



Outokumpu reference story

"The absolute vantage of Katsa is the domestic existence. Maintenance is done here in Finland, and we can do business with a domestic partner. That is very relevant to us," says Reliability Engineer Mika Näätsaari from Outokumpu's Tornio stainless steel plant.

Näätsaari truly has a perspective on this, and he knows what he's talking about. He has worked at the Tornio plant for 20 years and held a variety of positions among mechanical maintenance work during the years. Näätsaari's current job description include spare parts surveys, preventive maintenance work for different units and making the suggestions for major repairs if needed.

Näätsaari has been co-operating with Katsa the half of his career years in Outokumpu, since 2011. Originally the co-operation with Katsa based on the manufacturing certain spare parts such as gearboxes for various devices. The co-operation in those respects continues still but two years ago, Outokumpu's requirements and needs increased. Outokumpu needed a reliable, domestic operator who could also overhaul the transmissions for the grinding machines, not only supply spare parts. At that time, based on the recommendation of his current supervisor Pasi Lassuri, Mika Näätsaari approached Matti Kumpuniemi, who is a Sales Manager at Katsa.

At the Tornio steel melt shop, the recycled steel is smelted in the arc furnaces and then the smelted steel is cast into 25 tons steel billets (plates). Some of the steel billets are brushed and polished to ensure better quality. Billet grinding is an important part of the steel production at the Tornio plant. The gearboxes overhauled by Katsa are specifically designed to fit into these grinding machines. The gearboxes must withstand heavy use and extreme heat. The diameter of the actual grinding wheel is about 900 mm, engine power 315kw and the steel billets up to 600 degrees must be able to be ground. "For us, one of the most important selection criteria for a new service partner was that we no longer needed to send the gearboxes for repair or overhaul in Central Europe," says Näätsaari.

"Of course, just as important besides to the nearby maintenance is the functionality and reliability of the actual devices, while the durability must be at least 1 year without any device failures or breaks", he continues. Besides to that, the absolute strength and benefit of Katsa is the shorter service transportation distance which saves time, effort, and money."

Speed, a short distance and the fact that we can communicate in Finnish even in challenging situations, eases the communication and simplifies the collaboration" Näätsaari sums up.

"In terms of results, it is a bit early to say far-reaching effects, as this is still a recent case and just about a year ago the gearboxes, were put in place. In connection with the annual maintenance plan the gearbox are detached and transported to Tampere, where the maintenance also takes place. Katsa is a different partner in that respect that they are doing all the repairs and maintenance actions in the service workshop in connection with the actual manufacturing plant - even these special gearbox repairs and overhaul. "When we are talking at all about these kind of maintenance services, related for example to this steel polishing machine in Tornio steel plant, no question that it is a very demanding job" says Matti Kumpuniemi.

Although the exact quality of the service is not yet known, Näätsaari is impressed and convinced that the cooperation is working very well with Katsa. "We feel very positive, because we've seen how the collaboration works and how easy and effortless the communication has been - even in the most challenging situations," says Näätsaari. Näätsaari has also in mind the challenges of another gearbox as well. This gearbox has been in even worse condition than the first one and the promise on behalf of Katsa is, that it will become properly working gearbox in the future and if that succeeds, it's a great demonstration about the fact that Katsa has a very professional team" states Näätsaari.

When asked about the disadvantages of the cooperation, Mika Näätsaari is quiet for a moment and in a little while he states that "the only minus I can come up with is that due to the current COVID19 situation we haven't been able to visit Tampere on site yet, even if it would be very nice to meet both people and see the manufacturing site and service facilities itself".

What has been particularly good about working with Katsa then? "Collaboration and communication have been very good. We have always been able to call to each other and we've always find an answer. It has been easy to do business and interact with everyone. The reporting has been nothing less than excellent", complements Näätsaari. "Whenever some device or gearbox has been sent to the maintenance, a clear and comprehensive disassembly report has been obtained. It has increased trust and transparency into our cooperation", says Näätsaari.

"If something must be particularly named, there has only been a slight twist with Katsa of that gearbox which was in worse condition whether that can be refurbished at all. But all and all for that as well, a mutual agreement was reached, and that gearbox was delivered to them as parts. Katsa measured all the parts and considered various options and finally they concluded that refurbishing succeeded, and the expectation is to have an intact gearbox," rejoices Näätsaari.

"Looking to the future, Tornio steel smelter has a wide variety of other gearboxes that would require maintenance and / or refurbishment. So, in the future it will be important to expand our cooperation.

In terms of order, they will be considerably larger and more challenging assignments, but the asset is that we already know each other, and we have a solid and effective cooperation," sums Näätsaari.

All in all, Mika Näätsaari says that he is very satisfied with the co-operation what Katsa has brought. "If there has been any kind of issues or challenges, the time window resolving them has been very short, and the answers and solutions from Katsa have come quickly. There have been challenges, but those have always been overcome," he continues.

It is clear that if the special gear works as, it has worked now, Outokumpu's desire to continue the cooperation with Katsa is extensive. "If there will be another type of gearbox later, there will be so many perspectives to consider. But the time will show" Mika Näätsaari tells. "At the moment there is nothing which would rub us in our cooperation. Nothing annoys. I'm satisfied!" states Mika.

"I'm always happy to choose a domestic partner and service if that's possible. Gotta raise a hat for it. I hope that Katsa will remain in Finland," concludes Näätsaari. To these words are easy to agree with. Let's flagged of behalf of Finland and Finnish work!



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Outokumpu Tornio Steel Plant

Outokumpu Oyj owned steel plant Tornio is the world's most integrated stainless steel production plant, meaning that all the stages of the processing chain are located at the same factory. Outokumpu Tornio steel plant is the largest material recycler in Europe whose main raw material is recycled steel - it accounts for up to 90% share of the completed product. Outokumpu Tornio is a world leader producer of responsible stainless steel with the lowest carbon footprint in its industry.

The factory site covers all the departments of production facilities: steel smelter, hot and cold rolling mill. Covering an area of more than 600 hectares, Tornio plant employs more than 2,000 Outokumpu employees and hundreds of contractors and partners. Tornio steel plant is also the largest single consumer of electricity in the Nordics, total consumption being 3.5 TWh which is about 4 percent of the total on the whole Finnish electricity consumption.