

Alcoa Wheel Products Europe **NEWSLETTER**

March 2007

Alcoa increases Dura-Bright® wheel capacity

Alcoa Wheel Products Europe will be installing a Dura-Bright® line at its manufacturing facility in Hungary. The new line will be the third such global facility and will provide a significant addition in wheel capacity for its popular Dura-Bright® wheels. The new facility will be operational in January 2008.

The demand for Dura-Bright® wheels has been absolutely phenomenal and with the introduction of Dura-Bright® automotive wheels Alcoa expects this to increase substantially. This new line will allow Alcoa to keep pace with demand while also providing the European customers with more efficient and timely product delivery in 2008 and beyond."



Until the new Dura-Bright® line in Hungary is operational, Dura-Bright® wheels in Europe will continue to be supplied ex Cleveland, Ohio, USA as well as Alcoa's newest Dura-Bright® facility located in Monterey, Mexico. The Monterey facility began operations in 2006 and will help shorten European lead times for Dura-Bright® wheels considerably.



Alcoa Wheel Products recently introduced Dura-Bright® wheels with XBR™ technology, an enhanced version of its original Dura-Bright® wheels. Wheels manufactured at the operation in Hungary will be Dura-Bright® wheels with XBR™ technology. Dura-Bright® is not a coating, it is a surface treatment that penetrates the aluminium, forming a protective barrier that becomes an integral part of the wheel. Dura-Bright® wheels can be cleaned easily with water and soap. No polishing needed!

Shows and Truckfest

We will be pleased to welcome you at

- Solutrans in Lyon, stand J45 , hall 6 April 17-21
- CV show in Birmingham, stand 2360, hall 2 April 24-26
- Tip-ex in Harrogate, stand 44, hall F May 3-5
- Peterborough Truckfest May 6-7



Beware of Alcoa Imitation Wheels!

During the past couple of months, we have come across some Alcoa imitation wheels through our distribution network. Cracked wheels were sent to Alcoa distributors by end users, trying to get these wheels replaced by Alcoa wheels under the 5-year warranty agreement. The European Alcoa Wheels organization wants to warn the market of these imitation wheels.

These wheels seem to be based on the shape of old generation Alcoa wheels, making it difficult to identify the differences between an original Alcoa forged aluminium wheel and an imitation.

These imitation wheels however did not pass the critical tests at LBF and TÜV, nor have they been homologated by the truck OEMs.

A wheel is a safety part on both truck and trailer. For over 50 years, Alcoa has provided a safe and reliable design, combining optimal strength, performance and efficiency, based on the unique Alcoa forging process.



Customers and resellers may be challenged or confused how to determine whether it is a genuine Alcoa or an imitation.

The following information will help you to identify genuine Alcoa wheels.

on the outside of the wheel

- Alcoa sticker
- Alcoa roll stamp (indication of wheel size, part number, max. load, country of origin, production date)

on the inside / drop center:

- laser dotted identification
- barcode label



If you have any questions regarding this issue, please contact Alcoa at info.wheels@alcoa.com or call +32 11 458460.

Alcoa is developing new 22.5 x 15.00 trailer wheel

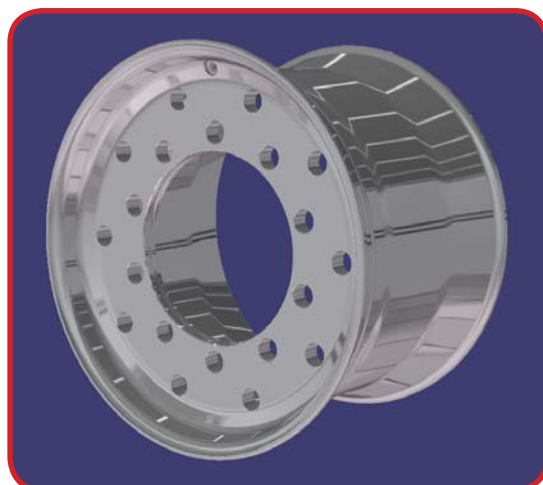
Upon request of the trailer industry, the tyre manufacturers have developed new tyre sizes: 455/40 and 455/45 R22.5.

The reason for this new development is the use of the same axle for all segments, also for high volume trailers, combining a low floor with axles and brake systems as used for 22.5 wheels and tyres.

In its role of **aluminium wheel innovator**, Alcoa is following this development and is working on a new trailer wheel.



Dimension: 22.5 x 15.00
Offset: 120 mm
Weight: 32.5 kg
Load rate: 5150 kg



Alcoa forged wheels, the strongest and best choice for construction vehicles



In the world of heavy-duty vehicles in Italy, the construction industry is a key sector. In its role of market leader, Alcoa is focusing its research and development on the problems encountered in this specific market. The main concern of owners of construction vehicles, is the strength and reliability of their wheels. The majority of transport companies working in the construction sector, experience problems in terms of the durability of their wheels.

Experience teaches us that in this type of off-road transportation, the wheels are subjected to bigger strains compared to normal road transport, and therefore require particular characteristics with regards to durability. Tests have proven that the Alcoa forged aluminium wheels have a mechanical strength which is up to 4.5 times higher compared to traditional steel wheels that are normally used in the construction sector. This means that transport companies operating in quarries and on construction sites can noticeably lengthen the life of their wheels by mounting Alcoa forged aluminium wheels and thus avoiding breakdowns. To demonstrate the properties of their forged aluminium wheels, Alcoa has started a series of tests on off-road transportation, with positive results.

Claudio Cerelli is the owner of a small fleet of 8x4 vehicles and operates in the construction transportation industry in the Frosinone area. One year ago, Alcoa convinced him to mount 12 Alcoa forged aluminium wheels on his own truck, replacing the steel wheels, and today Claudio is really satisfied with his choice. He has not had as many breakdowns as before and on top of that he has decreased the weight of his vehicle by 250 kg, an important added value in terms of useful cargo. The punctures he has had have been easier to handle, due to the fact that the wheels are much lighter, and he also noted a longer life time of the brakes.

He will continue to specify Alcoa wheels for his vehicles instead of the traditional steel wheels that caused him many problems in the past. Moreover, he intends to mount the new Alcoa WorkHorse™ wheels, which are specifically designed for off-road transportation, on the new vehicle he plans on ordering.

In fact, WorkHorse™ wheels are the future wheels for the construction industry. WorkHorse™ wheels are Alcoa's answer to problems in off-road transportation.

This new wheel has all the characteristics of Alcoa wheels, but has no ventilation holes, to protect the disc brake system from sand and gravel penetrating through the ventilation holes.

On top of that, Alcoa WorkHorse™ wheels offer a 5% increase on the maximum load allowed and, due to their new and sturdier design, the durability of these wheels is even longer.

Alcoa WorkHorse™ wheels are available in Brushed and Mirror Polished surfaces, with 26 as well as 32 mm bolt holes, in sizes:

22.5 x 8.25

22.5 x 9.00

22.5 x 11.75, 120 mm inset

22.5 x 11.75, 135 mm inset





Alcoa Dura-Flange® wheels

Since 2002 Alcoa has been testing their Dura-Flange® wheels in different environmental conditions. Tests conducted in the Swedish mining industry proof that Alcoa wheels are the strongest. According to Robert Lilja and his crew at Malmtransport I Norrland AB, Alcoa Dura-Flange® wheels have a life-time which is three times longer than the steel wheels they used before.



Their trucks are operational 24 hours, 7 days a week. It is important for them and for the company that exploits the mines that these trucks keep going without any unplanned service stops. They load and unload 36 to 40 tons of waste material during each ride, 4 to 6 times every hour, and this continues without interruption the whole year. The roads are often slippery and covered with sharp stones. Therefore they need to replace tires every 70000 km.

It has been proven that Alcoa Dura-Flange® is a reliable wheel for use in these severe conditions with heavy loads and rough environment. Earlier problems of cracking wheels and broken hubs have more or less disappeared.

Henry Isaksson at tire dealer Gruvdäck I Gällivare AB, who is responsible for the changing of wheels at Malmtransport I Norrland AB, has noticed lower maintenance costs with Dura-Flange® wheels and an improvement regarding rim horn wear on the wheel.

The rim horn wear is lower than on steel wheels. In the past, they had to replace steel wheels within 6 to 9 months, after only 130000 km. The Alcoa Dura-Flange® wheels are still running after approximately 3 years and 400000 km without any problems. Henry Isaksson says he recommends Alcoa Dura-Flange® wheels as the best wheels to use in these rough conditions.



Bernt Sirviö Åkeri AB, a logging fleet in the North of Sweden, has also been testing Alcoa Dura-Flange® wheels. According to them, these wheels will last longer than the trailer, which means the test can continue to approx. 1 million km. Until today these wheels have been rolling 480000 km without any severe rim horn wear. They can see that the surface of the coating is worn out, but the rim horn is still intact.

Bernt Sirviö Åkeri AB state they have already earned back their investment in Dura-Flange® wheels, thanks to the lower weight (500 kg saving compared to steel wheels) and increased payload.