

# ADVANCED BEARING SOLUTIONS FOR THE WIND INDUSTRY



Wind turbines generate electricity under adverse and constantly changing conditions, both on and offshore. Efficient power generation from wind turbines demands high performance from every component – particularly the bearings used in the main shaft, gearbox, and generator.

NSK rolling bearings for these applications perform with robust resistance to seizure, wear, flaking and unique challenges such as white etching cracks (WEC) to deliver advanced product design solutions for a reliable and sustainable operating life. NSK has been producing bearings for wind turbines for over 30 years.



# A GLOBAL PARTNER AND SOLUTIONS PROVIDER

As a leading manufacturer of rolling bearings, linear technology components and steering systems, NSK can be found on almost every continent – with production facilities, sales offices and technology centers – providing our customers with responsive decision-making channels, effective logistics and local service.



### THE NSK COMPANY:

NSK commenced operations as the first Japanese manufacturer of rolling bearings in 1916. From the outset, we have been continuously expanding and improving not only our product portfolio but also our range of services for various industrial sectors. In this context, we develop technologies in the fields of rolling bearings, linear systems, components for the automotive industry and mechatronic systems. Our research and production facilities in the Americas, Europe and Asia are linked together in a global technology network. Here we concentrate not only on the development of new technologies, but also on the continuous optimization of quality – at every process stage.



NSK has a long tradition in patent applications for machine parts. In our worldwide research centers, we not only concentrate on our development of new technologies, but also on the continual improvement of quality based on the integrated technology platform of tribology, material technology, numerical simulation and mechatronics.

### TRIBOLOGY:

**Improving Performance by Optimizing Friction.** Tribology is the study of friction and wear of contact surfaces in relative motion, such as rotating parts that endure enormous forces with a thin oil film. Severe operating conditions are optimized through lubrication and surface treatments developed by NSK, resulting in superior performance for applications requiring low friction, high-speed rotation, quiet operation or enhanced durability.

### MATERIALS:

**Superior Performance for Any Application.** Materials research and development affects nearly every aspect of product performance. Through careful selection of material composition, heat treatment and use of alternative materials, NSK enables optimization of application performance. This may be through improvements in product function, endurance, and reliability or through improvements in production and process cost efficiency.

### NUMERICAL SIMULATION:

**Turning Blind Risk Into Trusted Reliability.** In the past, accuracy and reliability in product development were achieved with experience-based design and longer testing periods. NSK's simulation technology allows for virtual validation to accelerate design and production. Extreme conditions or innovative designs that defy previous expectations can also be evaluated and analyzed.

### **MECHATRONICS:**

**Technology for a Safe and Comfortable Future.** Mechatronics refers to the combination of mechanics and control technologies. NSK has cultivated knowledge of mechanics through years of product development and production. This knowledge is used in conjunction with motors, sensors and circuits to develop mechatronic systems that add new functions, improve reliability and increase performance in various industries while also improving convenience and safety in our daily lives.



# EVERY SOLUTION CALLS FOR THE RIGHT PRODUCTS

Whether for the main drive stage or other components, our broad range of rolling bearing products deliver reliable and sustainable operating life across wind turbine applications.



### MAIN ROTOR SHAFT

The rotor induces high axial and radial loads in the main bearings, which occur both statically and dynamically. Given these loads, high bearing stiffness is indispensable. Spherical roller bearings used in the 3-point and 4-point drivetrains, or cylindrical and tapered roller bearings used in the 4-point drivetrain, are particularly well-suited for this application.

### MAIN GEARBOX

A variety of gearbox arrangements have been implemented for wind turbines in recent years. Megawatt-class systems often combine planet gear stage(s) with multiple parallel gear stages. Deep groove ball bearings, spherical roller bearings, cylindrical roller bearings, tapered roller bearings and fourpoint contact ball bearings are used, depending on location.



### GENERATOR

Generators primarily use deep groove ball bearings and cylindrical roller bearings. Transmission of electrical current can damage the rolling bearings and shorten their service life. In order to avoid this damage, NSK offers coated rolling bearings where an insulating coating has been applied to the outer rings.

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### PITCH AND YAW GEARBOX

Yaw gearboxes turn the nacelle into the wind or away from it. Pitch gearboxes are required for rotor blade adjustment. Deep groove ball bearings, cylindrical roller bearings, spherical roller bearings and tapered roller bearings are typically installed in these gearboxes.

# MAIN SHAFT BEARINGS



### **3-POINT SUSPENSION**

One of the most common wind turbine architectures is the 3-point suspension. In this configuration, a single spherical roller bearing is used to support the main shaft and wind loading. The other end of the main shaft is rigidly mounted to the input shaft of the gearbox and relies on the gearbox's flexible trunion system to share the loading through the gearbox's input shaft bearings. All of the wind loading generated by the rotor, as well as its torque, must be safely transmitted through the gearbox structure and mounting system to the wind turbine's frame.

Bearing Selection: Spherical Roller Bearing



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### 4-POINT SUSPENSION MODULAR DRIVETRAIN

The architecture is a typical configuration consisting of two main bearings that support a separate main shaft. This main shaft is also rigidly connected to the gearbox input shaft. The bearings supporting the main shaft isolate the wind loading from the gearbox and its bearings. Only deflections and tolerances may cause additional reaction loads in the gearbox bearings. Often the reaction loads at the bearings cannot easily be calculated in this statically indeterminate drivetrain configuration.

Bearing Selection: Tapered Roller Bearing, Single Row or Double Row KDH or KH Design

> Cylindrical Roller Bearing Single Row NU, NJ or NF Design

Spherical Roller Bearing











### SPHERICAL ROLLER BEARINGS

Spherical roller bearings use heavy-duty machined brass cages with extremely high load capacity and superior durability. Extra-capacity ECA bearings offer an optimized internal design for higher load ratings and a roller-guided cage that eliminates the need for a guide ring, reducing sliding friction and wear. Available with Super-TF long life steel applied to rings, and DLC coating applied to rollers to resist wear and peeling as option.

### TAPERED ROLLER BEARINGS DOUBLE-ROW

NSK double-row tapered roller bearings are designed with a single inner ring, 2 roller/cage sets and 2 outer rings with spacer. Optimized large-size rollers guided by high strength, wear resistant cages deliver high capacity for combined heavy radial loads and axial loads in both directions. In inch and metric dimensions with normal contact angle (KH design) or with steep angle races (KDH design) for increased axial load capacity. Available with Super-TF long-life steel applied to rings as option.

# CYLINDRICAL ROLLER BEARINGS SINGLE ROW

Optimized size and profile of rollers guided by high precision machined cages deliver higher load ratings and smooth rotation in main shaft applications, even at very low speeds. With heavy duty precision machined brass cage or pin-type cages. Available with Super-TF long-life steel applied to rings as option.

# TAPERED ROLLER BEARINGS SINGLE ROW

Tapered roller bearings can carry both radial and axial loads. The rigidity of main shaft can be increased by combining two single-row tapered roller bearings and applying preload. Both inch and metric series are available. And available with Super-TF long-life steel applied to rings as option.

# SPHERICAL ROLLER BEARINGS

### APPLICATIONS FOR SPHERICAL ROLLER BEARINGS

Spherical roller bearings have self-aligning capabilities and high load capacity in both radial and axial directions. These features account for their wide use in applications where mounting errors and shaft misalignment are likely, bearing spans are long, shaft deflection is high, or large radial or impact loads are applied.



### SPHERICAL ROLLER BEARINGS FOR WIND TURBINE MAIN SHAFTS

Spherical roller bearings used in main shafts face low speeds and high loads conditions from blades which can lead to surface damage such as peeling and wear due to insufficient oil film formation between the rolling elements and ring raceways.

To solve these surface damages, NSK provides solutions with material technology, analysis and design technology, and coating technology.



### EXTRA-CAPACITY ECA BEARINGS (ROLLER-GUIDED CAGE)

Conventional (CA type) spherical roller bearings require a guide ring between the cage and inner ring. Conversely, extra-capacity ECA bearings feature a roller-guided cage with specially shaped pockets that eliminate the need for a guide ring. The optimized design of these pockets reduces stress on the cage columns even with thinner columns, supporting a higher quantity of rollers and larger roller sizes to increase load capacity.





### **DLC COATING**

Applying a high-hardness diamond-like carbon (DLC) coating to the rollers helps to prevent the deterioration of roller surface conditions, even from metal-to-metal contact of the rolling elements with the ring raceways due to insufficient oil film formation. The DLC coating reduces tangential forces acting from the rolling elements on the ring raceways, resulting in superior wear/peeling resistance and longer life.

### MATERIAL TECHNOLOGY

### Standard Material: High-Cleanliness Steel

The rolling fatigue life of bearings is highly dependent on the quantity of non-metallic inclusions in the bearing material. NSK uses high cleanliness bearing steel as standard material, in which oxygen content is kept as low as possible and other impurities are greatly reduced in order to reduce non-metallic inclusions. This ensures longer rolling fatigue life.

### Advanced Material: Super-TF

Super-TF offers excellent resistance to wear and peeling, providing long life even in environments with poor lubrication or contaminants. (See pages 18-20 for details.)



Wear depth of outer ring raceway

## MAIN GEARBOX BEARINGS





Through close collaboration with our wind industry partners, NSK has gained tremendous insight into the complex conditions that impact wind turbine operation – none more profoundly than within the gearbox. Our advanced product development takes into consideration the continuous variation and fluctuation of factors such as lubrication, load, stress, vibration and temperature to deliver reliable and cost-effective operating life.







### CYLINDRICAL ROLER BEARINGS FULL COMPLEMENT

Cageless full complement cylindrical roller bearings have the maximum possible number of rollers and can sustain much heavier loads than cylindrical roller bearings of the same size with cages. In single row NCF and double row NNCF series. Available with Super-TF long-life steel applied to rings and black oxide coating applied to rings and rollers as option.

Bearing Location: Planetary Carriers Planetary Gears

# TAPERED ROLLER BEARINGS SINGLE-ROW

Single row tapered roller bearings have high radial and axial rigidity, and are capable of taking high radial loads and moment loads as well as axial loads in one direction. NSK offers a range of large size, dimensionally specialized single row tapered roller bearings for main gearbox applications in both metric and inch configurations. Available with Super-TF long-life steel applied to rings and black oxide coating applied to rings and rollers as option.

### **Bearing Location: Planetary Carriers**

### TAPERED ROLLER BEARINGS DUPLEX WITHOUT OUTER RING

Duplex tapered roller bearings without outer ring comprise 2 single-row bearings combined into a single unit. In gearbox applications, the outer ring is integrated into the gear, allowing the quantity and size of rollers to be increased for higher load capacity. In addition, planetary gear rigidity can be increased by adjusting the preload with a spacer. Available with Super-TF long-life steel applied to rings, and black oxide coating applied to rings and rollers and special crowning applied to rollers as option.

### Bearing Location: Planetary Gears





### **TAPERED ROLLER BEARINGS** DOUBLE-ROW/ASYMMETRICAL ARRANGEMENTS

Double-row tapered roller bearings can accommodate heavy radial loads and axial loadsin both directions. Available in normal contact angle (KH design) or with steep angle races (KDH design) for increased axial load capacity. Available with Super-TF long-life steel applied to rings, and black oxide coating applied to rings and rollers, and special crowning applied to rollers as option.

### Bearing Location: Low-Speed Intermediate Shafts

Asymmetrical tapered roller bearing arrangements use bearings of different widths to suit the axial load. Available with Super-TF long-life steel applied to rings, black oxide coating applied to rings and rollers and special crowning applied to rollers as option.

Bearing Location: High-Speed Intermediate Shafts High-Speed Shafts Low-Speed Intermediate Shafts

### TAPERED ROLLER BEARINGS WITH HIGH LOAD CAPACITY

Applying a special crowning to the rolling surfaces of tapered roller bearings reduces and equalizes the contact pressure generated under load.

As a result, longer life and higher reliability have been achieved.







**HIGH LOAD CAPACITY** 





### NSKHPS CYLINDRICAL ROLLER BEARINGS (WITH EM CAGE)

- > Bearing life increased up to 2x compared to conventional designs
- > Up to 23% higher basic dynamic load ratings
- > High strength and maximum rigidity for high loads and high speeds
- Higher permissible misalignment





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### CYLINDRICAL ROLLER BEARINGS, SINGLE ROW

Featuring NSKHPS high performance standard for increased load capacity and speed ratings, NSK single row cylindrical roller bearings deliver high strength and radial rigidity for high loads and speeds. Optimized internal geometry promotes lower running temperature and quiet operation. Cylindrical roller bearings without outer rings are also available for planetary gears. And vailable with Super-TF long-life steel applied to rings, and black oxide coating applied to rings and rollers as option.

### Bearing Location: High-Speed Intermediate Shafts High-Speed Shafts **Planetary Gears**

			PERMISSIBLE N	<b>NISALIGNMENT</b>
	L.C.	LIFE	22XXE, 23XXE	2XXE, 3XXE
onal	1	1	2′	4'
	1.23	2	4'	4'

### DEEP GROOVE BALL BEARINGS

NSK deep groove ball bearings are designed to deliver unsurpassed performance for a wide variety of applications. Precision high-grade balls and super-finished raceways provide smooth and quiet operation. For low to medium radial loads and smaller axial loads in both directions. Advanced lubricant technology and sealing designs ensure optimum performance and reliability. Available in NSKHPS series with pressed steel cage or machined brass cage.

### Bearing Location: Pitch Tubes

# **GENERATOR BEARINGS**

# ADVANCED SOLUTIONS – NSK TOUGH STEEL(TF)





### CERAMIC-COATED INSULATED BEARINGS

NSK ceramic coated bearings provide superior insulation to prevent electrical erosion or arcing in bearings used in turbine generators. An optimized alumina-based ceramic material combined with a blend of additives is used to coat the outer ring, offering high resistance to the flow of electrical current. The coating is tough and durable when impacted on its corner surfaces, and excellent heat dissipation properties. Boundary dimensions are identical to a standard bearing, enabling easy replacement without the need for modifications.

### Bearing Location: Generators

SPECIFICATION	NSK CERAMIC INSULATION HD2
Application	Generator
Insulating material	Al <sub>2</sub> 0 <sub>3</sub>
Insulation resistance (1000VDC)	Over 100MΩ
Breakdown voltage	Over 4kV
Boundary dimensions	ISO standard

The valuation of a wind turbine includes one major maintenance cycle during its over 20-year life expectancy. As such, the need for improved durability in bearing performance is a critical consideration to achieve the greatest reliability and total cost performance – even in uniquely demanding operating conditions. In response, NSK has applied our Tough Steel (TF) technology to bearing solutions that set a new standard for long service life.



Outstanding toughness, performance, and total cost-savings: NSK technology sets a new standard for long service life.



# SUPER-TF<sup>™</sup>

In its guest for longer bearing service life, NSK has spent many years analyzing the mechanisms of fatigue in bearings and researching and developing materials, heat treatment processes and operating conditions. The range of approaches to achieving longer service life taken by our research team are shown in Fig. 1. Super-TF bearings are designed to maximize service life under conditions where bearings are subject to hydrogen-induced embrittlement and contamination-induced surface-originating flaking.



FIG. 1 APPROACHES TO ACHIEVING LONGER SERVICE LIFE FROM BEARINGS



### SUPER-TF AND SURFACE-ORIGINATING FLAKING

Bearings can be required to operate under conditions where lubrication is easily contaminated. Metal particles or casting sand in the lubricant create dents in the rolling contact surfaces, and stress concentrated around these dents eventually leads to cracking and surface-originating flaking. Reducing the concentration of stress around the shoulders of surface dents is a direct approach to achieving longer bearing life.

NSK research and development of material properties has revealed that a high level of retained austenite is an extremely effective means of maximizing the r/c value around surface dents in the bearing material (see Fig. 2) - the greater the r/c value, the smaller the stress concentration. TF technology in general is a unique heat treatment process developed by NSK to optimize the level of retained austenite in bearing materials.

However, austenite itself has a soft microstructure, reducing the hardness of the bearing material. To meet needs for greater hardness with a higher level of retained austenite, NSK adopts a technique that promotes the uniform distribution and reduce the diameter of carbide and carbonitride particles in the bearing material. Super-TF bearing steel contains appropriate amounts of chrome and molybdenum to optimize the formation of carbides.

Figures 3 and 4 illustrate how Super-TF Bearings have a greater amount of fine-size carbide and carbonitride particles than ordinary carburized bearings, giving them a greater degree of hardness and higher retained austenite for a long service life.



FIG. 2 RELATIONSHIP OF R/C VALUE TO RETAINED AUSTENITE LEVEL FIG. 3 AVERAGE DIAMETER OF CARBIDE AND

### SERVICE LIFE UNDER BOUNDARY LUBRICATION CONDITIONS

Under boundary lubrication conditions where there is an insufficient EHL film, metal-to-metal contact occurs, thus reducing bearing life. Fig. 5 shows the results of service life tests conducted under conditions where oil film parameter  $\Lambda$ , which represents the ratio of the thickness of the oil film to the roughness of the surface, is very small ( $\Lambda$ =0.3). At this very small ratio, peeling damage occurs (Fig. 6), but in Super-TF bearings, the concentration of stress around the projections of the contact area is reduced, giving a service life approximately 5.5 times greater than that of ordinary carburized steel bearings.

### WEAR AND SEIZURE RESISTANCE

Besides extending service life under contaminated lubrication conditions, Super-TF increases the bearing's resistance to wear and seizure by ensuring the dispersion of a large number of fine carbides and nitrides in the bearing material. Fig. 7 presents the results of a Sawin wear test that shows the degree of wear and the seizure limit for different types of bearing material. The test reveals that Super-TF bearings have superior wear resistance to SUI2 steel. Super-TF bearings are also 40 % more resistant to seizure than SUJ2 steel bearings.











FIG. 5 Service Life Tests Under Boundary Lubrication Conditions

Direction of ball r



. 100un





FIG. 7 Comparison of Wear Resistance

# **BEARING FAILURE MODES**

### SURFACE-ORIGINATING FLAKING



Location: Gearbox - All bearing locations Main Shaft

Solution: Super-TF (STF) Long-life Steel



cracking

Foreign debris leads to the formation of dents

Stress concentrations around dents develop into cracks develop into flaking

Cracks propagate under the load of each passing roller and



COMPARISON OF SERVICE LIFE

Super-TF delivers 5 times the life of standard steel (SUJ2)

### WHITE ETCHING CRACKS / FLAKING



Location: Gearbox - HSIMS, HSS

Solution: Super-TF (STF) Long-life Steel Black oxide coating





Hydrogen permeates

the bearing steel, causing it to weaken

hvdroa

cracki

Cracks form along the boundary of the white structure from repeated stress and develop into flaking

the bearing

### **ELECTRICAL EROSION** ADHESIVE WEAR SKIDDING Location: Location: Gearbox - LSS, HSIMS, HSS Generator - Rotor Solution: Solution: Black oxide coating Ceramic coating

### Abbreviations

HSS:	High-speed shaft
HSIMS:	High-speed intermediate shaft
LSIMS:	Low-speed intermediate shaft
3PT:	Three-point suspension (1 bearing)
4PT:	Four-point suspension (2 bearings)





Location: Main Shaft - 3 point suspension Planetary Carrier, Planetary Gear



# **EXAMPLES: BEARING NOMENCLATURE**

### Abbreviations

- HSS: High-speed shaft
- HSIMS: High-speed intermediate shaft LSIMS: Low-speed intermediate shaft
- 3PT: Three-point suspension (1 bearing) 4PT: Four-point suspension (2 bearings)







### SPHERICAL ROLLER BEARING - 3 PT SUSPENSION (1 BEARING), - 4 PT SUSPENSION (2 BEARINGS)



### CYLINDRICAL ROLLER BEARING - MODULAR DRIVETRAIN

STF	NJ 28 /710 g5 M CCG338 U303	ST
CTE	Super TE lang life steel	
211	Super-triolig-life steel	
NJ	single-row cylindrical roller bearing - 2 outer ring ribs,	
	one inner ring rib	
28	dimension series (width series 2, diameter series 8)	
/710	bore diameter equals 710 mm	
g5	case hardened inner and outer rings (multiple options available)	
м	machined brass cage	
CCG338	special radial internal clearance	
U303	special process control for wind turbine bearings	(

### TAPERED ROLLER BEARING, DOUBLE ROW -MODULAR DRIVETRAIN



U303 special process control for wind turbine bearings



### TAPERED ROLLER BEARING, DOUBLE ROW - LSIMS

431	KH	57	55	SA	+K	CA640	U303
431	bore dia	imeter eq	uals 431 ·	- 431.999 r	mm		
КН	double	row taper	ed roller	bearing			
57	outer di	ameter e	quals 570	- 579.999	mm		
55	tolerand	e for inch	n bearing				
SA	special	tolerance					
+K	outer rii	ng spacer					
CA640	special	axial clea	rance				
U303	special	process co	ontrol for	wind turbi	ne bearin	gs	

### TAPERED ROLLER BEARING, ASYMMETRICAL ARRANGEMENT - HSIMS, HSS, LSIMS

HF	R 303	26	J	g5	/	HR	3
HR	high capacity						
303	medium width	series 0. diar	neter serie	es 3			
313	steep angle wie	dth series 1. (	diameter s	eries 3			
26	bore diameter o	equals 130 m	m (referer	nce number	x 5)		
1	ISO conformanc	e					

### CYLINDRICAL ROLLER BEARING, SINGLE ROW – HSIMS, HSS

NU	23 26 E /S/ M C3 & U303
NU	single row cylindrical roller bearing - 2 outer ring ribs,
	no inner ring ribs
23	dimension series (width series 2, diameter series 3)
26	bore diameter equals 130 mm (reference number x 5)
Ε	high capacity internal design
/S/	black oxide coating
м	machined brass cage
C3	greater than normal radial internal clearance
ß	NSKHPS - High Performance Standard
U303	special process control for wind turbine bearings

### TAPERED ROLLER BEARING, SINGLE ROW - PLANETARY CARRIER

R	1025	-2	/S/	E	U303
R	single row tape	ered roller be	earing, specia	l dimensions	
1025	bore diameter	equals 1024.	.875 - 1025 m	m	
-2	serial number				
/S/	black oxide coa	nting			
E	notch in the ou	ter ring			
U303	special process	control for v	vind turbine b	earings	

2	6	J	g5	DF	+KR	U303
g5	case h	ardened	inner and ou	iter rings (m	ultiple opti	ons available)
DF	bearin	ng arrang	gement is face	e to face		
+KR	outer	ring spa	cer (controls p	oreload)		
U303	specia	l process	s control for w	/ind turbine	bearings	

### CYLINDRICAL ROLLER BEARING, FULL COMPLEMENT – PLANETARY CARRIER AND GEAR



U303 special process control for wind turbine bearings

### FOUR-POINT CONTACT BALL BEARING – HSIMS, HSS

QJ	3 28 M E C3 U303					
QJ	four-point contact ball bearing					
3	dimension series 3					
28	bore diameter equals 140 mm (reference number x 5)					
М	machined brass cage					
E	notch in outer ring					
C3	greater than normal radial internal clearance					
U303	special process control for wind turbine bearings					

### DEEP GROOVE BALL BEARING - PITCH TUBE

60	26	DDU	C3	ઈ	AS2S

- 60 single row deep groove ball bearing, dimension series 0
- 26 bore diameter equals 130 mm (reference number x 5)
- DDU contact seal (non-contact seal and shielded closures available)
- C3 greater than normal radial internal clearance
- & NSKHPS symbol High Performance Standard
- AS2S grease type and fill



### DEEP GROOVE BALL BEARING, CERAMIC COATED - GENERATOR

63	30	HD2	MR	С3	X26	U303		
63	63 deep groove ball bearing, diameter series 3							
30	30 bore diameter equals 150 mm (reference number x 5)							

- HD2 ceramic insulated coating on outer ring
- MR ball-guided machined brass cage
- C3 greater than normal radial internal clearance
- X26 dimensional stabilizing treatment
- U303 special process control for wind turbine bearings





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