



A focus on advanced technology specialty tires

The tires used on construction machinery, aircraft and other highly specialized equipment must operate under difficult conditions, which in turn demands that these tires incorporate the highest level of technical expertise. An area where demand is growing is the market for ultralarge radial tires for mining equipment. Due to the sheer size of the vehicles and the loads carried, each of these tires must support a weight of up to 100,000kg. The Bridgestone Group is one of a very limited number of companies that possess the capability to design and produce these kinds of tires. Based on projections of future growth of global demand in this market, in 2006 Bridgestone announced the construction of an entirely new production facility in the Japanese city of Kitakyushu to ensure a stable future supply of ultralarge radial tires for construction and mining equipment applications.

Aircraft tires are another area in the spotlight. These tires must support the great weight of a large commercial aircraft (gross weight of up to 560,000kg) traveling at speeds of up to 370km/h on take-off*. These extreme use conditions demand that a tire manufacturer incorporate a full range of advanced technologies into the product. Bridgestone radial tires are now being fitted on production models of the Airbus A380 and the next-generation Boeing 787 as standard, two of the most advanced aircraft in the world.

Radials are increasingly the first choice of many equipment manufacturers, and this is also clearly the case in the motorcycle tire market. In general, the Bridgestone Group has identified specialty radial tires as key product sectors and has focused its research activities on the development and deployment of state-of-the-art technology for these products. Through advanced technology and improved services, we continue to focus on expanding sales throughout the specialty tire sectors.

* Quoted figures apply to the Airbus A380 super-jumbo.