



ANDUS *news*

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ANDUS GROUP SERVING THE INDUSTRY

ANDUS *group* companies:

Refractories

Gouda Refractories

Gouda Vuurvast Belgium

Gouda Vuurvast Services

Gouda Feuerfest Deutschland

Gouda Refractories Nordic

Steel Structures

HSM Offshore

HSM Steel Structures

Lengkeek Staalbouw

RijnDijk Staalconstructies

Specialties

Armada Mobility

FIB Beer Systems

FIB Industries

ISS Projects Slovakia

Van Voorden Foundry

COVID-19 HAS A LIMITED IMPACT ON ANDUS GROUP

Corona! Even the business community could not ignore it in these last six months. Various industries 'wrote' substantial losses and see an uncertain future. How did Andus Group do? How did our clients and our more than 700 employees experience this? And how do we see the future?

"We have no reason to complain", says CEO Wiebe van den Elshout. "Naturally, you notice something, but the impact on the turnover and results seem to be quite limited for the time being. This is also because many of the industries that we serve in their primary processes (petrochemicals, wind energy and waste processing, ed.) are in full swing. Also the strong spread of our activities certainly contributes to this. Of course, some clients had to postpone new orders and ongoing projects during the lockdown. However, although the uncertainty is not over yet, we can see that things are picking up again on those fronts."

No panic

According to the CEO, there was no panic within Andus Group. Not in a financial sense and not in an organisational sense. "In mid-March, we immediately sought good coordination within the board of directors, drew up protocols and took measures. This meant that office personnel started working from home where necessary and possible. But we are also primarily a production

company. In order to guarantee the 1.5 metre distancing and hygiene, we introduced staggered working hours and breaks in a number of our factories. This ensured a good spread in the canteens and changing rooms. You never know for sure, but we think it all worked out positive. It is good to see that we were able to count on understanding and cooperation of all parties. But also on appreciation of the approach."

Focus

In the meantime, clients did not have to worry for a moment about the continuity of the different Andus companies. Van den Elshout: "Our strong emphasis on liquidity management comes in handy in such an exceptional situation. We also appreciate the trust of shareholders, banks, guarantee providers and credit insurers. That gives us peace of mind. You can then concentrate optimally on the ongoing work. So just get on with the work. And it means that you don't have to make immediate cutbacks and make deep cuts in the organisation."

Challenges

The future, then. How does Van den Elshout see it? "Despite the corona problems, we look forward to the future with confidence. But we also have challenges. Until recently, for example, we used to travel a lot, because we value a personal approach to our clients. We now have to find a new balance in that sense as well. The health and safety of people inside and outside the company is always paramount. Therefore, we keep a close eye on developments. Where necessary, we take additional measures."



Wiebe van den Elshout

ANDUS GROUP SPREADS ITS WINGS TO SWEDEN

In addition to Gouda Refractories, producer of refractory bricks, precast shapes and castables, and the renowned service companies in the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany, the Andus Group's Refractories division has now spread its wings to Sweden. On 1 April, Gouda Refractories Nordic started as an installation and maintenance company in the southwestern part of Sweden, Höganäs. The first successes were immediately apparent.

Andus Group had long been interested in having its own new installation and maintenance facility in Scandinavia for its Refractories division. Until a few years ago, Gouda Refractories still regularly supplied refractory materials to a Swedish refractory installation company. However, this party was taken over by a competing company. It soon became clear that the new owner

was focusing on other markets. There remained a gap for services that could combine flexibility and short lines of communication with quality and innovative strength.

Offer

This was reason for Andus Group to look at that region even more seriously. Precisely at that moment, contacts with the former director (Thomas Edler, ed.) of

the acquired client were renewed. This renewed acquaintance soon resulted in the establishment of Gouda Refractories Nordic and the company got off to an energetic start on 1 April this year.

The necessary machinery and drying kilns were installed in a workshop in Höganäs (the 'refractory centre' of Scandinavia). Edler and his employees almost immediately gained a foothold with their business relations. This allowed them to pick up various maintenance projects during the summer break. As a result, the company is in good shape after just two quarters. The end-of-year shutdowns that are customary in Sweden will continue to generate good turnover in the last quarter of 2020. It will therefore come as no surprise to anyone that expectations for 2021 are high.



Old times

In life, you have to be a little lucky. The renewed contact between Edler and Gouda Refractories was – looking back – a matter of being in 'the right place at the right time'. The start of 'Nordic' brings winners and happy faces. Not to mention the clients. For them, good service is once again available. Relive old times; now with 'Gouda Refractories Nordic'.

FOCUS ON HSM STEEL STRUCTURES

At the joint yard in Schiedam, HSM Offshore is building large-scale projects for the offshore wind, oil and gas industry and HSM Steel Structures is building bridges and sluices for the civil market. Due to the extensive specialisation and in view of the growth opportunities in the civil market, HSM Steel Structures has recently appointed its own director.



François Lelieveld (left) and Jaco Lemmerzaal

François Lelieveld is the new managing director of HSM Steel Structures. With his arrival, he took over some tasks from Jaco Lemmerzaal who remains responsible for HSM Offshore and for HSM as a whole. Lelieveld (51) is no stranger to the site in Schiedam. In his former position as CEO of an electro-technical installation company, he was often on site as a subcontractor. Lemmerzaal on his appointment: "Offshore is demanding increasingly more attention. As a result, civil engineering work has moved somewhat into the background. A shame because we also have a lot of knowledge in this field. If we expect it to return to growth, it requires attention and concentration on a daily basis. That is why we consciously opted for a renewed focus on that business unit."

Replacement tasks

Lelieveld knows very well where the opportunities lie. "Directorate-General for Public Works & Water Management (Rijkswaterstaat) and governments face huge replacement tasks", he says. "With regards to infrastructure in the Netherlands, a lot is outdated or in need of replacement. Or it has to provide space for heavier traffic and increased traffic pressure.

About 30 to 40 years ago, everything was laid down anew. For a long time, there was no need to worry about it. But now it all comes at once. With HSM Steel Structures, we can and want to play a role in this. Just as in the maintenance that will follow later on from new construction and renovation."

HSM Steel Structures and HSM Offshore use one and the same production site. Lelieveld: "Our spacious yard is situated on open water. Partly because of this, we can handle both small and large projects. We are excellently equipped for this."

Remaining in sight

The Managing Director has not regretted his arrival at this special part of HSM for a minute. "It is a pleasant company with a close-knit group of employees", he says. "I felt right at home there. But what I especially like is that our products are almost all unique and will eventually be in sight somewhere for many years to come. Then you have something to be permanently proud of. Not to mention the fact that it is always great to talk about such a project on birthdays. It is a serious matter naturally, but for me it's also a nice boys' book."

INVESTING IN A 'REFRACTORY' FUTURE

If you drive to the site of Gouda Refractories, at Goudkade 21, near gate 4, you will notice immediately: investment has taken place and is still taking place here. The modern office building and the neatly landscaped grounds are a real eye-catcher. And yet everything is functional and modest. And there is much more going on behind it all ...!

"Above all, it shows that we look to the future with great confidence", says managing director Marcus Schuchmann. "Things are going well and we do not stand still. In the last two years, we have also been working on a new top-quality mixing line. It is now fully operational. With the new buildings we are taking a nice step forward."

This proves even more so when Schuchmann takes us on a tour. Two footbridges connect the office building with an also brand-new laboratory building. "The existing buildings elsewhere on the site, were in need of renovation", he says. In the future, they will give a way for possible expansion and modernisation of our production capacity.

State-of-the-art equipment

The new offices comprise approximately 1,575 m²; the laboratory is no less than 500 m². And the new building also offers space for a modern canteen (200 m²) and changing rooms (200 m²). There is also plenty of new parking space outside.



In the foreground the new office building with the footbridges and the new laboratory behind it.

Schuchmann: "Employees are entitled to excellent facilities. With this new building, we certainly offer them that. And at the same time, we are fully committed to Research & Development. We will move into the new laboratory after the autumn holidays. It will contain a lot of state-of-the-art equipment.

A great and permanently challenging place for the personnel working there. They can follow the technological developments in our industry and work hard on our future."

GOVERNMENTS AND COMPANIES HAVE THEIR OWN PARTICULAR PREFERENCES

The days when a bus stop shelter was simply a roof, are long gone. That is something that Armada Mobility is well aware of. Nowadays, all clients have their own requirements and wishes. Just as they do for bicycle storages, benches, waste bins and other street furniture, and complete train station sheds for which the company is a specialist.

Armada Mobility has had a prominent presence in the market for decades. Since 2013, the company, based in Nieuwegein, has been part of Andus Group. It has worked on numerous projects over the years. Silent but proud witnesses can be found in many places, both in the Netherlands and Belgium. At train stations and platforms, for example, because NS and Prorail have been loyal clients for many years. But also in many cities and towns. All products from which people benefit – often inadvertently.

'Tailor-made'

"We work for provinces, municipalities and the private sector", says sales manager Oscar Gathier. "And we are primarily a project-based organisation. This means that most of our products are 'tailor-made'. For example, clients want a unique design that reflects their own identity. Or they make special demands on their

facilities: a park bench or bus stop shelter with USB and Wi-Fi, a roof with solar cells or with sedum, bicycle storages that can be operated through a special app ..., no idea is too crazy for us.

It goes without saying that the tendering of such tailor-made products is also complex. All the more so because Armada Mobility fully unburdens clients, i.e. from

design to delivery. Gathier: "This starts –often based on a brief description –with sketches and a feasibility study covering both the technical and budgetary aspects. This is followed by the design and price quotation. In addition to our price, this obviously includes information on sustainability, circularity, use of materials, safety and a working plan for implementation."



In-house

Armada Mobility has approximately 45 permanent employees and organises all the work in-house. The offices are designated for, inter alia, project managers, engineers, designers and safety experts; testing, welding and construction are carried out in the company's own workshop. Assembly, development and production of profiles and semi-finished products is the standard. Also in collaboration with partners and suppliers. Finally, most of the products are ready to go as complete end products. Gathier: "This allows the field engineers to carry out their work quickly and efficiently on site. Although, of course, it is not a problem for us to deliver specific projects in separate parts and assemble them on site ..."

Separate area

In Armada Mobility's workshop, we can highlight a separate area. There, the company works on the production of all kinds of signage for train station halls. Oscar Gathier: "As a traveller, you just see these signs hanging in different places: above the gates, above the platforms, etc., but for us, it's really nice to know that these signs are all made here. We are proud of that too."

HSM OFFSHORE CONFIRMS ITS REPUTATION FOR 'OFFSHORE WIND, OIL AND GAS'

HSM Offshore has been busy with offshore projects this year and will be until next summer. There are 5 of them. Wind energy is 'booming', but the demand for oil and gas platforms also seems to be on the rise. HSM confirms its good reputation in both markets.

At the end of September, the company looks back on the successful execution of two large projects for the European energy transmission company TenneT. In 2019, wind-offshore platform Borssele Alpha was placed and installed in the North Sea; last May it was Borssele Bèta's turn. The commissioning of the second one

was exceptionally successful; Bèta was operational four weeks earlier than expected.

Large wind platforms under construction

Since the early years of 'offshore wind', HSM Offshore has been in that still growing market. As early as in 2002, the company delivered

the first platform. Quite a number more followed over the years. Two large platforms are currently under construction. The client: NNG, a special purpose company of which Electricité de France is the main shareholder. HSM is building the two platforms in consortium with General Electric, which provides everything in the field of high

voltage and transformers. Work started at the end of 2019, and the platforms will be given their definitive location off the coast of Scotland next summer.

Three times 'oil and gas'

But HSM Offshore will also continue in the oil and gas market. A topside for Dana Petroleum is approaching completion at the Schiedammer shipyard. With a weight of 'only' 40 tonnes (Alpha and Bèta of TenneT are around 4,000 tonnes, ed.) it may well be one of the smallest in the North Sea, but it is the concept for exploiting relatively small gas fields.

Independent Oil and Gas (in short IOG) has awarded HSM Offshore the contract for two gas platforms now under construction, called 'Southwark' and 'Blythe'. HSM Offshore takes care of the entire process, from design and procurement to construction and installation. Despite COVID-19, the construction is on schedule: these platforms will be ready for use in the summer of next year.

Expectations

In the meantime, HSM Offshore is also looking ahead. Partly due to its extensive knowledge and broad experience, the company expects to continue to play an important role in both 'wind' and 'oil and gas' in the coming years.



Platform Borssele Bèta

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