



ZSCHIMMER & SCHWARZ

Press Release

Well prepared for emergencies

The Zschimmer & Schwarz factory fire brigade and various emergency services from the Rhein-Lahn district and the city of Koblenz worked together to carry out a catastrophe training exercise.

Lahnstein, 23 October 2018 – During a catastrophe exercise training at chemical company Zschimmer & Schwarz, an external emergency plan was simulated for a fire with hazardous materials on Saturday, 20 October 2018. The four-hour exercise also focused on collaboration between all emergency response teams as well as smooth coordination of emergency services. In addition, the report and alarm systems as well as the hazard prevention plans were reviewed. Overall, more than 350 emergency personnel and employees of brigades from Lahnstein and the Bad Ems, Loreley and Nastätten municipalities, the catastrophe prevention units of the Rhein-Lahn district and the Koblenz professional fire brigade, the technical emergency services of Lahnstein and the Zschimmer & Schwarz factory fire brigade participated in this realistic exercise.

The exercise – conducted by the factory fire brigade of Zschimmer & Schwarz together with the Rhein-Lahn district commissioning the regional fire control – aimed to review the practical implementation of the external alarm deployment plan, the passing on of individual tasks to the head technical emergency services as well as the collaboration between different emergency response teams, such as the technical emergency services, fast-response unit and the fire brigade, to continually improve the approach taken by staff and to review the availability of staff members as well as the time required until work can be begin. It was also necessary to ensure the water supply and to carry out the hazardous materials operation.

This year, the exercise began with a smouldering fire in a pallet warehouse. Strong heat development and dense smoke affected nearby buildings, including



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the adjacent fuel depot, where pump lines for two very corrosive fluids were damaged. Later on, a deflagration resulted in the fire spreading. Several people were injured.

The fire brigades' task was to save people, fight the fire and prevent it from spreading. To accomplish this, the teams laid a water supply from the Rhine to ensure sufficient extinguishing water to quell the fumes. Numerous emergency personnel used water to cool the adjacent fuel depot and the nearby tanker station by cutting off the fire with the stationary sprinkler system. At the same time, the hazmat response team took air measurements to determine the risk area and rule out any possible restrictions for the neighbouring population. Residents were informed by means of sound trucks and KATWARN messages (a German warning and information system).

This type of exercise requires control over numerous emergency response teams and processes, with strict demands placed on all those involved in terms of management and coordination. "Collaboration with the external personnel went well. But some details do require a follow-up. In the weeks to come, this new insight will be incorporated into the report and alarm systems to further streamline processes", states Sascha Lauer, head of the factory fire brigade at Zschimmer & Schwarz.

General Manager Wolfgang Nowak was also pleased with the results of the exercise: "For years, we have practiced our safety concepts at Zschimmer & Schwarz with this type of ultra-realistic scenario, perfectly preparing us for an emergency. Today's test saw excellent collaboration between the various emergency response teams. I would like to thank all those involved – in particular incident commander Marcus Grün, district fire brigade inspector Guido Erler, deputy district fire brigade inspector Lars Ritscher, head of Lahnstein fire brigade Marcus Schneider and head of the Loreley fire brigade Jörg Preißmann – for their dedication and outstanding cooperation.



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Sascha Lauer (right), head of the Zschimmer & Schwarz factory fire brigade, discussing the exercise with the Lahnstein volunteer fire brigade



Excellent collaboration as part of the realistic exercise, with more than 350 emergency personnel and employees of brigades from Lahnstein and the Bad Ems, Loreley and Nastätten municipalities as well as the catastrophe prevention units of the Rhein-Lahn region and the Koblenz professional fire brigade, the technical emergency services of Lahnstein and the Zschimmer & Schwarz factory fire brigade participating



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Low tide on the Rhine made water supply difficult for the Braubach voluntary fire brigade

About Zschimmer & Schwarz

Zschimmer & Schwarz is a company with global operations, headquartered in Lahnstein near Koblenz, Germany. The company has been family-owned since its founding in Chemnitz, Germany in 1894. Our core activities include the development, manufacture and delivery of tailor-made chemical auxiliaries for the leather, fur, ceramic, textile and fibre industries. In addition, Zschimmer & Schwarz is one of the leading manufacturers of high-performance chemical specialties and auxiliaries for cosmetics and cleaning applications as well as phosphonates and polymer-based solutions. The corporate group Zschimmer & Schwarz combines 28 companies in 15 countries on five continents, 20 of them with their own production facilities.

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