

1. PREFACE

**Ladies and Gentlemen:
Dear Readers:**

“The Wind of Change” was the title of an EU seminar on the use of energy in the steel industry. But this expression could also be taken as the motto for the present Corporate Responsibility Report (CR Report) because, just like other industrial conglomerates, voestalpine too is faced with the challenge of having to respond to increasingly rapid changes in its business environment. What is even more important, however, is the need to contribute proactively to sustainable technologies.

In recent years, voestalpine has had to radically redefine its understanding of the concept of responsibility, with the result that its focus has shifted. The evolution from a conventional steelmaker to a global technology group probably was the biggest change. At this level, it is no longer enough for the company to fulfil statutory requirements and act responsibly within the confines of its facilities. Today, our approach in terms of both time and geography is much broader. Our task now is not only to predict customers’ needs through our research, but also to break new ground—particularly in ecological terms.

voestalpine’s quest to minimize emissions in production has been integral to our activities for quite some time. The challenge is to help our suppliers and partners adopt the high standards that we set for ourselves.

As far as our employees are concerned, nowadays our responsibilities go far beyond the specific work process. Our human resources activities encompass training and continued education, the promotion of women, the integration of people of different nationalities, and the promotion of employee health.

Our expanded understanding of “corporate responsibility” (CR) poses major challenges for us. This makes cooperation projects ever more important, whether as part of the UN Global Compact (UNGC) or ResponsibleSteel, an industry initiative that we help shape in crucial ways.

I can say with a good conscience that we are well positioned when it comes to both sustainability and responsibility. Not only has voestalpine developed a detailed strategy with respect to corporate responsibility, which was introduced

in last year's CR Report, the issue has also been firmly established as part of its overall corporate strategy. This ensures that corporate responsibility is taken into account from the start in all decisions, all planning, and all reporting processes.

At this point, I want to highlight a few areas that saw intense activity this past year. H2FUTURE, our contribution to the development of technologies aimed at producing steel in ways that lower CO₂ emissions, is particularly important. Our related EU showcase project in Linz will launch demonstration operations shortly.

It goes without saying that electromobility is a major issue for us, given our position as an important supplier to the automotive industry. This is evident from the extensive resources that we have devoted to (and continue to spend on) the development of new products in this area as well as from our sponsorship of the Formula E.

As part of the Sustainable Supply Chain Management (SSCM) project, both our suppliers and our partners are regularly reviewed based

on carefully elaborated criteria. This is an important aspect of our quest to secure the high standards we have defined for ourselves.

Of particular importance are our committed employees who, in their great diversity, contribute their talent with great enthusiasm. Without them, voestalpine would not be as well positioned for future challenges as it is today. It is critical to voestalpine to be considered an attractive employer, so that it can attract young talent to the company and maintain the loyalty of employees who have rendered outstanding services to us. As a company that operates production plants, workplace safety naturally is an important issue that we take very seriously. We are very pleased to be able to report on positive developments in this respect also.

Even though the current situation on the world political stage does not offer much hope for optimism, I am convinced that our corporate responsibility strategy prepares us well for the future and that our employees, with their commitment and enthusiasm, will contribute toward achieving our goals.

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