

David Baglieri, Glanda's operations manager with his father and Glanda director George Baglieri.

A breathable niche

Glanda International

A decision made several years ago to diversify into breathable wet-weather gear has seen Glanda International maintain and increase its on-shore production and carve out a niche that has provided no shortage of work.

David Baglieri, Glanda International's operations manager, says that the company had originally set up business in 1987 to produce disposable protective overalls, but by the early 90s, Chinese products had started to erode the company's market share.

"Imports forced us to diversify into breathable wet-weather apparel," he says.

"When I started here in 1992 we were manufacturing breathable wet-weather garments and safety vests for the road traffic authorities."

"We were pretty much the only company manufacturing bearable wet-weather apparel at that time and later that year we became licensed to produce Gore-Tex® garments."

Special fabrics, special work
Unlike the commodity

products it had been producing up until this point in time, the use of the Gore-Tex® fabric leant itself to a number of specialised fields, and so Glanda soon found itself having to take design into consideration for the first time.

"We began to develop the garments with the customers to improve them."

"This customising of the garments forced us into purchasing our own CAD system in order to design the garments," Baglieri says.

"We now have that all in-house so that if a customer says 'we want something different

here', within a couple of hours we can do it and process and manufacture it in-house – the customers love that versatility."

Meeting the toughest test

A long-term customer, the Australian Antarctic division is one such client that requests changes to its garments on an annual basis.

"We have the flexibility to change the product to what they

require, whether it is the fabric used, different panels, different designs or different zips."

"Every time they have a problem with a garment from the previous season, they will tell us, and in that short amount of time we can

change it," Baglieri says.

"I think they are very happy with that type of flexibility, which is great because we want to customise garments for the end-user."

Baglieri says that the emergence of apparel management companies over the past five years has changed the way that Glanda operates. However, in most cases it has been for the better.

A wide range of products

Glanda International now produces a range of specialised industrial wear as well as its wet-weather apparel, including fire-retardant, anti-static and chemical-splash suits, jackets and overpants.

The company produces around 80% of its garments in its West Heidelberg factory, supplementing its range with a small amount of imported product.

Baglieri says that he mainly uses Gore-Tex® because it's a niche product, but uses Australian-made fabric when possible.

"We work with the Speciality Group, which has some fantastic product – anything new and innovative we will use."

"We worked quite closely with Specialty when we developed a garment for Boeing Australia which was required to be fire-retardant and anti-static for the ground crew."

Export is an area that Baglieri would like to explore, but with his factory running at close to full capacity at the moment, it is one that he says will have to wait.

"We haven't had the resources to market or investigate because we have been so busy in what we are doing," he says.

"We already produce for our Antarctic division, so there is no



reason why can't we deal with the other national divisions."

"I think for right now we need to focus on looking after the customers that we have got, while we try to expand a couple of product lines and improve the production side."

And expansion is already underway. Glanda has recently commissioned a Lectra Vector cutting system, whilst a new Gore-Tex® sealing machine and ventilation system has opened up a range of new products.

"We are now able to produce chemical splash suits, which is a great market to tap into."

"We entered into that market about a year ago and already have had fantastic sales in just those suits; it's very rewarding," Baglieri says.

"There are a many companies in need of a certain sized product which we previously couldn't do – but now we can."

Riding the resources boom

The resources boom has opened up the West Australian market for Glanda, with strong demand from both the mining and electrical sectors.

"We originally didn't do anything in WA and now all of a sudden WA is a new market."

"For the electrical companies we are producing Gore-Tex® two-tone garments with lanyard access – plus a large number of features they requested."

"For the mining companies, [we produce] mainly Chemical Splash suits using Gore® fabric and also some other Gore-Tex® apparel.."

Growth is the aim for Glanda International, but Baglieri says that they won't be over committing.

"I would hope that within 5 to 10 years we would be able to directly

handle more contracts with a larger capability in-house."

"Within the next two years we will have outgrown this factory and [we will] expand again."

"And we want to look at more contract work, it offers you a bit more of a safety net – we would like to do more of that, but not forget about our niche markets," Baglieri adds.

Lectra cutter leads to new opportunities

An increasing workload and complex garment construction has prompted Glanda International to install a Lectra Vector cutting system.

The decision was not taken lightly with the purchase decision made over six months, including several trials.

"We looked at three systems, all great systems, but in the end we found that the Lectra stood out above all of them," David Baglieri says.

"We purchased it and it came in January this year. They came and installed it and we haven't looked back."

"We have had so much work that the machine hasn't sat still since we have had it," he adds.

The addition of the system has also opened up an opportunity for a side business: contract cutting.

"We have approached a couple of companies for supplying cut work," Baglieri says.

"I think within another six months we will start to cut some trials for them, and utilise the machine for outside work.."

"It has allowed us the flexibility to give us short runs and increase our quality, which we really want to stand behind," he adds.

