



# TrasMec

Tecnologie per la trasmissione meccanica

Overview of RKB rolling bearings.

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# A passion for bearings for over 70 years

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For over seventy years, RKB group has been manufacturing rolling bearings for the heavy industry. Besides the high-tech profile of their products, the company stands out for a flexible and efficient organization, and for direct control on all manufacturing stages. The group has a turnover of 20 million Euros approximately for technological bearings only and a staff of six hundred people. Based in Balerna, Switzerland (Ticino Canton), RKB group has close to 90,000 square meter facilities in total, including 13,500 in the European headquarters and 65,000 in three production sites in China, directly controlled by the company. Another key strength and peculiarity of RKB is large availability from stock, offering one of the best product ranges in Europe in terms of variety and quantity. The warehouse, with a financial value of 35 million Euro approximately, is managed using a proprietary software (ASSM - Active Strategic Stock Management), designed to deliver competitive benefits in terms of global time-to-market reduction. RKB operations are not limited to Switzerland, as they involve



**The industrial community is well aware of the critical role of rolling bearings as connecting elements between the static and dynamic worlds. In this domain, RKB solutions meet the strictest market specifications, with a unique range in terms of variety and quantity, available from stock.**

Italy, Ireland, China, Japan, The Netherlands, Belgium, Vietnam and Mexico, with a distribution network covering all continents.

## Capital-intensive operations are carried out in the Swiss headquarters

By virtue of the engineering and managing know-how acquired through many years of experience "in the field" and a vertically integrated production system, RKB solutions meet the requirements of a more and more demanding market, where bearings must ensure high reliability standards. RKB's organization and production

approach, based on the consistency and solidity of all activities, was analyzed in 2004 by the Tokyo Institute of Technology and the Switzerland Economy Business School, two of the most prestigious institutes in the technical and economic domain. All capital-intensive activities (including concept, design, engineering, fine-tuning, R&D, laboratories, quality control, guideline creation, protocols and procedures, sales, logistics and after-sales operations) were kept in the Balerna headquarters, in order to guarantee consistency and reliability in the long term, as well competitive prices, flexibility, quality and fast

The RKB headquarters in Balerna (Switzerland).



A CNC lathe in action at the RKB T3 site.



The laboratory for R&D activities at the European headquarters.

delivery. The RKB production sites, with ISO 9001:2002 and ISO 14001:2004 certifications, are exclusively dedicated to machining operations, using high-tech machine tools, according to the instructions sent each day by the European headquarters that also take care of raw material provisioning.

### Production can be divided into three product areas

The RKB product range can be divided into three specific areas: segment T1, i.e. miniature and precision bearings with small balls up to 35 mm inner bore diameter; segment T2, i.e. standard rolling bear-

ings; segment T3, i.e. technological bearings and optimized bearings for specific applications with executions up to 1,800 mm outer diameter.

These products are manufactured in compliance with the latest and strictest international standards, mainly addressed to the Iron&Steel, power transmission, Marine&Shipyard and renewable energy industries. Currently, the alternative energy sector is an opportunity and a major challenge at the same time, due to rigid procedures for the certification of original equipment and to the demand for higher and higher performance, often managed in

co-engineering with customers. It is not mere chance that the share of custom products, built to specific user requirements, exceeds 50% of total production.

The natural growth of RKB group, based on an alternative business model that assigns about 10% of annual turnover to R&D activities, will lead to the consolidation of the brand at international level and in the different target markets. Within the next five years, the company has plans to be listed in the Swiss Performance Index of the Zurich Stock Exchange. Opening up the stock capital to third-party and institutional investors is a necessary step to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the product and service offer to final users. ■