

A portrait of Johan Combrink, a middle-aged man with short grey hair and glasses, wearing a dark grey jacket over a white shirt and a patterned tie. He is standing with his arms slightly out to the sides. The background is dark with faint white concentric circles.

Lifetime Award AWARD NOMINATION.

Johan Combrink
Chief Operating Officer,
Glencore Ferroalloys Mining Division.

It is with immense pride and wholehearted support that I nominate **Johan Combrink for the Lifetime Award**, recognising a remarkable career that has made a lasting and transformative contribution to the chrome and ferrochrome industry.

Johan's career is characterised by visionary leadership, operational excellence, innovation, integrity, and an unwavering commitment to developing both people and assets. Having joined Glencore when it was still Xstrata Alloys in June 2004, following a successful career in the South African gold mining industry, Johan has played an instrumental role in shaping the modern chrome mining business that exists today. He currently serves as the Chief Operating Officer of Glencore's Ferroalloys Mining Division, overseeing a business that forms part of one of the world's largest chrome and ferrochrome producers.

From the earliest days of his tenure, Johan demonstrated an exceptional ability to identify opportunities, unlock value, and turn bold visions into sustainable operations. One of his most significant achievements was leading the development of the Mototolo mining complex, where he orchestrated the successful establishment of both the Lebowa and Borwa shafts. Through his leadership and

deep technical expertise in the board-and-pillar mining method, these operations were developed from concept into flagship mining assets that continue to contribute significantly to the business today.

Johan was also among the pioneers who recognised the untapped potential of chrome recovery from UG2 platinum tailings. Through his foresight and strategic thinking, Glencore established dedicated processing capability to recover chrome from these tailings streams, creating additional value from existing resources while maximising the full economic potential of the orebody. This innovation not only strengthened Glencore's competitive position but also demonstrated Johan's ability to identify opportunities where others saw limitations.

In 2006, Johan once again demonstrated his capacity as a mine builder and industry innovator when he led the establishment of Helena Mine from a zero-base development. Today, Helena stands as one of the key chrome mining operations within the Glencore portfolio, continuing to grow towards the full realisation of its long-term potential. The success of Helena is a testament to Johan's ability to transform geological opportunities into world-class mining assets.

Never satisfied with conventional approaches, Johan consistently challenged the business to think differently about asset optimisation. His philosophy of "sweating the asset" resulted in the development of innovative strategies to extract additional value from existing infrastructure. One such example is the progression towards mining alternative seams and creating new mining opportunities around existing operations. This vision laid the foundation for projects such as the continued growth and expansion of Magareng Mine, where existing infrastructure has been leveraged to unlock additional resources and extend the life of the operation.

What truly distinguishes Johan from many leaders is not only what he has achieved, but how he has achieved it. He possesses a rare ability to calmly influence peers, colleagues, and subordinates toward a common objective. His leadership style is built on respect, credibility, and trust. He drives an owner's mindset throughout the organisation and consistently encourages teams to seek sustainable value for the business. Those who have worked with Johan describe him as strict but fair, demanding excellence while providing unwavering support and guidance.

His influence has been particularly evident during some of the ferrochrome industry's most challenging periods. As the South African ferrochrome sector faced unprecedented pressure from escalating electricity costs, shrinking margins, and the threat of smelter closures, Johan demonstrated exceptional strategic leadership. Rather than focusing solely on mining performance, he adopted a broader value-chain perspective and implemented strategies within the Mining Division that helped sustain smelter operations, preserve employment, and enable the business to remain financially viable under difficult market conditions. This balanced approach reflected both his commercial acumen and his genuine concern for the thousands of employees whose livelihoods depended on the industry's survival. The challenges facing the ferrochrome industry during this period have been widely recognised as a major threat to the sector's sustainability.

Johan's contribution extends well beyond operational and financial success. He is a passionate advocate for safety and has been a driving force behind fostering a safety culture that empowers every employee to take ownership. His often-quoted challenge, "What value will I add today in safety?", continues to resonate throughout the organisation. Equally memorable is his analogy that "safety is like sweeping water uphill; you have to continuously do it, otherwise the water runs back." These simple but powerful messages reflect his belief that safety requires constant vigilance, commitment, and visible leadership.

Perhaps Johan's greatest legacy lies in the people he has developed. Throughout his career, he has invested significant time in mentoring young engineers, mining professionals, supervisors, and managers. He has always been generous in sharing his knowledge and experience, helping others grow into leaders in their own right. Across the chrome industry, many emerging leaders continue to seek his counsel, recognising the immense value of his wisdom, practical experience, and strategic insight.

Even today, despite a career filled with achievements, Johan remains focused on the future. He continues to dedicate considerable effort to evaluating the long-term life and sustainability of Glencore's chrome assets. Characteristically, his thinking extends beyond his own tenure. He is consciously building a strong foundation for future generations, ensuring that those who follow him inherit resilient operations, sound strategies, and sustainable assets capable of supporting the industry for decades to come.

Johan Combrink embodies everything this Lifetime Achievement Award seeks to recognise. He is a visionary mine builder, a respected industry leader, a champion of safety, a mentor to countless professionals, and a steward of South Africa's chrome industry. His contributions have shaped operations, strengthened communities, preserved jobs, advanced innovation, and developed future leaders.

His legacy is firmly embedded not only in the mines he helped build and the value he created, but also in the people he inspired and the standards of excellence he established. His influence will continue to be felt throughout the chrome and ferrochrome industry for many years to come.

For his decades of exceptional service, visionary leadership, enduring industry impact, and unwavering commitment to excellence, Johan Combrink is a truly deserving recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award.