


ARMS FOR THE WORLD



Arsenal Co. is a distinguished Bulgarian armaments company with a history that reaches back to 1878. Emma-Jane Batey interviewed executive director, Mr Christo Ibushev, to learn more about the company's high quality, high performance products and its plans for continued success.

Arsenal participates in all the major international exhibitions for the machine tool trade, such as EMO in Hanover, which is the world's largest machine tool exhibition and Milipol, which is a Paris-based trade fair for the police and state security industries. Mr Ibushev continued, "We do not only attend European based exhibitions – we also attend events such as IndoDefence in Indonesia. Actually, we first attended this event two years ago and we were the only Bulgarian company there. This year, the whole of the Bulgarian defence industry will be there!"

Quality is king

A key reason why Arsenal is such a major player in the international defence industry is the quality of its products. Its production is primarily based around the import and export of military products, such as weapons, ammunition and their related components.

Products include custom made pistols, sub machine guns, assault rifles, grenade launchers and light, medium and heavy machine guns. Ammunition products include artillery rounds, mortar bombs and hand grenades. Mr Ibushev told us, "Our machine guns are accurate and efficient as they can be paired with tripods and the custom designs for the pistols can include handle variations and logos." The company also provides civilian products, such as industrial machinery and tools, rifles and ammunition for the hunting sector and law enforcement equipment.

All of the products manufactured by Arsenal are supplied with extensive quality assur-

ance guarantees. As a supplier to NATO, the company maintains the quality management system applicable to the design and production of armaments, ammunition and components in accordance with the strict AQAP 2110 certificate – an internationally recognised mark. Its design, manufacture, delivery and service have the ISO 9001 accreditation.

All this is underpinned by the research and development of new and improved products. In addition to its product development section, Arsenal has an impressive engineering department at its head office which was established in 1987

and continues to generate valuable solutions.

Industry Europe asked Mr Ibushev what the company hopes to achieve in the short to medium term. He told us, "Our traditions as a company will continue because our history and reputation is very important to us. We will make sure that we marry this with our very modern technologies and our rapidly growing international client base. We already have some interaction with customers in western Europe and North America for our end products, so we are working towards increasing this." ■

Arsenal Co. is based in the city of Kazanlak, in the geographical centre of Bulgaria. Originally a state owned operation, Arsenal is proud to have been a fully self-supporting economic unit since 1947 and in the years since then has become an international armaments powerhouse, with extensive quality assurance and a reputation built on trust and high performance products.

Mr Christo Ibushev, executive director of Arsenal, has a family history of working at the company. He told Industry Europe, "This company means everything to me. Arsenal has always been a part of my life, even before I joined three years ago, because my father has worked here for a number of years and he is now the chief of the board of directors. Even though Arsenal is 130 years old, we are committed to being fresh and modern – we utilise the very best in the latest technology and make sure our products are market leaders."