

MEPS rules create opportunity, says SEW-EURODRIVE

With South Africa's Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) for premium-efficiency IE3 motors now mandatory, SEW-EURODRIVE sees a valuable opportunity for geared-motor users to boost efficiency.

South African regulations on premium-efficiency IE3 motors open the door to opportunities for geared motor users, says SEW-EURODRIVE, but planning and the considered advice of established and trusted experts are vital.

With the Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) now mandatory, many users of electric motors might be confused about their next step. Worse still, they may be vulnerable to poor decision-making due to uncertainty and opportunistic buying, according to Willem Strydom, SEW-EURODRIVE's Manager for Business Development Electronics.

"Having supplied IE3 motors as standard in our relevant geared units for some years already, and at no added cost, there is nothing in

the regulations surprising to us or our customer base," explains Strydom. "However, there are still many players in the market who might not be up to date with the regulatory developments – and we are well placed to be of service."

He notes that some companies may feel pressured by fear-mongering market messages to replace less efficient motors unnecessarily. On the other hand, the looming moratorium on the sale of IE1 and IE2 motors may lead to these units being 'dumped' on the market at cut-rate prices. This may tempt companies to purchase outdated technology, which will ultimately prove costly in terms of energy consumption.

"The regulations remind the market of the financial and sustainability value of using more efficient motors, but the real benefit lies in system efficiencies," says Strydom. "This is where companies can benefit the most when planning their shift to IE3 motors."

Natasha Meintjies, Business Development Electronics Proposal Engineer at SEW-EURODRIVE, explains that the customer journey often begins with an energy-efficiency test, which SEW-EURODRIVE conducts at no cost on the customer's site.

"By measuring the energy consumption on the customer's existing motors and comparing this to our IE3 motors, we can provide them with an energy cost saving analysis," says Meintjies. "There is typically an immediate cost saving of 4 to 8% of the motor's power consumption, but more significant benefits can be achieved when moving to the system level."

This includes SEW-EURODRIVE's more



Willem Strydom, Business Development Electronics Manager at SEW-EURODRIVE.



Natasha Meintjies, Business Development Electronics Proposal Engineer at SEW-EURODRIVE.

energy-efficient drives, which can take energy savings to another level—up to 20-30%, she says. These results are achieved by integrating the latest monitoring and optimisation technologies into the system.

"This also gives the customer more overall process stability and reduced maintenance costs," she says. "Our modular designs ensure that all the components work together seamlessly for the best efficiencies and performance, making the whole system more reliable."

Strydom highlights that SEW-EURODRIVE's global research and development has ensured that the company already has super-premium efficiency IE4 and ultra-premium efficiency IE5 motors in its market offerings.

"Our in-house laboratory in Germany is also third-party approved to test our motors for energy efficiency, as the IE3 benchmark has been mandatory for some years in Europe," he says. "The test certificates that we issue are therefore accepted by South Africa's national regulator, since we have been working on this well in advance to be ready for these regulations."

He points out that MEPS will be a valuable enabler for companies to mitigate the effect of rising power costs, especially if they reassess their drive systems with an integrated approach in mind and with experts like SEW-EURODRIVE to advise.

The MEPS specification applies to a broad range of three-phase, low-voltage electric motors with rated power output between 0.75 and 375 kW, including motors with non-standard mechanical dimensions and geared motors. Motor users are permitted to run their existing IE1 and IE2 motors until they fail and need to be replaced. From a retailer's point of view, these IE1 and IE2 motors may be sold until May 2026.

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Designed for hygiene and efficiency, SEW-EURODRIVE IE3 motors are ideally suited to the rigorous demands of food and beverage production facilities.



In logistics and warehousing, SEW-EURODRIVE IE3 motors provide dependable energy-saving drive solutions that keep operations efficient and downtime to a minimum.