

MEDIA RELEASE

AIDC EC BOOSTS MANUFACTURING COMPETITIVENESS

Through a range of world-class shopfloor improvement programmes, the Automotive Industry Development Centre Eastern Cape, is playing a significant role in boosting exports from the region's manufacturing sector.

Automotive Industry Development Centre Eastern Cape (AIDC EC) Executive, Hoosain Mahomed says global competitiveness is the ultimate enabler of increasing export volumes and the AIDC EC to a large extent was assisting auto and other manufacturing companies achieve this.

"In order to export, a local company has to have a product that is better than any competitor across the globe, with respect to quality, cost or delivery and sometimes all three.

"This intense competition with others across the world requires manufacturers to extract every efficiency possible to give them an edge," Mahomed said.

As a technical, engineering focussed organisation, that is owned 100% by the ECDC and mandated to increase the global competitiveness of Eastern Cape manufacturers, the AIDC EC trains in and runs with its clients shopfloor improvement interventions in World Class Manufacturing.

Employing manufacturing techniques and methodologies like Total Productive Maintenance (TPM), Six Sigma, Cleaner Production and Energy Management the AIDC EC's manufacturing clients achieve an average Overall Equipment Efficiency (OEE) improvement of 10%.

In the past financial year the AIDC EC has assisted industry participants increase productivity on average by 9% and reduce energy consumption by 10% for beginners and 5.9% for companies with existing energy management systems.

Part of the AIDC EC's service to develop internal efficiency and productivity, includes an engineering graduate development programme called the Programme for Industrial and Manufacturing Excellence (PRIME) and workplace wellness programmes that have been highly acclaimed as a leading light in the field.

"Worker wellness holistically - and this may include HIV&AIDS, substance abuse and financial management and stress, is a key contributor to product quality and costs relating to reject rates and absenteeism for example," Mahomed said.

Mahomed believes Nelson Mandela Bay is still regarded as the Detroit of South Africa.

"The manufacturing sector continues to grow with regular, significant investments at the Coega IDZ, including car maker BAIC and further plans for Isuzu to capture an export platform to boost the auto industry and provide spin-offs to the local supply base.

"What is more the sector locally is getting good support from the Automotive Supply Chain Competitiveness initiative (ASCCI), while the region has a good base of exporting companies who are in fact leaders in their area globally.

"Direct exports from multinationals into its sister plants abroad are not only a very necessary market to offset currency but also benefit from the exchange rate. Our Direct exporters have grown from strength to strength and positioned South Africa as a destination of choice.

"We boast world class manufacturing technologies and that these are designed and manufactured within our city is indeed a competitive edge for our industry. "

Mahomed is a judge for the prestigious Exporter of the Year Awards in August.

For more information see www.aidcec.co.za

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