

**Press release:**

***‘Smooth operators’: Dekra Institute of Learning and Willco’s machine operator and safety training partnership a synergistic success***

**03 December 2021**

As part of a rapid growth strategy in providing a comprehensive training services offering, and with the vision of becoming among the top five industry training providers in South Africa, the Dekra Institute of Learning (IOL) and Willco Safety and Training (Willco) have entered into a distinctive partnership to broaden their industry training service offering.

“This partnership will provide complementary and reciprocal synergies for both the Dekra Institute of Learning and Willco Safety and Training, as we are able to cater to a greater range of industries with a single-source, yet comprehensive service offering and an outstanding selection of courses supported by significant industry expertise,” says Christopher Mörsner, Head of the Training Division at DEKRA Industrial’s Institute of Learning.

“Moreover, this strategic value exchange – supported by Dekra IOL’s Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) and Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) accreditations - and Willco Training’s Construction Education and Training Authority (CETA) accreditation – will see the empowerment of learners receiving the best tangible practical and online training in machinery operations; as well as safety, health, and environmental management from two professionally-accredited training institutions,” he asserts.

Additionally, as a registered Lifting Machine Entity (LME), Dekra Industrial can provide registered Lifting Machine Inspectors (LMIs) in various approved categories, to conduct comprehensive inspection and load testing services to accredited sectors in the lifting and rigging industry.

The addition of the lifting inspection division broadens the company’s offering even further, completing its offering as a holistic, ‘one-stop’ services provider of NDT inspection, corrosion control with rope access and drone inspection.

“Our LME registration and lifting inspection service also synergise well with Willco’s machinery operator training offering,” comments Mörsner.

“Furthermore, Willco Founder and Co-director Willem van Niekerk’s wealth of experience, spanning more than 20 years in mining, construction and operator training and safety management, and his qualifications as an accredited course facilitator and assessor bring a unique flair – and additional benefit – to our common target markets such as mining, transport, marine/fisheries, and the nuclear power sector,” he explains.

Founded in Mpumalanga in 2016, Willco Safety and Training provides health and safety-related, as well as machine-operator training across the trackless mining and heavy transport industries that meet the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) and Education and Training Quality Assurance (ETQA) requirements.

“Sharing of Willco’s knowledge and experience in these sectors with others not only allows the company to grow in acquiring new skills, but opens new doors for market opportunities - complementing Dekra IOL’s growth in new industries, and thereby ensuring mutual growth,” says van Niekerk.

Since Willco and Dekra IOL’s first collaboration in health and safety training for the marine/fisheries industry in the Western Cape, the two companies have successfully completed collaborative training across various sectors. In particular, training achievements in the South African nuclear industry are testament to the success of Dekra IOL and Willco Training’s partnership, as Mörsner emphasises:

“In addition to the recent provision of scaffolding training as part of broader construction-based skills development at South Africa’s only nuclear plant, the Koeberg nuclear power station in Cape Town, Willco provided health and safety training comprising firefighting, basic emergency preparedness, safety health and environmental representation, legal liability, as well as hazard identification and risk assessment.

This brilliantly-executed and fruitful training has resulted in the establishment of a worthwhile and productive relationship - which, paired with Dekra’s highly-regarded safety profile at Koeberg - is primed for a potential continuous commitment,” Mörsner says.

“Reciprocally, based on the reputation, recognition and trust in the Dekra brand as a reliable and resilient provider (of 96 years globally and 38 years locally) both Dekra IOL and Willco Training’s access to the mining sector have been augmented,” Van Niekerk points out.

To this end, Dekra IOL and Willco Training’s new partnership projects include the provision of health and safety training courses for a coal washing company in Mpumalanga; and

meeting the considerable market demand for qualified machine operators, operator, scaffolding and forklift operator training, legally required driven machinery skills certification updates, as well as compulsory risk assessment and first aid training – not only within the mining and transport sectors locally, but across Africa.

Taking the pan-African growth opportunities into account, Dekra Industrial Managing Director Johan Gerber believes that “with successful projects in Botswana, Namibia, Mozambique, Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of Congo, Dekra Industrial has a strong drive in advancing our pan-African services, which will include a fundamental focus on training.”

Further recognising the mutual synergies of this strong partnership, Gerber suggests that both Dekra IOL and Willco can confidently ensure a positive ‘ripple effect’ in partnering with other similar service providers.

Further strengthening this efficient and mutually supportive partnership is a shared approach of advocating for - and raising awareness of - the Dekra brand; as well as a collective ethos of integrity, honesty and passion for education by focusing on the individual.

“We share a commitment to ensuring the provision of dedicated, inventive and fun education in the classroom and the training floor, which is bolstered by a passion for making a difference in skills development,” says Mörsner.

Van Niekerk agrees: “Setting our synergies apart from others in the market is our wealth of experience in safety and operator training - and our ‘hands on’ involvement. In taking our learners’ best interests to heart, and in valuing the individual we find purpose in the upliftment and improvement of industry,” he says.

“Through organic and sustainable growth, paired with Willco’s industry experience, training and service provision – and matched with our own health and safety training capabilities – we can ultimately create a massive difference: not only in empowering learners with accredited skills, but in raising an awareness around and innovative approach towards safety,” Mörsner concludes.

**Ends**

**(969 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 provides 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 SA is a holistic, '*one-stop*' services provider of NDT inspection, corrosion control with rope access, lifting and drone inspections, Dekra Industrial SA is Level 3 BBBEE-compliant, with 51 percent black woman ownership.

The company is also 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 online learning 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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