

Adventurous job in Tasmania's wilderness

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VAG On-site

12/09

Queenstown, on the west coast
of Tasmania

In 1914, Mount Lyell Mining and Railway Company finished the construction of a dam and power station at the edge of Lake Margaret to supply their mine with water and electricity through a three kilometre long pipeline.

Almost 100 years later, in 2006, the station was closed, among other things, to refurbish the historic wooden pipeline, whose wooden staves, shown in the picture, had become very porous.

Project overview

Project:

Refurbishment of an historic water supply in Tasmania's inaccessible wilderness

Services:

Delivery and assembly of a
VAG EKN® Butterfly Valve DN 1200, PN 16

Project duration:

June 2008 to June 2009

Client:

Hydro Tasmania
obtained through our dealer Metaval Ltd.,
Australia, Andrew Garland



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One of the old butterfly valves was also planned for renewal during the refurbishment. VAG-Armaturen in Germany quickly found the perfect fit: a VAG EKN Butterfly Valve, DN 1200, PN 16 with manual hydraulic drive.

Then things got interesting: How was the valve going to get across the inhospitable terrain so it could be assembled on site? VAG's transport and assembly experts had the answer: before leaving for Tasmania, the valve would be dismantled into as many individual parts as possible. This would enable the parts to be transported in small batches from the power station to the dam by helicopter.

At the same time, Frank Löffler, Service Engineer at VAG, embarked on his trip: 17,700 km by plane, 320 km by car and another 3 km on foot. 'I felt like Indiana Jones,' says an enthusiastic Frank Löffler about his adventurous assignment in the Tasmanian 'outback'. At this remote site, miles away from civilization, the valve would descend from the sky. Needless to say, good planning was of the essence! All of the tools, implements, lifting and alignment equipment had to be carefully thought through: the site had neither power nor cranes.

Working closely with Tasmanian installation contractor Tyco Tamar our engineer's heart was pounding when he looked up into the sky. Three days later - the flight had been postponed several times due to bad weather - the VAG EKN Butterfly Valve was finally in sight.

The pace had to be stepped up: place the body on the plateau that had just been anchored into the rock, calibrate the extremely heavy valve and fit the axle mounting: a precision job that had to be carried out in very difficult conditions. But it was not a problem for our experienced VAG service engineer. All that was left to do after that was mount the hydraulic brake and lift cylinder and the butterfly valve would be ready for service in the Tasmanian wilderness. Frank Löffler completed his assignment before the work on the new wooden pipeline reached the section leading to the valve.

So he left before the wooden staves were attached to the flange connection. 'I would have loved to stay until the whole project was finished', explained Löffler. 'But there was really no reason for me to stay, so to minimize the customer's costs, I left.'

The remaining construction work on the power station was completed by the end of October 2009. David Brown, Senior Project Manager at Hydro Tasmania said 'we are very happy with our valve „Made in Germany“ and thank VAG and Metaval for their very important contribution to successfully installing such an important part of the project in such difficult conditions.'

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