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German Companies in Qatar: Rohde & Liesenfeld

Rohde & Liesenfeld (R&L) is a German based logistic service provider for all cargo business, including the project sector. R&L's headquarter was established in 1954 in Hamburg as a privately owned and managed company. The company maintains more than 70 offices in some 35 countries worldwide and offers far reaching solutions for individual and complex logistics challenges. R&L Qatar was established in January 2001 under the management of Mr Philipp Luehrs.

GATE: When and how did the R&L venture into the Middle East?

LUEHRS: We established our first business unit in the Middle East in Dubai (UAE) in 1997 as a commercial delegation office, acting as the regional office in the GCC. In 2001 we opened fully operational offices in Qatar and early 2004 in both Kuwait and Dubai.

GATE: How did you come into Qatar market?

LUEHRS: Subsequent research and frequent market activities resulted into defining the State of Qatar as a strategic area for R&L's further development in the Middle East. Qatar was then and still is considered as being one of the fastest growing countries within the GCC, not only on the back of huge natural gas resources but also in view of hosting the Asian Games in 2006 which will elevate Qatar in the international arena.

The most significant step for Rohde & Liesenfeld in Qatar was the award of a three year contract by the state owned Qatar Petroleum (QP) responsible for all oil and gas industry processes in Qatar and abroad, including exploration and drilling for oil, natural gas and other hydrocarbon substances, production, refining, transport, storage as well as trading, distribution, sale and export of these substances. We are proud to be associated with Qatar Petroleum and many of its affiliated companies and joint ventures to which we provide complete purchase order management and transport logistic services.

GATE: How would you describe your core business in Qatar?

LUEHRS: R&L Qatar is divided into three business sectors: Firstly, we have a general freight forwarding division "R&L Overseas", covering import and export of cargoes by air, sea and overland. The second section "R&L Solutions" provides expediting and order management services including

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transport logistics for the oil & gas companies and petrochemical industry in Qatar. The third section "R&L Projects", offers complete project logistic services to the EPC/EPIC contractors, coordinates plant relocation and rig moves to and from Qatar. We operate in Doha with an industry unsurpassed staff compliment of six well trained and internationally experienced, European logistic experts, strengthened further by a team of multinational staff members from India, Sudan, the Philippines and South Africa that strikes to become the leading freight forwarding and project logistics company in Qatar.

GATE: Would you advise other German companies to invest in Qatar?

LUEHRS: Most certainly - in my opinion Qatar will play an increasing economic role within the region as it gradually develops to assume a hub function for neighbouring countries due to its well-developed infrastructure and new airport construction plans. Under the leadership of the Emir HH Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, the State of Qatar is politically stabile and offers a safe environment for its people and expatriate workforce.

GATE: Mr. Luehrs, we wish you further success in Qatar and the Middle East and thank you for the interview.