

PRESS RELEASE

VAN OORD ANNOUNCED WINNER OF THE IADC SAFETY AWARD 2025

Voorburg, the Netherlands, 18 September 2025

During the IADC Annual General Meeting in Stockholm, Sweden, IADC Secretary General, René Kolman, announced the winner of the Safety Award 2025. The IADC Safety Award is granted each year to a dredging company that has showcased an innovative solution to safety challenges often encountered throughout the global industry. This year's award went to Van Oord for its new gasket design.

DREDGING CONTRACTOR AWARD

Van Oord was granted the Safety Award for coming up with an innovative way to improve safety in gasket connecting.

When connecting the flanges of steel reclamation pipes, a paper gasket is placed in between to seal the gap. When using traditional gaskets, workers have to hold the gaskets in place during the sealing process, creating a potential risk of finger injuries. With Van Oord's redesign of the gaskets to add "ears", personnel are now able to keep their fingers further away from the flanges, therefore significantly reducing the risk of injuries while connecting reclamation pipes.

For each 12-metre section of reclamation pipe, a gasket must be placed. With kilometres of reclamation pipes being connected annually by the global dredging industry, this small change in design can have a huge impact in reducing the risk for personnel involved in this activity.

The new gaskets were developed after reclamation workers at Van Oord shared their concerns and ideas for improving the issue. After a few hours of brainstorming and development of the new design, the new gasket was created.

With this solution, the gaskets themselves remain the same and only a small change in design was needed.

ANNUAL AWARDS SHOWCASE AND CELEBRATE SAFETY INNOVATION IN INDUSTRY

"Ensuring the safety of workers when assembling reclamation pipes is a challenge all too well known among IADC members. This solution may sound simple at first, but the impact is significant. With up to kilometres of pipes requiring assembly every day on projects across the globe, elegant solutions like the Van Oord gasket design can really make a difference. With this design, Van Oord hope that they and other companies can avoid cases of serious injury and at the same time cut down on lost work time." said René Kolman, Secretary General of IADC.

"We are proud to share our gasket redesign with the dredging industry. It is a simple, cost-effective solution that we hope will have a big impact. This innovation is a great example of the importance of creating a culture of safety. By empowering our colleagues to speak up and voice their concerns, and listening to their ideas for improvement, we can all benefit." said Martin Smouter, Director Dredging & Infra at Van Oord.



On behalf of Van Oord, Martin Smouter (l), Director Dredging & Infra accepts the Safety Award 2025 which was bestowed by IADC's President Frank Verhoeven (r).

ABOUT IADC

The International Association of Dredging Companies (IADC) is the global umbrella organisation for contractors in the private dredging industry. IADC has over a hundred main and associated members. Together they represent the forefront of the dredging industry. An industry that makes the world a safer, better and more sustainable place to live. And IADC is driven to help that industry move forward with a variety of activities and publications, all available on our website www.iadc-dredging.com.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Ria van Leeuwen
Senior PR & Communications Officer, IADC
Phone: +31 (0)70 352 3334
Email: vanleeuwen@iadc-dredging.com