

## Groundbreaking ceremony for multi-million project at voestalpine in Linz

**voestalpine is investing EUR 188 million to build a new integrated pickling line in the cold rolling mill 3 (“BETA 3”) at the site in Linz. The fully automated pickling line with tandem cold mill meets the most stringent Industry 4.0 standards, further increasing the manufacturing quality of high and ultra-high strength steels for the automotive, household goods, and construction industry, as well as for electrical steel used in e-mobility. BETA 3 also sets new sustainability standards: hydrochloric acid takes the place of sulfuric acid for pickling of carbon steel qualities. The required acid is regenerated in a circulatory system using an on-site acid regeneration plant. Today marked the groundbreaking ceremony for the multi-million project; BETA 3 is scheduled to commence operation in late 2023. The plant will have an annual production capacity of around two million tons.**

Pickling is a key process in the manufacture of cold-rolled steel strip and is an intermediate step between hot and cold rolling. The acid removes mill scale, a dark oxidation layer which forms on the surface of the steel as it cools after hot rolling and impairs the surface quality of the steel strip and later products. To date, this process step was undertaken in pickling plant 1 which has been in operation since 1953. Investment in a new facility will allow all the necessary pickling and cold rolling process steps to be integrated into a single facility, shortening the overall processing time, and simplifying the logistics.

“We are continuously working to extend our technology and innovation leadership. The new facility will be state-of-the-art in terms of both digitalized processes and sustainability. The investment is an important step towards further strengthening our leading position in our key markets,” stresses Herbert Eibensteiner, CEO of voestalpine AG.

“Investments for the future, such as the new pickling facility in Linz, raise process efficiency, increase product quality, and play an important role in meeting our customers’ exacting demands. Projects such as this strengthen Linz as a location over the long term,” says Hubert Zajicek, Member of the Management Board of voestalpine AG, and Head of the Steel Division.

Previously, it was necessary to transport the hot strip bundles between pickling line 1 and the cold rolling mill 3. The new investment makes this logistical step redundant. Furthermore, BETA 3 makes it easier to process ultra-high strength steel strip, wider strip widths, and smaller strip thicknesses.

### Sustainable investment

BETA 3 will use hydrochloric acid for pickling, rather than sulfuric acid, in accordance with customer specifications. The acid will be regenerated in a circular system, i.e., it will be treated and subsequently reused in the pickling process. A new hydrochloric acid regeneration facility is being constructed at the site for this purpose. Another measure designed to protect the environment is the construction of a sewer overflow: rainwater will no longer be channeled into the sewer system, instead a new drainage system will be built, directing it underground, i.e., returning it to the ecosystem.

**The voestalpine Group**

In its business segments, voestalpine is a globally leading steel and technology group with a unique combination of materials and processing expertise. This global Group comprises about 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, it is a leading partner to the automotive and consumer goods industries as well as the aerospace and oil & gas industries; it is also the world market leader in railway systems, tool steel, and special sections. voestalpine is fully committed to the global climate goals, and its greentec steel program represents a clear plan for decarbonizing the production of steel. In the business year 2020/21, the Group generated revenue of EUR 11.3 billion, with an operating result (EBITDA) of EUR 1.1 billion; it had about 48,700 employees worldwide.

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