



Press Release

Ohorongo Cement takes training of employees to a next level

Early this month, Ohorongo Cement mother company Schwenk KG has received twenty of recently recruited Ohorongo employees. During their stay of three to five months in Germany with Schwenk, the ten control room operators, seven shift foremen, two department foremen and the clinker production superintendant are prepared for their future tasks at Ohorongo while at the same time being introduced to the Schwenk corporate culture.

Neville Gertze, Namibian ambassador to Germany, together with his colleague from the commercial office, Mrs. Mekondjo Kaapanda-Girrus, welcomed the group in Bernburg, the German town where Schwenk's largest cement plant is situated. Congratulating the entire group to this opportunity for personal advancement, he reminded them to always be on time, since, so Gertze '... this is characteristic to the Germans.' Also Gerhard Hirth, CEO of Schwenk KG, addressed a welcome note to the trainees and advised them to pick up as much knowledge and experience during their time in Europe.

According to a spokesperson of Ohorongo Cement, it proved essentially impossible to recruit Namibians with experience in cement producing processes at a level of technology en par with the process technology deployed in the Ohorongo plant. Plant manager Dr Jürgen Hilger explained: '...After its completion, the Ohorongo plant will be the most modern in southern Africa. It just makes sense to provide our people with the training required for their task in Germany at Schwenk KG. The processes and level of technology over there are similar to the setup here in Ohorongo.'

The group of Schwenk recruits is not the first to receive training within Schwenk. Although it is the largest single group sent to Ohorongo's mother company for training, since the start of the project a number of Namibians have been sent overseas already earlier to receive their induction and further training within Schwenk. Moreover, Ohorongo cement committed to a bursary of four polytechnic students who are on an exchange program with the University of Aachen in Germany.

Tanda Nashixwa, Ohorongo's Chief HR officer, indicated that central to the training of the group consists of on-the-job-training within Schwenk. The individual group members will be included in the Schwenk teams throughout the four plants owned by Schwenk. '...This allows our guys to become familiar with their future daily tasks and the equipment and installations they will work with.' says Nashixwa. It is further intended, that this group will act as multipliers when back at Ohorongo and transfer the Schwenk corporate culture to the colleagues not sent to Schwenk.

In addition to in-house training, the Namibians have already received an introductory course in cement production processes administered by the Association of German Cement Plants (VDZ). Selected groups will further receive specialized schooling in plant lay-out, design and operation by Polysius, the contractor building the Ohorongo plant. In addition, the ten control room operators will also undergo virtual training on a computer based kiln and mill simulation program.

The enthusiasm of the group was high. When asked about the prospect of working shoulder to shoulder with their colleagues from Schwenk, one control room operator had this to say: 'We're going to give our colleagues from Schwenk a good run for their money, we will work so hard!'

When asked regarding the cost of such extensive training program, Managing Director Hans-Wilhelm Schütte merely shrugged. 'We employed people we consider to have the greatest potential. It is now up to us as employer to provide the team with the tools necessary to succeed in their respective tasks to our expectations and standards. If such requires five months training in Europe, then so be it.' Schütte was confident that the group will not disappoint themselves or the company.

Schwenk started construction of the 2.5 billion N\$ Ohorongo Cement plant beginning of 2009. One and a half year later the plant is almost completed and commissioning is scheduled for the second half of this year. At full operation the plant will employ 300 people in the quarry, in the production-, maintenance-, and quality departments as well as in the administration and sales department.

27 April 2010

Contact:

Tel: +264 61 389 301

Fax: +264 61 247 878

Email: guenzel.kirsten@ohorongo-cement.com