

Australian Industry **OZWELD**

WINS!

WTIA National Diffusion Networks
Project (NDNP) funded by the
Federal and State and Territory
Governments and industry



AusIndustry

SUCCESS STORY NUMBER MS01: INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL DEVICE EXPERT BRINGS LATEST TECHNOLOGY TO AUSTRALIA – *Technology Forums by Dr Norman Stockham open new opportunities for the growing industry in all States*

The Medical Device Industry

The medical device industry is as diverse as it is specialised. It calls on the innovative use of design and components and utilises all facets of precision manufacturing from printed circuit boards, injection-moulded plastics to engineering, using a wide range of materials.

The Industry in Australia

The sector is highly diversified and highly competitive. The industry is represented in all Australian States and Territories and is characterised by a relatively small number of large companies that account for the majority of sales and exports, and a large number of small companies.

Australian medical device manufacturers and developers operate in a relatively small domestic market and consequently have to produce a quality of product that will, and invariably does, compete on the world stage. Most of what is made in Australia is exported.

Generally, such companies also have lower financial resource base, so look for clever ways of developing and manufacturing devices that are cheaper and quicker. The WTIA has been working with local and overseas centres of excellence to bring innovative joining technologies to Australian industry's doorstep.

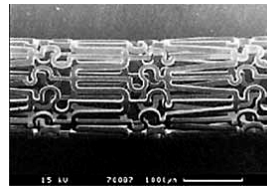
Role of the Industry Sectoral Project (ISP)

Through its national Medical Devices and Sensors Industry Sectoral Project (ISP) and the team working together in the Industry Specific Group, WTIA is tackling the exciting and rewarding challenges of welding and joining for the industry in Australia. The ISP is one of eight supported by the AusIndustry Innovation Access Program (IAccP) – Industry as well as by State and Territory Governments and industry.

Key Australian organisations involved in this ISP are ANSTO and CSIRO Manufacturing and Infrastructure Technology – Microtechnology. These and overseas members of the WTIA OzWeld Technology Support Centres (TSCs) Network have been working together to benefit Australian industry.

Visiting Expert

In April 2005, WTIA hosted a visit to Australia by leading UK expert Dr Norman Stockham from TWI.



*Stent
(left) and
artificial
prosthesis
c joint
(right)*



Dr Stockham has over 25 years experience in Medical Device, Electronic, MEMs and sensor materials, packaging and assembly technologies. This has included development work on catheter, pacemaker, cochlear implant, stents, surgical tools and monitoring equipment. He is currently involved in setting up several major European initiatives on biomaterials for orthopaedic implants and the reliability of medical products and Chairs the UK National Reliability Strategy Committee.

Latest technologies

In all, over 70 delegates attended the forums held in 5 capital cities around the country. The presentations by Dr Stockham, as well as experts from CSIRO, ANSTO and the WTIA, explained the state-of-the-art in medical device technology and discussed the impact of trends in new materials, processing, electronic packaging and MEMs. It also reviewed the challenges facing the medical device industry and some potential solutions.

Open discussion session on future technologies and needs in Australia allowed input from the industry which was used to identify technology needs which could be addressed by the WTIA Project. As one delegate commented “the forum has pointed out a number of areas in which our company could benefit from working with the WTIA Project in the future”.

Industry visits

Dr Stockham also went into companies, universities and research organisations around the country during his visit, identifying a number of specific areas for future liaison with TWI, and addressing specific issues and challenges.

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