



Applications | Case Studies

SPYRAFLO BEARINGS HELP RAISE THE GANGWAY

The Aluminum Ladder Company manufactures gangways and crossover walkways for easy access when loading and unloading bulk material from and to tankers, trucks and barges. Due to the arduous conditions and materials being handled, AL found bearing life was becoming a real performance headache. Bearings are critical to the equipment performance as they ensure the gangway treads remain horizontal and stable at all times during use.

The bearing problem centered on companies using the gangways to load and transport powdered cement where usage was arduous made worse by the dusty environment which further accelerated bearing wear. The problem impacted two products:

- Articulating tread gangways which provide safe access from a fixed platform to vehicles such as trucks and barges.
- Stand treads, a variable height platform with self leveling treads typically used by aircraft ground services.

Repairing the gangways required the replacement of 20 or more bearings per gangway, resulting in very high service costs and customer downtime.

Jimmy Daniel, one of AL's Senior Designers was tasked with resolving the problem. He initially identified bolt-on rolling element bearing assemblies which were expensive and bulky. When he saw the Spyraflo's self-clinching, self-aligning bearings, their search was over, chose 0.750" diameter Teflon-Bronze and 0.625" diameter Delrin-AF® self-clinching, self-aligning bearings. Installation time is less, with bearing performance and life significantly better than the bronze bearings they replaced.

