



Eschler Group considers relocating Swiss production plants

FOCUS ON NICHE PRODUCTS – ESTABLISHMENT OF A TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION CENTRE IN SWITZERLAND

The Eschler Group, which specializes in textiles, is considering the closure of its sites in Bühler (AR) and Münchwilen (TG). The production of a massively reduced product range is to be relocated to its existing subsidiary companies in Germany and Thailand. At the Bühler site, a technology and innovation centre will be created for special textiles. The planned restructuring of the Group is a consequence of the substantial worsening of economic conditions in Switzerland.

As the management of the family-run company has announced, the discontinuation of production in Bühler and Münchwilen will lead to job cuts affecting 75 people. At its plants in Thailand and Germany, Eschler will increasingly focus on the manufacture of niche products in the fields of sport, workwear, technical textiles and lingerie. These two sites are to be further developed as centres of excellence in their specialist fields. The headquarters of the group will remain in Bühler, where a technology and innovation centre is to be retained with around 15 jobs engaged in development and research work for future new products.

The planned measures by the Eschler Group are a reaction to developments on which the company has no influence. For some time, the textile industry has seen quality products replaced by cheap goods from the Far East, leading to enormous pressure on prices and crumbling margins. These developments have also left their mark on Eschler. The continuing trend now affects not only the mass production of low-cost textiles, but also products in the medium to high-end segment. The strength of the franc has also had the effect of squeezing margins even further and has hugely compromised the competitive position of Eschler Switzerland with exports accounting for almost 80% of its business.

The planned optimization of production sites and the focus on highly innovative products is designed to safeguard the continued success of the company that is so steeped in tradition. The management firmly believes the planned restructuring can preserve the competitiveness and hence the know-how of the company.



About the company

The Eschler Group with headquarters in Bühler, Appenzell-Ausserrhoden, was established in eastern Switzerland 84 years ago. The family-run company with over 160 employees at four production sites is one of the world's leading manufacturers of functional textiles. Besides its sites in Bühler and Münchwilen, it has subsidiary companies in Thailand and Germany