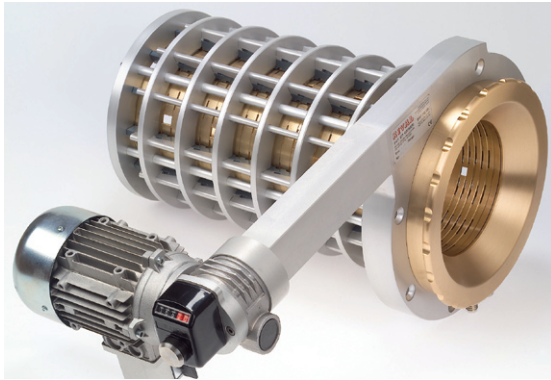


ADJUSTABLE CALIBRATING SLEEVES FROM RIVAL FOR FAST, EFFICIENT PRODUCTION



Engineering Manager Stephen Leggott, Vinidex "The RIVAL® adjustable calibrating sleeve represent the best solution in terms of the most important parameters

Australia's largest pipe manufacturer, Vinidex, still has a large stock of fixed calibrating sleeves in its tool store. If Engineering Manager Stephen Leggott has anything to say about it, however, they will soon be a thing of the past. The future belongs to adjustable calibrating sleeves, and at Vinidex those calibrating sleeves are called RIVAL. The company so far has 70 of them.

"In 2004 we scoured the market for adjustable calibrating sleeves because we were interested in reducing our raw material costs in particular, since these comprise 80% of our overall costs. We also wanted to streamline production. Instead of developing our own adjustable calibrating sleeve, we wanted to acquire tried-and-tested technology. During the course of our research, we considered a variety of models. RIVAL were able to supply the best solution, and we have acquired a wide range of adjustable calibrating sleeves for all our plants. We have been using them for two years now, and are happy with the results," says Stephen Leggott. Together with two colleagues from Vinidex, he is paying a visit to RIVAL in Denmark.



"RIVAL's calibrating sleeves mean our production is fast and efficient, and lead to huge savings in raw material costs. The adjustable calibrating sleeve is extremely precise and can give the pipe the correct diameter in the shortest possible time. That means less overweight and shorter payback time for the investment," says Engineering Manager Stephen Leggott, Vinidex (in the centre).

Here with (from left) Managing Director Henrik Holvad, Rival A/S; Product Engineer Jim Henwood, Vinidex; Production Manager Kevin Ianna, Vinidex and Exportchef Jesper Andersen.

Payback time of less than two years

The climate here differs somewhat from that of Australia, where unstable temperatures affect the raw materials, which react differently depending on a range of factors, including temperature. This problem is easily solved with RIVAL's adjustable calibrating sleeves, which may be adjusted rapidly and easily to 'offset' differences in temperature and materials.

"RIVAL's calibrating sleeves mean our production is fast and efficient, and lead to huge savings in raw material costs. The adjustable calibrating sleeve is extremely precise and can give the pipe the correct diameter in the shortest possible time. That means less overweight and shorter payback time for the investment," explains Stephen Leggott. He continues: "An adjustable calibrating sleeve is naturally more expensive than a fixed calibrating sleeve, but it lives up to our philosophy of a payback time of less than two years. That also means we can produce more, and be more flexible. Today, we hardly use our fixed calibrating sleeves even though we have a large stock of them."

Painless introduction

Phasing in and integrating the new RIVAL adjustable calibrating sleeves at our plants has been a painless process, and staff has welcomed them:

"Our staff feels they are easy to work with, despite the fact that they are larger and heavier than the fixed calibrating sleeves. They are easy to take apart and clean, and they have been easy to implement because they are compatible with the existing process equipment so the investment can stand alone," says Stephen Leggott.

Close dialogue between Vinidex and RIVAL

The three Australians are not just in Denmark on a courtesy visit. They have brought along a special development assignment which they hope to solve with the help of engineers at RIVAL. "Although RIVAL has a patented product, it is important for us to have a close dialogue with our suppliers so we can devise adjustments that suit our needs. The pipe industry undergoes constant change in the face of challenges such as thinner walls, larger diameters and materials that react differently depending on changes in temperature, air humidity and different colour mixtures," says Product Engineer Jim Henwood from Vinidex.