

Press release from Jan de Beer, cell 082 456 3677:

Tackling Safety 'The Meerkat Way' Paying Dividends For Chryso Group

The Chryso Southern Africa Group's "The Meerkat Way" occupational health and safety programme is paying substantial dividends with no incidents reported at the company's plants since the programme was launched in 2015, says Andries Marais, GM Operations for Chryso, which is this year celebrating 20 years of operations in South Africa.

Chryso SA's implementation of The Meerkat Way (devised by UK workplace safety specialists, Latitude Productions) has been globally hailed by the Chryso Group and won the company's annual international 'Best Initiative - Management' trophy last year.

"The drop in incidents at Chryso and its subsidiary, a.b.e. Construction Chemicals, since introducing The Meerkat Way - with its 'all for one' principle - has been most gratifying. An incident is an unexpected event that did not cause injury or damage but had the potential to do so. The fact that the volume of 'near misses' has risen since our new safety regulations were launched means that staff are now far more vigilant about preventing incidents, or accidents that could have caused lost time. Near misses, in safety terms, represent events that could have caused harm but did not, mainly because of preventative action," Marais explained.

The Meerkat Way promotes the implementation of five major safety rules:

- * Wearing the correct personal protection equipment (PPE) appropriate to the work station or safety zone;
- * Safe forklift operations, including correct fork positions, and the wearing of seatbelts;
- * Plant and warehouse safety: reporting any dangerous attitudes and incidents, including near miss incidents;
- * Ensuring that visitors and sub-contractors are in a safe environment - and also personally adhere to the Chryso Group's safety rules; and
- * The accessibility of safety equipment such as fully-operational fire fighting equipment.

In launching The Meerkat Way, Marais visited 11 Chryso SA Group sites all over South Africa, and made 21 presentations to all staff - from CEO to factory worker. "Successful safety programmes rely on repetition: constantly hammering the message that nothing is more important than looking after personal and colleagues' safety at work. Human nature makes us look for operational short cuts and that's where most mishaps occur," Marais reflects.

To illustrate its commitment to safety, the Chryso Southern Africa Group has punitive measures in place which, in keeping with the 'one for all' culture, affects all staff if one member breaks cardinal safety rules.

All members of the Chryso Group, globally, hold Safety Days at the various plants in March every year. Chryso Southern Africa this year made 'Never give safety a day off' its theme for 2016. Chryso SA attained the international occupational health and safety standard certification, OHSAS 18001 in 2011, and a.b.e. Construction Chemicals is striving for this accreditation, hopefully to be awarded later this year.

Marais says The Meerkat Way has helped strengthen staff members' commitment to uphold the requirements of the certification. "Staff now carry a plastic keyholder chain with a photo of a meerkat - wildlife's most iconic symbol of vigilance - on their person at all times. It reminds them to listen to their safety instincts, communicate with one another, speak up when they notice a risky situation or procedure, and to keep consistency and teamwork in mind at all times," he adds.

Ends

Caption: 'chryso - andries marais':

Andries Marais, Chryso Southern Africa's GM: Operations: "Taking short cuts is the most common cause of factory mishaps," he says.

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Caption: 'chryso - safety day signing pledge':

The Chryso Southern Africa's annual Safety Days in March involve all staff members. Here Andries Ledwaba, warehouse assistant at the Chryso head office in Jet Park, signs a pledge to uphold safety in his work environment at a Jet Park Safety Day.

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Caption: 'chryso group - meerkat'

The ever-vigilant meerkat has inspired the Chryso SA Group's successful and award-winning health and safety campaign.

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