



Components & Materials

Argus Fluidhandling

From British Rubber to Global Hydraulic Power



The Evolution of Oil Feed Engineering, Argus Fluidhandling and the Alfagomma Group

The story of Oil Feed Engineering sits at the heart of Europe's hydraulic engineering evolution – stretching from early British tyre manufacturing to today's global fluid power systems. What started as a domestic rubber industry network under the British Tyre and Rubber Company (BTR) grew into one of Europe's most influential engineering groups. Its specialist hydraulic businesses – Oil Feed Engineering and Argus Fluidhandling – became essential components in a broader international consolidation. By 1958, Oil Feed Engineering joined BTR Industries, specialising in flexible rubber and steel-braided hydraulic hoses. Around the same time, Argus Fluidhandling emerged as a leading supplier of hydraulic hoses and fittings, eventually integrated into BTR's Hiflex network. The late 1990s brought restructuring. BTR's hydraulic and rubber operations were consolidated under UniPoly S.A., streamlining decades of European engineering expertise. In 2005, Italian manufacturer Alfagomma acquired UniPoly assets, including Oil Feed Engineering and Argus. This acquisition united decades of British and

European hydraulic know-how under one global platform. Founded in 1956, Alfagomma had grown from a domestic Italian hose producer into a worldwide hydraulic systems leader. Today, the company operates 8 manufacturing plants, 79 subsidiaries across five continents, and serves OEM and industrial customers globally.

“From British rubber roots to a global hydraulic systems platform, this is a story of industrial transformation on an international scale.”

Argus Fluidhandling Ltd specialises in the manufacture of hose assemblies, rigid tube assemblies and fabricated structures for OEM markets worldwide. Specifically developed for the rail sector, the RailSAFE AF45 hose range has been designed to meet the demanding requirements of railway applications. RailSAFE AF45 hose is approved to EN45545-2:2013 and has also been developed to satisfy the requirements associated with NF F 16-101 and BS6853 standards, drawing upon many years of experience supporting the rail industry.

- Part code: RailSAFE AF45 Hose Range
– EN45545-2:2013 Approved
- Manufacturer: Argus Fluidhandling / Alfagomma

To further validate long-term performance, the RailSAFE AF45 hose range is undergoing extended one-million-cycle impulse testing. Designed specifically for railway applications, the AF45 range is frequently used as an alternative to standard EN854 R3 hose in railway air brake systems.

Group capabilities include:

- Hose development and validation
- Small- and large-volume hose assembly manufacture
- Fitting design and manufacture
- Tube bending
- Laser profiling
- Robotic welding
- CNC machining

Certified to ISO 9001, IATF 16949 and ISO 14001.

Alfagomma Railway Hose Solutions

Railway Hose Solutions Built for Safety, Performance and Reliability

Engineered for demanding rail applications and compliant with the latest EN 45545-2 railway fire safety standards.

When reliability matters, operators and OEMs trust Alfagomma railway hose solutions to deliver performance under pressure. Designed specifically for rolling stock, rail maintenance equipment, hydraulic systems and auxiliary rail applications, Alfagomma railway hoses are engineered to provide: exceptional flexibility and durability; high-pressure hydraulic performance; resistance to vibration and harsh operating environments; reduced maintenance downtime; long service life in demanding rail conditions.

Alfagomma 2SC and 2TE railway hoses comply with EN 45545-2, the European standard covering fire behaviour, smoke density and toxicity requirements for railway materials and components. Tested to meet the stringent safety requirements of modern railway systems, Alfagomma hose solutions help support: passenger rolling stock; metro and tram systems; locomotives; maintenance vehicles; hydraulic and pneumatic rail systems.

With proven global manufacturing capability and technical expertise, Alfagomma delivers hose assemblies designed for maximum operational reliability and safety.

Why Choose Alfagomma Railway Hose?

- EN 45545-2-compliant
- Designed for railway fire safety standards
- High-performance hydraulic hose technology
- Excellent flexibility and bend radius
- Reliable performance in harsh environments
- Global technical support and supply network

// 2SC RAILWAY



// 2TE RAILWAY PLUS **NEW**



ISO 11237 - EN 857 2SC - EN 45545-2 R22 (HL1-HL2) - R23 (HL1-HL2-HL3)

Tube: oil resistant synthetic rubber.
Reinforcement: two high tensile steel braids.
Cover: abrasion, ozone and hydrocarbon resistant synthetic rubber.
Application: high pressure hydraulic lines, fuel oil, antifreeze solutions, air and water. Specially designed for railway applications.
Constant operation: -40 °C +100 °C (-40 °F +212 °F)
air max T = +70 °C (+160 °F)
Length: random

Exceeds EN 854 2TE - EN 45545-2 R22 (HL1-HL2) - R23 (HL1-HL2-HL3)

Tube: oil resistant synthetic rubber.
Reinforcement: one high tensile textile braid.
Cover: abrasion, ozone and hydrocarbon resistant synthetic rubber.
Application: medium pressure hydraulic lines, fuel oil, antifreeze solutions, air and water. Specially designed for railway applications.
Constant operation: -40 °C +100 °C (-40 °F +212 °F)
air max T = +70 °C (+160 °F)
Length: random

Argus Fluidhandling – A Specialist Engineering Legacy within the Alfagomma Group

Argus Fluidhandling traces its origins back to the early development of hydraulic hose and fluid transfer technology in the 1930s and 1940s, when it was known as the 'oil feed company' and subsequently was brought into the BTR fold in the 1990s. The Argus name first emerged in Europe as a specialist manufacturer of hydraulic hoses and fittings. Over time, the business evolved through several structural changes within the wider British and European rubber and hydraulic engineering sector.

By the late 20th century, Argus had become part of a broader consolidation movement in the industry. In the 1990s, it was integrated into the BTR Fluidhandling and Hiflex network, aligning it with one of the UK's most influential industrial groups in rubber, tyre, and hydraulic systems. This period saw Argus develop into a recognised engineering brand within BTR's expanding fluid power division, supplying hydraulic hose assemblies, fittings, and engineered fluid transfer solutions for demanding industrial applications.

Following the restructuring of BTR's rubber and engineering interests in the late 1990s, Argus was absorbed into the UniPoly and Hiflex group structure, continuing its specialisation in hydraulic components while benefiting from a wider European manufacturing and distribution footprint. This stage strengthened its technical capability and positioned the business within a growing pan-European hydraulic systems network.

In 2005, a major transition occurred when Alfagomma acquired the Dunlop Hiflex Group, bringing Argus Fluidhandling into the Alfagomma portfolio. This acquisition significantly expanded Alfagomma's presence across Northern Europe, including the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, Scandinavia and other key industrial markets. Argus was subsequently integrated more closely into Alfagomma's global hydraulic systems strategy.

By 2016, Argus Fluidhandling had been fully consolidated within the Alfagomma Group, operating as part of its international hydraulic and industrial fluid handling division. Today, Argus supports Alfagomma's global OEM and industrial customer base, specialising in the design, assembly, and testing of hydraulic hose systems and fluid transfer solutions.

Integrated Acquisition Timeline

- **1958** – Oil Feed Engineering joins BTR Industries Group
- **1990s** – Argus becomes part of BTR Fluidhandling / Hiflex Group
- **Late 1990s–2004** – Transition through UniPoly and Hiflex restructuring
- **2005** – Alfagomma acquires Dunlop Hiflex Group
- **2005–2016** – Progressive integration into Alfagomma's global structure
- **2016** – Full integration of Argus Fluidhandling into the Alfagomma Group

Alfagomma Founding History

Alfagomma was founded in 1956 in Italy by Felice Gennasio. Alfagomma originated in Monza, Italy, in 1956, established by Italian entrepreneur Felice Gennasio as a general trading company. Initially, the company focused on industrial trading, and in 1972, it built its first plant for industrial hose manufacturing in Teramo, Italy, through a joint venture with BTR Dunlop UK, and in 1977, a second plant in Cosenza, Italy, was established to produce steel wire braid reinforced hoses.

The company's internationalisation accelerated in 1989 when Felice Gennasio's sons, Enrico and Guido Gennasio, took over management. Alfagomma then expanded globally, opening manufacturing plants in Malaysia and later in China for hydraulic fittings and adapters. Over the years, Alfagomma acquired Dunlop Hiflex Group in 2005, strengthening its presence in northern Europe and establishing a network of branches across Germany, Holland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland.

With over six decades of innovation, Alfagomma has become a global leader in hydraulic and industrial fluid handling systems, operating 22 manufacturing plants and 87 branches across five continents, employing around 3,600 people. The company has been recognised as a Historical Italian Brand by the Italian Ministry of Economic Development, highlighting its long-standing contribution to Italian industry.

