

## PYROTEK PRODUCT SOLUTIONS AND LOCAL SUPPORT ASSIST PORTLAND SMELTER

The Portland smelter operated by Alcoa in Victoria, Australia has been a key customer for Pyrotek for many years. Portland itself is a very picturesque, rural fishing port town on the southern coast of Australia, 365 km west of Melbourne and 1235 km southwest of Sydney.

The USD\$1.2 billion smelter commenced operations in 1986 with a nameplate capacity of 345,000 t/yr from two potlines, employing Alcoa A817 pots to produce remelt ingot through three ingot chains in the facility's casthouse. Due to the financial constraints resulting from the prevailing global economic situation, Portland, like many other international smelters has curtailed 15% of its production within the last year, and this currently remains off-line. In addition, within the last year the smelter stopped producing alloy remelt ingot and now only produces purity metal. Consequently, more attention has been placed on procurement in the carbon bake and potline areas.



*Portland smelter in Victoria, Australia – one of the world's most efficient facilities*



*Portland is one of the world's most efficient smelters and one that prides itself on its environmental awareness and ecological considerations. The creation of parklands around the plant site has earned Portland the title of the "smelter in the park", and also the first certification as a viable habitat ever granted by the Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Council outside the U.S.*

Keith Pigdon, Pyrotek Geelong Branch Manager has been closely associated with Portland as a supplier since the very beginning, and for the last 12 years has represented Pyrotek. But, Keith has always serviced this customer from his base in Geelong. At the beginning of 2008, Pyrotek employed Pablo Dorado as a Sales Engineer based in Portland to service the smelter as his primary customer. Since then, Pablo has worked tirelessly to expand the mix of items that Pyrotek supplies to Portland, and assisting plant personnel in conducting and monitoring trials which have led to process and competitively priced product solutions for the customer.

The combination of Pyrotek staff working closely with the customer's plant production personnel has delivered improved serviceability, efficient procurement and reduced costs.

### LARGE AND COMPLEX TAPPING SPOUT GASKETS FOR THE CRUCIBLE:

In winning this item, Pablo and Keith were assisted by Yahya Muhammad, the Soft Products Production Manager in the Sydney manufacturing facility. Yahya's extensive industry

knowledge was invaluable in selecting raw materials and production techniques that resulted in a gasket that is far out-living the item previously used.

### RUBBER SEALING BANDS:

These bands provide the vacuum seal around the pouring spout on the tapping crucible. This solution involved developing a vulcanized joint, which out-last-ed the rubber joint previously supplied by a competitor.

### CRUCIBLE LID SEALS:

Pyrotek was able to offer a more cost-competitive solution because of the ability to braid the rope around the rubber insert in-house at the Pyrotek Sydney manufacturing facility.

While these have been good project orders, further contracts are anticipated as the local Pyrotek staff continues to work closely with the customer, and further product trials are ongoing. All feedback from the smelter has shown how much it was appreciated having local colleagues close by to work with them and respond to their needs.