



Normet restructures

Normet is restructuring, aiming to become a truly global player in the underground market. The establishment of a new distribution network with headquarters in Switzerland and regional offices in Asia, Australia and the United States will, the company believes, enable it "to focus more strongly on its international presence, to build closer customer relations and to offer more comprehensive support on a global basis."

The Headquarters of the new distribution network, Normet International, is located in Baar, south of Zurich and manage global sales, marketing, Life Time Care customer service, regional offices, distributors, and customer relations. The Swiss operation is headed up by Tom Melbye, Normet's new chief operating officer. "The most important aspect of the new set-up is the change from a product and production driven company to a market driven organization. For instance, most Normet sales have been made through distributors, but from now on sales will be in Normet's own hands. We will have much more face-to-face contacts with our customers, and this will enable us to improve our product and service offering and adapt it much faster to the needs of our customers." he says.

"Our objectives and expectations for the near future are high. Within the next three to four years we plan to double our turnover, expand our Life Time Care offering and get more work force. All this will take place through organic growth, strategic partnerships, and in some cases also through strategic acquisitions."

The new region Europe includes Europe, CIS, Africa and the Middle East and is headed by Jorma Piironen. At the beginning, the region's office is located in Iisalmi, Finland but will later move to Switzerland. Additionally, there is a Normet operation in Kazakhstan, where a subsidiary company was established in 2006. In Russia the company has three offices, in Moscow, St. Petersburg and Norilsk.

The region Asia also includes Australia and New Zealand and is headed by Bill Reid. The office is located in Adelaide, South Australia, and there will be three branch offices in the major mining areas (Perth, Kalgoorlie and Mt. Isa). A new office in Shanghai will cover the Chinese market.

The office of the region Americas is located in Miami, Florida and is in charge of North and South America. The regional director is Heikki Ulvila. An office and service centre in Chile will take care of the South American markets.

Melbye is confident of Normet's future development. "Normet already has a large range of high-quality machinery and the company's sales have increased in double digit numbers during recent years. I am sure that taking this major step to become a global player, will not only further enhance Normet's performance, but will bring us much closer to our customers and enable us to respond more quickly to the ever-changing market demands".

He also points out that since early 2006 Normet has increased its manufacturing capacity at its Iisalmi plant by over 100%. "We are well prepared for future challenges", he says. In fact, the investment into manufacturing has already paid off when two months ago Normet concluded the biggest single deal in its history: Altogether 27 units of various machines were sold to Norilsk Nickel in Siberia.

"But whatever Normet's role in the international scene will be, its home base will always remain in Iisalmi. Here are our roots and our manufacturing expertise", Melbye concluded.

Normet was founded in 1962 and has since become one of the leading manufacturers of underground utility/service equipment. Normet's main products include concrete sprayers, lifting and charging equipment, as well as underground transport vehicles. Normet machines incorporate the most modern technical features combined with professional research and development in close co-operation with customers. Two years ago, Normet launched its Life Time Care (LTC) concept. With LTC, Normet aims to develop the customer-supplier relationship to a new level. The concept extends the supplier's interest to follow the machines' life by offering a lifetime support to customers.

Tom Melbye, COO of Normet Group and Managing Director of Normet International recently joined Normet after a long career with BASF Construction Chemicals. He has over 30 years of experience in underground construction, both as contractor and as supplier of chemical products and equipment. He has been involved in planning, supervision and troubleshooting of important international projects in sprayed concrete, injection, grouting, anchoring, and concreting. He has designed new technologies and has patents for new product systems. Since 1992 he has been an active member of EFNARC (European Federation for Specialist Construction Chemicals and Concrete Systems) and served three years as the president of the federation.

Bill Reid, Regional Director of Region Asia and Managing Director of Normet Asia-Pacific, has a long experience in civil engineering and business management of concrete, quarrying, construction chemicals, and mining. During his career he has been working in Central Asia, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, China, the Middle East, and Australia.

Heikki Ulvila, Regional Director of Region Americas has over 30 years of experience in international positions in different continents, particularly in Latin America. For the last two years he has been in charge of Normet's LTC concept.

Jorma Piironen, Regional Director of the Region Europe, CIS, Africa and the Middle East has been with Normet over 20 years and for the last three years he has been in charge of Normet's global sales. www.normet.fi