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SKF and VBN in additive manufacturing cooperation

Gothenburg, 25 March 2022: SKF and VBN Components have been working together for several years within additive manufacturing of hard and highly wear resistant steels with significantly enhanced fatigue properties. As a next step, a joint project is planned with the potential application of this technology on large size bearings.

VBN provides unique alloys for additive manufacturing, sold under the brand name Vibenite. The cooperation has mainly been focused within aerospace and racing where additive manufacturing has offered several advantages, including less complex and time-consuming manufacturing solutions, as well as environmental benefits.

SKF and VBN will next focus on the potential application of this technology on large size bearings. In these applications lighter weight components have the potential to improve performance under demanding conditions and will enable further weight optimization of machinery.

The use of the Vibenite materials in the components developed by VBN and SKF is as a result of the cooperation also expected to enable significant environmental benefits. Since additive manufacturing makes it easy to produce components from very hard materials, material consumption can in specific applications be reduced by 80–90%.

The Vibenite materials also have the potential to enable improvements in the material for many applications. VBN has customers that have increased the lifetime of components by more than ten times, resulting in a significantly reduced CO₂ footprint. In collaboration with SKF, Vibenite materials have been shown to provide very good rolling fatigue resistance due to their purity, hardness, and fine microstructure.

Victoria Van Camp, President, SKF Technology Development, says: “At SKF, we are constantly striving to improve the performance of our bearings and VBN’s solutions and material are contributing to this. Our cooperation also brings large sustainability benefits. This means that our customers get better products with lower environmental impact.”

Johan Bäckström, CEO of VBN Components, says: “SKF’s focus on continuously improving their products has given us the opportunity to test our Vibenite materials in very demanding applications. We are truly pleased to finally make this announcement after several years of successful cooperation.”

Aktiebolaget SKF
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SKF's mission is to be the undisputed leader in the bearing business. We do this by offering solutions that reduce friction and CO2 emissions, whilst at the same time increasing machine uptime and performance. Our products and services around the rotating shaft include bearings, seals, lubrication management, artificial intelligence and wireless condition monitoring. SKF is represented in more than 130 countries and has around 17,000 distributor locations worldwide. Annual sales in 2021 were SEK 81,732 million and the number of employees was 42,602. www.skf.com

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