

Eandis fits steel and city life perfectly

The new Ferrari red gas cabinet is a hit in Antwerp

Everybody is familiar with the graffiti covered gas cabinets in aluminium or brick housing somewhere in their neighbourhood. These cabinets are part of a large network and are essential for supplying natural gas at the required volumes and pressure to companies and households for cooking, heating, washing, etc. Although everybody likes the comfort of having access to natural gas, no one likes to have such a cabinet nearby for reasons of aesthetics, noise, and so on.

Elster-Instromet has already been working for quite some years as a preferred and strategic supplier for Eandis for the construction and engineering of distribution and customer cabinets for natural gas. These cabinets are single- or double-lined systems for natural gas volumes from 650 to 6,500 m³/h. The gas is delivered through an underground pipeline system at a pressure between 5 and 15 bar.

The birth of the "Ferrari" gas cabinet

In 2007-2008, Elster-Instromet received an order to build a special kind of gas cabinet: a Ferrari red cabinet. Reason enough to get in contact with Mr. Karel Bontemps, Project Supervisor for EANDIS, the largest mid-pressure gas network operator in Flanders. Mr. Bontemps is responsible for coordination and deals with project partners and public authorities involved in large infrastructure projects.

The project in question arose within the scope of an urban renewal project in the north of Antwerp, where an entirely new recreation zone was to be developed. The only problem was that the gas cabinet had always been there, but the architect was not so keen on the "boring building" in the middle of his project. Since Flanders is one of the highest populated regions per square kilometre in the world, there were not many options for an alternative location. That was how the idea came about to create something special that would fit in with the "trendy" look of the city quarter.



This was, of course, easier said than done. All parties concerned had to be convinced of the concept.

First, the Eandis Technology Department had to consider the technical feasibility of the project. Safety was another major issue. The accessibility of the station in case of an incident was also very important. In short: many consequences to consider and much studying to be done before the project could be realised.

Meanwhile, the cabinet has now been operating for three months. With great success. All parties involved in the project, not least the residents, are extremely pleased with the result. The design goes remarkably well with the completely new

area, and is in no way in conflict with the environment.

Even after three months, the cabinet still looks new. Eandis noticed with pleasure that no graffiti or damage have been reported to date. The people are proud of "their" piece of artwork in the neighbourhood, and quite rightly so. Mr. Bontemps informed me that the social surveillance is relatively high and that this has

certainly contributed to the success.

Future projects

The city of Antwerp is developing at a rapid rate and many large infrastructure works will be undergone in the near future (the renewal of Schelde quays, a new quarter for +/- 3,000 inhabitants, a new central traffic hub in the city centre, "Lange Wapper" bridge over the river Schelde, etc.). Perhaps the new standard for city integrated gas cabinets has been set? Elster-Instromet is sure they will in the future receive more such demands to take part in this kind of city renewal project, and is ready to do so. We are at any rate proud to have played a small part in this much talked of project.