

Family outfit steels limelight

DOUGLAS SMITH

STARTING as a workshop for mechanical repairs and maintenance for farmers and local council, Bowhill Engineering now designs and fabricates major steel structures for projects around the country.

Family-owned and operated, Bowhill Engineering is a small business that started in the '70s as a two-person operation.

In a testament to being able to operate a successful and growing business in regional South Australia, it now employs about 25 people and has been recognised by winning awards on a national scale.

In a tough economic climate, it aims to take on a new apprentice every year to further grow the business.

"The apprentice vacancy doesn't necessarily have to be a young person straight out of school. We're considering adult apprentices as well," managing director Jeremy Hawkes said.

Mr Hawkes has been in charge since the death of his brother who he says was the driver of the business.



WINNING TEAM: Bowhill Engineering managing director Jeremy Hawkes, far right, with some of his staff, and inset, the Adelaide Showground railway station bridge.

"He was really entrepreneurial and technically brilliant," he said.

Winner of Small Employer of the Year in the 2015 SA Training Awards, Mr Hawkes said Bowhill aimed to be world-class.

"We've been very fortunate to receive awards in business, training and safety," he said.

The company is advertising to recruit experienced workers.

"We're looking for people that are able to contribute to a team, not an individual," Mr Hawkes said.

"We wouldn't mind an experienced steel fabricator."

Bowhill Engineering won the Telstra 2014 Best Regional Business and last year Mr

Hawkes was awarded an Industry Leaders Fund grant, which helped him to attend Mt Eliza Business School.

The company was a key structural steel contractor for the Southern Expressway, providing steel for 11 bridges.

It also built the steel framework for the Adelaide Showground railway station bridge

and has designed and fabricated steel for many of the ferries on the River Murray.

"To be feasible in this industry you have to be at the top of your game, and we think there's space for us in the future market to problem solve and create really smart win-win solutions for our clients," Mr Hawkes said.

the far west of our state abutting WA," the department's executive director for minerals Ted Tyne said.

"The release of this data will be a game-changer that rewrites Australia's geological map. This massive area has only been pierced by half a dozen holes drilled to the basement, and is a vastly under-explored greenfields area."

The data, with flight paths every 400m or 200m, has been obtained in partnership with Geological Survey of SA and Geoscience Australia.

Addressing the SA Exploration and Minerals Conference in Adelaide yesterday, SA's chief geologist Steve Hill said the far west of the state represented a once-in-a-generation opportunity.

Data from a seismic line following the trans-Australia rail line was published last week and radiometric data would be released next year as part of a comprehensive program.

"Previously this was either a fuzzy area of airborne surveys of up to 3km spacing or a big white hole in radiometrics," he said. "So we've done a lot to address that."

Delegates at the conference questioned Dr Hill about future aeromagnetic surveys to be undertaken under the \$20 million PACE copper strategy, suggesting flights should exploit existing data to have a more refined strategy and focus on known prospective areas rather than simply following a grid pattern.

Dr Hill said the strategy for spending the copper initiative money was still being finalised.

Also addressing the exploration conference, Mineral Resources and Energy Minister Tom Koutsantonis urged the industry to use these tough times to prepare for the inevitable upswing.

■ The Advertiser and Sunday Mail have launched a campaign - **Jobs SA 2016** - to highlight success and inspire confidence in small business.

As part of the campaign, free employment advertisements are being offered from January 16 to February 27 to

companies employing 50 workers or less. Normally priced at \$199, the print and online package includes an Advertiser and Messenger ad and one online listing in careerone.com.au.

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