

Press release

SKF gains contract for train bearing units

SKF has concluded an agreement with Transwerk in South Africa, to supply train bearing units (TBU), including axlebox housings for one train set of 68 ore cars. The cars are manufactured for delivery to LKAB, Sweden. Each car is equipped with eight units from SKF. Deliveries were initiated during the month of September. LKAB has an option for the supply of additional 600 ore cars from Transwerk. The option means that a further 4 800 sets of TBUs and axleboxes are potentially to be supplied by SKF.

SKF has been working for nearly four years in close co-operation with MTAB, a subsidiary of LKAB. Luleå Technical University and SKF Engineering & Research Centre in the Netherlands have also been involved in the project to find and develop suitable lubricants to cope with the arctic climate of Northern Sweden. The lubrication is a key factor to ensure the smooth functioning of the bearings, and thus the whole train. Poor or incorrect lubrication can lead to bearing failure and even derailment of the ore cars.

The ore cars for LKAB are manufactured by Transwerk in South Africa. Adtranz Wheelsets supplies the wheels and axles. SKF's bearing units are manufactured in Italy and the boxes are made in France. These are transported to Sweden to be mounted on the axles, which then are mounted on the mining cars from South Africa.

LKAB has also bought nine heavy-duty double locomotives from Adtranz. Each of these locomotives has 12 axles. The bearings, axleboxes and also the traction and transmission bearings come from SKF.

The value of the whole package, including the options, is about SEK 50 million.

SKF has for a long time supplied bearings and boxes to MTAB and LKAB and provided these companies with technical support.

Göteborg, October 9, 2000
Aktiebolaget SKF
(publ.)

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