

## Press Release from Atlas Copco South Africa

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6<sup>th</sup> March 2013

### ATLAS COPCO - 140 Years Young in 2013!

Industrial Group, Atlas Copco, world-leading specialist in compressors, construction and mining equipment, power tools and assembly systems that deliver sustainable customer solutions, celebrated 140 years of global success on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2013.

Atlas Copco South Africa (Pty) Ltd joined the global network of Atlas Copco organisations around the world to celebrate this prestigious milestone and for 140 minutes employees downed tools to participate in the festivities. Once presentations and workshops, themed around the company's pledge, 'to improve customer centricity' were concluded, it was party time, complete with a suitably decorated Atlas Copco cake!

Bernie Hanaray, Managing Director of Atlas Copco South Africa (Pty) Ltd, responsible for Atlas Copco's Holdings Division in South and Sub-Sahara Africa, attributes a number of factors to Atlas Copco's 140 years of global success. "From a solid foundation, based on our values - innovation, interaction and commitment - we focus on our customers and our people because they are our key drivers. Our people add value in the way they think, behave, interact and communicate internally and with customers. They understand customers' requirements and recommend solutions for increased customer productivity. Our people are our biggest asset, representing our core values and reflecting the Atlas Copco culture."

General Manager for Atlas Copco South Africa Compressor Technique, Jim Tapkas, with 34 years' experience in the Group, has great global insight into Atlas Copco as a company, the culture, the people, the products and services. He believes that culture is one of the company's major strengths. "I have a pretty good appreciation of the culture shared by the Group, which permeates the organisation and provides a strong frame or structure within which we operate. But it is also important to remember that, whilst we do things in a very like fashion, whether Atlas Copco Africa, Asia, Europe, or the USA, we must also always take local culture into consideration. This approach contributes to the company's long term success."

*2/...Atlas Copco celebrates 140 years of global success*

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## *2/...Atlas Copco celebrates 140 years of global success*

Another vital success factor is the quality of Atlas Copco products and services and, while this best in class quality is widely known and proven around the world, both Bernie and Jim agree that this is only achievable by employing the best people as designers, developers, technicians, etc. "People are the heart of it all and we strongly believe in empowering all our people, especially in key areas; Holdings plays a vital role here to guide, develop and support them to give them responsibility to reach their goals and targets set."

Turning his attention to the challenges faced by the Group as a whole and locally, Bernie says that, like any business that is continually growing and developing, Atlas Copco has had to meet many challenges along the way. "Challenges are part and parcel of a company that has been around for so many years and that has shown sustainable growth. We had the courage and expertise to meet and rise above these challenges. Our philosophy is that we are in it for the long term not for quick financial gain. We set our strategies and develop our people and engineer our products on this solid base to ensure that we deliver on an on-going and sustainable way to customers."

From initially covering the South African market for all business areas, Holdings Division also covers Sub Sahara Africa to offer support in four key responsibility areas: Legal compliance requirements, financial reporting requirements, corporate human resources requirements and corporate communications for the Atlas Copco Group in the region. "As the business continues to expand on the African continent, so too do the challenges," continues Bernie. "Growth, direction, presence and legislation are some of the challenges we face. Growth and direction are driven by our customers; growth is of course a good challenge to have and we have taken on a few more resources in 2012 to manage this competently. It is very important to recognise where the business is going. We constantly have to ask ourselves what value can we add to our business areas and to our operations, how can we support and assist our people to do their job better to the ultimate benefit of our customers? This is an important part of our responsibility and leads to the next challenge of having presence in these regions."

"It is so important for us to be close to our customer and we believe that direct presence with people on the ground is the best way to get to markets. Where we are not able to have direct presence, we appoint business partners such as the distributors we have in many parts of the Continent. West Africa is an interesting and fast developing region and we have enjoyed presence here for some years with offices in Burkina Faso, Senegal, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria and Cameroon."

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“We are represented in central Africa through our DRC and Zambian offices. Complementing our Kenya and Tanzania offices on the eastern sea board is our recently opened company in Mozambique which is showing great potential over next 12 months. With offices in Botswana, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola, I can say with confidence that we now have a very strong presence in many countries in Sub Sahara Africa.”

Bernie points out that presence in so many countries presents its own unique set of challenges, noting legislation and support as two examples. “Legislation is a complicated challenge if you take into account that each one of the countries in which we operate is its own jurisdiction with varying currencies, regulations, rules, tax requirements, financial implications, etc. When it comes to supporting our people in the regions, we must take cognisance of the fact that they are different in many ways; experiences, capabilities and maturity levels. We have some young people in responsible positions who need our support.” But Bernie is quick to point out that it is not about doing it for them. “It is about guiding, mentoring, and supporting them in good holistic way to help them grow so that they can take responsibility.”

Atlas Copco South Africa’s Business Services division, headed by Victor Scott, Regional Manager – Africa and Middle East, also plays an important role to support Atlas Copco’s customer centres on the African continent. Operating globally since 1998, Business Services was rolled out to South Africa in 2003/2004 to initially support local customer centres in developing administrative processes. “We have since expanded to support all customer centres in Africa. Our total staff of 35 based in South Africa, supported by ten more IT specialists co-located in Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Ghana, Morocco and Algeria, take care of administrative services including monthly and quarterly reporting, accounts payable, financial accounting , HR administration and IT support, to free up time for our people in the customer centres to focus on our end customers.”

“Our challenges are to offer good quality support as we continue to expand into new African countries. IT infrastructure in Africa is quite a challenge and the numerous applications we develop are dependent on the availability of good bandwidth. As an example, with access to our applications, technicians on a mine site are able to provide instant feedback to end customers to assist them in optimising their operations. To ensure that we maintain high service levels, we conduct annual customer surveys which show pleasing results in terms of good interaction and relationships with our internal customers. Our customer’s perception is that our people are very committed which is one of our strengths.”

### *4/...Atlas Copco celebrates 140 years of global success*

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According to Bernie and Jim, the customer centres must never lose sight of the company culture and customer and people focus. “To ensure sustainable development and growth, the challenge here is to maintain the constants and to operate in a similar structure while at the same time adapting to each African country’s unique way of doing things.”

Looking to the future, Bernie sees good future growth potential in Sub Sahara Africa. “Our business in Africa is mainly driven by mining, a predominant sector on the continent. Oil & gas are also very important sectors, followed to a lesser extent by manufacturing and services. As a broad based engineering group, our comprehensive portfolio and capabilities enable us to provide a complete product and service portfolio. There is no doubt that our product is known and well respected in the various market sectors, especially mining. But just as important-as quality product, is support. Often when talking to our customers, we are asked if and how we can support them in their business, for example, the development of a new mine that may be very isolated. This in itself is a challenge but we are more than prepared to meet this challenge. We are well equipped from a product and service point of view to support our customers no matter where they are. Time lost due to equipment failure can never be recovered and this is true for any business. We understand the importance of equipment reliability and uptime for sustainable production.”

Jim adds to this. “While customer demands vary from country to country and different customers have different needs and demands, at the end of the day everyone wants good products and good service. It is important how we address these two common denominators. It all comes back to our key drivers – our customers and our people. In order to become even more customer focussed, the Group decided in 1990 to divisionalise. Each of the three business areas in the Group were split into divisions, where each division specialised on a certain product offering. This allowed us to better serve our customers. In 2008 Compressor Technique made another step to increase its focus on the customer; we created a service division. In so doing, we become more specialised in service; we are now more focussed on the needs of our customers enabling us to deliver the very best service possible. In the service field, it is important that we recognise our customer’s sense of urgency and get it right first time. With aftermarket now a unique, specialist division, we are equipped not only with the right structure and training, but we also have service products, including maintenance contracts, that we can offer to reduce the risk of lost production for our customers.”

#### *5/...Atlas Copco celebrates 140 years of global success*

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Discussing the local challenges faced by Compressor Technique, Jim says, that all the fundamentals and developments are in place and that senior managers are responsible and capable. "I believe that Compressor Technique in South Africa is well developed and does not require dramatic changes or fixes."

Jim continues, "While there is a good customer focus, we need a great customer focus. Using my experience, my goal is to build on the good foundations that have been laid by tweaking what is here making it better. I can apply to South Africa my experiences in Japan, a very structured culture, and my in-depth product experience I gained in Belgium. I want to assist managers to develop further and to grow their business by doing things a little bit better." Jim also notes that General Managers within Atlas Copco are moved around the world every three to five years. "The benefit is that we bring our own unique strengths to each country at different points in their development."

Commenting on the company's 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Jim says that the company has learned an awful lot over the past 140 years. "We have constantly changed, developed our approach and this has really served us well. While the fundamentals are the same, focus on the customer and our people, Atlas Copco is certainly not the same company in terms of product offering, service, capability and knowledge that it was when I started thirty four years ago and, it will and must be different when the 150 year milestone is reached. This strategy to continue to adapt and move forward, to develop new products and technologies, is what makes us very strong."

"While the future undoubtedly holds many growth opportunities and associated challenges, it is our ambition to continue this growth and success into the future. Our experience and intellectual knowledge of the group attained through our global presence around the world, our structure and our vision – 1<sup>st</sup> in mind 1<sup>st</sup> in choice, are some of the reasons why Atlas Copco has been in business for 140 years," remarks Bernie and concludes. "With good people, core values, strong foundations and the strength of our position in the market, we are ready to take on the next 140 years as a world leading provider of industrial productivity solutions."

ENDS *Photo Captions 6/...Atlas Copco celebrates 140 years global success*

6/... Atlas Copco celebrates 140 years global success

### **Photo Captions**

1. Bernie Hanaray (right) & Victor Scott cutting the Atlas Copco 140 year birthday cake
2. Jim Tapkas – Atlas Copco will continue to move forward and develop new products & technologies
3. Atlas Copco Compressor Technique employees sharing ideas at improving 'customer centricity' workshop
4. Atlas Copco celebrates 140 years of global success\_21<sup>st</sup> February 2013

In 2013 Atlas Copco, ranked as one of the most innovative and sustainable companies in the world, celebrates 140 years of profitable growth. At the beginning the company made products for railways, but the core of Atlas Copco's business dates back to the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when the first compressors, tools and rock drills were manufactured. Today, the Atlas Copco Group has world-leading positions in these areas and many others. Atlas Copco supports customers in 180 countries with own operations in 90 countries. Read the story about a company that believes 'there is always a better way' on [www.atlascopco.com/history](http://www.atlascopco.com/history).

**Atlas Copco** is an industrial group with world-leading positions in compressors, expanders and air treatment systems, construction and mining equipment, power tools and assembly systems. With innovative products and services, Atlas Copco delivers solutions for sustainable productivity. The company was founded in 1873, is based in Stockholm, Sweden, and has a global reach spanning more than 170 countries. In 2012, Atlas Copco had 39 800 employees and revenues of BSEK 90.5 (BEUR 10.5).

Learn more at [www.atlascopco.com](http://www.atlascopco.com).