

Huntsman celebrates as “Keystone“ splitter joins growth strategy

The decision to build one of the world’s largest splitters, at its site in Rozenburg, the Netherlands, will allow Huntsman Polyurethanes to become more flexible and cost competitive as a supplier of MDI products to the European polyurethane industry. The project – named Keystone, for obvious reasons – is a critical link between crude MDI and downstream applications using derivatives.

[image_0]

The Huntsman family, associates, customers, suppliers, and local dignitaries, including those from the Dutch government, **Rotterdam Investment Agency**, and the **Port of Rotterdam** recently celebrated the opening of the company’s new MDI splitter. The MDI splitter is an integral part of a current investment project worth USD 350 million (~ EUR 315 million) at sites in the Netherlands and Geismar, LA ,USA.

[image_1_right]

Peter R. Huntsman, President and CEO of **Huntsman Corporation**, congratulated the Board of Management for its foresight and vision in approving the investment 18 months earlier, in spite of being in the midst of an economic downturn.

With partners **Forefront** (USA) and **Taborin** (NL) the new splitter became operational by March this year, just in time to cover a gap in the supply chain caused by a maintenance shutdown on the existing splitter. In addition, a fourth melt crystallisation plant will be constructed this year, adding further to the site’s MDI processing capability.

[image_2]

Peter Huntsman also thanked the local authorities for their encouragement and support with the investment, since unlike many areas of the world including China, India, and Brazil, Huntsman had found a level playing field in Rotterdam on which it could compete without risking technology losses, higher taxes, and subsidised labour.

He also explained that the expertise of the Huntsman associates at this site had made it possible to undertake such a project with the certain knowledge that the products would be excellent. Huntsman is one of some 1,600 US companies invested in Rotterdam.

[image_3_right]

“This investment provides flexibility, an increase in quality and versatility. Its allows us to benefit from excellent knowledge of MDI chemistry amongst our staff while being able to use the lowest cost crude MDI from any of the three Huntsman sites globally,” explained **Anthony P. Hankins**, CEO Asia Pacific and President Huntsman Polyurethanes. The products produced by the splitter can then be fed into the derivatives unit to produce value-added MDI products to the systems business.

“The investment will allow us to supply our customers with material that is of sufficient quality to meet future environmental standards for the next ten years,” stated **Nick Webster**, Vice President, Europe, Huntsman Polyurethanes, referring to the step change in product quality and reduction in VOCs.

A personal affair

[image_4]

Jon M. Huntsman, Snr., Founder and Executive Chairman of Huntsman Corporation, also spoke during the opening ceremony and was joined at the podium by four of his 56 grandchildren. His personal fight against cancer continues as do his charitable donations to the **Huntsman Cancer Foundation**. His fight against cancer had also inspired a team of workers from the Rozenburg site to cycle up Alpe D’Huez six times in a day for a cancer charity. The team leader presented Jon Huntsman, Snr. with a signed team shirt.

Force majeure should end soon

As far as current supplies are concerned, Huntsman is still operating two Force Majeures, but Webster hopes to lift the one on

standard PMDI grade by the end of June and the one on diiso' and derivatives by mid-July 2013. Huntsman is considered by some to have been fortunate to have had to enforce Force Majeure at a time of slow demand, so that the impact on customers has been reduced.

Adresse:

<http://www.gupta-verlag.com/general/news/industry/13100/huntsman-celebrates-as-keystone-splitter-joins-growth-strategy>