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Primetals Technologies Receives FAC from Novelis Aluminum for Extensive Automation Upgrade

- **Software enhancements at aluminum hot-rolling mill boost production stability and ensure future-proof operations**
- **First-ever software migration of this kind in China**
- **Comprehensive Level 1 automation system upgrade finished ahead of schedule**

Chinese aluminum producer Novelis Aluminum Zhenjiang has recently awarded Primetals Technologies the final acceptance certificate (FAC) for Phase 2 of an automation upgrade project at its aluminum hot-rolling mill in Zhenjiang, Jiangsu province. This project focused on upgrading hardware and software to enhance production stability and future-proof operations. Additionally, Primetals Technologies recently received the FAC for a full-scale upgrade of the mill's Level 1 automation system, including operating systems and a new human-machine interface (HMI).

"The new solution from Primetals Technologies improves equipment reliability, positively impacting both efficiency and production quality. Our expectation is that unplanned downtimes will be reduced by the new technology," says Lei Xia, Manager Hot Mill Unit at Novelis Aluminum Zhenjiang. "We have observed several improvements with the new system. For example, the new programmable logic controller (PLC) is more standardized for integration compared to the former system. The updated platform also makes it easier to adjust critical process parameters, which shortens troubleshooting times."

Full Capacity Achieved Quickly

Phase 1 of the project had a challenging timeline, with just eight months from contract signing to final acceptance. Despite procurement delays and visa-related complications, necessitating remote system testing, Primetals Technologies received the FAC four days ahead of schedule. By then, the mill had returned to full operational capacity, with all products meeting the required quality standards.

Minimized Downtime

Phase 2 marked a milestone as the first software migration of its kind in China. The project included a transition to the state-of-the-art Totally Integrated Automation (TIA) platform, which offers higher capacity and reduced operational costs. With enhanced computing power, the upgraded automation system now operates on a more stable and efficient platform. As with Phase 1, the system was operational four days ahead of schedule.

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The upgrades also included server virtualization, which has significantly reduced IT response times.

Aluminum for the Aviation Industry

In 2014, Primetals Technologies supplied and implemented Novelis' aluminum hot-rolling mill in Zhenjiang. It is producing high-quality aluminum items, particularly for the aviation industry. Novelis is the world's leading producer of flat-rolled aluminum products and the largest recycler of aluminum. The company is a subsidiary of Hindalco Industries Limited, an industry leader in aluminum and copper, and the metals flagship company of the Aditya Birla Group, a multinational conglomerate based in Mumbai, India.



Representatives from Novelis Aluminum and Primetals Technologies celebrating the successful upgrade project at Novelis Aluminum's hot-rolling mill in Zhenjiang.

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