



GHD: FROM WATER SUPPLY TO RAILWAYS

The Company is improving rail worldwide through innovative technical solutions and global knowledge

Written by Laura Clapper & Produced by Heather Babcock

GHD, a leading global architectural, engineering and environmental consulting firm, began in 1928 under the name Gutteridge Haskins and Davey. The company originally focused on water supply projects in New Zealand and Australia. It has since built a solid reputation worldwide for providing innovative and sustainable solutions in the engineering and environmental industries.

Though they abbreviated the company name about 10 years ago, the company still provides the same high quality consulting services to companies and governments all over the world, including North America, United Kingdom, South America, Asia and the Middle East. "The only continent we're not on at the moment is Africa," said Martin Baggott, Business Leader of Rail for GHD. The company operates in 16 countries and employs over 6000 people around the world. Their market sectors include water, transportation, energy and resources, property and buildings, and the environment.

TRANSPORTATION

Though GHD is best known for engineering infrastructure and water projects, the transportation division plays a significant role in the company as well. "For 40 years, the transportation business in GHD has been a pretty large part of the organization," said Baggott. Transportation accounts for around 25 percent of GHD's total revenue worldwide, while water accounts for about 20 percent.

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Martin Baggott,
Business Leader of Rail

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Transportation became a separate division of the company about 20 years ago. "During the late 70s and 80s, we formed a very close relationship with a firm known as Transmark. GHD's earliest business in rail in Australia was built on that alliance," said Baggott. The alliance with the UK-based company was the springboard for GHD's rail-specific operation worth \$AU80 million, or 8 percent of the total revenue of the company, which is valued at about \$AU1 billion this year.

Transportation is comprised of several specialist groups including: economics and logistics, roads and highways, aviation, marine and rail. The rail group consists of a number of subgroups that are oriented to their customer base. "We're servicing, through design and management services, the construction of railway lines in Queensland and New South Wales for the coal industry and in Western



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Business Leader of Rail

Australia for the iron ore industry,” said Baggott.

“Servicing the resource industry is only one subgroup of rail; others include urban heavy rail and light rail service. The company is informing and designing projects for Adelaide, Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane, as well as sites around the globe. “In the United Kingdom, we’re operating a particular Centre of Excellence, assisting operators of railways to minimize the

long-term life costs of their assets and try to optimize their operations to improve reliability and reduce costs,” Baggott said.

Melbourne is the company’s centre of excellence for light rail services. The city boasts the second largest light rail network in the world. “When one looks at the number of projects that have been started up over the last 2 years, Light Rail outstrips many of the other rail projects that

are going on in terms of number and extent,” said Baggott. “This has fallen very favourably to our expertise in Melbourne, given that Melbourne had its light rail network for a very long time and this centre of excellence group has been here for a very long time. We see a coalescing of our capabilities and demand worldwide.” The company has its sights set on the North American markets in the future. For the time being, GHD is involved in the master planning for an extension to the light rail system in Sydney and a consortium to bring light rail to the Gold Coast region.

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HUMAN RESOURCES

GHD finds it a challenge to make sure they have the resources, both in number and skill, to meet the needs of their clients. The company often recruits graduates through their graduate intake program. Last year, the company hired 240 new graduates from the program, and plan to hire even more this year. “We pride ourselves on having the reputation for being innovative, and part of that innovation reputation is built from getting fresh ideas,” Baggott said. “New graduates bring fresh ideas and are not afraid to push the boundaries in terms of established practices.”

Additionally, GHD is always on the lookout for experienced people to come into the organization. The company has a relationship with several

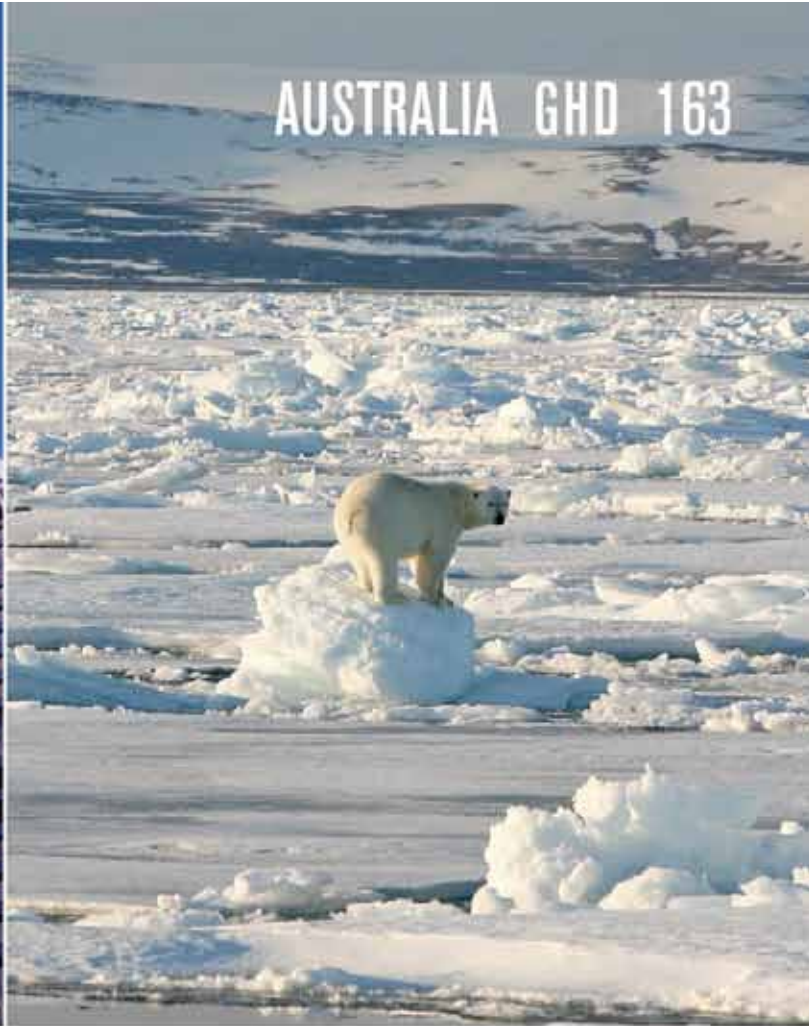


institutions to provide training and classes through the GHD Business School. The program is intended to develop strong and capable leaders to manage the company's numerous projects. “From my own personal point of view, it's a great place to work. An organization that knows what it's good at, wants to continue to do what it's good at, and remains focused without being diverted into all sorts of other operations, is a great place to deliver some very good services,” said Baggott. “GHD provides some of the best transportation services in the world.”

PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER COMPANIES

The company partners with a variety of companies to further expand their services. “We know that we can't offer every service for every job for every client. We understand our limitations and actively partner with other consultancies and groups that can bring that expertise,” said Baggott.

The company has recently partnered with SYSTRA, a transportation-consulting firm, on



the master plan for the Gold Coast light rail system. GHD has partnered with SYSTRA on many occasions, and it has proven to be a beneficial relationship to help ensure that the operational aspects of light rail are covered. Partnering with other companies allows GHD to provide clients a full range of services.

GHD also acquires smaller companies that provide services that fill a need within the company structure. One such company is Merrick & Associates, with whom GHD had a long-standing partnership until they felt that the company would be a good fit within the GHD family.

PLANS FOR GROWTH

Growth for GHD depends on the needs and requirements of their clients. Based on past performance, the company hopes that it will continue to grow at a sustained compounded rate over the next five years. Growth will occur through the acquisition and natural evolution of incorporating qualified people into the organization by way of organic growth. ■

FACTS AT A GLANCE



COMPANY NAME: GHD Pty Ltd

CEO: Ian Shepherd

OPERATIONS: Engineering, architectural and environmental consulting

ESTABLISHED: 1928

EMPLOYEES: More than 6000

REVENUE: AUS \$1.005 b - 2009/10

www.ghd.com