

## Success Stories from the WTIA SMART TechNet Project

**SUCCESS NUMBER 6: PIPE WELDING FOR THE QUEENSLAND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY** – *This small company has established itself a strong position in a niche market by accessing and implementing the latest pipe welding technologies*

### Queensland Construction Industry

The last few years has seen a considerable change in the construction industry in Queensland with the closure of some large construction companies, slowing investment by government, and steel imports placing pressures on local production. “Major construction projects in this country are more and more involving the assembly of pre-fabricated components from overseas rather than building pieces from scratch. This presents an opportunity for us, especially with small to medium projects, because someone still has to join the pieces together,” said Wayne Harrison, Manager at Dartbridge Welding.

#### Key issues

- Australian heavy construction industry is under competitive pressure.
- Future emphasis will be on engineering and assembly.
- Australian companies must build a reputation for quality and accuracy rather than compete just on price.

### Dartbridge Welding

Dartbridge Welding started out as a family business around 21 years ago with a staff of one, providing mobile welding services from the back of a truck. Now, with a staff of 15 and a factory in Carole Park, the company has become a specialist provider of X-ray quality pipe welding services.

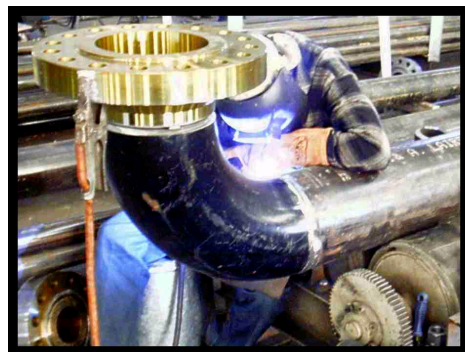
“Seven years ago we identified pipe welding as being a niche market for us in Australia. We operate at up to 100% X-ray level, which means that every joint and weld has to be of the highest standard,” said Wayne. Pipe welding, especially when it involves active high pressure gas or water pipes, requires a higher level of skill than regular welding and there are strict guidelines and industry codes to be followed.

### WTIA specialist assistance

To remain competitive in such a niche industry, it is important for Dartbridge Welding to be aware of new welding technology. The WTIA, through its Queensland State Technology Manager has organised industry meetings to disseminate information and techniques from overseas. The WTIA is also promoting AS/NZS ISO 3834 standards for the welding industry to ensure best practice in systems, documentation and welding techniques.

### Future Opportunities

“Many of the best welding machines come from overseas, and the WTIA Smart Pipeline Industry Group is helping many Australian companies evaluate the suitability of this equipment for Australian conditions. Many companies don’t have the time or the resources to do this themselves and the WTIA and the Australian Pipeline Industry Association have provided excellent R&D so far,” added Wayne.



### The benefits to industry

The major benefits for Dartbridge Welding and the pipeline industry were:

- Technical advice from the WTIA;
- AS/NZS ISO 3834 accreditation;
- Independent arbitration in disputes;
- Telephone advice line; and,
- Industry meetings to disseminate and share information on the latest techniques from overseas