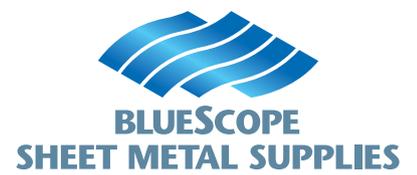


CASE STUDY

AQUA BOAT LIFTS



CATEGORY:
TRANSPORT - MARINE

LOCATION:
MELBOURNE, VIC

PRODUCT:
ALUMINIUM

BlueScope Partnership Makes New Venture Plain Sailing

With the quality aluminium products, proactive support and 'can-do' attitude provided by BlueScope Sheet Metal Supplies, Victorian company Aqua Boat Lifts is now manufacturing an exciting system which benefits not only boat owners, but also fellow local businesses.

Based in the suburb of Somerville, 53 km south east of the Melbourne CBD and adjacent to Western Port Bay, Aqua Boat Lifts is owned and run by long-time boating enthusiast David Keenan.

Having water skied on the fresh water of Lake Eildon in country Victoria for many years, David relocated to Patterson Lakes in outer south-east Melbourne over 10 years ago and soon became painfully familiar with the damage that can be done to a boat's hull and underwater gear through immersion in salt water – along with the many drawbacks of using toxic anti-foul products to combat this damage.

Looking online for an alternative way to protect his boats, David came across an overseas boat lift system which simply and easily raised and stored boats above the waterline.

“It’s fantastic to know we have a partner in BlueScope that works in step with us as we move forward.”

- David Keenan, Aqua Boat Lifts

Realising the value to fellow boat owners, David started importing and selling the boat lifts in 2010. However, over time he found that various cost and supply factors made importing the product untenable and 12 months ago decided that manufacturing a product locally was a far better option.

“Everyone thinks they’ll get a product cheaper overseas and bring it back and make a fortune, but that definitely wasn’t the case,” David stated. “With the cost of sea freight, fluctuations in the Australian dollar and being at the mercy of an overseas supplier, manufacturing our own product here was a much better option and has proved to be cheaper, effectively, and definitely more reliable in terms of supply.”

Having enlisted the services of a highly qualified engineer to design the new boat lifts, and knowing key components of the new system would be corrosion resistant aluminium sections and plate, David asked contacts that manufacture boats who supplied them with aluminium. He was immediately referred to BlueScope Sheet Metal Supplies.

“There were many alternative suppliers, but from first speaking with BlueScope, I knew I was talking to the right people and they quickly proved nothing was too hard for them,” David recalled. “They manufactured the die for the sections we required. They sourced quality aluminium, and they were happy to put in mill run product for us, which is protected stock held at their nearby Clayton South warehouse; everything has been fantastic and met our needs.”

Indeed, David feels BlueScope Sheet Metal Supplies has gone above and beyond in supporting Aqua Boat Lifts.

“It has quickly become a close and very good working partnership which we greatly value,” David said. “Other suppliers we’ve used from time to time for various other elements have been okay, but can’t seem to go the extra mile; that’s where BlueScope have been heaven sent for us,” David explained.

“We also found that the average size of plate sheets was going to be a problem, so BlueScope determined the biggest sheet and most appropriate size to minimise off cuts and maximise the number of pieces we could get from each sheet; BlueScope has sourced the large plate, they’ve got the router sorted, they’re going to cut out all the pieces we need and deliver them, ready to go.

“BlueScope Sheet Metal Supplies also recently came up with another solution that will save us many hours of work by suggesting that they can also robotically drill holes in the sections in the correct positions for us. It’s fantastic to know we have a partner in BlueScope that works in step with us as we move forward.”

This support will be invaluable to Aqua Boat Lifts as they prepare for upcoming boat shows and the product enquiries they know will follow – particularly as they have now also been approached by a business keen to distribute their boat lifts in the busy boating region which extends from Coffs Harbour in northern NSW right up along the extensive Queensland coast.

“We’re definitely about to get very busy, so it’s reassuring to know we have the strengths and expertise of BlueScope beside us,” David concluded.

The BlueScope Sheet Metal Supplies team also enjoys the strong working relationship with Aqua Boat Lifts and is pleased to know that they have been of service in supporting yet another Australian manufacturer.

BlueScope is invested in assisting fellow local manufacturers to grow and is dedicated to ensuring they support customers on that journey; The company’s role is not just that of a supplier, but that of a partner which is there to help customers in every way they can. They do that in many ways, as in the work with Aqua Boat Lifts where they have provided technical knowledge, supply solutions that enable them to grow without investing extensive capital in stock, plus value adds such as cut to length, pre-drilled material and routed aluminium plate.

BlueScope Sheet Metal Supplies is proud to be a large Australian manufacturer whose products support their customers’ quality message in the marketplace. Every customer, large or small, can be assured their focus is always on the quality of the support they offer.

For more information visit
www.aquaboatlifts.com.au



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