



April 15, 2014. The Australian pump industry is a significant niche with major financial interests in both population and commodity-driven markets. Currently, there's more than 2,500 people employed in this industry, just in manufacturing alone. That doesn't include agents, distributors, and other businesses that supply the end-product and services after the sale.

Pump Type

In the industry, there are many [types of pumps](#) , including [allight mining pumps](#) , centrifugal hydrodynamic pumps, rotary positive displacement pumps, and reciprocating positive displacement pumps. Each one serves a different market. For example, a centrifugal hydrodynamic pump is the largest group of pumps produced in Australia, and they range from

small domestic pressure pumps and swimming pool pumps to high pressure process pumps for oil refineries or wastewater treatment plants.

Rotary pumps are typically used for pumping viscous fluids. Gear pumps and vane pumps are used to transport oil and power transmission. Progressing cavity pumps are used for manufacturing processes and for handling water and slurries.

Industry Development

While there are several hundred companies that import pumps, there are also a lot of [domestic producers](#) too. Some of Australia's early history in the pump manufacture is represented by just two organisations that are still in operation to this day. The oldest is Southern Cross Machinery, which started in Queensland in 1871. The other is Thompsons Kelly & Lewis, started in 1875.

Pump users in the country have been very demanding and have helped develop the local industry towards the strong position it still occupies today – though, as demand changes, the industry needs to keep up its competitiveness.

Australian pump manufacturers are leading the way, though, with high technology and continued improvement in manufacturing processes.

Industry Rationalisation

The pump industry in Australia has recently seen a significant restructuring over the past decade. Pump manufacturers have slowly taken initiatives with a series of takeovers and consolidations that have ended up rationalising a large portion of the industry. Now, the industry is controlled by a small handful of players.

While the number of Australian pump companies has been reduced, however, the total plant capacity has actually remained unchanged. This is due to continued development, investment, and interest in updating machinery and processes.

The industry now has a strong capital base and adequate capacity to produce much higher volumes than it used to.

Supply Capabilities

Most of the pumps that are being manufactured today contain castings. The capacity of an indigenous pump industry is highly dependent on the quality and reliability of key suppliers.

One of the most significant changes recently is the size of the pumps that can be produced – today, they're not limited by foundry capability. Some foundries can pour castings up to 30 tonnes. As far as materials go, there's not really any limitations anymore either. If companies or consumers need exotic alloys, they can have it. If they need duplex stainless steel, they can have it.

Finally, the labour cost in Australia is lower than in Europe. It rivals North America, even with workers' compensation insurance and superannuation.

Paul Underwood has been involved in the Australian mining industry for many years now. An avid blogger, you can read his articles on a variety of websites.