE

HISTORY OF THE SA PRIMARY STEEL INDUSTRY

History of the South African primary steel industry

Selected important events in the development of South Africa's primary steel industry:

- 1882 Prospectus of the South African Coal and Iron Company is published.
- 1892 Mr Sammy Marks, through the efforts of AH Nellmapius, obtained a concession to erect factories and furnaces for the smelting of iron.
- 1901 Mr CL Green produces a small quantity of pig iron from a rudimentary blast furnace at Sweetwaters, near Pietermaritzburg to European methods. The venture was terminated.
- 1905 The Transvaal Iron and Steel Company is formed in Kempton Park and buys a rolling-mill plant from New Zealand. It intends to rework scrap into sheet-metal products. The plant is broken up and sold as scrap in 1913. There was no commercial production.
- 1907 The railways acquires a Bessemer converter and uses it in the Pretoria workshops to produce small quantities of iron from the ore found near Pretoria. The project failed due to the cost of importing suitable coke.
- 1908 Sir Robert Kotze, the Transvaal government mining engineer, advocates the building of a moderate furnace and steel plant. Instead the government calls in FW Harbord, a British specialist, to draw up a report. The report suggests electric furnaces to smelt the considerable quantity of railway scrap available.
- 1910 The Transvaal government acts on the Harbord report and awards a tender to Mr Hawkins for erection of a furnace to transform railway scrap to steel. He fails to carry out his obligations, the contract is forfeited and awarded to Sammy Marks.
- 1911 Mr Wright and Mr Sammy Marks establish the Union Steel Corporation (USCO).
- 1912 Machinery merchants Cartwright and Eaton starts producing puddled and merchant iron. The company name is changed to Dunswart Iron and Steel Works in 1914 - later acquired by Iscor.
- 1924 A German company, Gutehoffnungshütte, publishes a positive report on the potential of the South African steel industry. The report is pioneered by Mr Delfos, who then starts to canvas government support for the expansion of the local steel industry.



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- 1924 SCAW Metals starts operations in Johannesburg as a steel ceilings and aluminium window frames manufacturer. SCAW moves to Germiston in 1939.
- 1927 Legislation is tabled in parliament that effectively leads to the founding of the South African Iron and Steel Industrial Corporation - Iscor.
- 1929 Cape Gate Fence & Wire Works (Pty) Limited is founded in Parow, Western Province by the Kaplan / Kushlick families as a wire netting manufacturer.
- 1934 State-owned Iscor starts production in Pretoria.
- 1943 Iscor commissions a heavy plate mill at Vanderbijlpark.
- 1947 Iscor expands by establishing a green field integrated steel works and flat products mill in Vanderbijlpark completing the first phase in 1953. Major expansions followed during 1964 to 1968 and during 1973 to 1977.
- 1957 Minerals Engineering of Colorado opens a plant in Witbank designed to produce approximately 1,4m kg of vanadium pentoxide annually.
- 1959 In November 1959 Anglo American Corporation of South Africa acquires a two-third share in Minerals Engineering and in August 1960 the company's name is changed to Transvaal Vanadium Company (Proprietary) Limited.
- 1960 The Highveld Development Company Limited is established on 19 May 1960 to investigate the viability of processing titaniferous magnetite ore for the production of liquid pig iron and vanadium-bearing slag.
- 1962 Cape Gate (Pty) Limited is established by the purchase by the Kaplan family of a small wire netting plant on 15 hectares in Vanderbijlpark, Gauteng Province.
- 1963 RMB Alloys Ferrochrome Pilot Project is launched in Middelburg.
- 1964 In November 1964 the Highveld Development Company embarks on a programme to build an integrated iron and steel works near Witbank.
- 1964 The stainless steel Southern Cross Steel Co (Pty) Ltd is established. In 1968 it becomes the Steel Division of Middelburg Steel and Alloys (Pty) Ltd and in 1990 MS&A Stainless (Pty) Ltd is established. Columbus Stainless (Pty) Ltd is formed in 1991 when the initial partners, Samancor and Highveld Steel, acquire the stainless steel facility of MS & A Stainless from the Barlow Group.



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- 1965 The name of the Highveld Development Company Limited is changed to Highveld Steel and Vanadium Corporation Limited ("Highveld") on 11 June 1965.
- 1965 Cape Town Iron and Steel Works (Pty) Ltd - CISCO is established.
- 1966 Following the acquisition of the remaining shareholding of Transvaal Vanadium Company (Proprietary) Limited, this company, in August 1966, becomes a division of Highveld, the largest vanadium producer in the world.
- 1967 Cape Gate (Pty) Ltd - The Sharon Wire Mill division is established to produce uncoated and galvanized wire, welded mesh, diamond mesh, barbed wire, field fence and other products.
- 1971 Iscor starts erecting an integrated steel works and long products mill at Newcastle. Blast furnace produces first iron in 1976.
- 1973 Iscor takes ownership of CISCO.
- 1975 Cape Gate (Pty) Ltd - The Davsteel division is established, and rolling mills for the production of wire rod, re-bar and rounds is commissioned in Vanderbijlpark.
- 1976 Highveld Steel acquires a 65% share in Transalloys (Proprietary) Limited. The remaining interest is acquired in 1985 and Transalloys now operates as a division of Highveld, producing manganese alloys.
- 1978 Highveld Steel acquires the total issued share capital of Rand Carbide Limited, which was founded in 1918 in Germiston. The plant moved to Witbank in 1926 and Rand Carbide now operates as a division of Highveld, producing ferrosilicon and various carbonaceous products.
- 1980 Cape Gate (Pty) Ltd - An EAF meltshop consisting of a 45 ton electric arc furnace, casting machine and associated plant for steel manufacturing is commissioned.
- 1981 Cape Gate (Pty) Ltd - The Oren Wire division, to produce specialist wire products, is established.
- 1985 Highveld Steel - The group acquires Rheem South Africa (Proprietary) Limited, a company involved mainly in the manufacture of drums, pails and crown closures, in 1985. It operated as a division of Highveld until the various parts were sold partly effective from 1 January 2002 and the rest early 2003.
- 1988 First commercial Corex unit in the world is commissioned at Iscor Pretoria.



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- 1989 Iscor privatises and is listed on the Johannesburg Securities Exchange on 8 November 1989.
- 1991 Highveld Steel - the group expands its activities into stainless steel with the acquisition of the stainless steel operation of Middelburg Steel & Alloys (Proprietary) Limited in partnership with Samancor Limited resulting in the formation of the Columbus Joint Venture.
- 1991 Iscor gains full control of the USCO steel works south of Johannesburg and renames the facility Iscor Vereeniging Works.
- 1993 Highveld Steel - Highveld and Samancor each sell a one-sixth share of the Columbus Joint Venture to the Industrial Development Corporation.
- 1994 Highveld Steel acquires the vanadium producer, Transvaal Alloys (Proprietary) Limited, on 1 January 1994.
- 1994 Iscor Pretoria works is upgraded to produce stainless steel.
- 1995 CISCO formed a JV with Reinforcing Steel Contractors, known as RSH.
- 1996 Construction of the Saldanha Steel plant, a joint venture between Iscor and the Industrial Development Corporation, commences.
- 1998 Highveld Steel - Hochvanadium Holding AG and a wholly-owned subsidiary Hochvanadium Handels GmbH commences business in Austria on 1 December 1998 for the purpose of processing and selling vanadium products.
- 1998 Iscor Pretoria works is decommissioned.
- 1999 The Saldanha Steel plant is commissioned.
- 1999 Murray & Roberts Limited acquires full ownership of CISCO.
- 2001 Iscor transfers its mining companies and businesses to Kumba Resources Limited, save a portion of the mineral rights at Sishen mine entitling it to delivery of 6,25 Mtpa of iron ore. Kumba is successfully unbundled and separately listed on the Johannesburg Securities Exchange on 26 November 2001.
- 2002 Acerinox of Spain acquires a 64% stake in Columbus Stainless with effect from 1 January 2002 from the three founding partners of Columbus i.e. Highveld Steel, Samancor and the IDC.



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- 2002 With effect from 1 January 2002 Highveld Steel disposes of 64% of its interest in Columbus Stainless, thereby retaining a 12% interest in Columbus and acquiring a 2.9% interest in the share capital of Acerinox, S.A.
- 2002 Iscor acquires the IDC's 50% shareholding in Saldanha Steel and fully integrates Saldanha Steel into Iscor's flat steel products division as from April 2002.
- 2003 The Highveld Steel corporation acquires a 50% shareholding in South Africa Japan Vanadium (Proprietary) Limited with a plant situated at the steel works, which produces ferrovanadium specifically for the Japanese market.
- 2004 LNM acquires more than 51% of Iscor Ltd and the LNM subsidiary's name is changed to Ispat Iscor Limited as from September 2004.
- 2005 On 14 March 2005, Ispat Iscor Limited is officially renamed Mittal Steel South Africa Limited. This development follows the December 2004 merger of Ispat International and LNM Holdings, the parent company, to form Mittal Steel Company N.V.
- 2005 Highveld Steel - Half the Acerinox S.A. interest is sold on 7 January 2005 and the balance together with the investment in Columbus Stainless (proprietary) Limited on 13 May 2005.
- 2005 Columbus Stainless - Acerinox increases its shareholding in Columbus Stainless by 12% from 64% to 76% on 13 May 2005.
- 2006 Following Anglo American's announcement on 26 October 2005 that it had decided to rationalise its portfolio and increase the focus on its controlled mining businesses, Anglo American reduced its 79% interest in Highveld Steel & Vanadium Corporation Ltd. On 13 July 2006 Evraz and Credit Suisse have each acquired 24.9% of Highveld's share capital from Anglo American. Anglo American retains a 29.2% interest in Highveld.
- 2007 Anglo American plc disposed of its remaining 29.2% shareholding in Highveld Steel and Vanadium Corporation Limited to the Evraz Group S.A. As of May 4, 2007, Evraz owns approximately 54.1% of all outstanding shares in Highveld.
- 2007 Evraz executed the option to acquire the remaining Credit Suisse shares in Highveld Steel and Vanadium Corporation. As of 28 September 2007 Evraz owns 80.9% of the entire issued share capital of Highveld.
- 2007 Following the merger between Arcelor and Mittal Steel to form the world's largest steel company, formerly Mittal Steel South Africa Limited is known as ArcelorMittal South Africa Limited.
- 2008 On 29 August 2008 the conditions set by the Commission of the European Communities for Evraz Group S.A. in relation to the divestment of Highveld's vanadium-related assets were met.