

Evonik Licenses HCN Technology to Akzo Nobel

February 14, 2008

Evonik Industries AG with its subsidiary Evonik Röhm GmbH has entered into an agreement with Amersfoort-based Akzo Nobel Functional Chemicals B.V. for licensing its hydrocyanic acid (HCN) production technology based on the Andrussov process. Akzo Nobel will use the technology to produce chelating agents—which find application in, for example, the manufacture of soaps and detergents—in a world-scale plant at Ningbo Chemical Industry Zone (NCIZ) in China. Under the license, Evonik will provide to Akzo Nobel an extensive technology package, including advice and consulting services from the planning stage to the startup of the plant.

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Evonik can look back at more than 50 years of experience in hydrocyanic acid production. Vast expertise is available in three of the four direct synthesis processes that are used industrially: the Andrussov, the BMA, and the formamide processes. The Andrussov process is the most widely used direct synthesis process for hydrocyanic acid production. In this process, ammonia and methane are reacted on a platinum gauze serving as a catalyst, at temperatures exceeding 1,000 degrees Celsius. The waste heat from the reaction is used to produce steam. This process is currently the most important method for commercial scale production of hydrocyanic acid.

“In making available extensive expertise and wealth of experience, we are enabling our partner to rapidly attain the benchmark in regard to safety, ecology, and economy in hydrocyanic acid production,” said Gregor Hetzke, head of Evonik Industries' Performance Polymers Business Unit.

Evonik operates a number of plants worldwide and possesses, in addition to technological expertise, a fund of operational know-how. The processes have been continually optimized ever since the first plant started operating in the 1950s. The company has taken out various patents for hydrocyanic acid production by the Andrussov process. These include the latest developments such as the use of oxygen-enriched air for the synthesis, which allows capacity to be significantly increased.

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Registered Office: Essen
Register Court: Essen Local Court
Commercial Registry B 19474

Company information

Evonik Industries is the creative industrial group from Germany which operates in three business areas: Chemicals, Energy and Real Estate. Evonik is a global leader in specialty chemicals, an expert in power generation from hard coal and renewable energies, and one of the largest private residential real estate companies in Germany. Our strengths are creativity, specialization, continuous self-renewal, and reliability. Evonik is active in over 100 countries around the world. In its fiscal year 2006 more than 43,000 employees generated sales of about Euro 14.8 billion and an operating profit (EBIT) of over Euro 1.2 billion.

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