

# Immerse yourself in the world of Robel!

Report on Robel's second open house event for customers at its manufacturing facility in Germany.

Between 15th and 17th September, Robel held an open house event, again coinciding with the ÖVG (the Austrian Society for Traffic and Transport Science) conference held in Salzburg, Austria (see pages 27 and 28). Robel's factory is situated just over the border in Freilassing, Germany, and the company arranged a shuttle service to allow its customers to participate in both the conference and the open house. Over 500 guests came from around the world, including the UK and Network Rail, with all continents represented.

## The event

Attendees were shown some short presentations on the company's history and range of products, followed by a tour through the factory where the production of machines and tools was taking place. This gave visitors the chance to understand both the products and skills capabilities of the company's production facility. Robel, with a staff of almost 500, has 38,000m<sup>2</sup> of production space, management offices, stores, a training school and main line connected test tracks at the site.

On the latter, some of the larger track vehicles in the company's portfolio were arranged for display during the event. As well as a rail delivery train and wagons fitted with side loading cranes, the on-track equipment on display included a selection of the company's mobile maintenance systems. These ranged from a very early example, showing where the concept of a mobile maintenance unit was developed, through to the latest finished example for Network Rail (see pages 13 and 14). Additionally, an alternative double deck and compact mobile maintenance unit of ÖBB that is used for maintenance work in



tunnels was also displayed.

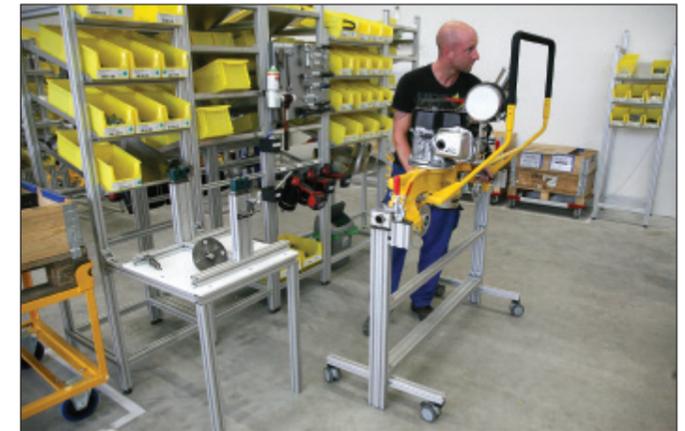
## Hand tools

Robel representatives were on hand to discuss the various products and, whilst production was ongoing in the factory, a number of the workshop and service support staff were also available to assist with practical demonstrations of the various products. For a large number of the tools within the Robel range, there are now several power options. These options are self-powered (using either petrol or diesel engines), hydraulic power, electrically powered (from an external power

supply) and battery-powered.

Of particular interest to UK visitors were the range of tools that have been developed for use in the Mobile Maintenance Trains. Robel is currently supplying to Network Rail. Further details of the currently approved tools can be found on pages 13 and 14.

The newly developed rail stressing kit for use in third rail areas (pictured middle left on page 37) was also on show. Battery power for tools is a growing area of interest and the open house event included new examples from the Robel range. Thanks to their emission-free and quiet operation, battery



tools are ideally suited for track maintenance work in tunnels, underground and in urban environments. The immediate availability of the machines when charged and the simple replacement of the modular batteries also adds more benefits. The highly-successful Robel 62.05 vertical hand tamper now has a battery-powered option (pictured left) and maintains its less than 25kg weight.

Also showcased was the new battery-driven rail band saw (pictured above left). This has been designed with tunnel or confined spaces working in mind as there is no danger from the use of fuel or exhaust emissions. The machine is also extremely quiet and has very low hand arm vibration. A slimline version for use in third rail areas will also be available shortly.

## Investment

Robel has recently made a substantial investment in the building of a new paintshop and frame construction hall at Freilassing.



These, together with other assembly procedures and processes, mean its manufacturing quality is state-of-the-art. Visitors to the open house event had the opportunity to inspect the assembly areas for hand tools. This included a newly established area that has a different approach for the manufacture of items. Inside, the workstation for each product has been optimised to give the best solution for the worker, as well as the production method (pictured top right). In establishing this area, Robel had involved its employees in the design of the work area and methods employed meaning they were fully engaged with the ideas and principles behind it. Ultimately, this will be of benefit for production and quality.

The accompanying photographs show some of the tools and machines that were on display at Freilassing, as well as some of the visitors to the event.

Photographs: Alex Hall.



## Who is Robel?

Robel was founded in Munich in 1901 and is now located in Freilassing, Germany. The company is a specialist for railway construction equipment and machinery in the areas of small machinery, work vehicles and special equipment. The company has more than 100 different products in its portfolio and supplies these to countries all over the world. Its agent for the United Kingdom and Ireland is Plasser UK.

For further information on any of the products, please contact the Robel agent:  
Plasser UK,  
Manor Road, West Ealing,  
London, W13 0PP.  
Telephone main: 0208 998 4781  
E-mail: robelteam@plasser.co.uk  
Telephone customer support: 0208 991 3085  
E-mail: customer.support@plasser.co.uk  
Website: www.robel.info