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France's cement industry prudent for 2016

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According to the French union of the cement industry, Syndicat français de l'industrie cimentière (SFIC), the sector remains prudent for the future.

Sales in 2015 fell 5.3% year-on-year to 17.2 million tonnes, as low as 1964.

The market suffered the flatness of the new construction market, a continual drop in non-residential construction and an absence of investment in public works.

Consumption has fallen by around 1 million tonnes/year since 2007, reports Raoul de Parisot, president of SFIC.

He believes the lowest point in the cycle was reached in 2015, although the sector remains "prudent for the future."

In the first two months of 2016 consumption rose 3.7% and production has ceased to drop. SFIC expects an end in the lowering of business in 2016 and a stabilisation of consumption at around 17.2 million tonnes.

It is reported that the five cement groups present in France and members of **SFIC**, **Lafarge**, **Ciments Français**, **Eqlom**, **Vicat** and **Kerneos**, have lost just over €1 billion (US\$1.12 billion) in revenue since 2007.

In 2015, revenue stood at €2.3 billion, compared to €2.5 billion in 2014.

Despite the business cycle, overcapacity remains significant with production in 2015 of 15.6 million tonnes, while the current production capacity stands at 27 million tonnes.

As a result, Lafarge France announced the closure of two of its nine cement plants in France (Le Havre and Angoulême) and their transformation into grinding stations, with the loss of 202 jobs in total.

The cement industry is counting on major projects such as the Grand Paris Express; the Lyon to Turin trans-Alpine road, and the densification of cities, notably underground.

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www.Vicat.com

SFIC

www.infociments.fr/

Lafarge

www.Lafarge.com

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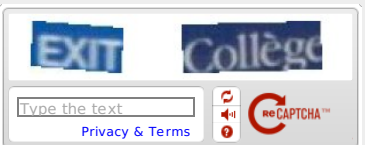
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