



Titans turning the heat up at Solar Turbines

SOLUTIONS SNIPPET

Solar Turbines Australia were looking for a new way to heat compressor housings while repairing their turbines. They were using an oxy-acetylene torch to heat and expand the compressor housing to remove the end cap. This method was recognised as a significant work health and safety risk from fumes and the use of a gas welding torch in the middle of the workshop. As a manual task, the cost in labour was also a motivation to find a better solution. SBH Solutions were more than happy to help to come up with a unique solution for this challenging problem.

Initially, Solar Turbines were considering custom-made LMK heating jackets to wrap around the housings. However, SBH Solutions recognised that the energy intensity required could not be delivered by the relatively low watts density of a heater jacket and suggested using short wave infrared heaters instead. A 2000 watt Titan short wave infrared heater can very quickly achieve operating temperatures over 100°C on a close-by surface. Following some in-house tests, SBH Solutions suggested that an array of 3 Titans was a viable solution to replace the oxy-acetylene method.

Solar Turbines found that they could replicate the test results and they adopted the new method of heating compressor end caps. The workplace risks have been significantly reduced – reduction in fumes and naked flames. The Titan short wave heaters can be set up and left to heat, so productivity has improved. Even though it takes a little longer to heat up, the cast compressor end cap is no longer stressed by the localised higher temperatures of the oxy-acetylene torch.

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