

Making the blood run cold

Media Release – 23 July 2010

The Australian Red Cross Blood Service (ARCBS) marked a new era in Australian blood production, with the recent commencement of construction of their new \$115 million principal blood manufacturing site in Sydney.

This new facility will be the largest principal blood site in Australia and will manufacture around 32% of Australia's national fresh blood supply. The construction phase, being undertaken by the Buildcorp Group, is expected to create between 250 and 300 jobs.

The new facility will also contain state of the art laboratory facilities, inventory systems and other specialised equipment designed to ensure the safety and quality of all fresh blood products. A key component of these new state of the art facilities is the materials handling solution that will convey blood products through refrigerated areas without operator intervention, thereby reducing OHS risks while increasing productivity when compared to the previous system.

Australis Engineering is proud to announce that it was been appointed to design, manufacture and install the purpose built and designed materials handling solution for frozen blood products at the new ARCBS facility.

"The new ARCBS blood product manufacturing facility provides a unique set of challenges for a manufacturing facility. In particular, blood products have to be stored safely and securely in sub-zero temperatures, with the ARCBS freezer facility capable of reaching -40°C" said Australis Engineering Director of Engineering Services, Anthony Gustafson. "In conjunction with this challenging operating environment, being a blood product, health and hygiene are paramount considerations for the long-term operation of the equipment" said Mr Gustafson.

Australis Engineering has proposed an engineering solution that ensures the purpose-built roller conveyors and belt conveyors, product handling baskets and trolleys being installed to the ARCBS freezer and fridge facilities will result in reduced OHS risk to ARCBS employees as the conveyors will operate easily in the sub-zero temperatures – unlike employees who currently have time restrictions in place to prevent cold-related health and safety impacts from occurring. "OHS risk and facility productivity are improved as ARCBS staff will spend less time donning cold suits to brave the arctic-like conditions of the freezer facilities. Instead our conveyor system transports the blood products directly to the lab technician's work area." said Mr Gustafson. This is a major benefit of Australis Engineering's solution as it means a dramatic reduction in the number of freezer entries by ARCBS staff and will result in increased productivity.

To ensure that the new materials handling solution meets strict Therapeutic Goods Association standards, the Australis Engineering design incorporates medical grade stainless steel construction of all structural components and the use of food grade anti-bacterial belts within the system. Critically, Australis has designed the roller conveyors with special purpose roller bearings that are designed to maintain their operational requirements despite the extremely cold temperatures within the freezer environment.

Further information

Australis Engineering is a family owned and award winning company with 27 years experience in providing innovative materials handling and industrial automation systems for Australian manufacturing industries. We manufacture and install quality conveying, materials handling and automation systems for clients who are mostly large national and multi-national companies, typically in the pharmaceutical, health, food & beverage, packaging, coin minting and hazardous substance sectors. Our team of engineers and expert tradespeople can design and manufacture entire automated conveyor systems or special purpose materials handling equipment to meet your exact requirements.

For further information regarding Australis Engineering's design and manufacturing solution can be obtained by:

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- send an email to enquiries@australiseng.com.au
- search the Australis Engineering website www.australiseng.com.au