

TWO (2) Spiroflow pumps

Technical History

The pumps are 6inch INDENG multistage centrifugal pumps. They were driven by Blackstone model TPT engines via a multiple V belt drive. They were known to be installed to pump water at Hesso on the Pt Augusta to Woomera water pipeline in 1957, but may be older.

No manuals or books are currently available.

Working History

The complete working history of these pumps is not known. We don't know when they were made, and are unsure about their earliest years. We do know that they spent from 1957 to 1992 pumping water to the town of Woomera and the Woomera Rocket Range & Nuclear Testing facility.

In South Australia, far from the "cold war" chills of Europe, frantic efforts were being made by Britain to enter the Nuclear Club, and to produce rockets capable of delivering warheads. This effort was centred on the outback facility near the purpose built town of Woomera.

Water was a major problem in this arid country, and a "crash" program was instituted to get water from the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline at Pt Augusta and deliver it to Woomera. We understand that this involved the "commandeering" of a pair of Blackstone TPT engines each with a 6inch INDENG Multistage Spiroflow pump. They were installed on the pipeline being constructed to Woomera at the then tiny railway siding of Hesso, 53km north of Pt Augusta.

The Spiroflow pumps delivered water at the rate of 650 gallons/minute (2955l/m) against a head of 473 ft. (144m). A former engine driver at Hesso told AHMRC members that when the pumps were under load and engines working hard, the ground around the pump house shook!

In 1996, the Defence Support Centre, Woomera, donated both 6inch INDENG Multistage Spiroflow pumps, together with one of the Blackstone engines and other items to the Club. They were recovered by a group of volunteers, supported by the Australia Army and other sponsors.

Both pumps are currently in storage.