

Swedish Prime Minister visits voestalpine company Uddeholms AB in Hagfors

Today Prime Minister Stefan Löfven visited voestalpine company Uddeholms AB at its headquarters in Hagfors, in southern Sweden. The company is the global market leader in the production of special steels for industrial tool manufacturers. With 850 employees, revenue of EUR 250 million in the business year 2015/16, and an export rate of 94 percent, Uddeholms AB is an important economic factor in the region. Major investment projects will be realized in the coming years, and include the manufacture of metal powder for 3D printing.

Uddeholms AB, part of the Special Steel Division of the voestalpine Group, is specialized in the production of tool steels used in the automotive, mechanical engineering, consumer goods and packaging industries. During his visit to Hagfors, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven was able to see for himself voestalpine's state-of-the-art plant, and to speak with company representatives. "We are delighted that Prime Minister Löfven visited us at our largest Swedish site. This is also recognition of the outstanding work done here by Uddeholms AB employees. The company's success is a shining example of the value of voestalpine's strategic focus on high quality, special products for technology-intensive industries," says Wolfgang Eder, Chairman of the Management Board of voestalpine AG.

Investments in Sweden: focus on producing metal powder for 3D printing

voestalpine has already invested over EUR 100 million in continually expanding technology and capacity at Uddeholms AB over the past decade. "In order to reinforce the company's global leadership in special steels for industrial tool manufacture, over the coming years further investments totaling around EUR 30 million are planned, for new high-tech heat treatment facilities, as well as research establishments to further refine our steel grades. A focus of our future activities in Hagfors also lies in producing metal powders designed for use in 3D metal printers," explains Franz Rotter, Member of the Management Board of voestalpine AG and head of the Group's Special Steel Division.

Only recently a new pilot plant for manufacturing the extremely fine powder went into operation in Hagfors. The powders will be tested and processed into extremely complex components at the voestalpine Additive Manufacturing Center in Düsseldorf, Germany, as well as sold to external customers. This not only opens up a new business segment for Uddeholms AB, but, in its role as a prematerials supplier, also supports voestalpine's next planned expansion in the field of metal additive manufacturing in both Asia and the NAFTA region. Additive manufacturing – also known as 3D printing – makes it possible to produce customized, flexible components with completely new shapes and functionalities all in a single production step. This includes parts with complex cavities or bionic structures, for use in aviation and aerospace, the automotive industry or in tool manufacture.

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Environmental projects and intensive research and development at the site in Hagfors

Over the past years a range of environmental projects have been realized at Uddeholms AB. By converting from oil to liquefied natural gas as a source of energy it has been possible to make huge reductions in CO₂ emissions. The company's research & development department has 50 employees working to strengthen its standing as an innovation leader in special materials, and owns 310 active patents. The company offers sophisticated steel grades via its global sales, warehousing and service network at 120 locations, as well as additional services including processing, sawing, heat treatments and coatings. Southeast Asia, especially China, is the largest market, with its in-house sales brand ASSAB, followed by the USA, Italy, Germany and Sweden.

voestalpine in Sweden

In Sweden voestalpine is represented by six companies from all four divisions (Steel, Special Steel, Metal Engineering and Metal Forming). Its 1,165 employees generated revenue of over EUR 350 million during the business year 2015/16. The export rate for the Swedish companies in the Group is 83 percent. Key customer segments include the mechanical engineering, automotive, white goods and consumer goods industries.

Special Steel Division

The voestalpine AG's Special Steel Division is focused on technologically sophisticated materials and customer-specific services. Due to its unique sales and service network at 160 sites around the world it offers customers material availability and processing as well as local points of contact. The division is the global market leader for tool steel and a leading provider of high-speed steel, valve steel, and other products made of special steels, as well as powder materials, nickel-based alloys, and titanium. The most important customer segments are the automotive, oil and natural gas exploration, and mechanical engineering industries as well as the consumer goods and aerospace industries. In the business year 2015/16, the division reported revenue of around EUR 2.7 billion, of which about 50% was generated outside Europe, and an operating result (EBITDA) of EUR 364 million; it has around 13,500 employees worldwide.

The voestalpine Group

In its business segments, voestalpine is a globally leading technology and capital goods group with a unique combination of material and processing expertise. voestalpine, which operates globally, has around 500 Group companies and locations in more than 50 countries on all five continents. It has been listed on the Vienna Stock Exchange since 1995. With its top-quality products and system solutions using steel and other metals, it is one of the leading partners to the automotive and consumer goods industries in Europe and to the oil and gas industries worldwide. The voestalpine Group is also the world market leader in turnout technology, special rails, tool steel, and special sections. In the business year 2015/16, the Group generated revenue of EUR 11.1 billion, with an operating result (EBITDA) of EUR 1.6 billion; it has around 48,500 employees worldwide.

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