

# BULLETIN

ROBIT PLC CUSTOMER MAGAZINE 1/2019

## Tunneling for railways in Thailand

**New distributors  
in North America**

**WestConnex: easing  
traffic in Sydney**

**Robit**

# DEAR READER,

Robit's development in recent years has been rapid, and our great team is motivated to serve our customers better, as promised by our brand slogan Further.Faster. As the new Group CEO, I have the opportunity to work with a highly skilled global team focused on delivering quality service to our customers.

A skilled staff is a top priority to us. We are constantly developing our expertise, working closely with our customers, training our staff, or adding experienced experts to our team. Expertise combined with a flexible corporate culture and strong service attitude are a key part of who we are.

To serve better our piling and tunneling customers we have establishing a new Robit Geotechnical team. Ville Pohja has had a great start as lead of the Geotechnical business, and the customer feedback about the new team's expertise and service attitude has been very encouraging. Underground construction and tunneling is led by Dawie Van Der Walt, who focuses on further developing our tunneling products and services with his unmatched expertise. I am sure these designations will help us be able to serve our customers more effectively.

Our position is steadily strengthening also in the mining segment. We are proud that more and more major mining companies are convinced of the quality and competitiveness of our products. Robit's products are being used in open-pit and underground mines around the world. An example of our product development is the new Evolution TH bit, which has achieved great results for our customers in several underground mines. The heavy duty version of our D65 DTH hammer has cut customers' costs and increased drill metres. We are constantly developing more cost-effective solutions and expanding our product portfolio in close cooperation with our customers.

To sum up, Robit continues to go forward on several fronts. I'd like to extend my warmest thanks to our staff, our dealers, partners and customers!

**Tommi Lehtonen**  
CEO



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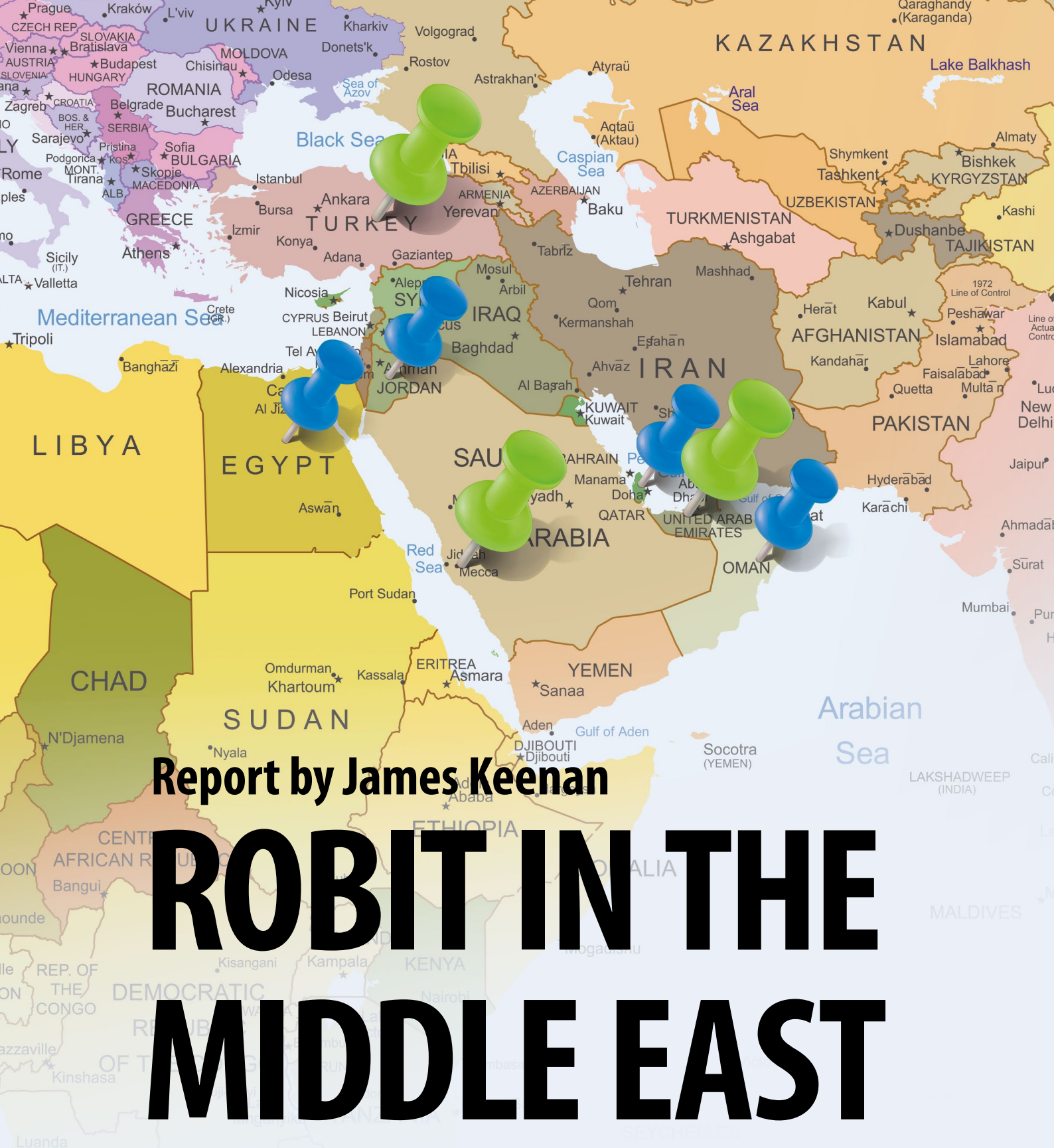
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**Report by James Keenan**

# **ROBIT IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

*In February 2019 I joined Robit Group to assist in developing our distributor network with the aim of increasing our market share in the Middle East. I have spent the past 35 years in the region and hope to add my experience to the young and ambitious team in Finland.*



*James Keenan with Engineer Aziz (left) from Bin Harkil, Robit's Saudi distributor, and two site engineers at Comedat Phosphate Mine, Saudi Arabia.*

The Middle East is not the most straightforward region because of the political unrest and, at times, heavy fluctuation of crude oil price which is the heartbeat of Middle East business and budget planning. At the time of this writing crude oil price is reasonable at around 60 USD per barrel – a good sign for the region.

I'm picking out some highlights of Robit's ongoing and increasing business in the Middle East.

#### **United Arab Emirates**

In the UAE we have secured a second two-year contract with Stevin Rock, a leading quarry operator in the Middle East, for all their DTH tool supplies. We have also started to supply Top Hammer and DTH tools to local contractors and quarries. Another goal is to enter into testing at a large underground oil storage project spanning five years, currently just in its first year.

#### **Saudi Arabia**

With support of our local dealer Bin Harkil we are steadily growing our business. At present we are a

regular supplier to several local contractors working in the Mecca area.

Our goal in Saudi Arabia is to enter into the growing mining sector. We have ongoing discussions with underground mines at Mahad Dahab, Al-Amar, and Amak as well as the Jak Rikjz contracting open cast mine. The cement sector is another key focus area for us in the country.

#### **Turkey**

With our local dealer Guris we have gained a market share in the construction sector. Construction has, however, recently slowed down considerably in Turkey, and we are looking for growth in the mining sector which has remained stable.

#### **New markets**

Middle East continues to have untapped potential for Robit, and we'll be focusing our efforts to making areas such as Oman, Qatar, Jordan, and Egypt new dots on the Robit world map in the near future. Stay tuned!



# WestConnex:

## helping to ease future traffic in Sydney

**Ever since World War II, the motor car, more than anything, has been the driving force behind urban development in Sydney, Australia's largest city.**

To fight the constant traffic congestion, major investments in infrastructure have been made in the car-dependent city over the last decade. In addition to public transport such as light rail lines and the metro system, these include several motorway projects. WestConnex, the largest of them, has been described as the biggest transport project in Sydney and all of Australia since the Harbour Bridge.

WestConnex, in operation since 2015, is a joint project of the New South Wales and Australian governments. It includes a widening of the M4 Motorway, a new section for the M5 South-West Motorway, and a new bypass of the Sydney central business district connecting the M4 and M5.

The M4–M5 Link Tunnels are the most important stage of WestConnex, providing a vital connection between two of Sydney's busiest motorways.

Tunneling work, a joint venture between Lendlease, Samsung C&T, and Bouygues (LSBJV), takes place on three separate sites: St Peters Interchange, Haberfield, and Pyrmont Bridge Road.

Drilling began in April 2019. It involves Top Hammer drilling of holes for ground support at all three sites. The supply contract of TH consumables was awarded to Hard Metal Industries (HMI), Robit's Australian dealer.

"The contract covers the supply of shanks, rods, bits and couplings to LSBJV. Together with HMI we beat off stiff competition from a number of other suppliers", says Technical Sales Representative **Richard Epstein**, Robit Australia.

The supply of Robit tools is expected to continue into late 2020. The entire WestConnex project is scheduled to be finished by 2023. Once completed, it will help thousands of motorists by easing congestion on the M4 and the M5, making their daily commute a great deal quicker and safer.

# Moving Thailand's FREIGHT TO RAIL

**Moving freight across a large, busy country like Thailand is an expensive business. Thailand's logistical overhead is around 1.75 trillion baht (€50 billion) per year. To cut this overhead, the Thai government has started an ambitious program aiming to move a large amount of road and air freight to rail.**

Thailand has about 4,000 km of rail network, most of which is single track. In order to boost the role of rail – currently carrying only 2 % of Thailand's freight – the government plan includes doubling large parts of the single-track railroads.

One of the double tracks to be laid in the first phase (2018–2022) is the 120 km stretch on the Northeastern main line from Map Kabao to Thanon Chira Junction in the central part of the country. This involves the excavation of three new tunnels.

Two of the tunnel sites are located in Saraburi province, some 150 km northeast from Bangkok, and one in Nakhon Ratchasima province, 200 km

from Bangkok. The main contractor for the work is Right Tunnelling (RT), who Robit have been supplying with rock tools for several years.

Drilling work began in January 2019. "We signed a consignment agreement for the job sites with RT in March. It covers a full set of our tools, including bits, rods, couplings and shanks. Things have run smoothly", says **Yong Woo Jeon**, Distributor Business Manager for Robit in the region.

Once completed, Tunnel 1 near Map Kabao – a twin tunnel, 1.4 km each – will be the longest railway tunnel in Thailand. Tunnel 3 at Khlong Phai, Nakhon Ratchasima, will also be a relatively long twin tunnel (1 km each).

Moving a tonne of freight by road costs almost twice as much per kilometre as by rail. The railway project is still in its early stages, but once finished, Thailand can expect huge savings in logistical costs every year.

# HAKANIEMI:

## an indoor market completely remade

**In June 1914, the people of Helsinki had reason to be proud. A new, grand, two-storey indoor market hall, praised as Europe's largest and most modern, opened at the Hakaniemi square. Now, over a hundred years later, the venerable marketplace is undergoing the most thorough renovation of its history.**

Hakaniemi Hall is one of the most massive renovation projects Stara (the City of Helsinki Construction Services) has ever undertaken. The building is protected, so the exteriors must remain unchanged, but on the inside, practically everything has been torn down. The building is now held together by metal buttresses reaching all the way up to the ceiling.

The project began with ground cleaning and reinforcement, as the land under the hall was found to be heavily contaminated. The old load-bearing wooden piles also proved to have weakened over time. They will be cut off and replaced with new metal piles.

In addition to renovation work, the project includes excavations for an underground connection to the

Hakaniemi metro station and to a service yard. The sheet piling work required for the 5–10 metre deep interconnections is carried out by Fingeo Oy.

"In addition to sheet piling, we have driven individual piles in the hall to support the old structures," says driller **Arli Kolamets**, Fingeo. Arli operates a DTH drill rig, with wear parts supplied by Robit.

"Robit delivers our drill bits, pilots, DTH hammers, ring bits and adapters, among others. Deliveries are really smooth and the products arrive at the site quickly. Robit's technical support is also exemplary. I have been given advice on e.g. pile penetration rates and hammer air pressure. The workday often stretches far into the evening and it is great that Robit always picks up the phone. My special thanks to **Sami Paavola** for his competence and customer service attitude", Arli says.

The sheet piling will be completed during summer 2019. A lot of work, however, remains to be done inside – and underneath – the walls of Hakaniemi Hall before it finally reopens, completely modernized, for business in 2021.

# Bauma broke ALL RECORDS

**As was expected, Bauma – the world's most important trade fair for construction and mining machinery and equipment – broke all previous records. The triennial Bauma gathered 3,700 exhibitors and over 600,000 visitors in Munich in April.**

With a total area of 614,000 m<sup>2</sup>, Bauma – now held for the 32nd time – is also the world's largest trade show. Robit had, naturally, reserved some of those square meters for their elegant stand.

In addition to its traditional highlights, Robit introduced a new line of products in Munich.

"We have always been strong in Top Hammer and lately also in Down-The-Hole products. Now we have also entered the rotary drilling market. In rotary

drilling, the sharp drill bit bites into the ground at high rotational speed without percussion. It is widely used throughout the world in mining and construction. This is a significant growth opportunity for us in the future", says **Kari Alenius**, Robit VP EMEA.

Robit's stand gathered a large crowd of interested visitors from all over the world. "We had some really interesting discussions with customers and dealers. Also, receiving concrete feedback from the field benefits our product development", Kari says.

"Our expansion into a new field of drilling was warmly welcomed. Now we can serve our customers even more comprehensively. We currently have a strong focus on increasing our customer base in the mining sector, alongside tunneling and piling."



FURTHER. FASTER.



“They soon realized it would be a win-win situation: they are in a long-lifecycle investment product business, and selling our consumables could help their customer retention”, Mikko explains.

"Our activity in the Upper Midwest has been quite low so far. So this is a step ahead for Robit, particularly in the aggregate sector", Mikko concludes.



*Jim MacPhail (Technical Sales, Pinnacle) and Ville Pohja (Director, Geotechnical Business, Robit) shaking hands at Robit HQ, Lempäälä, Finland.*

# MAKING STRIDES in Canada with Pinnacle

**A large country with a thriving mining industry, both underground and surface; an active and growing construction sector, driven by a good economy. Two good reasons why Canada is an extremely attractive market for a company like Robit.**

Sometimes supply and demand meet in a beautiful way. Robit was looking for a new Canadian distributor, while Pinnacle Drilling Products, a major Canadian dealer and manufacturer of drilling tools, was testing new casing systems for construction piling.

Successful tests, conducted in early 2019, convinced Pinnacle of the quality of Robit's products, and the

first deals were signed in March. Robit, in turn, was impressed with Pinnacle's knowhow and experience in a wide range of challenging drilling applications.

"We can expect substantial growth in the sales of our piling products in Canada, particularly in large infrastructure projects which have previously been out of our reach", says **Mikko Vuojolainen**, Robit VP, Americas.

"I believe these projects will help open doors to our Top Hammer and DTH products in other customer segments as well. To achieve this, we will follow our strategy and go where the action is, in other words, work closely with local dealers", Mikko states.

# DIAMONDS ARE A DRILLER'S BEST FRIEND

Imagine a button bit that keeps drilling away, remote-controlled, outliving  
a regular bit many times over, no sharpening, no downtime.

Stay tuned for the next issue!



**Robit**

Robit Plc, Vikkiniityntie 9, FI-33880 Lempäälä

Tel. +358 3 3140 3400 // [robitgroup.com](http://robitgroup.com)