

05

**We are building the  
bridges of tomorrow**

24

**Tomasz Siwak:  
Production &  
People Manager**

A man wearing a green hard hat, safety glasses, and a high-visibility orange and yellow jacket with 'SMULDERS' and 'EIFFAGE' logos. He is standing in front of a large, curved metal structure, likely a bridge component, in an industrial setting with scaffolding in the background.

**pas  
sion**

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Magazine of Smulders

### Smulders

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# Group with a Mission



**Let's not keep it to ourselves any longer: 2021 was an excellent year. The results are good and all the branches have done a good job. Foundations, bridges and most of the substations were delivered on time. Proud of the whole team.**

I also have positive news for the future: the order book for 2022 is well filled and the offshore market looks promising. The first projects in the US market are now within reach. More on that soon.

I am also pleased that our employees were fully engaged during our Awareness Week in November. Safety requires our undivided attention. We now know the causes of the serious, material incident in Hoboken last year. Even though our Titan is built in full compliance with the engineering guidelines and safety legislation, we are going to build an additional safety device on the Titan crane to prevent this kind of incident from happening ever again.

### Investing in machines & people

Our investment programme is on track. Our yard in Newcastle is now fully part of Smulders, and the same goes for our branches in Poland. In Hoboken we are studying the extension of the quay and what is needed to guarantee sufficient lifting capacity.

Speaking of investments and goals. At all our sites, we have defined clear targets for sustainability and reducing our CO<sub>2</sub> footprint. It is our mission not only to build wind turbines that provide green energy, but also to build them as ecologically as possible.

In the coming year, we certainly want to improve our efficiency even more. Continuous activities in Newcastle will take more shape and we will think together about leadership. We are forging strong bonds for the future and for all the projects that still lie ahead.

Best wishes on behalf of the entire management,

**Raf Iemants**

Managing Director Smulders



# News



## Smulders and Eiffage are gold partner of the Royal Belgian Hockey Association

Smulders and the other Belgian companies of Eiffage - across all branches - are Gold Partners of the Royal Belgian Hockey Association as of 1 July 2021.

Christophe Van Ophem, CEO of Eiffage in de Benelux says that this decision is logical because the values promoted by the sport of hockey are accentuated and respected on a daily basis within the Eiffage Group.

“As a common basis, I refer to the values exemplarity, responsibility, trust and confidence and courage and pugnacity. As a truly unifying sport, hockey has been gaining popularity in Belgium in recent years. Fair play and team spirit are the keywords here. As a partner, we want to give an extra boost to the positive development that this sport is currently undergoing. We look forward to guiding the Federation and our two national teams to new successes through this strengthened partnership, and are delighted that our Red Lions and Red Panthers will henceforth wear our logo.”

## Back on track



This autumn, we were again able to participate in some trade fairs in a Covidsafe manner. In October, we set up our stand for the first time again at the Offshore Energy exhibition in Amsterdam. In November, we participated in the WindEurope Electric City event in Copenhagen. In early December, we could not miss the NOF Offshore Wind North East 2021. Our colleague Tom Coosemans gave a lecture and was the first to announce a new project for our Newcastle yard. Read more on page 16!

# Theme

## Bridge Special



### Focus on our current bridge projects:

- Leverkusen
- Darmstadt
- Henneaulaan

### We are building the bridges of tomorrow

We are facing an exciting time. A time when, with our passion for steel, we can more than ever make a difference in the various markets in which we operate. Especially in the civil segment, including bridge construction. We may be offshore experts by now, but we are not ready to let go off other constructions. That calls for a bridge special!



# Interview

# Gerd Steemans Project Director

## Back to our roots

It was once quieter on the bridge market. But in the meantime, many bridges in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany are about 50 years old and at the end of their lifespan. There are two things a government can do in this situation: renovate or build a new one. At Smulders we can do both, the result of decades of building bridges. It also brings us back to the roots of Iemants, which once started with profile work and gradually focused on bridge building.

## But how do you get such projects and how do you build a bridge?

Our Project Director Gerd Steemans knows all about it. Under his wings, the most diverse constructions in the civil market, industry, oil & gas and infrastructure take shape.

Gerd: “We move in the market where these contracts are awarded. I have noticed a steady increase in recent years because most of the bridges built in the mid-20th century now need to be renovated or replaced. These works require more than just maintenance to be fixed. Bridges are public works, and impossible to build on your own as a steel company. We usually work in combination with a contractor and under different types of contracts, such as a joint venture (JV) or subcontracting. For example, we leave the concrete work for foundations and roads to others. We also engage a partner for moving bridges.”

Design & build is possible, although the design is usually not in our hands. In this, we follow the customer. Only producing and supplying the steel: check. Assembly too: check. Or the design in-house: certainly.

## What is the added value Smulders can provide?

That there are still many projects to come is good news. In any case, the space and expertise are there. We know the world, we are in the middle of it and we do everything we can to live up to our good name today and tomorrow.

Gerd: “Apart from our people and their know-how, our workshop and lifting capacity in Hoboken is the biggest asset. Compared to our competitors, we can get very large stretches of road and can even completely lay out a bridge. Water transport can be arranged from Hoboken, although we also have that option in Balen. Depending on the size of the pieces and production capacity, we divide the



Cycling through the Trees

work between several sites. We are certainly strong, although we feel the pressure and challenges. We are looking more and more closely at the preparation process. Optimising production and assembly processes is in our DNA.”

## Bridge Builders

No two bridges are the same. There are no trends per se. Steel is steel. The client sets the boundaries and within those boundaries we are more or less free to do our thing. Within a tender, not only the price counts and it comes to more than steel. Special architectural firms often come on board if the design needs to be a bit extra, and we build it. A special case was The Hague, for example, where we were responsible for the engineering and construction of a viaduct that forms part of the terminal station for the Erasmus Line.

Literally and metaphorically, we are bridge builders. Always leaving a good impression, that is what we want. A good relationship with our partners, contractors and public authorities is extremely important to us. “From the management to the mechanics... we can all be proud of the work we do. We build as a team and seeing the end result together is powerful. Our people who make bridge components in the workshop are always curious about the assembly at the final location. Seeing 3 m wide and 20 m long tubes in a structure that is overall 20 m wide and 350 m is quite something”, Gerd says.

## Gerd’s bridge track record @ Iemants & Smulders

- Number of bridges built: approx. 25
- Iemants’ first bridge project: Docklands in UK
- Average weight: from 50 to 10,000 tonnes and more
- Ongoing projects: Darmstadt, Henneaulaan, Leverkusen, Clyde Crossing
- Most atypical project on the group’s track record: iconic ‘Cycling through the Trees’ cycle bridge
- Good to know: It’s mostly a man’s world in bridge building, but Gerd had the honour of working with a female trainee (Bachelor of Architecture) for Darmstadt

To add weight to this story, we have delved into some current bridge projects. Enjoy your reading.



Terminal station for the Erasmus Line, The Hague



# Theme



## Project Manager

Michel Vos

## End client

Die Autobahn GmbH Des Bundes NL Rheinland - Außenstelle Cologne

## Customer lemans

ArGe

## Assignment

18110 A1 Rheinbrücke  
Leverkusen - Production and delivery of steel

## Location

Leverkusen, Germany

## Timing

June 2021 - March 2023

## Weight

3,425 tonnes (lemants scope)

# New bridge in Leverkusen

**A busy traffic junction and an unsafe situation. It typifies the Rheinbrücke in Leverkusen, currently closed to freight traffic due to its poor condition. Under the wings of the temporary work company ArGe, this will change with the replacement of the lower part of the double bridge.**

Production in Hoboken



## Production of main girders & cross girders

A joint venture (JV) of SEH Engineering, Eiffage Métal, Max Bögl, Hochtief and lemans is doing the work. The JV is responsible for the main design, the participating parties are responsible for detailed engineering. lemans produces and delivers 3,425 tons of steel for the 15,700-ton bridge with a length of 680 m. The assembly is not our responsibility.

Project Manager Michel Vos: "There are 51 components involved: 30 main girders and 21 cross girders, in fact the green parts on the drawing. In terms of steel qualities, as usual, but the application of German standards to drawings and procedures is different to what we are used to. Our procedures and drawings are already prepared for this."

The production of the main girders – all plates and troughs – takes place in Arendonk. From there they go to Balen, where we make diaphragms, manually assemble the pieces, blast them and paint them. Hoboken also participates and most of the pieces are transported over water. We produce the crossbars entirely in Arendonk, from where they are shipped to the shipyard in Leverkusen.

## Tangent control

SEH Engineering, Eiffage Métal and Max Bögl supply their share of steel. Hochtief does the civil works. This means: coordinating with all parties, while an inspection agency watches closely. With good reason, as this bridge has a previous history - an earlier one built by a different contractor proved to be of poor quality. So we are working from scratch, but the final construction is partly based on the previously planned bridge pillars. Together with the other suppliers in the JV, we carry out an interface check on the basis of a uniform checklist for each building section.

The result? A new bridge with one part above land and one part above water. A construction that will be long, sturdy and heavy. A fairly standard German design and extremely solid with the well-known qualities S355 for the bridge materials and S460 for the pylons. And with the troughs on the poles, a modern, graceful concept. Ready for freight traffic again from the beginning of 2024.



Production in Balen



## Theme



### Project Manager

Yves Boenders

### Customer

Hessen Mobil - Straßen- und Verkehrsmanagement

### Assignment

Darmstädter Kreuz reconstruction - 4 bridges

### Location

Darmstadt, Germany

### Timing

March 2021 - May 2023

### Weight

4,940 tons (total)

# Darmstadt bridge construction on track

**After the Rheinbrücke contract, we are building another bridge structure in Germany: at the intersection of the A5 and A67 motorways at the Darmstädter Kreuz. This traffic artery between Mannheim and Frankfurt is in need of renovation. Eiffage received the honour of the refurbishment and is demonstrating its expertise in various fields: general contractor Eiffage Infra-Bau for the concrete construction, lemans for the steel bridge(s).**

**“The different components are built on a pre-location with a pre-foundation in the same line of the Taktkellers bridge”**

### From Süd to Nord

The current traffic junction will get a complete makeover. The existing complex with 4 bridges will be demolished and replaced. There will also be more lanes than before. The works are carried out in phases as follows:

1. Südrampe: southern ramp (entrance and exit)
2. Nordrampe: northern ramp (entrance and exit)
3. Substructure Nord of the Zentralbauwerk (ZBW)
4. Substructure Süd of the Zentralbauwerk (ZBW)

The northern ramp takes the A67 - with 2 lanes and 4 spans - from south to north across the A5. The current structure from 1966 has a total length of 138 m and will be replaced by a steel structure with three walk-on box girders - a total of 170 m with room for an exit lane for trucks.

The southern ramp has a length of 138 m, also has 4 spans and dates from 1967. The new Süd gets 3 steel box girders and is reduced to 94 m. The old ZBW consists of 2 substructures, each with a construction length of 122.5 m and 4 spans. The new ZBW will have three spans over a length of 160 m.

### Technically unique process

Project Manager Yves Boenders: “The implementation is based on the plans provided by our customer and the selected engineering firms. For steel construction and painting, there is an interaction between our offices in Arendonk, Balen, Poland, Tessenderlo and Hoboken. Larger pieces go from Balen by water to Mannheim, from where they are then transported by road to Darmstadt.”

The construction of the components themselves takes place on a pre-location with a pre-foundation in the same line of the ‘Taktkellers’ bridge. This is technically unique and it allows us to slide the bridge into its final position. For the Nordrampe, for example, we work in 3 ‘Takten’: the pieces are made half and are then slid into position. By making preparations in the Taktkellers, we avoid blocking the busy motorway for too long. Sliding the bridges is one of the biggest challenges and requires sufficient support while moving.

And the looks? We see a modern bridge complex under construction, according to the highest German standards. The unusual geometry of an undulating trough bridge, although with colour detail, is striking. The inside of the ZBW gets strips in all shades, from green to purple.

**“With our decisiveness, technical acumen and solution orientation, we work towards perfection.”**



### On track

“We started the Südrampe in March 2021. The Nordrampe and ZBW Nord are planned for July 2022, with the start for ZBW Süd planned for spring 2023. First, ZBW Nord must be put into service to divert traffic. After that, we can demolish the existing bridge. We are on schedule and lessons learned along the way help us, for example, to optimise welding details and processes. With our passion for steel, our technical critical eye and our focus on solutions, we are working towards perfection”, concludes Project Manager Yves Boenders.

# Theme



Image: De Werkvennootschap

## Project Manager

Dirk T'jampens

## Customer

Flemish Government -  
'De Werkvennootschap'

## Assignment

Refurbishment complex  
R0-Henneaulaan - 2 bridges

## Location

Brussels ring road, Belgium

## Timing

September 2021 - July 2023

## Weight

2,350 tons (total)

# Corten steel on the Brussels ring road

Anyone driving over the connecting bridge between Zaventem and the Diegem business zone will have noticed it: the old concrete bridge is in need of replacement. The Flemish Government will modernise the entire ring road and the renovation of the R0-Henneaulaan complex with a new bridge construction will be a priority. Two bridges made of Corten steel will soon be erected there. This is quite unique for a technically complex concept, at least in Belgium, where structural bridges have not previously been built in this material.

“ The aim: safer roads, better traffic flow and a pleasant environment for people and animals.”

## Quick wins

The bridge over the R0: traffic often comes to a standstill, cyclists and pedestrians are afraid to cross the bridge because of the unsafe situation. The Flemish Government intends to change this with the construction of a new bridge, followed by works on the connections to the Ring road. The goal: safer roads with easy approaches and exits, better traffic flow and a pleasant environment for people and animals.

De Werkvennootschap opted for 'quick wins'. A number of road works within the programme are being accelerated, and the renovation of the obsolete bridge on the Hector Henneaulaan is one example. The construction of the bridge was entrusted to the joint venture Besix (foundations and concrete works) - Iemants (steel production and installation).

## Less hindrance

- Construction of new bridge (KW01) next to old one
- Demolition of old bridge
- Traffic temporarily runs on the new (KW01)
- Construction of the second bridge (KW02)

KW01 will eventually be used by cyclists and pedestrians, KW02 is the bridge for cars. We are building the first bridge in Hoboken, where we have enough space to lay it out completely. The cutting is done in Balen. After road transport, the bridge will be welded together at the final location – temporary assembly site. KW02 will be made for 100% in Arendonk.

“ Thanks to a wildlife crossing, animals can cross the Ring road in all safety. The green areas are accessible to local residents and employees

## Installation in Corten steel

What makes this version special is not so much its shape, but the material: Corten steel. It was already used for the new cycle bridge in Hechtel-Eksel, Cycling through Trees, but not yet for bridges that have to carry more weight. The engineering study was performed by SBE as a subcontractor of Besix, with our input for the stability in temporary situations. Iemants is also responsible for the assembly studies and shop drawings.

With special road transport, we transport the bridge components to a temporary site for assembly and disassembly. The bridge deck is assembled at ground level. We will then jack up the bridge to a height of approx. 8 m so that modular multiwheelers can be fitted under it to drive it to its final location across the Ring, where it will be lowered onto its foundation.

## New sights

Besides the technically strong steelwork, the surroundings also play a major part. When both bridges are completed and traffic is no longer diverted, KW01 will be exclusively for cyclists and pedestrians. In addition to a separate cycling lane and footpath, there will also be a free bus lane and a wildlife crossing or green strip along the entire length of the new construction. It will connect the green areas on both sides of the Ring. And all of this brings valuable new perspectives for at least 50 years.



## My job, my passion

**Interview**  
**Amanda Young**  
HR Manager  
Smulders Projects UK



## The driving HR force in a warm family

**Teamwork makes the dream work. With the purposeful cooperation of our Smulders Projects UK branch. In terms of HR, everything is steered in the right direction by passionate HR Manager and family person Amanda Young. A great co-worker you should definitely get to know...**

### **How did your story at Smulders Projects UK (SPU) begin?**

"Well, we'll have to go back to 2019, at the time of the Moray East Offshore Wind Farm project, for which we assembled the jackets at our yard in Newcastle. I was thrown in at the deep end right from the start, and got to know my colleagues and the Smulders processes along the way."

### **What experience did you bring with you?**

"Since 2011 I have been working hard and have grown from Assistant to Manager, across different companies. I also worked as an HR Advisor for a while, through a consultancy firm. It was a very exciting period, as I worked for various companies in different industries such as oil & gas, manufacturing and others. This way, I quickly gained insight into very different disciplines - even though I already had my HR cap on. You could say that I built a solid foundation from which I can draw for my current job and which allows me to optimally help colleagues with their questions and growth process."

### **What does HR involve at SPU?**

"The HR department as such is just 'Amanda Young' at the moment. And my work revolves around the 40 people who work for us. In extremely busy periods, it will be a bit trickier, because there's a lot to arrange for additional contractors. I'm sure I'll get the support from an HR Assistant by then."

### **What do you think is typical of SPU and Smulders?**

"Definitely, the team spirit, as well as the huge expertise. Going in the same direction, pursuing the same business goals and delivering projects on time. It is an honour to contribute to this as an HR Manager. We are a big group, but it feels like a warm family or a 'small world' so to speak. Everyone knows everyone else, we interact with respect and we acknowledge each other's work. If someone at SPU has a question and I can't solve it myself, I know straight away which person to refer them to."

### **Does this mean HR has been streamlined across the sites?**

"That is a process and it is maturing. We have our independence as SPU, under the wings of the group. Consistency across branches is the future and we are in the process of implementing the Worktime tool for time and job registration. I get all the support I need for our local HR."

### **What are the challenges you are facing?**

"Covid is not yet over. Then there is Brexit, which has quite some impact on recruitment, as well as changes in tax legislation for contractors. Another challenge - but an enjoyable one - is our

commitment to getting more and more employees on the payroll. Of the current 40 people, we now have about 17 colleagues on the payroll, with the others as contractors. The general switch has started and involves a lot of preparation."

### **What do you like most about your job?**

"The content is great, as are the people. I love my job and a great job makes a world of difference to your quality of life. That is how I experience it. Self-development is important to me and it is certainly a pillar of our personnel policy. In terms of growth and development, we want to give our colleagues every opportunity. Their safety is paramount, but so is their well-being. And we organise training about this. Mindfulness in the workplace, that's something we do."

### **What is your greatest talent?**

"Making logical and realistic assessments of situations, critical thinking and getting things on the right track. I do this with integrity, honesty, respect for others and always with the utmost professionalism. That is what people expect and that is also my work ethic."

### **What does the future hold for SPU?**

"I would like to do much more of what I do now and, when it is busy, have an HR Assistant by my side. That would be great. As a team, we look forward to the next project with enthusiasm in order to achieve further successes. I would like to continue to develop myself, to enjoy my job even more and to provide optimal support for my colleagues in their jobs."

### **Your job is clearly your passion - what about your private life?**

"Well, I have a passion for people and my family knows that. I am the person people come to in times of crisis. I like to listen and help. With my husband and 3 children, I enjoy life to the full. I am a family person and we do a lot together, also with the grandparents."

### **Do you have time left for hobbies?**

"Our home is always busy, so hobbies are not easy. We regularly go out with the family, for example to classic car events - a passion my husband and father share. Being together is my favourite thing."

### **Team spirit or family atmosphere?**

"I'll have both. We have a strong team spirit and support each other, like families do, here at SPU."



## Offshore Wind



### Moray West selects Siemens Energy/Iemants for offshore substations

Moray West, an offshore wind farm in the outer Moray Firth, has selected the Siemens Energy/Iemants consortium for the supply of the project's two offshore substation platforms using Siemens Energy's proven Offshore Transformer Module (OTM®) technology.

A key part of the selection was how the Siemens Energy/Iemants consortium will bring assembly and fit out of the OTMs to the Smulders Projects UK yard. The yard, located in Wallsend, Newcastle fabricated jacket foundations for the neighbouring Moray East project, and this will see the scope of work extended. This is good news for UK fabrication and signals the return of topside work to a UK yard after a gap of several years.

The prefabrication of the two substations will start in Belgium in April 2022. As from July, the assembly will take place at Smulders Projects UK. The load out of both substations is scheduled for the second half of 2023.



**The Offshore Transformer Module for Moray West are similar to the ones we built for Moray East in 2020.**

### Consortium Sif-Smulders and Dogger Bank Wind Farm sign Contract for Dogger Bank C

**Smulders, in a consortium with Sif, has signed the contract for the manufacture of all 87 monopiles and transition pieces (approx. 130 kton steel) for the third phase of Dogger Bank Wind Farm located in the North Sea off the North East coast of England.**

Following the award in November 2020 of contracts for Dogger Bank A and B, Dogger Bank Wind Farm has now signed with the Sif-Smulders consortium the contract for the fabrication and supply of all foundations for the Dogger Bank C phase of the project. The foundation fabrication and supply are subject to financial close on Dogger Bank C which is foreseen late 2021.

In the project-specific Sif-Smulders consortium, Sif is responsible for fabrication and supply of monopiles and primary steel for the transition pieces, and for the marshalling of all foundation components at its Maasvlakte 2 Rotterdam terminal (picture below). Smulders will manufacture secondary steel and assemble, coat and test fully equipped transition pieces.

Production for Dogger Bank A started at our production facilities in Belgium and Poland. The production for Dogger Bank B will start in 2022.

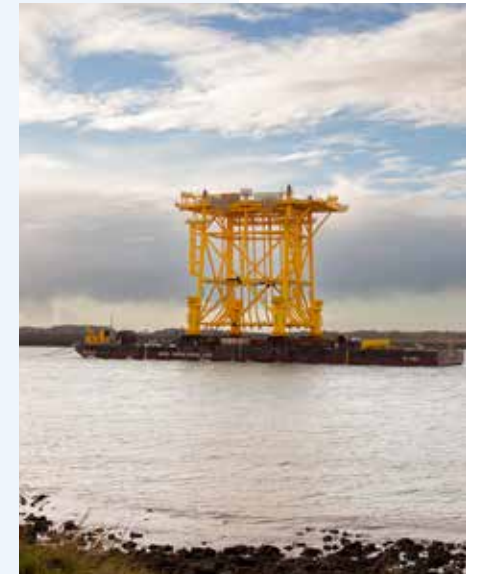
### Jacket for Hollandse Kust (noord) substation installed offshore

The jacket for TenneT's Hollandse Kust (noord) substation was successfully installed off the coast of North Holland in early November. The next step for this substation is that the topside containing the transformers will be placed on the foundation in May 2022. The construction will be completed in 2023 and TenneT will then feed the sustainable wind energy into the onshore high-voltage grid.

The jacket was commissioned by Smulders and built at Heerema's yard in Vlissingen. The departure of the jacket attracted a great deal of attention as it sailed close to the coast of Vlissingen, providing some impressive images! After leaving the port of Vlissingen the jacket arrived at its destination in 20 hours, more than 18 kilometres off the coast of Egmond.

The topside is currently in the hall of our JV partner EQUANS in Hoboken. In early 2022 the move out will take place and the topside will be finished outside. The topside will be installed on the jacket in May.

In addition to the substation for Hollandse Kust (noord), we are also building the substations for the Hollandse Kust (west Alpha) and (west Beta) offshore wind farms.



## Civil & Industry



### More than half of Wintrack III pylons installed

Mid October we installed the 65th high voltage pylon for Wintrack III in Groningen. On behalf of TenneT we are building 130 high voltage pylons spread over 65 mast positions. Less than half is still to go!

### Final pylon for Avelin Gavrelle installed

For the Avelin Gavrelle project, we built 45 architectonic high voltage pylons. The final pylon was installed in France in the beginning of October.







Jacket for Hollandse  
Kust (noord) substation  
installed offshore



# Aware or not aware, that's the question

**In 2021, we transformed what used to be known as SAFETY WEEK into AWARENESS WEEK. For we should definitely look beyond everyone's individual square metre. We added a sustainability workshop to the programme, an ethics toolbox, a root cause analysis workshop, as well as (mental) well-being. The initial feedback shows that AWARENESS is the way to go, even in 2022.**

## Going one step further

The programme for the Awareness Week in the 3rd week of November was developed in cooperation with our HSE Managers, Project Management, Production Managers and input from the shop floor. It was and is aimed at involving and encouraging many colleagues to make a positive contribution.

We continue to build on constructive initiatives from the previous edition. Think of the housekeeping event and resuscitation techniques. A training course was initiated for supervisors to make toolbox talks more interactive. During the awareness week, some groups attended their session; other foremen/supervisors are to follow soon. In the check-act, we verified that all the actions after a serious incident in one of the spray halls were carried out effectively and followed up later on. The management was largely involved in the root cause analysis for more decisiveness. And we made another call for voluntary work in exchange for a day's leave.

We went one step further with the following initiatives:

- Mental capital: a webinar on mental resilience to cope with change quickly
- First aid for mental problems: for everyone, with a focus on managers so they can recognise signals more quickly and enter into a dialogue
- Emergency exercise: evacuation from a perilous situation at a height for project management
- Ethics toolbox: during which the code of conduct is revealed
- Armen Te Kort: looking for buddies for the underprivileged (voluntary work)

Every day we shared a short safety moment with everyone who has access to a computer screen. More than 400 employees watched the safety moments on a daily basis.

## Feedback & Actions

The first reactions are predominantly positive. As an organisation, we have found that it would be best to start and disseminate the programme sooner to ensure a smoother inflow.

## Smulders stimulates local & global energy transition

**A lot is happening in the area of sustainability. Completely CO<sub>2</sub> neutral by 2035 – a mission you must have heard before. As a company we are setting up concrete actions to work towards this goal. And with the signing of SteelZero, we are taking it one step further. We zoom in on two important phases that have recently been initiated.**

### SDG Champion

About 3 years ago, we committed ourselves to achieving the United Nations' sustainability goals and entered the phased 'Unitar SDG trajectory' with the assistance of VOKA. SDG stands for Sustainable Development Goals. We have successfully completed the first part and can now call ourselves 'SDG Pioneer'. In the second part, 'SDG Champion', we are boosting our sustainable ambitions.

The challenge? Tim Balcaen: "By the end of 2022, we have to present an elaborated plan with actions to become CO<sub>2</sub> neutral by 2035. We have called in some experts to investigate which technologies are feasible. For example, we are talking with specialists in geothermal energy and hydrogen, with an independent energy transition consultant as the neutral referee. We are inquiring with local councils because we need to know whether heat grids will extend to our locations. And our site directors are also involved, as the entire sustainability plan must be integrated into our sites' investment plans."

By the end of next year, much will have been decided. Let's not forget that the actions also require the necessary investments. These will be spread over the next 14 years. The time is right for some technologies, but not for others.

### Some of the ideas we are working on...

- Interventions in heating systems, such as heat pumps
- Forklift on hydrogen
- New technologies and machines
- Electric commercial vehicles
- Heavy transport or cranes on e-fuels - synthetic fuels from sustainably generated electricity and CO<sub>2</sub> that can be extracted from the air or factory chimneys

### SteelZero

Another good point: the recent signing of the SteelZero charter – our commitment to buying steel with a smaller carbon footprint. This is Smulders' contribution to making the shift towards the responsible procurement and production of steel in the global market. Steel, which is our raw material, in fact accounts for most of the emissions in our value chain (70%). As a concrete goal for 2030, we want half of what we buy to be 'reduced-impact steel'. Our steel suppliers are already researching more efficient production techniques (less energy), building carbon capture facilities or switching to natural gas (instead of coal) and eventually hydrogen.

Smulders is really making things happen. By the way, did you know that we were present at the COP26 climate summit in Glasgow? No empty promises, but actions. That is what we aim for.

### More information?



SDG Champion



SteelZero



## Young talent

# Interview with Tomasz Siwak

Production & People Manager  
Smulders Groep Poland Sp. z o.o.

**"Materials, deadlines and people... if it is well-balanced, we can handle anything."**

**Always striving for better. Committed to good communication. Attention to the person behind the story. Typical Tomasz. As Production Manager of our site in Niedmodlin, he absolutely makes a difference for our production and people.**



### How did you end up at Smulders?

"Well, we'll have to go back 10 years for that. After school I started working at Spomasz and I started study Production Management. I did not bring any experience from a previous employer, but my training was extremely comprehensive in terms of production environments. And so I started out as a production preparation worker."

### How did those first years go?

"From the beginning it felt right. My superiors and colleagues gave me all the support I needed and I learned a lot from them. It is a very specific business anyway and you always come across new challenges for which you have to find solutions. Lifelong learning is part of it. I was only 24 years old when I was asked to become a foreman myself. It was a

challenge, but thanks to the people around me on the shop floor, I managed."

### What is your current job?

"Since March 2020, I have moved to our new location in Niedmodlin. In the meantime, I grew from being a foreman to Production Manager. The production with about 110 colleagues is in full preparation for the Dogger Bank project."

### What do you like about your current job?

"Working with a team of passionate employees. Everyone counts. Having done different jobs across the company, I know how important each link is and what people's needs are. My superiors give me an excellent example, I am well surrounded."

### What is your greatest talent?

"I hear from others, and I also feel that's true, that I am good at people management. People are not machines, you have to lead and inspire them and treat them with respect. Much depends on the attitude, but with the right motivation you can teach others a lot. Look at safety, for example. I always say that when your work is done, there is a family waiting at home. I want everyone to get home safely every day, with their 10 fingers."

### What challenges do you experience?

"Again, mainly a people issue. Projects sometimes require extra manpower and finding those extra resources is not always easy. Materials, deadlines and people... if it is well-balanced, we can handle anything. I can say that I have a great team and that we are flexible in dealing with issues. We find a solution for every problem. This is also because we are well-organised, with persons in charge of each sub-project, and we consult a lot."

### What are your ambitions for the future?

"Continuing my mission as Production Manager. In line with the company standards, I always want to strive for better and optimise communication. Whether it is for the wind industry or bridge building, we keep the dynamics going. Bring on those large projects! I like surprises and I am committed to contributing to the success of Smulders together with the team."

### Any tips for other starters to choose Smulders?

"Don't hesitate. You get every opportunity here. I had no experience either when I started, but through dedication, specialised training and the right entourage, I was able to become the Production Manager I am today. There is plenty of choice at Smulders: you do not necessarily have to work in the warehouse or in the production of steel elements, a world of opportunities is also open to you in other departments. Believe in it and go for it."

### Work hard, play hard – do you have time for anything else?

"When I am at home, I want to be there for my wife and 2 children. I have a 6-year-old son, Szymon, and a little daughter, Blanka. She's 6 months. I owe a lot to my wife. Thanks to her, I can work fully on my career. Leisure time is also dominated by football. My son and I play football and my whole family are big fans of it."

**As you can see: Tomasz is a satisfied man. As Production Manager and as People Manager. Making the production run and motivating people, that's what he does best.**



# Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy 2022!

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**Raf Iemants**  
Managing Director Smulders