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A. Suite of SOLUTIONS

From humble beginnings in the Hunter region to building its footprint across Australia, China, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Russia, South Africa, Botswana, the UK, and the US, Ampcontrol provides world-class electrical solutions for numerous industries.

Images courtesy of Ampcontrol

Ampcontrol was founded in 1968 when it first entered the Australian underground-mining industry. The company was soon recognised as a leader in the provision of safe, reliable, electrical solutions that powered Australia's resource sector. Since then, Ampcontrol has seen many milestones achieved and celebrated by a growing workforce around the world. However, despite the technological firsts, numerous awards, expansive growth, and global reach, Ampcontrol remains a company founded on a simple, yet rock-solid foundation—a philosophy that anything is possible. This overarching vision has meant that Ampcontrol's customer-driven technology solutions are redefining industry expectations

and leading safety in more than nine countries.

Geoff Lilliss, former CEO and Managing Director of Ampcontrol, is a thought leader in the engineering space and has a wealth of knowledge and experience within the energy sector. "I spent 37 years in the electricity distribution and transmission industry in New South Wales, most recently with Energy Australia, which is now Ausgrid, and its predecessor organisations. The last position I held there was executive general manager networks and executive general manager engineering and transmission. I came to Ampcontrol about three and a half years ago as CEO and Managing Director."

Geoff announced his retirement and resignation in June this year,

leaving a great legacy and strong company behind him. He recalls his first major challenge with the company, which came from the increased demand of the mining boom. "Ampcontrol is the market-leading manufacturer of underground longwall mining, electrical, and safety equipment. We're in a very unique position in that we provide most of that equipment to an entire industry on which this country depends, and we are quite clear on our responsibilities that help keep this industry going. The first major challenge was to focus on that and to provide the level of backup that the industry was looking for. At the same time, we had to deal with a hugely increasing demand through 2011 and 2012 for our premium heavy-engineering equipment in that sector." >



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- Geoff Lilliss

Now in the midst of a prolonged market downturn, Ampcontrol is continuing to broaden its reach by investigating new markets where their established technology could get a foothold.

“Ampcontrol, like a lot of other mining services companies, has had to adjust to the downturn in the industry. We’re seeing iron-ore prices that have come off significantly, and coal prices have done that over the past couple of years. So Ampcontrol has to focus more on assisting our customers to increase their productivity and safety outcomes in a cost-effective way.

“We’re having a look at our value propositions in all of those customer segments. We want to represent good value for our customers so that our customers know that they’re buying the best equipment in the market for the most effect on their operation. And that’s through our service operations as well as our repair

shops that operate nationally and internationally. We will be focusing on a whole range of electrical needs for our valued mining customers.

“In addition to this, the mining industry is highly dependent on accreditations, and this differs all around the world. So to put our range of equipment into the United States, for instance, we require accreditation from the Mine Safety and Health Administration in the US, which is quite a lengthy process.

“Even though we have good demand for our products in the US, getting our products through those approval hurdles is quite a significant challenge. It’s no different in the UK industry with ATEX approval, and the same in China. There are separate regulatory authorities in Russia, South Africa, and so on. We spend a lot of our time working with regulatory authorities so that our equipment is approved,

because it’s really vital to mine safety and productivity.

“The organisation’s approach to global expansion has been incremental and strategic, supporting a two-fold objective to be near customers and in markets where our technology can be introduced.”

By supporting customers through each phase of development, Ampcontrol can be agile and flexible to customer needs, working in partnership with them to deliver the best possible technical outcome. This is a key principle that underpins Ampcontrol’s ethos. “Clearly we’re focused on customer service. One of the key journeys for me at Ampcontrol was to increase our focus on the customer and to become a very reliable supplier of high-quality equipment, and I believe we’ve advanced well along that journey. We’ve still got a little way to go, but customer values, customer service, and customer

responsiveness are part of our value set.

“Because of the products we’re manufacturing, our core values are safety and reliability, and we take that very seriously. In fact, as a company, we play a role in advising regulatory authorities in various parts of the world on these very complex and significant safety issues. We value technical excellence because at the heart of our business is an advanced set of proprietary products that Ampcontrol has developed through significant R&D investment over many years.”

To align Ampcontrol’s staff to these values, there are mechanical as well as leadership aspects that come into play. “We take leadership very seriously at Ampcontrol and we’re increasingly working on the accountability and leadership aspects of our total management team, especially our middle-management team; not only leading by example and providing leadership from the CEO and the executive team, but also the more well-known aspects of instilling values and key performance indicators in performance-management systems, and rolling those things out amongst our staff, many of which have been with Ampcontrol for many years.”

Geoff believes the company’s true strength comes from its relationships across the industry. “We have very good relationships with our customers at every level. In fact, as an original equipment manufacturer, we have a number of very strong relationships with other major original equipment manufacturers in not only the mining industry, but the electrical industry more generally. We also have strong relationships, at an operational and strategic level, with our major end-use customers; people such as large mining companies, both onsite and at a head office level, and often we service both of those requirements every day.”

Geoff also notes that Ampcontrol is a complex organisation with many moving parts and strong expertise

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in engineering. “Ampcontrol has a leading-edge engineering group in Australia and for a company its size, one of the most significant engineering groups that you would see in a company like this. We also carefully control product development centrally from Australia and try to devolve

authority to our local country managing directors as well, so it’s always a two-edged sword.”

Ampcontrol’s engineering team is highly skilled and experienced in a range of electrical, mechanical, and automation engineering disciplines as well as being mobile resources



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to customers when needed. Working in tandem with Ampcontrol's extensive advanced manufacturing facilities across several continents, the company's engineers deliver innovative solutions for the most challenging environments. Ampcontrol now applies this engineering focus to customers in mining, tunnelling and utilities, and energy-intensive industries across the world.

"It's a balancing exercise that is not directive, but participative, and those country managing directors are responsible for working with the central product development group to ensure quality and standards. By means of regulation as well, those standards are automatically assured because we have to comply with regulation in every country we operate in. We also have to comply logically with customer requirements and specifications, which are often very detailed. All of those processes need to come together to ensure quality and performance. Our equipment is well-known for the longevity of its performance and indeed its reliability, which is a really big factor with our customers these days because they're all looking for maximum productivity."

Ampcontrol's ability to collaborate and communicate with different branches of the industry ensures the company is always well-informed and continuously improving. The organisation is not afraid to embrace new means of communication to further establish its place in the industry. "We're utilising more electronic means to communicate with our customers. We're looking to refine our product information continuously, starting with some of the current communication mediums such as social media, and we get our significant engineering people out and about,



talking at industry seminars. We clearly spend a lot of time communicating with regulators so they understand the capability of our equipment, and also our engineering capability to solve some of the more difficult problems in the industry that we serve."

Technology has played a major role in the development and growth of Ampcontrol. The company is built on technological innovation and will continue to implement new processes and products to further establish the brand in the resources sector. "I think one of the proudest moments was when we completed the development on one of our latest products, which is our VSDguard wide bandwidth earth leakage relay, which increases

the standard for electrical safety and underground coal mining quite significantly.

"That has been a major breakthrough development that will allow customers to be able to track individual pieces of electrical equipment throughout the mine, and get continuous performance monitoring around the aspect of safety. I think that has been a major breakthrough and it makes me proud to think that our team can develop such a complex device and then market it to an entire industry."

Today, Ampcontrol remains focused on making the impossible possible while operating in new spaces, both geographically and technologically. Ampcontrol consistently challenges itself to engineer new solutions every day and set benchmarks in technology, engineering, and manufacturing by creating integrated electrical solutions that improve safety and efficiency across the globe. ●

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"Working with Ampcontrol is rewarding. Ampcontrol requires us to procure processed steel within a timely fashion. Our challenge is to meet the need of Ampcontrol with solutions. The relationship is that of trust, open communication and honesty." - Brad Ayton, Branch Manager Cardiff, BlueScope