

# UNSTOPPABLE TED

WE HAVE FEATURED NIVEK INDUSTRIES A FEW TIMES AND FOR VERY GOOD REASON. WHEN IT COMES TO INNOVATION, THIS IS A COMPANY AT THE TOP OF THEIR GAME.

TED, which stands for 'Tracked Elevating Device', is the machine the company is built around. What started as a life saving device to help safely remove difficult and dangerous to handle belly plates on heavy earthmoving equipment, has now evolved into a multi-faceted and versatile machine capable of a range of tasks, making life on the job a whole lot easier and safer for fitters.

In terms of the evolution of the company over the last few years, it all started with Kev working out of a shed at Greta, then two brothers working out of their parent's farm shed. That evolved into a machine that the mining industry couldn't ignore, and it took off from there.

Now they have a manufacturing facility at Maison Dieu in Singleton working at full capacity to try and keep up with the high demand generated through high performance and reputation. Nivek Industries is now a team of 8 fulltime staff that will only grow larger.

**THE BUSINESS IS DOING VERY, VERY WELL AND AWARDS AND RECOGNITION IS FLOODING IN FROM INDUSTRY AND THE NSW PREMIERS OFFICE.**

Marketing Manager Rachel Fraser proudly told us, "Recently we won two awards with the HMA. Excellence in Export of Manufactured Goods and the coveted Board Award. For us, that's a massive accolade, considering its industry recognition; they're acknowledging we have something impressive and see immense potential in our business, which is particularly encouraging for a relatively young company. On top of that we were recently finalists in Minerals Energy and Related services at the Premiers Export Awards in Sydney, and a finalist in Excellence in Mine Safety, OH&S at the National Mining Prospect Awards in Brisbane."

Nivek's export footprint is taking



off as well, expanding to places like Great Britain, Canada, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Africa, Mongolia, the USA and beyond. That export market is driving innovation even further and, in some cases, they have been designing modifications to cope with extreme climates from ice and snow to hotter desert like conditions and tropical environments. TED really is one tough little bugger. All up, there are now around 230 units in operations around the world.

**ALSO VERY SATISFYING FOR THE COMPANY IS THE FACT THAT THERE ARE QUITE A FEW MINES LOCALLY AND INTERSTATE THAT ARE ACTIVELY COLLABORATING WITH THEM ON FURTHER INNOVATION TO MAKE TED SUITABLE FOR SOME REALLY IMPORTANT SOLUTIONS ON SITE.**

Operations Manager Jeff Merchant finds this particularly exciting. "Sites come to us saying we would love to be able to use TED for specific complex tasks. One recent request was to lift a steer idler at exactly the right angle to get it into ultra-class dump trucks. Another site asked us to come up with an idea to take hoist pumps out of 930Es. Sound suppression removal on 793s has been another one of many recent requests."

"What started as a belly plate lifter, now has around seventeen attachments with more in the design phase, all making maintenance safer and easier. The other great thing about our machine, is that it isn't limited to work on one brand or type of machinery, or even just in the mining industry. TED is now supporting maintenance across a wide range of industries including; smelters, refineries, crushers, forestry, and more and more in civil works. Wherever you have heavy machinery to maintain - TED can assist," Jeff explains proudly.

They really are just discovering how far they can take it in collaboration with industry. Whether it be site specific or job specific, the innovations will continue

**TED CAN LIFT 800KGS AND HAS AN AMAZING RANGE OF ATTACHMENTS WHICH CAN SUPPORT A MASSIVE RANGE OF HEAVY AWKWARD COMPONENTS.**

without a doubt bringing safety and versatility to a whole new level.

**WHEN THE QUESTION OF SHIFTING MANUFACTURING OFF-SHORE WAS ASKED, THEY WERE ADAMANT AND PROUD THAT THINGS STAY HERE.**

"It's extremely important to us to keep the benefits of local jobs and high Australian standards. It's Australian designed and we want to keep the work in Australia. Wherever practical, we use local people and suppliers. The argument that Australian Manufacturing can't compete doesn't wash. Our quality and innovation are our competitive advantage and that business model works. We want more jobs here for more people," said Jeff proudly.

"It's a lot of hard work but a lot of fun and very rewarding," were the unanimous words both Jeff and Rachel ended our chat with.

Designed by fitters for fitters, Nivek's journey of innovation simply won't stop any time soon.



## STEPPING UP TO THE JOB

RUTHERFORD BASED MINING SERVICES COMPANY TEFOL, HAVE GROWN ON A FOUNDATION OF INNOVATION AND DEDICATION. THEIR INDUSTRY REVOLUTIONISING 'TEF STEPS' ACCESS SYSTEM FOR HEAVY EARTHMOVING EQUIPMENT DEMONSTRATES WHY THEY ARE A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH.

We recently sat down with the team behind 'Tef Steps' and it soon became clear why this unique access system is winning fans at the big machine end of town.

Access systems for heavy mining equipment take a battering in harsh mining environments and are historically failure prone. Repairing and refurbishing the full range at work in the industry, Tefol identified some inherent issues and potential improvements. The team knew there would be demand and an appetite for something that was more reliable and robust. It's fair to say it was an emerging market due to strengthening OHS systems and policies and safety culture. The development time frame was all customer driven said the team behind his innovative product.

**"THIS PRODUCT STARTED 12 YEARS AGO. WE HAD CUSTOMERS COMING TO US SAYING WE WANT A LADDER DESIGNED FOR THIS OR THAT, BECAUSE WE ARE NOT HAPPY WITH WHAT IS IN THE MARKET."**

Credit must go to owners Brett and John Willis who saw the opportunity and had no hesitation in going for it and investing in the products potential.

"Less maintenance is a big thing and an area we also really focused on, so being able to say our solution requires around 40% less maintenance is a point of pride. We make them so that in eight years on the side of a dozer there is minimal structural problems."

A key thing that Tefol did differently early on was to integrate the hydraulics into the machine eliminating a key point of failure over other systems. They integrate what powers the ladder into what powers the rest of the machine hydraulically.

Fewer moving parts, fewer operating parts, fewer failure points, and rather than having a pump specifically to run the ladder, the machines pumps have been proven over decades to be much more reliable than something that is bolted on. It's a little bit more work up front but it saves big in the long run. It does make it a little more expensive to produce, which they acknowledge, but they make no apologies for that, because that investment pays back way more in the long run.

In terms of units in operation there would be 200 - 300. They're in Western Australia, heaps in Queensland and NSW of course, plus Victoria and New Caledonia. They are currently looking at taking it all to gold mines in Utah in America as we speak.

**IT'S GREAT TO SEE HUNTER COMPANIES AND HUNTER PEOPLE TAKING ON THE WORLD.**

When we speak of innovation, something else the team does is make all their own electronics on site, including circuitry, hardware and programming, flow control programs, board design, coding - the whole lot all under one roof. It gives them a great flexibility to customise for specific requests and environments.

The team went on to say, "The whole approach ensures that not only does the product grow and evolve, but we as a company do as well. We are a team that has pretty much all stuck together and all of us have been here from the beginning. It's all about constant evolution and improvement. Our close relationships with our customers mean any issues are ironed out quickly and easily and improvements are integrated quickly."

**"WE ARE 100% AUSTRALIAN MANUFACTURING AND THAT'S SOMETHING WE ARE REALLY PROUD OF."**

On local collaboration, "We try to use suppliers right here in Rutherford and the Hunter Valley and there are at least six main ones just a few streets away. Companies like Emeco who work with us sandblasting and painting, SLS do all our profile cutting, Hunter Valley Steel supply everything we need on that side of things. We love using local companies and collaborating. Bannisters Transport are another who get our stuff to our customers. Valley Fasteners help to source a lot of what we need."

Tefol's next big development will be to move into rail with a product specifically designed for that market and which will be a huge development.

From 15 years ago, with just two brothers and a truck when they started, they have come a long, long way. Keep up the good work!

## CLEARING THE PATH FOR AUSTRALIA'S RESOURCE INDUSTRY



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