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Smulders Magazine

### Smulders

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### Photos

Studio Fase, wpd, Foto Van der Kloet, Triamo

### Design & Production

toelgroep, merk.ontwerp.interactie

### Printed by

Bartels



# We're doing well

These are strange times, we hear that all the time. And it's true, because COVID-19 is no small feat. It has an impact on our personal and social life, on the way we work together and much more. At Smulders we're doing well. The business is running, and our employees have continued to work hard over the past few months. The management is of course very grateful.

We wouldn't be Smulders if we hadn't been able to tackle the corona problem and make it workable. We're used to taking on challenges. Even though the initial phase was disturbing. By talking and taking action, we've kept our head cool. All our colleagues have contributed to the successes we have already achieved this year.

### Business goes on

We are moving forward. For example, there is plenty of activity for the jacket foundations for Moray East. At the beginning of 2020 we felt a larger workload in Arendonk and Balen. Towards the middle of the year that workload shifted to Hoboken and Newcastle, where all hands are on deck to meet the deadline by the end of the year. In Poland, too, colleagues have not been sitting around doing nothing. One of the 3 production sites has moved there and from July onwards we will switch from 6,000 working hours per week to approx. 12,000 working hours with a well-filled schedule. There's a lot of work there until 2022. Arendonk and Balen have a dip until September, but then it will be on the up again with a well-filled order book for the end of 2020 and 2021. The same also goes for Hoboken.



### In a strong position

Despite COVID-19, we have received new orders. For example, we have 3 substations on order. As for the masts... it's dogged that does it. TenneT has submitted 4 tenders, each for around 100 pylons for high-voltage lines, and we are proud and happy to have won the 4th tender. It's nice to be in a strong position until next year. Our operational activities are not greatly affected by current events – except for the Moray East project. In the past period we have placed 5 substations at sea in full corona time, finished the bridge at the Rozenburg lock in Rotterdam and installed Noordkasteel bridges.

### Efficiency, creativity & safety

We have no idea how the current global crisis will turn out. Internally, at Smulders, we have confidence and we want to share that with you as well. So far, we have managed to contain the coronary risk with efficiency and creativity. This inventive attitude – together with a further focus on safety – will also be our common thread in the future. It goes without saying that we will continue to comply with the coronary measures.

**In any case: thanks for the nice cooperation, together we are strong!**

On behalf of the entire management,

**Raf Iemants**

Managing Director Smulders



## News

# Smulders delivered 5 substations in 4 months' time

**Between March and June we installed, together with our partners, no less than 5 substations. Two more will follow in the coming months.**

In March, the 2 substations for the Belgian SeaMade offshore wind farm were installed in the North Sea. The 2 substations, 1,200 tonnes each, form the beating heart of Belgium's largest offshore wind farm. Smulders also supplied the foundations of the substations and the 58 transition pieces for the wind farm, which had already been installed at the end of 2019.

A month later, mid-April, the first of 2 substations for the Triton Knoll offshore wind farm left the Hoboken yard. The second substation followed in the beginning of June. Once arrived, the platforms were successfully installed on the monopile foundations produced at our Newcastle yard.

In June we also delivered the first of 3 substations for the Moray East offshore wind farm. The sail-away and installation of the remaining 2 substations is planned for the summer months.

## Railway bridge over Rozenburg lock successfully installed

On Saturday 4 April, the railway bridge over the Rozenburg lock was moved from the pre-assembly location to its final destination. A unique operation that, because of COVID-19 and in order to guarantee a safe break-in operation, interested parties could follow fully live at home via webcams.

Our team started assembling the bridge in the summer of last year, after the bridge parts were transported from our site in Hoboken to the pre-assembly site next to the Rozenburg lock. There, the bridge parts were joined to form an arched bridge, with a single span of 172.8 m and a total length of 176.8 m.

See the photo report of these installations on pages 16-18.

## Smulders donates protective equipment to local hospitals and care centres

Smulders also wanted to make its contribution to ensuring the best and safest possible treatment of COVID-19 patients. That is why the Belgian branches of Smulders donated a lot of material to local hospitals and care centres.

In total, we donated more than 2,000 face masks and 1,500 overalls to AZ Turnhout, AZ Herentals and the Middelheim Hospital, among others. Read more about COVID-19 and its impact on Smulders on page 18.



## Theme



# Smulders goes Taiwan: transition pieces & e-units for wpd

**Interview with Dirk T'jampens** (Project Manager), **Jonas Lens** (Assistant Project Manager electrical package), **Sarah Vandekerckhof & Simon De Souter** (Offshore consultants for Smulders in Taiwan)

### Project

Yunlin offshore wind farm

### Customer

Yunneng Wind Power Co., Ltd. (73% wpd, 27% Sojitz Corp Led consortium)

In a previous Passion you learned that Smulders was selected to build 40 transition pieces (TPs) and 80 electrical cages (e-units) for wpd's offshore wind farm Yunlin, located approximately 8 km off the west coast of Taiwan. This is our first project for the Asian wind market, and it is special in every way. Over the past few months we worked hard on the manufacturing and the final phase is now in sight.



# "In offshore wind projects the electrical package is becoming increasingly important and complex."



The e-units, completely packed and ready for transport to Taiwan.

## Engineering & electrical scope

A quick overview: half of the TPs for the wind farm are made by Smulders, the other half by a Taiwanese partner of wpd. The initial idea was that the production in Taiwan would be ahead of ours, but building for the offshore market was completely new for our local peers. A lot of know-how still had to be acquired locally – also in terms of quality and safety. Smulders was more than happy to share their expertise: 3 colleagues even worked in Taiwan a couple of months to assist the local team in the production. More about this later.

The designated Project Manager in Belgium is Dirk T'jampens, assisted by Jonas Lens for the electrical works. "In May 2019 we started with the engineering phase", Dirk says. "The design was made by wpd, after that we had to investigate all the technical details to make sure all errors

and contradictory information was handled. Afterwards our Project Engineer made a 3D model, as usual, to prepare the drawings for production."

Besides the engineering part for the TPs, there was also an electrical scope. Even though we are a steel company, the electrical package is becoming increasingly important and complex, especially in offshore wind projects. The time when it took just a lamp and cable duct and a single person to take care of it is definitely over. That is why a specialised department was set up about two years ago. Their knowledge – and in particular Jonas' – now came in handy for the e-units. "The plan was to start with the TPs, but wpd asked if we could deliver the e-units sooner", Jonas continues. "We then focused on those e-units in order to be able to give them in production in Poland first. Some of these e-units had to be shipped to Taiwan

quickly and 'separately' for installation into the TPs of the Taiwanese partner. The main advantage of an e-unit or cage is the time and efficiency aspect: it can be manufactured parallel with the production of a TP. The work is split up and when both parts are completely finished, they can be brought together. Besides, you can test the electrical system before it is built in a TP."

## Conical foundations

Dirk and Jonas seem to be quite relaxed about it all, as if this were just another day on the job. It was the combination of tight planning and exceptional technical requirements that made it exciting. Taiwan is sensitive to earthquakes and typhoons. Our foundations are always solid, but this design is really phenomenal: conical TPs which are wider towards the end, with a diameter of 9 metres at the lowest point. The section on which the windmill will be placed is T-shaped. Everything to make it extra strong.

The TPs went into production in Hoboken in recent months. The welding and painting work was carried out at record speed, followed by the finishing and installation of the e-units. By the time this Passion is published, some of the load-outs will be completed. The last load-out is expected in mid-August, with arrival in Taiwan one month later. By then, the local installation campaign of the foundations will probably also be started.



Load-out of the transition pieces in Hoboken

## The Yunlin TP

"Let's beat earthquakes & typhoons"

- Height: 26 m
- Weight: 445 tonnes
- T-shaped top flange
- Bottom diameter, each time: 9 m



Sail-away of the transition pieces from Hoboken to Vlissingen



**“Let’s be honest: we have tons of experience with TPs and wpd is now benefiting from that know-how.”**



Project Managers Tim Benjamin Kühl of wpd and Dirk T'jampens of Smulders (right)

#### Delivery reliability

For this project, we worked directly with the wind farm’s end customer. Usually there would be an in-between party, but that wasn’t the case now. “We worked with wpd and those short lines were very nice”, says Dirk. “You really noticed that we were working towards a great end result together. Add to that the atmosphere within our team, which was very good. There were quite a few new colleagues involved – including quality and coating experts – and everyone did a great job.”

Why wpd chose Smulders? “Because it needed to go fast and we have an excellent reputation. But above all because of our delivery reliability. Let’s be honest: we have tons of experience with TPs and wpd is now benefitting from that know-how. We secretly hope that the customer is very satisfied. We won’t say no to a next project or wind farm in Asia.” According to Dirk and Jonas.

#### Working & living on the move

Then there were our sounding boards or offshore consultants in Taiwan itself: Sarah Vandekerckhof, Simon De Souter and Koen Baeten. They mainly assisted the Taiwanese partner of wpd to produce their part of TPs. It was mainly a matter of advice and knowledge sharing, because for the local producer the offshore wind market was new. Sarah did this particularly in the field of engineering and purchasing, Simon for planning and production and Koen for quality. As team leader, Koen also took care of the official communication with wpd. While Koen was commuting between Belgium and Taiwan, Sarah and Simon left for Taiwan in September 2019 before returning in March 2020. So they had to live and work on Asian soil!

“Smulders was asked to send a delegation with experience in the offshore wind industry”, Sarah explains. “Simon and I didn’t hesitate for long, all the more so because we were absolutely in for the adventure together. Of course we coordinated with our Project Engineer in Belgium, although our work was separate from the production here. We were manufacturing consultants in Taiwan. We gave support and made any necessary adjustments on the spot. For safety, quality, planning, engineering and procurement, we’ve come up with ideas and written reports for wpd.”

Maybe you think: what a difference in culture and communication! But that’s not so bad, because we were welcomed very warmly and everyone did their best to make the communication as smooth as possible. “It’s a different work attitude”, Simon says. “At Smulders, we like the no-nonsense approach. We do what we promise. They do that in Taiwan too, but it takes longer. We had to insist and make improvements. Information coming from the ERP system was not so easy to obtain there. With many up and down phone calls as a result. Decision-making runs in circles and hierarchically, but we’ve been able to do our job with a good feeling.”

#### Tourist trips

Sarah and Simon moved between the 2 sites, the Taiwanese Spomasz and Smulders Projects so to speak. That was always about 30-35 minutes’ drive from their apartment in the centre of Kaohsiung, a coastal city at the bottom of Taiwan. And when the workday’s over, what do you do? Explore the region! “It’s a beautiful country”, Sarah and Simon conclude. “It’s certainly as developed as over here and it is so incredibly clean everywhere.



Sarah and Simon together with the team of wpd and CTCIM (Taiwanese partner)

During the weekends we made trips to the endless mountains, or we went on a city trip with a local colleague. We stayed in Taipei with 3 generations under one roof, what a hospitality. Snorkelling with the turtles was also an incredible experience. We definitely want to go back.”

The plan was indeed to return home in the spring, but because of COVID-19 Sarah and Simon were back in Belgium a little earlier. “Because we were told there would be no more flights from April. Too bad, because we still had some plans. In any case, our working trip was very instructive. Things that we take for granted are less obvious over there. You don’t understand the usefulness of certain systems until you miss them. You start to appreciate your own work more.” ■

**“Our work trip was very instructive. Things that we take for granted, are less obvious over there.”**



## Interview

# Tim Benjamin Kühl

## The wpd Project Manager Foundations has the floor

When you say wpd, you automatically think of wind and solar projects. A company with more than 2,500 employees and activities in 25 countries can rightfully call itself a famously appreciated player. The fact that wpd is awarding part of the Yunlin manufacturing contract to Smulders - says something about our expertise. Tim Benjamin Kühl, Project Manager Foundations at wpd, looks back with satisfaction.



**“We needed a competent partner for the construction of a wind farm in Asia, to support the offshore project Yunlin in this area.”**

### How did you first get in contact with Smulders?

“Our first collaboration dates back to 2009-2010, for BARD Offshore 1. That was before my time at wpd, where I came on board in 2011. Then, also in 2011-2013, lemants was involved in wpd’s large offshore wind project Butendiek. Good contacts and co-operations are not easily forgotten. Wpd is specialised in the development, financing, construction and operation of on-/offshore wind and solar energy projects. However, for the construction of a wind farm in Asia we needed a strong and competent partner to bring the project to success.”

### How did the project start?

“For Yunlin we started working according to multi-contracting with a total of 8 contracts – thus spreading the risk and increasing the fabrication capacity. For Smulders the construction of 40 TPs and 80 e-units was in scope. By law it was required to build

foundations locally as well. We have a Taiwanese branch, where about 60 to 70 colleagues take care of the on- and offshore works. As the local supply chain is not that experienced in serial production for offshore wind structures, especially if these contractors built new plants in Taiwan, we requested support at Smulders and that’s why you sent us consultants Sarah, Simon and Koen.”

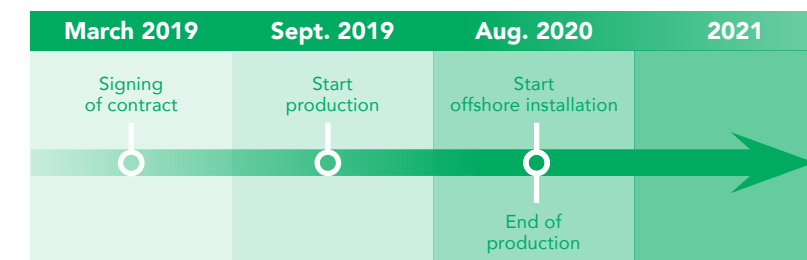
### What timeline are we talking about?

“The negotiations go back to 2018 and first talks with Smulders were very efficient, which were concluded in an agreement fairly quickly signed on 15th March 2019. Timing was and is crucial, so we had to move very quickly. And, indeed, the work was done at record speed: the production of primary steel started in September-October, in quarter 1 and 2 of 2020 the production sites in Belgium, Poland and Germany were up and running at cruising speed and by the

end of the summer everything will come together in Taiwan where the installation will start.”

### What are the challenges you encountered?

“Offshore projects in Europe are slightly different from those in Asia. The Taiwan region is sensitive to earthquakes and typhoons. The range between the highest and lowest water level is enormous and has led to the extraordinary dimensions of the foundations and the choice of a T-shaped top flange. Besides, the new industry ‘Offshore Wind’ in Taiwan was quite a challenge. Your consultancy services to our local people were a necessity. We were well aware of that. And then there’s the cultural and linguistic difference. You need someone to translate instructions to the shop floor all the time, a local person of trust who can also deliver the message in Chinese. And that’s what happened. By working together



we were able to increase the number of TPs per week in Taiwan. You know, at wpd we always work with our eyes on the solution, taking into account the timeline and the budget.”

### To what extent did COVID-19 have an impact on the works?

“COVID-19 hasn’t slowed down the fast pace of work. Even in these exceptional times we managed to continue working safely, with social distancing and good communication. You contributed to that too.

It was a bit of a search for the local people in the beginning, but eventually everything got right on track. We are on schedule and we are looking forward to the end of August, when the last TPs will be shipped to Taiwan with Jumbo.”

### Will you be going to Taiwan again?

“I travelled there and back quite a lot during the multi-contracting phase in 2018 and 2019; for example every 6 weeks and less after that. These were short business trips, although I did see a bit of the region

and visited the Tapei Sky Tower ‘101’. It all depends a bit on future projects, so who knows.”

### Finally, what about further professional plans in Asia?

“We are not sitting still at wpd ... new projects are indeed maturing in Taiwan and the Asian region.” ■





Even in these exceptional times, we managed to continue working safely, with social distancing and good communication. The first TPs were already shipped to Taiwan.





# Success starts with good preparation

Interview with  
Marijn Verachten

Meet Marijn Verachten: work planner at Willems, proud dad of Leon and, deep inside, a man of competition. Even though his diabetes is always lurking around the corner. Here's his story.

## What is your current position?

"I'm a work planner at Willems, the link between drawing office and workshop, so to speak. The data coming from the drawing office are further processed in our department and we make controls for the machinery, with a view to the production of profiles. Of course, we also follow up the planning and are in close contact with the work preparation in Arendonk."

## How did you end up at Willems?

"After my education in 'Mechanical Techniques', I was keen to start working right away. As an 18-year-old Willems gave me that opportunity. My father worked here and I wanted to find out whether I had made the right choice: go to work or continue to study. And that's how I've been on board since 2006. I started in the machinery fleet and 3 years ago I switched to work preparation. This was possible after several tests at an external company."

## How do you experience the collaboration with your colleagues?

"I learned how to manage the machinery and related programs from an experienced colleague. As a work planner you work intensively together with different teams. That's nice, but sometimes also a challenge because decisions have an impact on subsequent tasks. I want to keep everyone happy and get as few complaints as possible."

## What do you like most about your job?

"The contact with the departments that come before us (drawing office) and after us (machinery fleet, assemblers) really fascinates me. You go over and listen, take a look at the machinery every now and then ... and you hear a lot. You hear about the things that go wrong and try to anticipate on it the next time. As a work planner I have an overview of the entire process. That's really fascinating."

## What are your ambitions for the future?

"I want to continue to grow in what I'm doing now. There's always something to learn. After 10 years in the machinery fleet, I am happy that I applied for the job of work planner. The machinery still fascinates me and I'm lucky to still be near it."

**"Success starts  
with good  
preparation, both  
in my job and  
when I exercise."**

## Who is Marijn as a person?

"To start with the most important thing: since 2.5 years I am the proud dad of Leon. He has changed my outlook on things. I used to be pretty impulsive and super sporty. All that has calmed down a bit. My family and my child are what matter to me most. I live 2 km from work, I get home on time and I can be an active part of Leon's upbringing. That makes me happy."

## What do you do in your spare time?

"If the planning allows it, I work out: mainly cycling, running, swimming and playing tennis. I have also done many triathlons in Belgium and I love competitive sports. Giving it your all during a match, that's so special."

## Sounds like a passion?

"Triathlon certainly was for long time. When our son was born, I was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes, though. My body doesn't produce insulin anymore, so I keep my sugar at the right level with injections. It requires constant monitoring. That's quite tricky when you love sports, lots of sports, so I've had to take things easier for a while. I don't follow a special diet, but I have to plan my eating and sports moments very well and bring enough sports drinks and energy bars. I've learned to live with diabetes, but I can't

work out as 'smoothly' as I used to. I did start racing again and in the summer I train about 10 hours a week."

## Do you see a link between your work and your sport?

"Success starts with good preparation, both in my job and when I exercise. My sugar can be easily disturbed. I pay attention to the details and double-check every step. You won't see me going to work or to a game without thinking twice. I still have the enormous drive to achieve a feasible top performance in sports within 5 years, like running 10 km in less than 40 minutes. But first I look forward to another great period in my life: the birth of our daughter in September."



## Do you want to say anything else about diabetes?

"I am proud to share my story here. My closest colleagues know I have diabetes. Those who didn't know it yet, well, they will now. There's an emergency insulin syringe in the fridge. I hope it never happens, but if you see me fall down suddenly and for no apparent reason, you know what to do." ■



# Offshore Wind

## Smulders delivered 5 substations in 4 months

### Seamade



Load-out at the ENGIE Fabricom site.

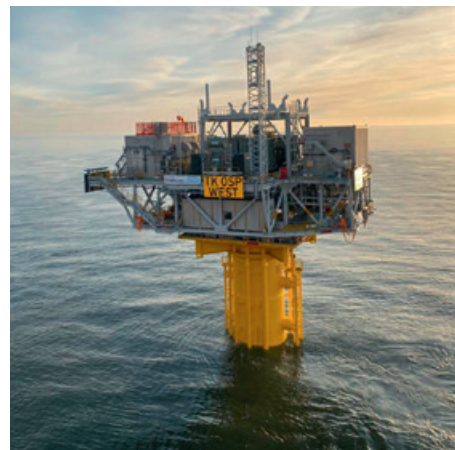


The substation on its way to the Belgian North Sea.



The substation was installed on the TP foundation, which was already installed offshore at the end of 2019.

### Triton Knoll



In April and June the 2 substations for the Triton Knoll Offshore Wind Farm were successfully installed off the British coast.

### Moray East



The first of three substations for the Moray East Offshore Wind Farm left end-June for its final destination off the Scottish coast. The sail-away and installation of the remaining 2 substations is planned for the summer months.

## ENGIE Fabricom and Iemants are awarded Hollandse Kust Noord offshore transformer substation contract

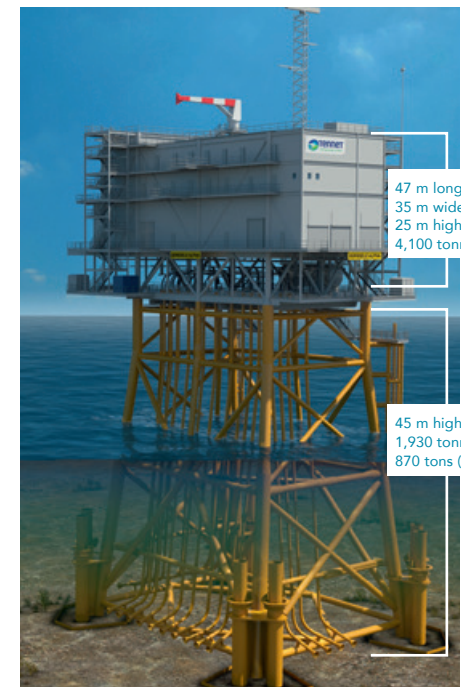
Following a European tender procedure, TenneT TSO B.V. has selected the joint venture **ENGIE Fabricom – Iemants** (subsidiary of Smulders) to construct an offshore transformer station for the **Hollandse Kust (Noord)** wind farm zone. The joint venture is also the preferred contractor for TenneT's next offshore projects, the **Hollandse Kust (west) Alpha** and the **Hollandse Kust (west) Beta** platform.

Iemants, subsidiary of Smulders, is responsible for the engineering, procurement and construction of the steel structures for both the topside and jacket. All works will be performed inhouse, at the Smulders' production facilities in Arendonk, Balen and Hoboken

(Belgium). The topside will be transferred to the ENGIE Fabricom yard for final assembly. The jacket will be assembled at the yard in Vlissingen (the Netherlands).

ENGIE Fabricom, is responsible for the engineering, procurement, integration, construction and testing (on- and offshore) of all LV, MV, HV and auxiliary systems for the jacket and topside of the Hollandse Kust Noord offshore transformer station.

Engineering works have started, and construction works for the topside and jacket will start in October 2020. Load-out of the jacket is planned for the fall of 2021. The topside is scheduled to leave the yard in Hoboken in the spring of 2022.



47 m long,  
35 m wide and  
25 m high  
4,100 tonnes.

45 m high  
1,930 tonnes (jacket)  
870 tons (piles)



# Civil & Industry



## Railway bridge over Rozenburg lock successfully installed

On Saturday 4 April, the first railway bridge in the Theemsweg route moved to its final location across the Rozenburg lock.

## TenneT selects Smulders as supplier of new masts



**TenneT has selected Smulders to supply 130 pylons (65 mast positions) to be placed on the 380 kV Eemshaven-Vierverlaten connection.**

This high-voltage connection will be realised using the new type of 'Wintrack III' mast, suitable for 4 380 kV circuits. TenneT has recently started the construction of the connection, which is scheduled to be commissioned in the course of 2023.

### First masts in place in early 2021

The production of the masts will now begin. First, so-called anchor cages, part of the foundation, will be made and delivered. Civil contractors have already started construction. The masts are attached to these anchor cages. The pylon production will also start, in January 2021 they will be assembled.

Klaas Bakker, TenneT: "The masts are transported in parts and assembled on site. The design already took into account the size and diameters of the various mast sections, for the purpose of transport. Think of viaducts, tight curves and narrow roads. It is a heavy-duty transport. From a traffic safety point of view, this requires a careful approach, in consultation with road authorities, and our environmental panels. And we're going to give extensive attention to communication with traffic participants and local residents."



# COVID-19 and the impact on Smulders

Interview with Carla Wellens, Gunter Sannen, Barbara Perdu

If we thought we had already been through stormy weathers, well, this is another one to remember. We will definitely learn a lot from this crisis, which will make us better, faster and more efficient. Lately, there has been a serious trade-off between various new working methods, with health and safety as a priority. A consideration which was not only focused on our own employees, but also on customers, subcontractors, the healthcare sector and many other parties.



## Approach based on our core values

The first 2 weeks of the corona crisis were very hectic and confusing. What is allowed, what can we do, what should we do? Subcontractors wanted to return immediately to their homeland and family, but what about the quarantine, and taking a car or plane? Major partners in Spain suddenly went into full lockdown. Due to the great uncertainty, capacity at Smulders Projects UK fell from 100% to 30% overnight. However, we managed to quickly regain confidence by tackling the crisis based on our core values:

- **Decisiveness:** solutions to continue operations in workshops, health and safety guarantees, working from home organised immediately, protective equipment and hand gels made available.
- **Respect:** respect for government guidelines, social distancing measures, communication with all parties involved.
- **Customer-focused:** optimal assistance to customers, planning respected as much as we can.
- **Teamwork:** flexibility to and from employees, solutions searched and found together, trying to maintain social contact with colleagues, sharing best practices between Smulders branches and more widely with Eiffage.

## W-A-T: working apart together

Economic activity was seen as a necessity, not only from the point of view of 'cash flow', but also because we realise that working has a central role in our lives. It gives structure and is a source of social contact. Who would have thought a year ago that we would make full use of alternative forms of work such as teleworking, building relationships through virtual contacts and managing 'invisible teams'? Reassuring people and keeping in touch was what our managers had to do. Let's also remember that 70% of our people have continued to work on site in all safety. For them, working from home was or is not possible. We are grateful for everyone's efforts, wherever people were working.

## Some measures within Smulders

It is also amazing how each country fights the virus depending on their governing authorities. The figures are still unsure because every country handles it differently. But what is certain is our commitment to protect everybody.

Chairs were taped off or removed from meeting rooms and cafeterias and lunch is now organised in different shifts with respect for social distancing.

We installed barrier tape in front of the receptions and counters to allow sufficient distance to be maintained there as well.

In addition, we installed extra sinks, provided disinfecting hand gels and disinfect all meeting rooms, cafeterias and personal protective equipment for visitors after each use.

In May, we paid extra attention to the measures to be applied, also in private life. That is why each employee received a number of disposable and reusable face masks, as well as a disinfecting hand gel. Meanwhile, we still believe that nothing beats warm-human, physical encounters where you can show who you are, without a digital filter.

**#staysafe**

# Green kilometres



There is also a sustainable side to the corona crisis. In a world that is suddenly less global, where we often rely on digital tools to connect and work... a more local and sustainable growth story emerges, with nice side-effects on our CO<sub>2</sub> transport emissions.

## Driving behaviour

The fact is that in the last few months the number of kilometres driven and flown have decreased enormously compared to the same period last year. In April 2019, we flew a total of 218,811 km. In April this year, it was only 3,996 km and even 0 km in May. We also notice a sharp drop in the commuting figures. Logical, of course, given the lockdown and the compulsory homeworking.

We see a sharp decline in some areas, while the productivity level stays the same. So, it can also be done like this. The transport for production has decreased less, because of course our business still required and requires journeys from here to there. We haven't stopped.

Our ecological footprint has shrunk in full crisis. We also see a positive impact on the environment worldwide. Due in part to a decrease in electricity production, goods transport and air traffic, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in China fell by some 70% in the first quarter. How long the reduction in emissions will last will depend on the further impact of the coronavirus and on when the global economic activity will reach cruising speed again.

## Bike lease

Naturally, we do not allow our sustainable commitment to depend on current events alone. We are constantly aiming to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. That's why we also like to put our bike lease program in the spotlight

The number of participants in 2019 increased by 77% compared to 2018. That means the bike lease has worked super well. In terms of green kilometres, that's quite something: a difference of almost 57,000 km or converted into CO<sub>2</sub>: a difference of 10 tonnes. In total, the bikers saved more than 35 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2019!

**"We see a sharp decline in some areas, while the productivity level stays the same"**



# Interview with Cedric Verheyen

We owe the dynamics of our group to our talented employees. Everyone contributes to a fine selection of projects and constructions. Some already have a proven track record, others are at the beginning of their careers. Or rather: at the beginning of their growth trajectory, because this is a place where you can develop yourself and choose your own path. That's how it feels for 'Young talent' Cedric Verheyen.



**"Taking the initiative, exciting projects and working in a great atmosphere, that's what it comes down to."**

## What exactly are your tasks?

"I am currently working in the welding department of Iemants in Ardonk, more specifically in hall F. I participate in several projects. Now, for example, I am working on parts of electricity pylons and I've also worked on parts for bridges."

## How did you join Iemants/Smulders?

"After my welding-construction training I got my first job at a different company in the steel construction industry. This company wasn't doing so well, so I, as well as some other colleagues, took a chance at Iemants. This is how I started here in August 2019."

## What about your induction period?

"At the start everything was new. I started a trial period at an assembly site. I soon felt that working outdoors wasn't my thing. So, I took matters into my own hands and went to ask my foreman if I could try working indoors. Welding is more my thing than assembly. Right from the beginning I got the support I needed from my colleagues at the department. There's about 15 of us and we can ask each other anything."

## What do you like most about your work?

"Contributing to super interesting projects, that feels great. We work here together in a nice atmosphere, with the best materials around. When a machine breaks, it is

immediately replaced so we can continue our work. And what's also important, when you need some time off, no one makes it difficult on you. The working hours are fixed, but you can always start earlier. I really appreciate that flexibility."

## What do you see as your greatest talent?

"Maybe the fact that I'm a hard worker and if I really want something, I am not afraid to take the initiative to change and move forward. This also enabled me to make the switch from outdoors to indoors. My superiors also appreciated the fact that I took this matter into my own hands."

## And what about your further ambitions?

"I am 22 years old and I realise I can still learn a lot as a welder. I want to become better and better and I realise that it is important to listen carefully to colleagues with more experience. It seems that I have found my place in the company, although I will not fail to take the initiative again and speak to the right people when the time is ripe for a different challenge. I am really glad I dared to ask to work as a welder indoors back then."

## Why should more young talent choose to work at Smulders?

"People care for you and give you the support you need. There are a number of initiatives that are unique and motivating,

especially for young talent. For example, the monthly toolbox meetings for all departments. That's where we, welders, hear everything about new tools, safety actions, events and more. During these sessions you can also express your questions and doubts. It strengthens the group atmosphere. Sometimes, after work, we go out for a pint with colleagues."

## Work hard, play hard: that goes for you too?

"Certainly, there's more than work alone. I like working as a welder, but I also like to play football with my friends, go on holiday, drive around on my moped, get out and about with my friends and in times of

corona also gaming. It keeps everything in balance."

## What did you think about us asking you for this interview?

"It was a pleasant surprise. There's so many people around here and then you ask me. Really, a great initiative. It is also nice to see that the job of welder is put in the spotlight."





# Do the check!

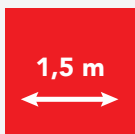
Stay corona free!



**Wash your hands regularly and thoroughly with soap and water.**



**Use the available disinfectant gels in between.**



**Keep a distance of at least 1,5 m. Wear a face mask if keeping this distance is not possible.**



**Monitor your own health and stay at home when you are ill.**