

A GLANCE AT THE PAST

On April 29th 1850, a Royal Decree was signed that permitted the establishment of a Black Powder factory at Clermont.

Pyrotechnic mission of Clermont was significant from the very beginning of the activities on the site and was constantly strengthened throughout the 150 years of its industrial existence.

Clermont factory has a history rich in experience in various fields :

- Manufacturing of black powder (1850 to 1962)
- Manufacturing of safety fuses and wires, manufacturing of mine clearing wires (1860 to 1969)
- Manufacturing of smokeless nitrocellulose powder (shotshells powders in flakes and granules) (1894 to 1964)
- Manufacturing of shotshells (1899 to 1936)
- Manufacturing of nitrocellulose (1901 to 1940)

History of Clermont has been strongly marked by the advent of new techniques :

- Acquisition of a license from OLIN in the United States for the manufacture of spheroidal powders which enabled the installation of the first European industrial facilities of this type at Clermont (1952)
- Building of an industrial complex for the production of artillery and tank combustible cartridge cases and accessories with extension of the laboratory in metrology (1979)
- Building of a nitroglycerine production plant, whose process was developed in Sweden, which secures self-sufficiency for the company (1991)



Since April 29th 1850, different names were given to this factory :

- HILGERS & Cie Company : 1850
- MULLER Company : 1872
- S.A. Poudreries Réunies de Belgique : 1919
- S.A. PRB : 1969
- S.A. PB Clermont –SNPE Group : 1990

THE INDUSTRIAL SITE

Factory is located within the bounds of the County Borough of Engis in Liège Province of Belgium and covers a partially wooded

area of close to 250 acres (100 Ha), on the right bank of the river Meuse between Huy and Liège.

Advantage was taken of the sloping site to distribute the work's activities over three levels :

- Production departments, general services together with the physical and chemical and metrological laboratories are located at the lowest level
- The ballistic stand is at mid slope

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- While the top level is occupied by the powder final homogenisation workshops and packing facilities, as well as by the finished products storage warehouses.

MANUFACTURING KNOW HOW

Manufacturing know how is based on three essential requirements :

- adherence to, at every operating level, simple, detailed and reliable procedures
- systematic use of the proven results obtained to ensure without fail the essential traceability of all products and their reproducibility
- timely planning of production to achieve optimum quality together with a short cycle time of manufactured products, ensuring customer delivery times and competitive prices

QUALITY ASSURANCE KNOW HOW

Quality control is essentially carried out by physical and chemical, metrological and ballistic laboratories.

Further to customers requirements and in close cooperation with Production and R&D, the Quality Control Department prepares specifications for raw materials, production in the line and finished products. The specifications have close but realistic tolerances and are regularly reviewed.

The laboratories must then efficiently check and interpret the compliance of products to these specifications : to do so ,they have specific equipments (for example : barrel test), and beside them , apparatus making use of modern analytical techniques : liquid and gas chromatography, spectrometry, spectrophotometry, piezometry, microcalorimetry, etc. ...

DEVELOPMENT KNOW HOW

Faced with an extensive and highly diversified world-wide market, Clermont has made a point of listening carefully to customer requirement and trends.

Whether a performance level is to be enhanced or existing products are to be optimised or innovations are to be made into new applications, use is constantly made of research supported by the acquisition of complementary know how and equipment.

This is a vital strategic way, that ensures the correct updating of offered range of products.



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CERTIFICATION OF COMPANY

Quality, as well as safety and productivity, constitute one of the pillars of the preservation and the development of Clermont.

In order to answer efficiently to customers' requirements and to assure quality of suppliers, Clermont has implemented a quality system conform to the international requirements for ISO 9001 and AQAP 120. This system defines through rules and procedures, the task of each one in order to reach these aims.