

## THE DEMAND FOR HIGH-STRENGTH PLATES IS OWING TO CHANGING NEEDS

Publication: Projects Info , Agency:Bureau  
Edition:National , Page No: 9, Location: Half Page , Size(sq.cms): 513

# THE DEMAND FOR HIGH-STRENGTH PLATES IS OWING TO CHANGING NEEDS

*Key industry players across different segments in India have accepted that availability of thicker and wider width plates will result in enormous savings on fabrication and welding, and also lead to an improvement in yield, quality and durability, says Ravi Singh, Senior Vice President, Essar Steel in an interview with Projects Info.*



Ravi Singh,  
Senior Vice President,  
Essar Steel

**Could you please tell us about the high end products manufactured by Essar Steel for the infrastructure space in India?**

Considering that there is an increasing need for specialised steel in the Indian infrastructure sector, we have launched a range of hi-end branded steel plate products such as Essar Structor; Shipor; Thermor; Boomor and Rockstar etc. These products have been specially crafted and customised to suit the best industrial requirements for sectors such as construction, oil and gas, power and ship building. They have also been specially designed, keeping in mind the different sectors that they would be used in. For example, submerged undersea tanks used in the hydrocarbon sector require the steel to be atmospheric corrosion resistant and have extremely low sulphur content.

**According to you which are the sectors that have more demand for your products?**

Construction, especially high rise buildings and infrastructure sector is the largest consumer of steel plates. This is not surprising given the heavy use of

steel in this sector and soaring construction and infrastructure activity in the country since the past decade. Since investment in infrastructure is expected to grow at a CAGR of 14.5 per cent during the twelfth five year plan, I would expect the demand for steel, especially steel plates to grow at the same number.

**So have you introduced any new products that would specifically cater to the growing needs of these (infra and construction) sector?**

Yes. Looking at the opportunity and the growing need in infrastructure sector, we have introduced Essar Structor and Essar Penstar, a range of products that have been designed to support this sudden surge in demand in the sector. The USP of these products are that they replace the country's dependence on imported plates for critical infrastructure development.

**Would like to have an idea that does the critical plates for yellow goods are imported from China or European countries?**

Earlier the critical plates for yellow goods were imported

from European countries but now the scenarios has changed since JFE Steel Corporation has been a good source for Indian market. As a result the European's share in this market has started coming down. We have supplied about 40 per cent of critical plates last year to the yellow goods and now we are aiming for 100 per cent target. Our products have been cleared by every yellow good manufacturer company such as L&T Komatsu, Caterpillar, Tractors India and Hitachi. In fact we are in the race of supplying our products to Caterpillar's new manufacturing unit in Indonesia. We had adopted the most advanced metallurgical processes and that makes these products unique. Employing the best steel making technology, the products are customized with various treatments to control the properties in the steel like sulphur level and phosphorous & gaseous content. Calcium treatment and inclusion shape control reduces internal discontinuities giving plates improved toughness, enhanced fatigue life, better weldability and excellent shape properties.

These products are customised and equipped with

advanced Hydraulic Automatic Gage Control (HAGC), online Gamma Thickness Gauge and L-2 Automation. The company can supply steel plates as per actual thickness, width, length and profiles, required for specific projects or applications.

**Do you think that the high strength steel plates will reduce the overall cost structure of any project be it construction or infrastructure?**

The demand for thicker, wider and ultra high strength steel plates has been increasing due to rapid industrialisation across the world. Key industry players across different segments in India have concurred that the availability of thicker and wider width plates will result in enormous savings on fabrication and welding, and also lead to an improvement in yield, quality and durability. We have joined the ranks of international steel producers who manufacture extra wide plates. The 4 Hi Rolling mill has a roll separating force of 10,000 metric tonnes and can produce plates with a width of up to 5 metres.

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