

voestalpine invests EUR 40 million in the growing aerospace segment

Aerospace is a key strategic growth area for voestalpine, and is therefore a high priority in the coming years. Over the medium term the company expects to increase Group revenue in this technologically challenging customer segment from its current level of EUR 300 million to around EUR 500 million. In the next two years voestalpine will invest over EUR 40 million in a new high-tech, high-speed forging line at Group company Böhler Edelstahl GmbH & Co KG in Kapfenberg in order to literally give additional thrust to this growth. The state-of-the-art facility is scheduled to go into operation as early as in 2018, and will primarily be used to manufacture forgings as pre-materials for extremely high load-bearing aircraft components, such as engine parts, or as workpieces for sophisticated products used in the oil & gas industry.

Over the next one and a half decades global demand for almost 40,000 new aircraft is forecast. The major investment in a new, state-of-the-art forging line demonstrates that voestalpine is again staying abreast of the dynamic developments in the aerospace sector. “The aerospace industry is one of the key drivers of our international growth strategy in the future market of mobility. All most important aircraft manufacturers already rely on technologies and products from voestalpine. By intensifying our innovation and investment activities we aim to further expand our position as a leading provider also in this sophisticated customer segment,” explains Wolfgang Eder, Chairman of the Management Board of voestalpine AG.

Fully automated facility sets new standards

The Special Steel Division of the voestalpine Group is one of the leading global suppliers of high-performance materials and special forgings for the aerospace industry. Its highly stress-resistant products include structural parts, engine components and mounts, landing gear parts, and door segments that are used in the aircraft programs of manufacturers including Airbus, Boeing, Bombardier, and Embraer. “The new high-tech forging line will not only play a key role in increasing volumes in the aerospace business segment, but it will also set new standards in product quality, process automation, and digitalization. As a result, this investment significantly strengthens the technological leadership enjoyed by our Styrian production companies. Investment in a new special steel plant is also in planning as a means of opening up new dimensions in materials production. This is in addition to, and independent of, the current project. A final decision on the location of the special steel plant is expected for the second half of 2017,” says Franz Rotter, Member of the Management Board of voestalpine AG and Head of the Special Steel Division.

Moreover, the new facility will produce forged components for oil and gas exploration which are required to withstand extreme conditions both on land and at sea. The high-tech forging line will process the material with a pressing force of 4,400 tonnes and a speed of up to 120 strokes per minute, or 2 strokes per second.

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Böhler Edelstahl GmbH & Co KG and the Special Steel Division

Böhler Edelstahl GmbH & Co KG, a subsidiary in the Special Steel Division of voestalpine AG and based in Kapfenberg, is one of the most important suppliers of tool steels, high-speed steels, and special materials in the world. The company has a product portfolio covering around 250 various steel grades. Its high-performance materials are primarily used in tool construction, aircraft, turbines for power generation, and in oil & gas extraction. With its workforce of around 2,400 employees, Böhler Edelstahl GmbH & Co KG generated revenue of over EUR 620 million during the business year 2015/16.

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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