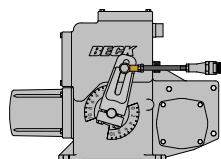


Learning from Old Mistakes



SSAB - Alabama U.S.A.

The SSAB facility in Axis, AL is a steel mini-mill that manufactures plate and coiled products, and it became commercial in April 2001. Major equipment in service includes a Fuchs 175-ton twin-shell electric arc furnace, twin-station ladle metallurgy furnace (LMF), slab caster, rolling mill with a reheat furnace, and plate finishing facilities. PLC controls are used in all areas.

Up until 2003, a total of (93) Beck drives were purchased for this facility as part of original plant construction. Beck was specified for almost all significant modulating dampers and valves. Applications include caster cooling valves, EAF exhaust dampers, baghouse dampers, and all combustion valves and dampers for the reheat furnace.

Project personnel from the Montpelier Works in Muscatine, IA specified Beck for the Axis Mill. The Montpelier Works is a steel mini-mill that was commissioned in 1997 and was built as a turnkey project that did not include Beck drives. As with most turnkey projects, valve and damper actuators with the lowest initial price were purchased for most process applications. Almost immediately there were performance issues with some of the equipment, and Beck was purchased for baghouse damper applications as early as plant start-up because the existing actuators could not be repaired to work correctly. With the operating losses that were experienced, it was easy to justify the cost of replacement Beck drives. Since August of 1997, the plant has been purchasing Beck on a gradual basis to replace the cheap actuators that were installed as

part of original plant construction. A total of (64) Beck drives have been purchased for the Montpelier Works over the years.

Rather than repeat the headaches that were created by not specifying Beck for valve and damper applications from the start, key project personnel from the Montpelier Works decided to specify Beck drives up front for the Axis plant. Even though the initial cost of a Beck drive can be more than other actuators, the ownership cost has proven to be less because of the improved control and reliability that the equipment offers.

The performance of Beck drives continues to be outstanding, which has led to an additional 70+ drives being specified between 2004-2011.



*i.e. Beck rotary 11-409 [Melt Shop
Fume Control Tempering Air Damper]*



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