# SICK on course for substantial growth and innovation

Core business expanded, R&D investments at record level

Waldkirch/ Hannover, April 2018 – The SICK Group achieved record results during the 2017 fiscal year. By the end of the reporting period on 31.12.2017, orders received exceeded those of the previous year by 10.3 percent, amounting to EUR 1,542.8 m. Sales, of which more than 20 percent took place in Germany, grew by 11.0 percent to EUR 1,511.6 m. After deduction of taxes, Group profits amounted to EUR 104.3 m. The workforce grew by 9.5 percent to 8,809 employees – 5,224 of them in Germany. Investments in research and development reached EUR 169.4 m., a year-on-year increase of 18.1 percent, underlining the SICK Group’s consistent alignment on growth and innovation.

The reasons for the consistently good development during the entire course of the year lie in the continuing high demand for intelligent sensor solutions that improve productivity in factory and logistical processes, as well as workflows, together with general growth of the world economy, and the successful introduction of new products and system solutions.

**Further expansion of core business in industrial automation**

During the 2017 fiscal year, SICK again further expanded its business with sensors, systems or services that help customers improve productivity, increase flexibility, and conserve resources – particularly in worldwide factory automation and in logistics automation. The continued high demand worldwide was felt in both segments, though there were major regional differences. Process automation was below expectations due to a lack of investment in the oil and gas industry. This segment did, however, experience a boom in China because the country is still making considerable investments in emission measurement technology for power stations, as well as for waste and recycling plants.

**Greater investments – also in new business models for Industry 4.0**

Investments in research and development represent an important basis for securing the company’s future. R&D activities during the 2017 fiscal year also underline the ambitions of the SICK Group to maintain its leading position among sensor producers worldwide – given the paradigm change and market upheavals triggered by digitalization and Industry 4.0.

SICK has an intelligently diversified product portfolio in its core business of industrial automation due to continuous and intensive R&D activities, and can thus meet the requirements of the most varied of applications and sectors. This was confirmed by, among other things, more than a dozen product innovations in 2017, such as the new line guidance sensors for automated guided vehicles based on a variety of physical operating principles; the first safety laser scanner with CIP Safety™ via EtherNet/IP™; innovative particle measurement devices and ultrasonic gas counters; or a 2D LiDAR sensor and a multi-layer scanner – both designed to provide driving assistance and collision prevention for autonomous vehicles and mobile objects. R&D work also focused on developing application- or sector-oriented complete packages for mobile intralogistics, for example. These enable customers to obtain all coordinated components from a single source, without interface or availability risks.

Sensors from SICK will also take over the role of important data providers in the intelligent factory. The company is therefore not only driving forward the development of sensors and sensors solutions, but also investing a significant part of its R&D expenditure in, among other things, the further expansion of the AppSpace ecosystem – SICK’s digital programming platform for differing sensor technologies with cloud connection – as well as in new digital business models, such as a solution for the cloud-based processing of incoming goods with merged sensor data and securely encrypted Trusted Connector data transmission, developed in collaboration with the Fraunhofer AISEC and the International Data Space Association.

SICK will continue to invest a double-digit percentage of sales in R&D in future. It is important to understand customers’ requirements and implement these intelligently and efficiently in new products, system solutions and service concepts. The SICK Group is consequently also aiming for new record figures in 2018: “We will further increase our R&D expenditure in order to expand both our stock portfolio and our data-based solutions for Industry 4.0 simultaneously. We have founded Start-Up Initiatives within the Group alliance to develop new digital business models and exploit the opportunities of Industry 4.0. We expect another single-digit percentage increase in sales in 2018,” according to Dr. Robert Bauer, Chairman of the Executive Board of SICK AG.

Picture: e-infographic\_SICK-2017.jpg
All the signs were that the SICK Group would grow during the 2017 fiscal year.

Picture: CEO\_Dr.Bauer\_Robert.jpg
Dr. Robert Bauer, Chairman of the Executive Board of SICK AG.

SICK is one of the world’s leading producers of sensors and sensor solutions for industrial applications. The company, founded in 1946 by Dr. Erwin Sick and based in Waldkirch-im-Breisgau near Freiburg, is a technology and market leader with a global presence – with more than 50 subsidiaries and associated companies, as well as numerous sales offices. SICK achieved Group sales of about EUR 1.5 bn. in the 2017 fiscal year with almost 9,000 employees worldwide.

Further information on SICK is available at http://www.sick.com or by phone at +49 (0)7681 202-4345.