

# ICN's deep understanding helps a Queensland SME win big in Defence



B&R enclosures is a family-owned and operated medium manufacturing business with more than 60 years' experience in the design and manufacture of enclosure and cabinet solutions, delivering protection of equipment and safety for people from a workforce of over 400 people.

With headquarters in Brisbane, Queensland on a purpose built (18,000 sqm) state of the art manufacturing facility, B&R supports offices in all mainland states of Australia, with further manufacturing locations in Adelaide and Sydney as well as overseas.

The company offers an extensive range of products including domestic and commercial enclosures, data racks and cabinets, industrial and mining enclosures, switchboards and MCCs and hazardous area equipment.

Its four divisions—B&R Industrial, B&R Data ICT, B&R Hazardous Areas and B&R Residential Commercial—each focus on unique needs of different market segments with B&R's Defence prowess stemming

from its leading position in these markets, demonstrated by their agility to effectively work across these segments.

B&R was awarded a contract to supply Communication Equipment Racks for the SEA1180 OPV (Offshore Patrol Vessel) program. This project originated from a trade mission led by Austrade and ICN.

"ICN has been particularly valuable for us," Julian Spencer, B&R's National Business Development Manager – Defence said.

"On the face of it, businesses can always use ICN's Gateway to find out about different projects. But because ICN has taken time to get to know B&R and understand our organisation and our capabilities. We have been able to take advantage of opportunities very effectively."

"The level of engagement has enabled us to be very targeted in what we have chosen to pursue, saving us a lot of time and effort by not wasting resources in investigating projects that aren't suitable."

Julian makes special mention of ICN Consultant Jeremy Satchell, who works closely with the Defence Industry, and identified B&R as a key enabler across many technology platforms as well as

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**Julian Spencer**  
National Business Development  
Manager – Defence



taking the time to visit B&R on site to learn more about the B&R business.

“We are very appreciative of the time ICN, and particularly Jeremy, has taken to guide us—thus allowing us to make the most of opportunities. This has been the key to the benefits for us.”

Julian advises other organisations to give ICN the opportunity to know them beyond their capability statement, and to also take part in different industry events and workshops that ICN facilitates.

“Sometimes people don’t see these things as relevant. They may feel they are too busy and don’t see the value. But the opportunity to network and communicate your capabilities and strengths with relevance has been a big factor in our success.”

Before ICN, B&R was just one of many businesses trying to “shop our wares” out to the Defence Industry, competing with a wide variety of suppliers.

“ICN has provided us the opportunity to show people what our strengths are. Potential customers can come to us and tell us their challenges and we can work with them to come up with a solution,” Julian said. “Working with ICN has allowed us to strengthen our profile in Defence and expand dramatically.

“ICN is very much about the end game. They are very business focused, and have helped us target worthwhile opportunities.”

The Government focus on Defence has helped combat the decline in Australian manufacturing, that is due mainly to cost of manufacturing.

“They are supporting Australian manufacturers to not only provide goods and services within this country for Defence but also looking to build capacity here and promote our capabilities overseas.”

ICN has also been instrumental in matching B&R’s capabilities with other Australian SMEs for collaboration opportunities, allowing local industry to deliver turnkey solutions.

According to Julian, Australian companies are considered quality-focused and reliable, and pose a lower security risk than some other manufacturing countries. To take advantage of this situation, B&R is focusing internally on being more effective and efficient to keep manufacturing in this country.

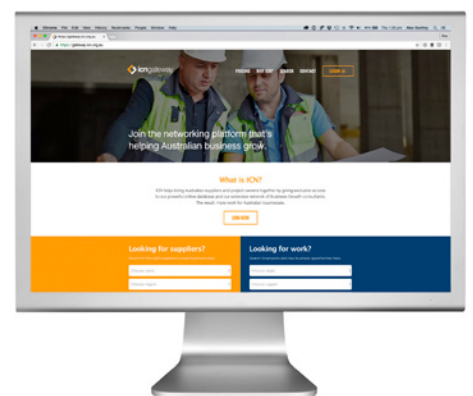
“We are pursuing an Industry 4.0 approach, taking a data-driven manufacturing strategy. This makes us more efficient through using data to guide production activities.”

The OPV contract has allowed B&R to grow and showcase its abilities, as well as use the technology and learnings to move into other markets. For example, ship-based solutions for industries other than Defence.

“It also gives us a lot of credibility across a range of markets here and internationally where we can demonstrate that we manufacture products for the Australian Defence industry.”

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