Construction industry

Tarmac Trupak

Solid Oil bearings

Maintenance levels extended with Solid Oil bearings

Innovative Solid Oil bearings from SKF are helping Tarmac Trupak cut the cost of maintenance significantly at its sand bagging facility. Whereas the conventional bearings that were used previously needed replacing every five weeks, the Soild Oil bearings continued to operate effectively for five months, producing a cost saving of £7,600 for the company.

Tarmac Trupak is the UK's leading producer of bagged sand for building, construction and related applications. At its production facility at Rochester, in Kent, the company's main sand bagging machine processes around 100 bags every hour. As a result, any downtime proves extremely costly.

Kevin Taylor, Chief Engineer at Tarmac Trupak, explained, *'The bearings used on the sand bagging machine are subjected to continual particulate and moisture contamination due to being in contact with wet abrasive sand. As a result, the standard bearings that we were using needed replacing every five to six weeks, resulting in downtime of two to three hours each time. The replacement costs and production downtime were simply unacceptable, so we approached BRAMMER for a solution'.*

Having sourced all of the Rochester plant's maintenance, repair and overhaul equipment for three years, the Maidstone branch of BRAMMER, an SKF Authorised Distributor, understood Tarmac Trupak's needs clearly. BRAMMER recommended that the standard bearings being used in the sand bagging application be replaced by Solid Oil bearings, which are specifically designed to prevent the ingress of contaminants.

Solid Oil bearings are essentially sealed for life, using a conventional cage and rolling element arrangement that incorporates a specially developed oil-impregnated polymer material in place of standard lubricating grease. This Solid Oil completely fills the internal voids within each bearing, leaving a narrow gap between rolling elements and raceways. The micro-porous structure of the polymer material holds up to four times more oil than a conventional grease-filled bearing, and allows oil to be released gradually around the moving internal surfaces, ensuring uniform and consistent lubrication for the operating life of each bearing.

Solid Oil bearings are ideal for use in areas with high levels of contaminants, such as the Tarmac Trupak sand bagging application, as the polymer layer prevents the sand and water from attacking the moving bearing parts and shortening bearing life. The Solid Oil bearings had an immediate impact on Tarmac Trupak's production uptime, operating effectively for between two and five months before requiring replacement. As a result, machine downtime has been reduced considerably, allowing the company to optimise its productivity.

Kevin Taylor commented, *'Using the old bearings we could never be sure when one might fail and often we would need to replace all four bearings in a machine at one time, having an impact on the entire production process. Now we know that, in terms of bearings, production will be uninterrupted for at least two months, and we can schedule replacements when it suits us'.*

Tarmac Trupak sand bagging facility

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