

For further information, please contact:
Samantha Joubert, Marketing Communications
Tel: +27 11 821 3602 / Fax: 086 681 4342
Samantha.joubert@skf.com

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SKF to build test centre in Germany

SKF invested in the construction of a large-size bearing (LSB) test centre in Schweinfurt, Germany. The investment, which totals SEK 360 million, is being supported by both the German Government and State of Bavaria, who are contributing SEK 28 million in funding.

The test centre have two LSB test rigs; one for testing bearings used in wind turbine main shafts and one for applications across a wider scope of industries, including marine, mining, construction and steel. The former is able to test bearings with an outer ring diameter of up to six metres, with extreme bending moments and dynamic loading conditions.

The bearing test rig dedicated to the wind energy segment will be the first in the world capable of testing single rotor bearings as well as mainshaft bearing arrangements in a realistic application environment. Utilising original customer components, engineers are able to better tailor SKF's bearings to customer's exact needs.

The other test rig offers unique capabilities to improve simulation tools that support large-size bearing development and tailoring solutions for a variety of industries.

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Bernd Stephan, Senior Vice President, Group Technology Development, says, "This investment reinforces our focus on generating value for customers through application-specific solutions that improve bearing performance and efficiency. We are very pleased and grateful for the support provided by the German and Bavarian State Governments in this project."

"This new facility significantly cuts the length of time the testing process takes, reducing associated energy consumption and CO2 emissions. Recycling residual heat from both test rigs also contribute to lower energy usage."

Construction of the bearing test centre will commence during the summer of 2015 and is expected to be completed during the first half of 2017.

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 15,000 distributor locations worldwide. Annual sales in 2014 were SEK 70,975 million and the number of employees was 48,593.

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B: Sonia Laverick

Laverick Media Communications cc

Tel: 011 040 0818/ Fax: 086 671 6836

lavmedia@iafrica.com / www.laverickmedia.co.za