



news



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Dakota Arms Hits New Production Targets, Announces Management Changes in Sturgis

Sturgis, SD – The number of rifles coming off the production line at Dakota Arms, Inc. in July was up 42 percent over the number of rifles manufactured in January. Expected revenues from rifles and actions built in July represent a 72 percent increase over the value of January's production.

Patrick Franklin, Senior Vice President and General Manager of Dakota Arms, attributed the company's performance to improved production efficiencies and smarter deployment of human capital.

Franklin joined Dakota Arms in June with over 30 years of management, sales and entrepreneurial experience in a broad range of industries. Most recently he was the founder of a semiconductor metrology company in Silicon Valley that manufactures tools to measure contamination in the computer chip making processes.

"We recruited Pat for the General Manager position because we knew that his unique skill set was exactly what we needed to take Dakota Arms to the next level of revenue growth and manufacturing efficiency. He has brought his considerable talents, energy and enthusiasm to the company and we are already seeing the results in the company's bottom line," said Charlie Kokesh, Chairman of Dakota Arms.

Franklin said, "The Dakota Arms mission statement is 'We make the best custom-made rifles in the world.' The proof is in the high standards of craftsmanship for which Dakota Arms products are universally recognized. The men and women who work for this company have no peers in the firearms industry. They are simply the best at their craft. All we have done is help them do their jobs more effectively by revisiting the planning process and integrating logic and consistency into our systems."

Working closely with plant supervisors, Franklin has undertaken several new initiatives, including the development of a 120-day production schedule that will coordinate customer orders, raw material scheduling, tooling and parts ordering, production and shipments to customers. Mitch Harmon has been promoted to Production Manager to spearhead the production effort.

Franklin acknowledged the history of lengthy delays in delivery that has had a negative effect on customer satisfaction and the financial viability of the company. "The goal is to deliver products to customers within four months from the day the order is

taken. This will be accomplished without sacrificing any of the qualities that make a Dakota Arms rifle so special – accuracy, reliability and beauty,” Franklin said. “We are well along the path toward achieving this goal.”

In addition to making changes on the production floor, Franklin has also recruited a new Controller for the company. Corena Carmichael, a CPA with several years of experience in financial analysis and reporting, audit and purchasing, will join the company in September to keep a firm hand on the budgetary side of the new manufacturing strategy.

In other personnel changes, Franklin has expanded the sales team and implemented a sales incentive plan, which will focus efforts on building retail and dealer sales at the national level. Marla Heble, who has been with the company since 2001, is now a fulltime member of the sales team, joining National Sales Manager Richard Spruill. “Dakota Arms is an industry icon. As word gets out that production is moving full-steam ahead under new management, we are confident that sales will continue to build to record levels,” Franklin said.

Dakota Arms is the leading manufacturer of custom and semi-custom rifles for the sporting markets. The Dakota product lines are universally recognized for outstanding quality, design, accuracy and aesthetic appeal. The Dakota brands include Nesika, Miller Arms and Dan Walter Cases. Nesika produces actions and rifles renowned for their exceptional accuracy; Miller Arms is known for the reliability and performance of its single-shot actions and custom rifles; and Dan Walter Cases are regarded as the premier travel case for shotguns and rifles.

In business for over 25 years, Dakota Arms is strongly anchored in the Black Hills and provides significant economic benefit to the entire region. Recent new hires have brought the number of employees to 40.

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