

Further investment for assembly, repair and training expansions from SEW-EURODRIVE

Raymond Obermeyer, MD of SEW-EURODRIVE South Africa, talks to *MechChem Africa* about the company's ongoing expansion plans and the introduction of local to-order assembly of the PPK and P2.e planetary drives from the new Aeroton assembly plant in Johannesburg.

Having finalised the move into its new state-of-the-art assembly, repair, warehouse and training centre in Aeroton, Johannesburg, SEW-EURODRIVE SA is again looking to expand. To keep up with local demand and to increase repair and after-sales service capacity, the company has purchased an additional piece of land, adjacent to the current site in Aeroton, to develop further facilities. The new facility will allow SEW-EURODRIVE to expand its repair and refurbishment offering and will provide an opportunity to fabricate. "One of our key strategies going forward is the fabrication of crucial components of our products, such as the bell housings," says Raymond Obermeyer, SEW-EURODRIVE's South African MD.

"This further expansion will allow us to move after-sales services away from the assembly plant, creating more capacity for the assembly and repair sides of our operation," he explains.

In terms of the company's expansion into Africa, Obermeyer describes how their existing headquarters has allowed them to expand their footprint. "We have now opened offices in Congo, Zambia, Tanzania

and Kenya, which are operated by our own staff, with Botswana and Angola to be up and running soon."

SEW-EURODRIVE's DriveAcademy® makes it possible to train and upskill employees and external partners locally and across the continent, allowing for meaningful engagement within the African satellite branches.

"Last year at the DriveAcademy®, we completed a little more than 1 500 short training sessions and we put five to ten people through longer qualifications. We would like to increase that by at least tenfold, though, so we can train at least 50 people per year in the skills we need to assemble, install and repair our gearboxes, motors and inverter drive systems," Obermeyer tells *MechChem Africa*.

"Our needs are now very broad and we need multiskilled people with proficiencies in pneumatic, hydraulics and mechatronics, for example," says Obermeyer.

The PPK and P2.e planetary drive range

Also exciting for Raymond Obermeyer is the expansion of SEW-EURODRIVE's planetary drive range. "We are now introducing



the new PPK and P2.e planetary series gearboxes, which will, from now on, also be assembled to order in our new facility," he says.

"In planetary gear units, the load is distributed across multiple planet gears. Compared to other gear types, this enables a significantly higher power density to be transferred through a much smaller unit. The PPK series planetary gear units are therefore perfect for heavy-duty applications that require a robust, compact design and high gear ratios," explains Obermeyer.

Ideal for many high-torque applications in the sugar industry, for the apron feeders for materials handling and for wheel motors, the agricultural industry, for example, the PPK series from SEW-EURODRIVE can deliver in the torque range from 10.7 kNm to 17.65 kNm. As a three-stage design or with a primary gear motor, gear ratios can range from 65 to 10 650, making them ideal for applications that require high torque at exceptionally low speeds.

Along with the space saving advantages, the series offers reliability thanks to gearing based on DIN 3990 with infinite fatigue strength. The PPK range also offers flexibility, thanks to the ability to combine the gear units with the DR range of modular motor systems from SEW-EURODRIVE, along with corresponding frequency inverters. "Most important, though, we will be able to offer short delivery times thanks to our local assembly capability and our optimised processes," Obermeyer points out.

Also to be locally assembled is the P2.e planetary range in sizes between 24.8 to 124 kNm in torque. This series of two- or three-stage planetary gear units covers gear ratios from 15.2 to 332:1. With its

compact design, flexibility and high thermal limit rating, P2.e planetary gear units are ideal for continuous heavy-duty applications where space is tight.

"These two additions now give us a full planetary range of products, which we have not had in the past," Obermeyer points out, adding that maximum efficiency is achieved due to the unit's best-in-class thermal rating, which requires no additional external cooling.

Test facility for the X.e mixer drives

He goes on to highlight that the new test facility for SEW-EURODRIVE's X.e mixer drives will shortly be fully functional, which will allow these mixer drives to be load tested on demand and certificated before being shipped to site. "The testing facility enables loads to be applied to a vertical XE drive under test to give clients the assurance that the units will meet operational expectations," Obermeyer says, adding that any of SEW-EURODRIVE's vertical drive units can be tested at the facility.

"There are so many exciting things happening at the moment. We have finished moving electronic assembly from Cape Town to Aeroton and we can offer local assembly of all SEW-EURODRIVE VSDs in various sizes and voltages. The servomo-



The PPK series of planetary gear units are "perfect for heavy-duty applications that require a robust, compact design and high gear ratios".



The P2e industrial planetary gear units, ideal for continuous heavy-duty applications where space is tight.

tor assembly line is also up and running, so we can assemble, service and repair all our motors. Finally, our MOVIGEAR® line is currently being brought up, and that will give us the full capacity to assemble, manage and supply our entire product range from Johannesburg," Obermeyer notes.

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SEW-EURODRIVE's state of the art facility in Aeroton.



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SKF South Africa (Pty) Limited
6 Martin Road, Jet Park
Tel: 011 821 3500
Email: sales.za@skf.com

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