

# PRESS RELEASE

## BI is exclusive distributor for CRAFT bearings of Europe

**31 October 2019:** A leading European supplier of high-quality, low-cost bearings for a range of industrial, agricultural, and automotive aftermarket applications is the latest international brand to be added to the product stable of leading supplier Bearings International (BI), part of the Hudaco Group.

With the local market increasingly price-sensitive as it strives to cut costs due to the prevailing economic conditions, BI decided to assist its customers by offering another brand at the lower end of the price spectrum.

"It is often the case that premium brands do not have to be used in all applications. CRAFT bearings give end users the assurance of quality, tested bearings that are also highly affordable," BI Business Unit Head **Ross Trevelyan** comments.

BI Offer Marketing Manager **Victor Strobel** reveals that the new range will be introduced in a phased approach. Ball bearing units, the largest-volume sellers, will be introduced initially, and tapered roller bearings, cylinder roller bearings, and deep groove roller bearings at a later stage. The first consignment of stock is due from the European manufacturer in January 2020.

CRAFT bearings is the only manufacturer at the lower end of the price market that boasts a state-of-the-art laboratory where product batches are tested in accordance with an acceptable quality limit. "Our rigorous testing protocol encompasses visual and dimensional testing, as well as measuring longevity for particularly arduous applications," Sales Director **Virgilijus Lapėnas** explains.

In addition, CRAFT bearings has an extensive global supply chain, with a warehouse in South America, and four additional warehouses in Europe. Here its high stockholding – another unique factor setting it apart from its competitors – ensures a quick turnaround time for customers anywhere in the world, including bulk orders.

Established in 1991, CRAFT bearings embarked on an internationalisation drive that has seen it export to about 80 countries to date. "Negotiations for the local distributorship were initiated two years ago, and were successful due to the companies sharing a complementary vision and growth strategy in Africa," Lapėnas highlights.

BI has been granted exclusive rights for South Africa, Swaziland, Lesotho, Namibia, Botswana, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Malawi. "We anticipate significant sales volume growth from the South African market in particular," **Martynas Ruibys**, Head of Business Development for Africa & Middle East at CRAFT bearings asserts.

"This is mainly because our brand will be ably supported by BI's extensive distribution network and value-add it is able to offer customers in the form of customer service and technical back-up. Our initial focus will be followed up by a concerted push into Africa, which is a region that we have not really focused on to date, and which represents major synergies for both CRAFT bearings and BI as we pursue growth opportunities here," Ruibys concludes.

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**Ends**

**Notes to the Editor**

To download a hi-res image for this release, please visit <http://media.ngage.co.za> and click the BI link to view the company's press office.

**About BI**

BI is a member of the Hudaco Group. BI is a leading distributor of bearings and power transmission products in Southern Africa. With its customer-focused approach, BI is committed to delivering value to all its stakeholders, while offering quality solutions that make a real difference to optimising plant availability and turnaround time. With over 60 years in the bearings and power transmission industry, BI puts its experience to good use by going great lengths to ensure their product range and services meet the changing needs of clients, industry and business. Backed by an elite technical team, BI covers the full spectrum of customer requirements, and is able to ensure immediate availability of products through a nationwide network of branches.

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