



PRESS RELEASE

Mannheim, 11 March 2011

Federal Minister Dirk Niebel visits the Headquarters of the VAG-Group in Mannheim

Today, Dirk Niebel, Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, paid a visit to the Mannheim headquarters of valve manufacturer VAG.

Contact with the VAG Group was established last year during the minister's journey to South America and he was accompanied by representatives of Germany's industry and business. Mr Niebel, together with Mr Fellner-Feldegg, VAG's Managing Director, travelled to the South American Countries of Bolivia and Peru. The target of the trip was to establish contacts with water authorities in order to improve the infrastructure of these countries' drinking water supply networks in the long term.

VAG has developed a Pressure Management System which can reduce water losses in supply networks by up to 50%. Water losses occur due to leaks in pipelines which are mostly caused by excessive pressures. The VAG Pressure Management System controls the pressure in the pipeline based on the instantaneous demand for water. This ensures that pressure is built up only to a level which is the absolute minimum required for reliable water supply.

Through Mr Niebel, contact was also established with Hermann Sewerin GmbH, a company which develops technology for the detection of leaks. In the future, VAG and Sewerin intend to form a strategic alliance to be able to offer customers an integrated solution ranging from leakage detection to repair up to the reduction of new leakage. The cooperation meets with the Federal



Minister's approval. "That's what I call economic cooperation when two companies jointly develop a solution to be able to support their customers."

Especially in Latin America drinking water ranks among the most important resources. To train people in the proper handling of this precious resource, VAG offers free training courses to water authorities on how to handle drinking water and valves. In Lima, Peru, VAG in cooperation with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) [*German Organisation for International Cooperation*] also supports two projects in which the VAG Group took over the costs of the pressure management components. Within just a few months, water losses were reduced by 40%.

Finally, Mr Niebel stated with a smile that it was funny that one had to travel to Boliva first to find out what "treasures" the *mittelstand* of the Electoral Palatinate had to offer.

For more than 130 years, VAG-Armaturen GmbH, the modern company with a long tradition, has been operating wherever water is treated, stored and distributed. With more than 1200 employees world-wide, the valve manufacturer is a global player and as a provider of systems and solutions sets new standards in water and waste water technology. With its over 180 sales representatives, 17 sales agencies and 4 production facilities, VAG is at home all over the world.



Picture 1: from left Oliver Wagener (Chamber of Commerce Rhine-Neckar), Hans-Peter Bauer (BMZ), Manfred Schmidt (Head of Technical Design, VAG), Dr. Birgit Reinemund (MP), Dirk Niebel (Federal Minister), Frank Wierum (VAG), Peter Oppinger (Managing Director of VAG-Chile), Lutz Happich (Head of Pressure Management, VAG)



Picture 2: A tour through the production facilities