

Press Release

Automotive sector with growth potential**Airbag yarns on the rise**

Remscheid, November 22, 2016 – According to estimates from Business Wire, the demand for airbags will increase by 5 percent annually over the next five years. To date, airbags have been predominantly manufactured using polyamide 6.6 yarns. However, there is a noticeable trend with these challenging industrial filament yarns towards polyester.

Industrial yarn producers are increasingly perceiving the airbag yarn segment as a growth market. To this end, four projects for manufacturing airbag yarns from polyamide 6.6 (PA6.6) and polyester (PET) supplied by systems builder Oerlikon Barmag have been successfully commissioned in the past 12 months alone. The systems – installed at well-known yarn manufacturers in North America and China – cover titer ranges of between 235 and 700 dtex for PA6.6, and between 470 and 550 dtex for PET.

The systems concept offers the highest level of flexibility: the proven SP4 spinning system with exchangeable melt distribution enables the conversion of the airbag yarn systems from PA6.6 to PET or vice-versa without much effort. To this end, yarn producers can react flexibly and swiftly to changing market requirements.

Market with growth potential

The reason for the increased demand for airbag yarns is the global rise of road safety requirements. Within this context, the Indian government and the Department of Road Transport and Highways, for example, have revised their vehicle safety rules and regulations. The new version, which comes into force in the fall of 2017, demands considerably greater occupant safety, particularly with regards to side and front impact. According to the estimates of numerous automobile manufacturers, compliance with these new safety rules and regulations can only be achieved with the installation of airbags.

And, according to research conducted by PCI, greater safety in vehicles is also a much-discussed topic in Latin America, which is having a positive impact on the airbag and safety belt manufacturing industry: two South Korean airbag producers have already announced investments in Central America.

The average volume of textile fibers and filaments in automobiles is around 30 kg; according to PCI Fibres, just under 19% of this is airbag yarn. This opens up a highly-profitable growth market for industrial yarn manufacturers.

363 words

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About Oerlikon

Oerlikon (SIX: OERL) is a leading global technology Group, with a clear strategy of becoming a global powerhouse in surface solutions, advanced materials and materials processing. The Group is committed to investing in value-bringing technologies that provide customers with lighter, more durable materials that are able to increase performance, improve efficiency and reduce the use of scarce resources. A Swiss company with over 100 years of tradition, Oerlikon has a global footprint of over 13 500 employees at more than 170 locations in 37 countries and sales of CHF 2.7 billion in 2015. The company invested CHF 103 million in R&D in 2015 and has over 1 350 specialists developing innovative and customer-oriented products and services.

For further information: www.oerlikon.com

About the Oerlikon Manmade Fibers segment

With its Oerlikon Barmag and Oerlikon Neumag brands, Oerlikon Manmade Fibers segment is the world market leader for manmade fiber filament spinning systems, texturing machines, BCF systems, staple fiber systems, nonwovens and artificial turf systems and – as a service provider – offers engineering solutions for the entire textile value added chain. As a future oriented company, the research and development at this division of the Oerlikon Group is driven by energy-efficiency and sustainable technologies. With the expansion of the product range to include polycondensation systems and their key components, the company now caters to the entire process – from the monomer all the way through to the textured yarn. The primary Oerlikon Barmag markets are in Asia, and – for Oerlikon Neumag – in the USA, Turkey and China. Correspondingly, Oerlikon Barmag and Oerlikon Neumag – with just under 2,500 employees – has a worldwide presence in 120 countries as part of the Oerlikon Manmade Fibers network of production, sales and distribution and service organizations. At the R&D centers in Remscheid, Neumünster and Chemnitz, highly-qualified engineers and technicians develop innovative and technologically-leading products for tomorrow's world.

For further information: www.oerlikon.com/manmade-fibers