Silo fire in Uelzen largely contained

Braunschweig, Germany, 27 June 2014

After yesterday’s fire in silo 9 at the sugar plant in Uelzen, the flames are now largely contained. It is still too early to give the all-clear, however.

At around 2 p.m. yesterday, 26 June 2014, a fire broke out on the conveyor bridge leading to silo 9, which was only built last year. The fire quickly spread to the silo’s roof and caused sections of the bridge, as well as the roof itself, to collapse. The roof of the adjacent silo 8 was also damaged by the collapsing bridge. Extinguishing the blaze quickly at a height of 82 meters proved extremely challenging, and specialist equipment was required.

A cantilever arm from the company fire brigade at Airbus in Hamburg as well as two police helicopters were called upon to fight the flames with water from the river Elbe’s lateral canal from early evening until dark before continuing their efforts this morning. The cantilever arm was able to provide an uninterrupted supply of water to the blaze. There does not currently appear to be any further spreading of the fire.

The cause of the fire is not yet known. A total of around 40,000 tons of sugar are stored in the new silo 9, whilst the adjacent silo 8 is currently being emptied of residues. The delivery of high-quality sugar to customers has not been affected and will be temporarily taken over by the other Nordzucker plants. The Uelzen plant had already resumed loading by this morning.

Luckily, no one was injured.

Nordzucker would like to thank all those who helped on site, especially the rescue services, the fire brigade, the police, Airbus and the employees who were working at the time and assisted efforts with unquestionable commitment and energy.
Nordzucker also regrets that the fire meant delays for numerous passengers. We ask for your understanding regarding these circumstances.

More information to follow.