

press release

File name: Raut –WC103 – 1107.doc
Ref: WC103 (11/07)
Version Two – amended 28/11/07

Title: Rautomead continuous casting technology for high-speed Chinese railways

Release Date:

Continuous casting technology specialists, Rautomead Limited, of Scotland, have signed a contract with NKT Cables GmbH, of Cologne, Germany, to supply a copper-magnesium casting machine to NKT's wholly-owned subsidiary company in Changzhou, China.

Through their European operations at HFB Hettstedter Fahrleitungs-und Bronzedraht-GmbH, nkt cables group has been using Rautomead technology for production of copper-magnesium wire rod for over fifteen years. This is used principally as the contact wire in high-speed rail systems in the European market.

nkt cables group's latest investment for manufacture in China reflects the enormous scale of development of the transport infrastructure in the country and also recognition by the Chinese railway authorities of the advanced technology available in this field from Europe.

Outstanding properties

With its superior balance of tensile strength, electrical conductivity, good wear and environmentally neutral properties, copper-magnesium is the preferred alloy in many countries for contact wire in high-speed rail systems with running speeds of 300 km/hour and more.

Rautomead Limited
Continuous Casting Technology
PO Box 100
Dundee DD1 9QY
Scotland

t: (44) 1382 622341
f: (44) 1382 622941

sales@rautomead.com
www.rautomead.com

Accurate control of magnesium

Magnesium is a light and volatile element, where even a very small variation in alloy content causes unacceptable changes in key physical properties of the product. It is, therefore, technically difficult to achieve the necessary consistency of quality in the manufacturing process. Rautomead's unique resistance-heated continuous casting furnace design enables the magnesium to be accurately controlled and uniformly distributed in the alloy. The new Rautomead machine will be installed in the second quarter of 2008.

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For further press information, please contact:

Rautomead Limited

PO Box 100

Dundee

DD1 9QY

Tel: + 44 (0) 1382 622341

Fax: + 44 (0) 1382 622941

E-mail: sales@rautomead.com

Web: www.rautomead.com