

press release**File Name: PM56 – (03/11) version 2****Release Date:****INTEREST IN CONTINUOUS CASTING FOR GOLD AND SILVER CONTINUES
APACE FOR RAUTOMEAD**

Interest in equipment for the production of gold and silver coinage strip from continuous casting technologies specialist Rautomead Limited of Dundee, Scotland has continued unabated with the company's announcement of three particularly significant orders from the Far East.

Firm orders have been received to supply RMJ/H 025 table-top continuous casting machines to cast fine gold and silver strip for the Shanghai and Shenyang Mints in China, both of which are state-owned through China Banknote Printing & Minting Corporation, and the Royal Thai Mint in Thailand.

All three orders are significant for very different reasons: those from the Shanghai and Royal Thai Mints because they are repeat orders confirming the strength of Rautomead's ongoing relationships and that from the Shenyang Mint who are replacing existing equipment with their new Rautomead machine.

A YEN FOR CONTINUOUS CASTING

The Shanghai Mint installed its first Rautomead continuous casting machine, an RMJ/H025, for processing gold and gold alloys, way back in 1991 with a second, larger, RMT model casting machine following on in 1994. In response to increasing demand, in 2009/10 the Shanghai Mint opened a new factory facility and, in an expansion of production capacity, installed a new Rautomead RMT continuous casting line incorporating an in-line cut to length saw. The new RMJ/H 025 machine will be installed during 2011 and will be the fourth Rautomead machine supplied to the Shanghai Mint.

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ONGOING TIES WITH THAILAND

The Royal Thai Mint installed its first Rautomead RMJ/H 025 model continuous casting machine with in-line cut to length shear in 1996. During 2010 a second RMJ/H025 machine doubled the installed precious metal continuous casting capacity at the Mint's new factory close to the Don Muang airport in Bangkok. The machine was supplied complete with an automated ingot feed system as well as an automated cut to length shear.

MAKING A MINT FOR INVESTORS

Global investment in precious metals continues to boom with investors looking for less risky alternatives to stocks and shares.

As Rautomead Sales Manager Guy Henderson remarks "We have seen a considerable increase in enquiries for our precious metals casting models from all round the world in recent months. These significant orders from China and Thailand are further confirmation that demand is likely to remain strong".

THE CRUCIAL CRUCIBLE

The Rautomead casting process is based on the use of a graphite holding crucible, surrounded by electric resistance heating elements to provide the power to melt and hold the metal charge. Heating is by thermal radiation and heat convection. The interior of the machine is protected in an inert gas atmosphere to protect the hot-working graphite components.

Silver in particular has a strong propensity to attract oxygen in the molten state. The totally enclosed nature of the Rautomead process, however, where the molten metal is in contact only with the pure carbon surfaces of the holding crucible and casting die, is particularly suitable for casting silver and eliminating any residual oxygen.

ROBUST, RELIABLE AND SAFE

Though many features of the Rautomead process have been developed and refined over the years, the furnace design remains as it was originally designed, over twenty years ago. The machines have proved robust, reliable and safe to operate with many of the early machines still in daily use today.

CASTING FAR AND WIDE

In all, Rautomead has supplied over 150 continuous casting machines for the processing of gold and silver alloys for coinage strip, jewellery, electronics and dental alloy applications. The special features of these machines, along with over thirty years' experience in graphite furnace technology, have cast Rautomead Limited as the number one choice for mints all over the world.

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Photos:

Photo 1: RMT 200 casting machine

Photo 2: RMJ/H 025 casting machine with ingot feed & shear

Photo 3: sample of coin made on Rautomead machine s

Photo 4: sample of coin made on Rautomead machines