

Groundbreaking for solution SBR plant in Singapore
– diversification of production locations for enhanced stability of supply –

Asahi Kasei Chemicals held a groundbreaking ceremony on June 22, 2011, in Jurong Island, Singapore, at 11:30 a.m. local time, for the first phase of construction of a new plant to produce solution-polymerized styrene-butadiene rubber (S-SBR).

The ceremony was attended by some 100 guests including eminent persons such as Mr. Leo Yip Seng Cheong, Chairman of the Singapore Economic Development Board (EDB) and Mr. Yoichi Suzuki, Japanese Ambassador to Singapore, as well as by Mr. Taketsugu Fujiwara, President of Asahi Kasei Corp.

S-SBR is a synthetic rubber which enables the production of tires that provide greater fuel efficiency while maintaining safety performance. With tightening environmental regulations and heightening environmental awareness, demand for high-performance tires which provide improved fuel efficiency is growing throughout the world—and demand for S-SBR which is therefore growing briskly. At the same time, the overall market for tire rubber in Asia is expanding as rapid motorization continues and tire production increasingly shifts to the region.

Asahi Kasei Chemicals is expanding S-SBR operations as strategic world-leading business, with the new plant in Singapore representing a major step in diversifying its operation base for enhanced stability of supply to meet growing demand and customer needs.

Outline of the new plant

Location:	Tembusu district, Jurong Island, Singapore
Capacity:	Phase 1 – 50,000 tons/year Phase 2 – 50,000 tons/ year (planned)
Production:	S-SBR for fuel-efficient high-performance tires
Process:	Solution polymerization
Scheduled start-up:	Phase 1 – May 2013 (Phase 2 – early 2015)

Synthetic rubber business of Asahi Kasei Chemicals

Major products:
S-SBR, butadiene rubber (BR), thermoplastic elastomer, transparent styrenic resin.

Capacity for S-SBR (flexible capacity including BR):
Kawasaki Works – 105,000 tons/year
Oita Plant* – 35,000 tons/year
Total – 140,000 tons/year

* Japan Elastomer Co., Ltd., 75% owned subsidiary of Asahi Kasei Chemicals (25% owned by Showa Denko K.K.)

About S-SBR

Styrene-butadiene rubber (SBR) is a synthetic copolymer consisting of styrene and butadiene, produced either by emulsion polymerization or solution polymerization. Depending on which production process is used, it is classified as either emulsion-polymerized styrene-butadiene rubber (E-SBR) or solution-polymerized styrene-butadiene rubber (S-SBR). Whereas E-SBR is used mainly for standard-grade tires, S-SBR has become the focus of increasing attention for its essential function of enhancing tire performance. S-SBR is now increasingly used for fuel-efficient high-performance tires.

Being an optimal material for improving the balance of performance characteristics—including abrasion resistance, safety, and fuel efficiency—the modified S-SBR produced by Asahi Kasei Chemicals using its continuous polymerization process is widely recognized among tire manufacturers around the world.



At the groundbreaking (from left):

Mr. Seah Kee Pok, Assistant CEO, JTC Corp.

Mr. Toshiaki Higashihara, President, Hitachi Plant Technologies, Ltd.

Mr. Taketsugu Fujiwara, President, Asahi Kasei Corp.

Mr. Leo Yip, Chairman, Singapore Economic Development Board

Mr. Yoichi Suzuki, Japanese Ambassador to Singapore

Mr. Masaki Sakamoto, President, Asahi Kasei Chemicals Corp.

Mr. Shigenori Konno, Managing Director, Asahi Kasei Synthetic Rubber Singapore Pte. Ltd.



President Taketsugu Fujiwara, Asahi Kasei Corp., presents Chairman Leo Yip, Singapore Economic Development Board, with a token of appreciation after the groundbreaking.