

New app launched to assess stainless steel life cycle costs

According to the Southern Africa Stainless Steel Development Association (sassda), one of the biggest obstacles to the specification of stainless steel in certain applications is the misperception that it's more expensive in comparison to other initially cheaper options.

The screenshot shows the 'Life Cycle Cost' app interface on a mobile device. At the top, there's a status bar with various icons and the time '12:02'. Below that, the app title 'Life Cycle Cost' is displayed. There are two main buttons: 'Calculate LCC' and 'Results'. Under 'Calculate LCC', there's a section for 'Select preferred currency' with a dropdown menu showing 'ZAR'. Below this is a 'Project Name' field. Further down, there's a section titled 'Rates and Duration' with four input fields: 'Cost of Capital (% pa)', 'Inflation Rate (% pa)', 'Desired Duration (years)', and 'Downtime per Maintenance / Replacement Event (days)'.

To overcome this obstacle, sassda has developed an app that allows for the real-time calculation of the life cycle costs (LCC) of stainless steel via a pre-programmed calculator. This requires the entry of key top-line data to calculate a breakdown of the relevant costs.

Long-term benefits assessed against short-term expediency

Sassda executive director John Tarboton elaborates: “The app was created to assist engineers to calculate total LCC using the standard accountancy principle of discounted cash flow, so that total costs incurred during a life cycle period are reduced to present day values. This allows a realistic comparison to be made of the options available. In terms of material selection, the app also enables potential long-term benefits to be assessed against short-term expediency.”

He adds that many months have been spent working out the correct formulas that now form the backend of the app, which has removed the burden of this type of time-consuming calculation from the end-user.

“This will prove invaluable for professionals in the field, wanting to bypass the complicated process normally associated with this type of calculation that most professionals are unfamiliar with; unless they also have an accountancy qualification!

“In this way, we’re also hoping to educate the market on the inherent benefits of stainless steel which include minimal maintenance, a minimum 60-year lifespan and significant ‘green’ benefits,” adds Tarboton.

The app is now available on the Google Play Store (Android) and will be available in the Apple iStore by the end of the year. The sassda Life Cycle Cost calculator is also available via [here](#) for non-Android phone owners.



Sassda executive director John Tarboton

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