

# BLACKWOODS CASE STUDY

## NORTHCONNEX



**Blackwoods**

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# THE CUSTOMER AND THE CHALLENGE

Maximising productivity on large-scale construction projects demands the latest technology and equipment combined with an experienced team capable of delivering it quickly wherever it is required.

NorthConnex is a nine kilometre tunnel linking the M1 Pacific Motorway at Wahroonga to the Hills M2 Motorway at West Pennant Hills, and on completion will remove up to 5,000 trucks from Pennant Hills Road each day.

At a cost of approximately \$3 billion, NorthConnex will be the longest road tunnel project in Australia. Aside from allowing motorists to bypass 21 sets of traffic lights on Pennant Hills Road, the project will deliver shorter travel times, improve the movement of freight and boost the economy.

## THE CHALLENGE

When construction commenced in 2014, the joint contractors Bouygues Construction and Lendlease, faced the challenge of finding a supplier capable of meeting the project requirements of its 2000 plus strong workforce.

Quality, reliability, logistics and product availability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) was a key consideration for the Lendlease Bouygues Construction Joint Venture (LLBJV), the construction contractor.

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# THE SOLUTION

Following a comprehensive audit across LLBJV construction sites, Blackwoods' leading Inventory Solutions technology proved an attractive solution. A series of specialised vending machines have been installed across the project sites to provide employees and contractors with 24/7 access to the latest PPE including gloves, safety glasses and masks.

Achieving higher productivity and minimising downtime on a project of this nature were key drivers for LLBJV. Blackwoods identified opportunities to add value and improve operational efficiencies, from invoice management and cost reductions through to innovative solutions and automated product dispensary technology.

Blackwoods understands the challenges associated with tunnel projects. From piling and shaft excavation through to tunnelling and mechanical and electrical fit-out, our comprehensive product range and specialist solutions are designed to meet complex project and safety requirements..



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# THE BENEFITS

Several benefits were observed following the implementation of the mobile vending machine solution including higher productivity, improved safety and compliance, greater cost control and streamlined invoice management.

## 1 Higher Productivity

“Improving our productivity were key drivers based on the large-scale nature of this project,” said Antoine Benzaglou, Purchasing Manager for Lendlease Bouygues Joint Venture. “The vending machine innovation has really benefited us in terms of time. Subcontractors can access the machines 24/7 and quickly purchase their safety equipment. Stock is replenished regularly ensuring high availability so there is no unnecessary downtime onsite.”

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## 3 Greater Cost Control

The vending machines are an effective solution in driving down costs, particularly with a fixed price on PPE. “We are able to accurately track and measure every single product that we use onsite, which gives us complete visibility over product usage of individual personnel,” said Antoine. “The fact that the machines are automated has eliminated the need for an onsite dedicated storeman, providing another opportunity for us to focus on other tasks.”

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## 2 Improved Safety and Compliance

“Safety is our number one priority, and we have very strict guidelines surrounding the types of safety products we provide to our onsite personnel. All PPE is checked by the safety managers to ensure compliance. By supplying PPE through the vending machines, we have been able to stop subcontractors using unapproved PPE which may not meet our safety standards. Having a reliable partner like Blackwoods, with the technical expertise, means we can ensure all our people are working safely and using equipment in the appropriate manner.”

## 4 Streamlined Invoice Management

“Reducing the burden of administration is always an added bonus. Blackwoods send us one bulk invoice each month which consolidates our total product usage by line items. This means not only can we pay on time, but it provides an indirect cost saving, and also allows us to spend more time on achieving our project milestones.”

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# MOBILISATION AND TRAINING

Extensive discussions took place between LLBJV, subcontractors and Blackwoods surrounding the integration of the vending machine technology with their existing infrastructure. According to Antoine, it was important for the site personnel to be trained on how to use the technology and to ensure a seamless transition to the new system.

“The system integrated smoothly with our ‘programme’ which is mandatory when Onboarding new subcontractors prior to them undertaking any work onsite. The Blackwoods team coordinated training with all our safety managers onsite, ensuring all personnel were aware of how to operate the technology and purchase PPE using their unique access cards.”

“Overall, having Blackwoods supplying our industrial safety equipment gives us confidence we are providing our personnel with the highest quality PPE fit for their respective applications,” said Antoine.



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# EVERY DAY, WE HELP MORE PEOPLE TO BUILD A BETTER AUSTRALIA

Blackwoods is the largest operating unit of Wesfarmers Industrial and Safety, a division of the Wesfarmers group which is an ASX listed company and one of the largest employers in Australia.

**Blackwoods is proud to provide products and services that are essential to the economic growth and prosperity of our country.**

With origins extending back to 1881, Blackwoods is wholly Australian owned and operated, and specialises in the supply of industrial and safety equipment to Australian businesses of all sizes in a wide range of industries.



Blackwoods, along with Wesfarmers, are founding members of Supply Nation since its inception in 2009. We engage with a number of Aboriginal businesses as contractors to Blackwoods.

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