

# Press Release

*For further information please contact:  
Samantha Joubert, Marketing Manager  
Tel: +27 (0) 821 3602 / Fax: +27 (0) 86 681 4342  
[samantha.joubert@skf.com](mailto:samantha.joubert@skf.com)*

For immediate publication  
05 December 2018

## **SKF operators step into the future with alerts on smartphones**

In recognising the vital role that technology plays in securing business, SKF continues to move with the Industry 4.0 tide. In line with the company's 'World Class Manufacturing' initiative, SKF has implemented the operator 4.0, a new approach to managing machinery and operations from the palm of employees' hands.

Since SKF's launch of the 'World Class Manufacturing' digitalisation model at Göteborg plant in 2015, the company has been rolling out new innovative digitalisation and automation features to improve production and turnaround times to the ultimate benefit of customers.

This automation transformation also upskills employees and enhances their job experience with smarter technology leading to a more productive and safer working environment. The introduction of Operator 4.0 relieves operators from manual tasks and requires them to broaden their knowledge in order to be in a position to understand a more comprehensive system, with multiple connections.

Smartphones are a vital part of this equation as data alerts on these devices enable operators to interpret information and make strategic decisions. To assist in this transition, SKF has hired data scientists and data analysts. These experts assist in upskilling and training employees to equip them with the necessary knowledge so that they are able to understand complex systems with multiple connections to ultimately work faster, smarter and safer.

The straightforward process of data collection to operator interpretation begins with the operator viewing real-time data of all machines which is conveniently displayed on a screen mounted in the assembly island area. The compact Multilog IMx-8 from SKF is an online data collection instrument that offers sophisticated, fit-for-purpose machine health monitoring.

### **SKF South Africa (Pty) Limited**

PO Box 13157, Witfield, 1467, Visiting address 4B Saligna Street, Hughes Business Park, Witfield 1459, South Africa

Tel 011 821 3500, [www.skf.com](http://www.skf.com)

Directors: M. Sebtli (Managing) (French), B.J. Dailly, Dr. N.B. Mabuya

Reg. No.: 1914/004430/07 Vat. Reg. 4160112928

The most recent addition to SKF's highly popular IMx-16 and -32 channel machine health monitoring platforms, the IMx-8, then processes and interprets the data measured by the sensors (up to 8 channels in this case). QuickCollect is the software on the smart device (smartphones and tablets) that interprets the IMx-8 data in a user friendly and comprehensible format. Through the power of the IMx-8 and software, machinery results detected by the sensors including temperature, rotation speed, and vibrations, are sent directly to the operators' mobile phones. Operators are able to view machine condition, when service is required or detect problems early, thus avoiding critical failures and costly replacements and downtime.

In the event of an anomaly, an alert is sent to the operator's smartphone via the 'MOST' application. Developed in-house by the Connectivity Room, this versatile application allows the operator to move between the assembly islands and view the instructions at each workstation by scanning the data matrix placed on each unit. In addition to being privy to information which was previously restricted, operators are now also able to exchange information with colleagues via an integrated chat messaging application. This functionality allows employees and their supervisors to be connected at various locations.

In this digital age it is widely accepted that new technology also means increased risk and this too has been addressed by SKF. The company has introduced a number of measures to limit any potential hazards: Segmenting the physical network into virtual sub-networks, ordering two firewalls, and working on the development of a system to block viruses transferred via USB port inputs. Furthermore, e-learning modules and IT security workshops are conducted with employees to generate improved awareness on IT security and risks.

SKF employees are reaping the benefit of cutting-edge technology through the acquisition of new IT skills and the use of the smartphones in the workplace. With the recent implementation of these dynamic digital solutions, SKF is poised to elevate employee skills and enhance production quality and performance for the ultimate benefit of SKF customers.

/ends

*SKF is a leading global supplier of bearings, seals, mechatronics, lubrication systems, and services which include technical support, maintenance and reliability services, engineering consulting and training. SKF is represented in more than 130 countries and has around 17,000 distributor locations worldwide. Annual sales in 2017 were SEK 77 938 million and the number of employees was 45 678. [www.skf.com](http://www.skf.com)*

® SKF is a registered trademark of the SKF Group.