

Another notch on the (sustainability) belt ...

Written by Jaco de Klerk

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MAN has again been included as one of the most sustainable companies in a world-leading sustainability ranking this year. The 2015 Dow Jones Sustainability Indices (DJSI), and the sustainability rating agency RobecoSAM, again ranked the company in the Dow Jones Sustainability World and Europe Indices.

The Dow Jones Sustainability World Index was launched in 1999 as the first global sustainability benchmark. The DJSI family is offered cooperatively by RobecoSAM and Standard & Poor (S&P) Dow Jones Indices.

“The family tracks the stock performance of the world's leading companies in terms of economic, environmental and social criteria,” the organisation’s website points out. “The indices also serve as benchmarks for investors who integrate sustainability considerations into their portfolios, and provide an effective engagement platform for companies that want to adopt sustainable best practices.”

“We applied to be listed, back in 2010,” explains Geoffrey du Plessis, managing director of MAN Truck & Bus South Africa. “One of the main motivations was that we wanted to ensure that all of our internal projects, in terms of sustainability, were, in fact, delivering.”

He adds that the DJSI provides a very measurable reference point on how a company is doing in all its different categories. “By measuring it, you can actually track it and ensure that your improvements do deliver and advance sustainability.”

Du Plessis continues: “It was a case of us using the mechanism to ensure that all our sustainability issues were delivering what we required. If you measure something, it will change – it generally doesn’t stay the same; it either gets better or worse – and we have been getting better.”

He adds that there were three major areas of improvement in this year’s listing: “One was in the economic area, where we increased by four points; environmental was another, where we increased by five points; the third was on social matters, where we increased by eight points.” Compared with the previous year, MAN scored five more points, achieving an overall result of

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85 out of 100.

MAN is also still the only German company to be represented in the Indices in the machinery and electrical equipment industry category. The Group showed the most noticeable improvements in: "Talent Attraction" (plus 20), "Human Resources Development" (plus 17), "Customer Relationship Management" (plus 16), and "Supply Chain Management" (plus 12).

"What we really are looking for is continuous improvement in all of the macro issues that impact sustainability," Du Plessis points out.

More than 100 mechanical engineering companies were judged on their performance in economic, ecological, and social sustainability. The DJSI is one of the most important performance indicators for financial investors of the world's most sustainability-driven companies.

"It recognises that we are a sustainable company. This, in itself, is important when it comes to our customers, who can see that we are a sustainable organisation. It is also important internally for our staff and our shareholders. They can see that we have actions and activities that actually support the sustainability of the organisation," Du Plessis tells SHEQ MANAGEMENT.

Josef Schelchshorn, chief human resources officer of MAN SE, adds: "Our corporate responsibility strategy for a sustainable future is paying off. Today's award is, first and foremost, thanks to our employees worldwide, who are making MAN one of the most sustainable companies in the world."

Du Plessis concludes: "We are very proud of what we have achieved. It makes for a proud company and proud employees – and we can engage the market with a good conscience."