



# European News

## BULTEN



### Bulten Streamlines Its Distribution Chain

As part of Bulten’s strategy to maintain a strong operational platform, the company has reviewed its global distribution chain. This has prompted a decision to close one of the two logistics centres in Sweden. The cost of the closure amounts to approximately SEK 1.5 million. Aiming to bring about more efficient logistics in order to reduce lead times, and streamline processes, while also reducing costs and environmental impact, Bulten has been reviewing its global distribution chain. The company has decided that utilising capacity in warehouses close to production units to a greater extent, will enable a more efficient supply chain. Accordingly, significant investments have been made in a new warehouse near Bulten’s factory in Germany, and in a new surface treatment plant and a logistics centre in Poland. The streamlining will involve the closure of Bulten’s logistics centre in Gothenburg, Sweden.

The goods flows that previously passed through Bulten’s logistics centre in Gothenburg will now be handled by the centre in Hallstahammar, Sweden, and by the above-mentioned logistics centres in Germany and Poland. Ten employees will be affected and trade union negotiations have been initiated. The closure is planned for completion by the end of the second quarter of 2023. “Streamlining the distribution chain will allow better transportation flows and thereby also reduce environmental impact. It will also help us reduce costs and capital tied up,” says Anders Nyström, president and CEO of Bulten.

### Closure of Manufacturing Plant in the UK

Another step in Bulten streamlining its operation and improving profitability, includes the closure of its manufacturing plant in Pembroke, UK. The closure means that 50 jobs are at risk of redundancy. The closing down process was announced in December 2022, and the plan is to complete the process during the second quarter of 2023.

“It is unfortunately difficult to achieve profitability with the mix of products made in Pembroke, and also volumes are relatively low. By moving the parts of production that have long-term potential to our other plants, we can achieve better efficiency and thereby higher profitability. This is in line with our strategy, which includes better utilisation of our production network,” explains Anders Nyström. The operation in Pembroke became part of Bulten Group in 2020 with the acquisition of PSM International. Fifty people are currently employed at the plant, manufacturing and purchasing fasteners for different industrial segments. Bulten’s other operations in the UK will not be affected by the closure of the Pembroke plant.



### NORMA Group CEO Moves

Dr. Michael Schneider stepped down as CEO at NORMA Group at the end of 2022, following mutual agreement, which was reached with the supervisory board back in August, when it was decided not to extend his contract, which officially expires mid 2023. As of 1st January 2023, Miguel Ángel López Borrego is the new interim CEO, following NORMA Group’s supervisory board deciding to appoint him to the role until the position of CEO has been



permanently filled, which is expected to have been done by the end of 2023.

Chairman of the supervisory board, Günter Hauptmann, said the group was extremely pleased to have Mr. Borrego fill the CEO role during this transitional period to ensure continuity of the company’s management, adding: “He is exceptionally well-positioned to leverage his deep insight into NORMA Group’s business model and the challenges it currently faces, enabling him to guide the company through the current turbulent economic environment in an organised and competent manner.”

Mr. Borrego has been a member of the NORMA Group supervisory board since March 2021 and as CEO of Siemens SA in Madrid, he has been heading Siemens’ Spanish operations since 2018



and has many years of management experience in the automotive, general industrial equipment and new energy sectors.

During the transition phase, Mr. Borrego will continue to implement ongoing improvement measures in the company together with other management board members, though his role on the supervisory board will be suspended. Mr. Borrego said he will be working together with colleagues to “stabilise profitability, compensate for inflation-driven cost increases and enhance plant productivity.” Adding: “With its diversified business model and strong order book, NORMA Group is in an excellent position to take advantage of growth opportunities, even in challenging times.”

### bigHead Invests to Increase Bonding Productivity

In a deal worth GB£1 million, bigHead has recently installed new, state-of-the-art machinery at its facility in Dorset, UK, which will help improve the quality of the technology it uses to make its bonding fasteners for composites. bigHead explains that the new equipment, which was custom-made by Expert Technologies Group, will help reduce the time spent on extra-machining and secondary operations, as well as leading to a 30% - 40% increase in productivity.

Indeed, the company considers long-term investment as its best strategy, adding that the new machines give it a platform to scale the business, as it meets growing demand for composite panel fasteners beyond Europe, from Asia and the USA.

### The Different Methods of Checking Torque Value

Here Dr. Bill Eccles, from Bolt Science, looks at the different methods involved in checking the torque value of a bolt and what is the best method to choose. There are three basic methods for the checking of torques applied to bolts after their installation, namely, taking the reading on a torque gauge when:

1. The socket begins to move away from the tightened position in the tightening direction.
2. The socket begins to move away from the tightened position in the un-tightening direction.
3. The fastener is re-tightened up to a marked position. Clear marks are first scribed on the socket and onto the joint surface, which will remain stationary when the nut is rotated (avoid scribing on washers since these can turn with the nut). The nut is backed off by about 30 degrees, followed by re-tightening so that the scribed lines coincide.

For methods 1 and 2 the breakloose torque is normally slightly higher than the installation torque since static friction is usually greater than dynamic friction. In my opinion, the most accurate method is method 3. However, what this will not address is the permanent deformation caused by gasket creep. An alternative is to measure the bolt elongation (if the fastener is not tapped into the gearbox). This can be achieved by machining the head of the bolt and the end of the bolt so that it can be accurately measured using a micrometer. Checking the change in length will determine if you are losing preload.

The torque in all three methods should be applied in a slow and deliberate manner in order that dynamic effects on the gauge reading are minimised. It must always be ensured that the non-rotating member, usually the bolt, is held secure when checking torques. The torque reading should be checked as soon after the tightening operation as possible and before any subsequent process such as painting, heating, etc.

The torque readings are dependent upon the coefficients of friction present under the nut face and in the threads. If the fasteners are left too long, or subjected to different environmental conditions before checking, friction and consequently the torque values can vary. Variation can also be caused by embedding (plastic deformation) of the threads and nut face/joint surface which does occur. This embedding results in bolt tension reduction and affects the tightening torque. The torque values can vary by as much as 20% if the bolts are left standing for two days.

*Compiled by Fastener World; News provided by Fastener + Fixing Magazine ([www.fastenerandfixing.com](http://www.fastenerandfixing.com))*

### Heavy Duty Anchor Certification

UK Technical Assessment (UKTA) certification has been given to EJOT UK's LEIBIG Superplus BLS range of self-undercutting, heavy-duty anchors – providing assurance to users, such as engineers, designers and architects, that these products fully comply with the post-Brexit standards protocol. EJOT UK worked with the British Board of Agrément to complete the independent assessment of the product, checking its performance data against British and European standards.

Providing an independently assessed performance approval to complement the product's long-held European Technical Assessment (ETA), the UKTA will become increasingly important in specification decisions in projects throughout England, Scotland and Wales, as the UK adopts stand-alone standards. The company says this assessment future-proofs the Superplus BLS anchor by demonstrating its suitability for continued specification and use in light of the transition from CE Marking to the UKCA Mark. The anchor is widely used in nuclear power plants due to its seismic approvals.

Superplus BLS is part of a wide range of LIEBIG and EJOT anchoring solutions that also includes advanced chemical-based systems, concrete screws and through-bolts for concrete and solid base applications.



# News from Italy



Left to right: Steven Kerveillant (COO), Andrea Erriu (Account Manager), Mario Caracciolo (Director & Market Manager Italy & Turkey), Vincent Le Berre (President & CEO)

## Many Announcements at the Annual NOF Metal Coatings Conference

On October 20, 2022, Mario Caracciolo, Director & Market Manager Italy & Turkey for SIE s.r.l., welcomed guests to the large conference hall of the "Environment Park" in Turin as the host of the annual NOF Metal Coatings Europe conference. He had a very positive expression on his face, which reflected his satisfaction with the important new developments that would be revealed during the conference.

For many years, SIE s.r.l., as the representative of NOF Metal Coatings Europe S.A. in Italy, has organized a meeting-congress for customers, technicians, and fastener operators at a hotel in the Turin hinterland.

In 2022, everything changes, as a symbol, the meeting was held at the green technological park of Turin "Environment Park", where green spaces are harmoniously and sustainably blended with architectural structures.

SIE s.r.l. considers this congress to be of particular importance, to the point of requiring the participation of the President and CEO of NOF Metal Coatings Europe S.A., Mr. Vincent Le Berre, accompanied by his closest collaborators.

Opening the proceedings, Mario Caracciolo welcomes all the attendees and particularly the President Le Berre and his collaborators who have come from France. "2023 – emphasizes Caracciolo – will be a very important and full of changes year for SIE s.r.l. which from January 1st, 2023 will change its name to NOF Metal Coatings Europe s.r.l." "Another important news – Caracciolo underlines – is the change of headquarters that has been transferred, precisely in this prestigious technological park that is the Environment Park."

After analysing the market situation, Caracciolo notes as the demand for zinc flakes coatings is growing despite the gradual transition to electric vehicles. After other interesting technical analyses, he concludes his speech by mentioning the problem of finding new application processes for small screws, intended for electric vehicles. After Caracciolo greetings, the President and CEO Vincent Le Berre thanked the attendees for their warm welcome and shared his gratitude for what is being done in Italy, in line with the philosophy of the Group.

"NOF Metal Coatings Europe – Vincent Le Berre reiterates – is continuously reinforcing its European Organization, with enhanced synergies with Asia, North and South America business units, from both an operational and sales force point of view. More actions on the market, product & process developments, and investments in different fields of our activities will take place in a near future, to serve further business and technical development in Europe and Italy." Next, the staff members who accompanied President Le Berre took the floor.

"Based on advanced data research – Steven Kerveillant, COO, points out, – on the automotive industry, we are able to closely monitor zinc flake and GEOMET® development on the market, which have been continuously growing during the past decade. As of today, BEV development is considered as an opportunity to maintain this growth trend, especially with the recent introduction of a new generation of coating equipment, that will allow a better processing of zinc flake coatings on small diameter parts, in both silver and black colors."



First Italian Partners Day by NOF METAL COATINGS EUROPE, October 20th 2022



Left to right- Mario Caracciolo (Director & Market Manager Italy & Turkey), Rocco Coviello (Revifa), Camillo Rumi (Primat), Andrea Erriu (Account Manager), Marco Cibien (Upiveb), visiting the new office facility.



Benoit Millet, Technical Director, summarizes the situation as follows, "After several years of product development to better respond to customer needs in term of climate change and energy savings, we have reached a significant step into the reduction of our curing temperature, that will allow us to start our 1st scale up phase and industrial trials beginning of 2023."

The last taking the floor was Isabelle Perche, Quality and Training Center Director, who in her extensive report is keen to specify, ".....that with the objective to better support existing and future GEOMET® development activities, NOF Metal Coatings Europe has entered into a modernization phase of its training program, with 11 years of experience in this field, and the objective to further support its network of GEOMET® licensees and dedicate to part makers and OEM Partners specific modules, in line with their business and technical demands."

At the end of the conference, the interesting and lively session of questions to the various speakers by the audience immediately began.

Once the conference work was over, all the participants moved to an adjacent room where a generous buffet was served which also proved to be a further opportunity to continue the discussion, initiate new contacts, exchange ideas and impressions.

As a culmination of this interesting and stimulating day, the participants visited the new elegant and modern offices of NOF Metal Coatings Europe s.r.l. located in the "Environment Park" area.

All the staff were there to welcome visitors to the new offices:

- Andrea Erriu – Account Manager
- Mariella Liuzzi - Sales Administration
- Alessandro Asperges – Logistics
- Marinella Rossi - Sales Administration
- Carlo Zevi - Service Engineer
- Luigi Scimè – Technical Service

A team of highly qualified people, a guarantee for the full satisfaction of customer expectations.

With the visit of the new offices, a day full of ideas ended and where there was certainly no shortage of news. ■

*News provided by Marco A. Guerritore,  
Editor in Chief of Italian Fasteners Magazine*

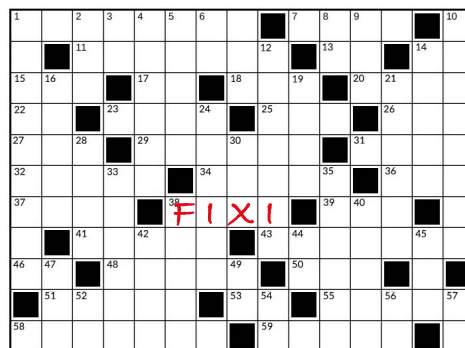
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