

***Press release: Dekra Industrial: moving ahead, one safe and strategic step at a time***

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“Dekra Industrial’s sole reason for existence is safety,” says Johan Gerber, Director at Dekra Industrial RSA, and it is evident that these are more than just words. Since 1925, when Dekra began its journey into safety services in the international automotive industry, the company has continued to pursue a strategy which enshrines and elevates the importance of safety throughout the many industrial sectors in which the company works, and in more than 50 countries worldwide. Dekra Industrial has grown into the largest industrial inspection entity worldwide under private ownership, and the local business – Dekra Industrial RSA - has been building on its parent company’s key safety ethos in South Africa for the past 38 years.

As such, Dekra Industrial RSA provides accredited Non-Destructive Testing (NDT) services, material testing, laboratory services, advanced NDT, asset integrity services and industry training to various industry sectors. These include the nuclear, power generation, oil and gas, construction, petrochemical, manufacturing, fabrication, pulp and paper, rail, mining, steel, and foundries industries in South Africa and pan-Africa. Dekra Industrial RSA is in the process of becoming RD 0034 compliant – an important nuclear safety compliance standard - and is one of the few NDT companies locally to hold the ISO 45001: 2018 certification.

Gerber explains: “We are fortunate, in that we have cultivated a footprint in a cross-section of industries and are putting plans into place to expand into others – renewables (wind and solar energy) and remote inspections for example. In 2020, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to think out of the box, and initiate new and more innovative ways of working. One of the biggest and most significant of these changes was making our operation entirely paperless.

As an inspection company, we have to retain reports and inspection documents for a minimum of five years. By going paperless, we have improved on our proactivity levels – by between 200 and 300 percent - and can now access those documents instantly. Going paperless has therefore turbo-charged our efficiency, and drastically reduced our reaction time. And despite the understandable challenges due to COVID-19 last year, we were able to achieve our targets for 2020.”

2020 also saw Dekra successfully registering Dekra Industrial Inspection LDA Mozambique. This will form a vital

gateway into the rest of sub-Saharan Africa, and a key base from which to target the major Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and power generation projects in the region. Dekra has also been awarded projects in key target sectors such as nuclear and power generation; and has won the prestigious NOSCAR safety award for the sixth consecutive year. In addition, the business achieved ISO 45001 certification in 2020.

Says Gerber: “Last year gave us the opportunity to restructure the company in such a way that we can now take a far more targeted and strategic approach. We have dedicated team members who focus on specific areas of the business. These include dedicated sales and marketing and advanced technologies managers. These changes have enabled us to strategically be very effective”.

Eddie Van Hansen, General Manager of Dekra Industrial agrees, adding: “Brands are not defined by *what* they do, but by *how* and *why* they do it. As Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos once remarked, ‘*Your brand is what other people say about you when you are not in the room*’. At Dekra Industrial, it is our aim to build a brand that is talked about as being synonymous with quality, integrity, safety and - most of all - the advocacy of our service within our key target market sectors.

“We aim to change the prevailing misperception, that NDT is a ‘grudge purchase’. There should never be any compromise in terms of safety and quality. As we are often the last to closely inspect a component or structure before it goes into operation, we are the last line of defence, providing vital safety and quality assurance to our clients.

NDT is therefore an incredibly important asset to our clients – this encapsulates our brand promise - and we aim to do business with clients who share this vision. Furthermore, beyond assurances, we also provide ongoing condition monitoring to ensure that safety remains a priority in terms of the components or structures which we have tested. Ultimately, what we do ensures the safety of our clients and their staff on site. This, of course, is of the utmost importance. And while there are many smaller businesses out there that also do a basic level of NDT, we provide premium NDT and inspection technologies and experience - and are properly accredited,” Van Hansen advises.

Gerber is confident that the strategic plans the company has in place to move the business forward in 2021 and into the future, are set to see Dekra Industrial increasing its footprint into untapped industries; and thereby further differentiating the company from its competitors.

“Building our brand internally is equally as important as building it with external stakeholders. And we are big believers in building our business – and our capacity and expertise - from the inside.

We therefore encourage our managers to be proactive, embarking on initiatives which explore new avenues for the company – such as solar plants or pipeline extensions for example. Their efforts are supported by sales and marketing and other relevant departments. These initiatives will allow us to specialise in areas of business that other NDT businesses do not, developing awareness of Dekra Industrial within sectors outside of the ones we already service.”

Van Hansen adds: “Another key differentiator for Dekra Industrial is that we are able to collaborate with our international colleagues. For example, we can quickly obtain valuable market intelligence by drawing on the Group’s extensive research and development and Services divisions; or in sourcing equipment which we may not have available locally. This is an invaluable resource, which helps us to maximise our turnaround time and efficiency. It also saves costs, as we would not have to purchase the equipment in question locally.

“Intelligence from our international counterparts and divisions is hugely valuable. Dekra is on five continents and in more than 50 countries; and we are thereby able to tap into the very latest, cutting-edge NDT and inspection strategies, software and procedures – all of which add significant value to our clients on a daily basis,” Gerber points out.

Collaboration on a global level is a vital component of the culture at Dekra Industrial. In so doing, the company has been successful in securing several global contacts on local projects, with a view to future business growth going forward.

“Another key element in our forward-looking strategy is to ensure we have happy internal brand ambassadors. We have made great strides in working on our internal communication in this regard, and also in our external communication, so that our staff all see and understand our goals, objectives and achievements. This builds a sense of ownership and pride at working in a company which is an employer of choice in its industry sector,” Gerber explains.

“Ultimately, the core Dekra Industrial ethos – in addition to having happy brand ambassadors internally - is that we do not differentiate between our larger and smaller clients. This really differentiates us from our competitors in the sector. As with our staff, we believe that clients are the best brand advocates for us. We also know that someone at a small company can move on in their career to a larger business, and if they are happy with Dekra Industrial, they will take us with them.

We inspire this level of advocacy from our clients, by providing everyone with the same level of service excellence, quality and above all, safety. We will continue to provide the best after sales service, and we have the capacity to grow with our clients as we continue to build awareness of NDT throughout sub-Saharan Africa,” Van Hansen concludes.

**(1 318 words)**

### **About Dekra Industrial and Dekra Institute of Learning**

With 96 years in the industry through its global parent company, Dekra Industrial SA has established a formidable reputation as a leader in inspection services, non-destructive testing (NDT), material testing, laboratory services, Advanced NDT, and asset integrity services, and offers industry training through Dekra Institute of Learning. With a group presence in more than 50 countries on five continents, Dekra Industrial RSA is committed to providing professional and innovative safety solutions across a multitude of industries, including power generation, oil and gas, construction, petrochemical, manufacturing, fabrication, pulp and paper, rail, mining, steel industry and foundries, within South Africa and pan-Africa.

Dekra Industrial RSA is in the process of becoming RD 0034 compliant, a nuclear safety compliance standard and is one of the few NDT companies locally to hold the ISO 45001 certification.

Dekra Institute of Learning is QCTO-accredited and delivers an internet learning service across all industries, in both public and private sectors, with training pitched to all levels of competency, focusing on HSE, ISO and CPD-aligned courses. Classroom-based and distance learning are also available.

Dekra Industrial strives to be recognised as the 'heroes of safety'.

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