

UPSTREAM TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT

Upstream Technology provides world-class diamond processing products and services across the globe. A large number of specialised technicians are employed in the Upstream Technology Support function to ensure that a high standard of product support is maintained.

A number of functions are performed by the product support team throughout the product life-cycle.

These include the provision of specialised skills during the manufacturing, assembly and testing of the actual products.

Both factory acceptance, site commissioning and testing are performed with the clients to demonstrate the performance of the product in accordance with machines specification.

Informal operational and maintenance training is sometimes provided to metallurgists and technicians before and during machine hand over, whereas formal training and knowledge transfer takes place during subsequent plant visits.



Scheduled inspections are performed on sorting machines to ensure a high standard of separation efficiency. These inspections also serve as a standardised plant audit that provides management with an unbiased view of the performance of the diamond recovery plant. Upstream Technology technicians normally perform these duties alongside the plant technicians, to ensure that optimal knowledge transfer and training takes place during these activities. Repairs can be performed as part of the service depending on the requirements of the client.

First level repairs are sometimes performed by mine personnel while Upstream Technology Support is geared to perform second level repairs. Certain modules or machine parts can be returned to De Beers Commercial Technology for repair. Upstream Technology personnel then liaise with mine personnel to determine whether to repair or replace an item. Upstream Technology technicians also respond to occasional breakdowns on request from the operations.

Continuous improvement to the machine design takes place based on feedback from field technicians and end users. Unit life cycle management forms an integral part of the product development. Some Upstream Technology-produced machines have been in operation for more than 20 years.

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