A project involving a lot of stone

Full steam ahead with Railcare T

Ballast Feeder 40 premiere in real-life situation

Minister on nocturnal visit
Ready for the next level

Railcare was founded in 1999, so this year we celebrate 25 years of development, innovations and joy at work. This is a major milestone for Railcare. Many things have happened during the company’s journey, but to summarise: we have moved from a one machine company to a profitable group. History may be shorter than the future, but it’s still important to us even as we accelerate towards that future.

We always want to develop, to invent new machines, establish new markets, and at the same time keep growing the core of the company. Today we have reached a whole new level. We are well established in Sweden – our home market – performing contracting and transport services. After several years there, the UK has become our second home market. We have strengthened the company with more operators, leaders, sales personnel, workshops, machines and export activities, and all while maintaining growth and profitability. Today we find ourselves well placed with a full backlog and liquidity constantly improving, so I believe we are ready to go to the next level.

When I look into the crystal ball, contemplating our world and our future, it is of course very hard to predict, but according to national plans in both Sweden and the UK there will be some major investments made in railway maintenance. This is very encouraging for the future, and will inspire our continuing growth and development.

My expectation for 2018-2019 is a genuine boom if these plans are realised. We can probably space it up with export orders if some of our many quotations bear fruit. The future looks really bright and I expect many new opportunities, challenges for which we are well prepared. By combining innovative railway solutions with our prime resource, our employees, we’re building the future Railcare now. So enjoy reading this anniversary edition of Railcare News!

A project involving lots of stone

Despite this fact, production manager Adam Sundin is well satisfied and marks this as “a wonderful project from start to finish”.

Peter Erizon, acting site manager at Svensk Järnvägsteknik, seconds this: “The Swedish Transport Administration should be credited for its perfect planning”, he says. “I understand it too is very pleased with the results, and hopefully it’ll be a template for future cable lowering projects.”

Prior to the rail refurbishment

The project was a part of the 70 km rail refurbishment. “It is unusual to make all the preparations one year, followed by the work itself in the next year. This worked well for all contractors, not least for Railcare which is usually put under a lot of pressure by the contractors next in line!” says Peter Erizon.

Out of the way

“Fewer machines and vehicles on track make for better productivity, and next year we will be out of the way during the rail refurbishment work”, says Adam Sundin. “Most of the time we used just one machine, sometimes we needed an additional machine for additional tasks”.

“This project involved a busy track, and as I’m familiar with the Railcare cable lowering method, it made good sense to involve them in this assignment,” says Peter.

Extensive project

There was a huge amount of stones, many too big for the Railvac machine to handle. A number of excavators were used to remove the largest ones before Railcare could lower all the cables. The project was around 200 work shifts long and was performed from April to November.

“I hope that there will be more projects like this, where both Svensk Järnvägsteknik and Railcare can team up as sub-contractors”, says Peter Erizon.
Top marks for Robocut after cleaning up from Kil to Grums

“‘It actually went better than we’d expected.’ Klas-Göran Mattson at InfraNord reviews the project performed last summer by two of Railcare’s remote controlled cleaning machine, known as Robocut. The railway banks from Kil to Grums were given an extensive facelift when shrubs and bushes were removed. It both looks better and improves safety, making it easier to spot animals and other obstacles next to the track. It also decreases the risk of ‘leaves on the line’ and slippery tracks.

This was a test to find out how well the method worked and what distance can be covered in a day,” says Klas-Göran. “We are now evaluating the results and maybe we will continue using this method this summer. According to our new regulations we must clean up annually, so we’re now counting on a faster process in year two because it will be mostly grass instead of shrubs.”

Shrubs and bushes

Last year’s stretch was overgrown with shrubs, bushes and small trees up to five cm in diameter. “We cleaned back some seven metres from the track centre beyond the security zone”, comments Per Nilsson, project manager at Railcare. “We kept two machines ready but only used one at a time. Because of the dense vegetation the machines needed quite a lot of maintenance, for example the cutting shears needed to be sharpened frequently.”

Good for tracks with lots of traffic

“In this case there is a lot of heavy traffic using the line, making it very hard using traditional methods to find the time on the track to be effective.”, says Klas-Göran Mattsson. “While Railcare’s machines have rubber tracks, they can be moved around very well and were even more effective than we anticipated. I think this is a very interesting method to use for lines with lots of traffic.”

Four weeks

InfraNord had no specific time limit for the project, so the test also included investigating how far you can go in one day. Railcare’s Robocut operators worked for four weeks, and it will soon be revealed if the job is to continue in 2017.

Third batch of Railcare Academy graduates

The applicants have very diverse backgrounds”, says Jonny Granlund, operational manager at Railcare. “What I think they have in common is an interest in technology. Our goal is to investigate what each can add as a person and how he or she acts socially. Being a machine operator means spending around 30% of your time at work, the rest you have to spend with your workmates when you work 10 days in a row on site.”

“After interviewing up to 80 people each time, around 15 applicants have moved on to the eyesight examination, in accordance with the railway industry’s demands. Some 50% of these candidates have now passed these tests.

We will have many candidates to choose from next time”

Quite when the Railcare Academy will re-open has not been decided but Jonny says people are sending in applications constantly. “We keep all the applications, so we will have plenty to choose from next time.”

FACTS

Railcare Academy

A total of 25 persons have graduated from the Railcare Academy in the last two years. They have completed their education to become machine operators, and most are now working in the UK on various Railcare projects.
Full speed ahead with Railcare T

Busy days both in the workshop and out on the tracks. “A very good year!” concludes Lars Filipsson, assistant operational manager at Railcare T.

The first two months of the year is usually slow due to less demand for engines and drivers, mostly because of the absence of large scale refurbishment jobs. But 2016 got off to a flying start, including a major renovation assignment in the workshop. 2017 looks equally promising with new assignments from some of our existing customers, including:

• A large VR Track job to upgrade a number of locomotives with modern Scania engines, new screens and cabins, etc.

• Renovation of two T22 12 cylinder diesel engines.

• Renovation of Railcare’s own locomotives.

“These are fun but challenging jobs”, says Lars. “The engines alone can each weigh up to 19 tonnes, be 12 metres long and have cylinders with 11 litres’ volume each. When we need to move them around, we use giant trucks and very sturdy cranes!”

New employee in the workshop
Railcare T has a new employee at the workshop in Långelu, who’s responsible for purchases, spare part logistics and the internal goods. “The increasing number of jobs makes it even more important to keep everything in order to ensure optimization of the work process”, says Lars.

Updated engine
Railcare T renovates locomotives both externally and internally. One job last year included both external painting and installation of ATC and GSM-R telephones in a V4 engine to be used in Norway. An assignment for Nordic Refinance included total refurbishment and painting of two TMZ locomotives.

Engine drivers wanted!
“We’re always on the look out for skilled engine drivers we can hire”, says Johan Hansén, production manager at Railcare T. Recruitment is ongoing and future retirements mean demand will remain constant for a considerable period of time. “Railcare is well known so we have quite a large number of applicants, but we also need to find the right people. We need those who are entrepreneurial, willing to solve problems and go the extra mile whenever needed. It doesn’t really matter where you live in Sweden,” he says, but Johan is hoping for new employees from the northern part. Currently Railcare T has some 20 engine drivers and controllers.

High demand
2016 saw a high demand for rental engines, wagons and engineers. “A year with more bookings than usual contributed to both increased turnover and a good result”, says Johan Hansén production manager at Railcare T. “We were entrusted to deliver engines and engine drivers for almost all the big refurbishment jobs in Sweden.” He continues: “The customers appreciate both our highly capable line-up and our ability to perform on-site repairs. They can also trust us to perform jobs safely.” Johan is looking forward to some of the new jobs this year, for example Railcare T will be supplying locomotives for 11 weeks this summer on the Viskaland to Mosselund line, the same location for Railcare’s major cable lowering project in 2016.
Will the process industry be Railcare Lining’s next major business area?

Tobias has scanned the market by visiting a number of large companies.

**Upcoming test project**

“This has worked out very well and we now have some quotations we’re processing.” He continues: “We have to remember this is an entirely new technology to them, but we’re anticipating the opportunity to do one or a few test projects in the near future. While we offer a faster method, we have to deal with very long lines where we need to refurbish around 100 metres a day during a very brief production stop. A fresh water feed line can be up to 20 km long, and a total renovation would need to be portioned out over several years.”

**Job in wintertime**

“This kind of work would suit us perfectly because it would provide longer term contracts, and it can also be performed during the winter when we have fewer assignments on main roads and the railway.”

So far, our lining method has been used for horizontal installations in road and railway culverts in order to divert water through a road or a railroad bank. Thanks to the processing industry there’s a need for a vertical application, refurbishing vertical pipes at a processing plant.

Now also vertical

We have developed a method that makes vertical lining feasible,” says Tobias Lindgren. “Now we can refurbish a complete network using our lining method, avoiding joints that can cause problems. In addition we can also do extensions that join the existing network, sealing them with a more robust lining as well.”

Railcare Lining has now developed the method and material further.

Extensive inspection

**job for Railcare Lining**

Railcare Lining will undertake a state inspection of around 150 railway drainage culverts on the Härnösand-Sollefteå line.

“It involves a total of 48 km being covered on foot to inspect the culverts’ condition all along the line”, says Tobias Lindgren, operational manager at Railcare Lining. “This really works to our advantage, as the client has great confidence in our state inspection process and it can create opportunities to undertake future culvert refurbishments.”

Presenting the railway culverts and their status on a Google map thanks to Railcare’s own software, contributed to the customer’s choice of contractor in this case. The maps can also be imported directly into the Swedish Transport Administration’s own IT system. The work is scheduled to the first half of 2017.

Fast method preferred by the process industry

There’s a lot of interest, and so far we’ve performed a few jobs very successfully within the process industry”, says Tobias Lindgren, the new operational manager following Roland Lindberg’s retirement last year. “First and foremost, fast installation appeals to customers in the process industry. When pipes, culverts, etc. need to be refurbished production has to be shut down, leading to losses and large costs.”

“Great interest shown shown to the process industry for Railcare Lining’s method for use in pipes and culverts.”
Ballast Feeder 40

Railcare’s new Ballast Feeder 40 has been used for the first time as part of the major rail refurbishment project on the Träskholm-Bastuträsk and Älvsbyn-Koler lines in the north of Sweden during the summer of 2016. Partnering the Railvac machine, the Ballast Feeder is a new concept that makes changing ballast faster and safer within the very tight timeframes usually applied to these projects.

“It was mainly used for ballast excavation and refilling in crossings, and it worked very well,” says Peter Strandgren, project engineer at Structon Rail, the main contractor. “One of the major benefits is the potential to use less personnel, thereby reducing overheads.”

This job was one of the largest ever rail refurbishment projects in Sweden. A total of 80 km track was to be exchanged over ten weeks in summer. To cope, some 400 people from a number of companies worked intensively during the slots when the track was closed for traffic. 25 Railcare employees were among them.

Cable lowering and ballast exchange

“Our main tasks were to lower the existing cables using our two Railvac machines and to change the ballast in the crossings”, tells Adam Sundin, production manager at Railcare. “In addition we also had to remove surplus material and prepare for the installation of riser pipes for drainage and cable laying.

“It was challenging because two phases of the project were carried out simultaneously, and the ballast exchange is normally done in parallel with the cable lowering. To sort out the logistics with all machines and material was a real puzzle...”

Third phase remains

Only phase three remains, the Koler-Bastuträsk line that will join the refurbished parts in this gigantic project. The main purpose is to update the only existing railway line in northern Sweden. There have been derailing incidents causing stoppages of both passenger and freight traffic, causing the official speed to be reduced.

...in summer 2017

“After last year’s effort, the official train speed is back to normal again”, says Peter Strandgren. “We hope to get the go-ahead for the third phase this year.”

International snow machine demo

East and West can certainly meet, as they did during a very enjoyable Railcare snow machine demo in Stockholm at the beginning of the year. Representatives from the USA, Portugal, Russia, Poland and of course Railcare all participated.

Railcare Export invited them to a demonstration, primarily of the snow melter SR 700 and the smaller snow plow SR 200, along with a Railvac machine and a ballast wagon.

“Unfortunately there was no snow! But both Americans from our customer Loram, and Russians from the Russian State Railway were very interested. They were particularly interested in the SR 200, a machine that’s easy to set up and use on site”, says Jan Billberg, manager at Railcare Export.

The supplier of the snow melting unit came from Portugal and the Polish representative was a reporter from a leading railway publication.

“The idea was to inspire to a story about Railcare to be published prior to a tradeshow in Poland in which we’re participating” says Jan. “We will also be exhibiting at four other tradeshows this year, one of them in France – the first French tradeshow for Railcare.”
**Increased customer focus proves positive for Railcare**

An increased customer focus by the British rail operators paves the way for new methods from innovative companies like Railcare.

Yes, Network Rail’s ambition is to focus even further on their end-customers, both passengers and cargo companies, when planning for railway updates, says Håkan Johansson, MD at Railcare Sweden Ltd. “The overall goal is to minimize disturbances and to use the available track time more efficiently.”

According to Håkan, this will give Railcare an even better marketing position when all methods have to deliver reduced maintenance. “The development of our new machine Ballast Feeder 40 is a step in exactly the right direction. It makes it possible to perform ballast exchange very efficiently, something that I’m sure will be in great demand.”

**Ballast Feeder widens the market**

Railcare Sweden is introducing the Ballast Feeder 40, starting a dialogue with several customers. The new machine can be used on typical infrastructure projects, widening the marketing base and increasing the number of people to contact. To cope with this, Railcare Sweden now has a new salesman, Simon Twiner. Lasse Rissvik has been assigned to sales and marketing, and Pete Erwin has been hired as a senior advisor. He is highly experienced, having held leading positions in the railway industry both in the UK and internationally.

**Short and long-term**

“Our job is strategic machines sales with both a short and long-term perspective,” says Daniel Öholm, CEO at Railcare. “In addition to the marketing reinforcements in the UK we’ll also support the efforts of Railcare Group in Sweden.”

**Top marks in England**

Top marks and five stars! That was the result of the risk audit performed in the UK last autumn. “This is an annual subcontractor audit by Network Rail, and you need to pass in order to work on the railway,” says Angela Kettlewell, office manager at Railcare’s office in Derby, UK, and responsible for the risk audit work.

It’s a very thorough investigation and you must have all the management, quality and safety systems, manuals, personnel instructions and much more, all in perfect order. It takes a whole day for the auditor and myself to inspect everything, and it is up to us to prove that everything is correct and as it should be.”

**Extra plus**

To get top marks and five stars isn’t strictly necessary but of course it’s an extra bonus. Railcare has been audited three times; the first time it got four stars and the last two times five. “We have worked very hard lately because we have to adapt to the new Network Rail standards,” says Angela. I think we now can relax, although we must continue to keep abreast of new regulations. At the moment I’m working with a service maintenance update regarding railway wagons!”

**RAILCARE SWEDEN**

**Railcare Sweden’s new office opened**

Railcare Sweden Ltd’s new office in Derby was officially inaugurated by Catharina Elmsäter-Svärd, chairman of the board at Railcare Group. The new premises are situated near the old ones, but much more spacious. “We now have both a workshop, storage and education rooms next to our office,” says Håkan Johansson, Railcare Sweden Ltd. The interior design is Swedish/Scandinavian and during the inauguration Swedish food specialties were served.

**In Swedish style**

“Our customers in England find it fun to test some novelties and we also feel that we like to emphasize our Swedish heritage. Basically we are a British company, today with a majority of British personnel.”

In addition Railcare Sweden has also up-dated its website to follow the standards and layout of the .se-address.

**Brexit – good or bad for Railcare?**

What will Brexit – the UK leaving the EU – mean for a company like Railcare? The answer seems to be: basically nothing. “No, I don’t foresee any special consequences for us”, says Ulf Marklund, vice MD at Railcare. “Our business of railway maintenance has to continue no matter what, in order to guarantee a functioning society. We are also well established in the UK market with our UK subsidiary.”

“Like many others we were surprised by the outcome of the poll, but we will keep on going as usual and it has not altered our plans for the future in our second home market.”
**Tradeshows to remember**

Railcare participated in a number of exciting tradeshows during 2016. These are the three most important:

- **Innotrans:**
  - **Location:** Berlin, Germany
  - **Target group:** International trade-show for railway entrepreneurs and clients
  - **Date:** 20-26th of September
  - **No. of visitors:** 145,000
  - **Railcare comments:** An overwhelming tradeshow with lots of machine suppliers. An important meeting point where we both initiate and continue discussions with our customers.

- **RailLive:**
  - **Location:** Long Marston, UK
  - **Target group:** National tradeshow for Network Rail in particular
  - **Date:** 22-23rd of June
  - **Visitors:** Network Rail employees, consultants, etc.
  - **Railcare comments:** The big annual tradeshow for Railcare Sweden Ltd with important potential customers. We note an increasing interest and an increasing number of visitors at our stand.

- **Euromine Expo:**
  - **Location:** Skellefteå, Sweden
  - **Target group:** International mining industry
  - **Date:** 14-16th of June
  - **No. of visitors:** 1624 persons from 37 countries
  - **Railcare comments:** The mining industry is an interesting target group for Railcare Export. The tradeshow is held in Skellefteå, on a convenient distance from our head office.

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**In Short**

If you want to receive a book of your own, please get in touch with Johan Forslund, send an e-mail to johan.forslund@railcare.se

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**Test our app!**

Test the app by downloading the app Railcare 25 from Appstore or Google Play to your mobile phone. Follow the app instructions and point the symbol to the sample page. Test to the right. The content will start up/show automatically.

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**Railcare 25 years!**

This year we turn 25 and will celebrate this achievement in different ways. We have produced a jubilee book and as usual we wanted to make it a bit ELJEST. (different). The book contains stories told by a number of people either working at Railcare or cooperating with us who share their most amusing memories. We are also testing the AR technology, making it possible to access extramaterial such as films, pictures and illustrations with the book in your hand and a mobile phone with an installed app.

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**When the second machine for sucking up ballast was delivered, more operators were needed to handle the machine to its maximum efficiency.**

The new operators were educated by Railcare’s experienced instructors in just one week. “The customer was very satisfied with the training, but of course it takes time to become a fully skilled machine operator. So now the new operators can keep on practicing in a real life situation.” – Jan Billberg, manager at Railcare Export.

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**Tubevac in the tube**

Two Tubevac machines for the London Underground have been commissioned and very well received. “The capacity increase is gigantic, from sucking up 10 cubic metres of ballast each shift using the old Tubevac machine, to 26 cubic metres per machine today,” says Jan Billberg, manager at Railcare Export.

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**NewTubevac operators were trained close to Railcare’s head office in Skelleftehamn.**

Jan Billberg, manager at Railcare Export.

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**“It was virtually impossible to find a suitable place in England where we would be allowed to dig and test drive. In Skelleftehamn we could use our very own backyard. The new operators were educated by Railcare’s experienced instructors in just one week.” – Jan.**

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**Innovation & Design**

**our creative core**

Everything under one umbrella – that’s the idea behind Railcare Innovation & Design.

“To be honest, our development of new machines and methods will continue much as before”, says Ulf Marklund, manager at Railcare Innovation & Design. “What we’re emphasising is the central importance of development, and that it concerns all the companies in the Railcare group.”

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Minister goes nocturnal

A delegation with representatives of the Swedish Traffic Administration, main contractor Structon and media, with Infrastructure Minister Anna Johansson taking the lead, went on a fieldtrip in early September 2016. The goal was Boden-Bastuträsk and a visit to this summer’s great rail exchange project.

Railcare got the opportunity to show our new Ballast Feeder 40 that in tandem with the Railvac machine forms an entirely new ballast exchange concept. The Infrastructure Minister showed a great deal of interest and didn’t hesitate when offered a test-drive of the Railvac machine under the supervision of our experienced operator Stefan Persson. Railcare’s CEO Daniel Öholm was of course also present.

“Anna’s clearly talented enough to handle the machine!”, says Daniel. “She stayed longer than expected and everything turned out very well, thanks to the efforts of everyone involved in the visit.”

Realistic scenario

Öholm continues: “We think it’s essential that our politicians both understand the need for railway maintenance and learn something about our own methods and ideas. This time it was a night time visit, giving a much more realistic impression as most of our work is performed during these hours.”