

Harri Natunen/MRN

27 May 2004

**QUALITY AWARD FOR APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING
TO KOKKOLA ZINC OY**

Kokkola Zinc has today received the Quality Award for Apprenticeship Training granted by the Ministry of Education for the year 2004. The Central Ostrobothnia Apprenticeship Center nominated the company for the Award. The Minister of Education and Science, Ms Tuula Haatainen presented the award to representatives of the company at the Government Banqueting Hall in Helsinki.

The Quality Award for Apprenticeship Training is granted in recognition of a high quality of apprenticeship training and of the results achieved as well as of the exemplary work done to develop apprenticeship training. The grounds for the Award are presented in Finnish in the press release published by the Ministry of Education and on the Ministry's website.

Harri Natunen, President of Kokkola Zinc Oy, regards the Award as a remarkable recognition of the systematic personnel policy of the company. The company has during recent years paid much attention to the competence and skill of the personnel. Apprenticeship education has played an important role in this respect.

"This is a very valuable recognition of the advanced training programme of the company. At the same time we also owe the Quality Award to our cooperation network within training", he says.

At present a change of generation is going on at Kokkola Zinc. Together with its local and national cooperation partners Kokkola Zinc has developed a training system based on apprenticeship, which aims at transferring the know-how of the experienced zinc makers to the young generation. Continuous development of the skills and know-how of the new workers is a remarkable factor of success having a substantial impact on the competitiveness. Kokkola Zinc has applied apprenticeship training since 1996.

Kokkola Zinc Oy is one of the leading zinc producers in the world. Merely high technology or efficient production is not enough; the personnel and its know-how are our most important resources", Natunen emphasises.

All new workers joining the company via recruitment training, popularly known as the zinc course, have the opportunity to continue their training. The target of this training is a degree or diploma in maintenance or chemical technology. The knowledge and skill required for this diploma can be achieved through apprenticeship training. Also the more experienced workers have the same opportunity to develop their competence. About 320 workers, i.e. 65 per cent, are presently taking their trade diploma or have already taken it. All new workers take part in the training.

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