



Fit For Nuclear Q&A: QA Weld Tech

Welding specialist QA Weld Tech is aiming to expand from its core oil and gas business into nuclear. Operations director David Pickles explains how Fit For Nuclear is supporting the company's ambitions.

Could you introduce your company?

QA Weld Tech is a specialist welding and engineering business that has been based on the Riverside Industrial Estate in Middlesbrough for 37 years.

We have developed a reputation for the turnkey supply of critical components for the subsea oil & gas industry, particularly high-pressure severe service applications.

Why did you enter the F4N programme?

We felt that the skills developed and experience gained of working to the high quality and safety standards demanded by our clients in the oil & gas industry would transfer well to the nuclear industry, and that measuring ourselves against the quality standards required in that industry would identify any gaps in our existing offering.

What areas did the assessment identify for development?

The F4N assessment didn't throw up any surprises in the areas of quality and manufacturing standards, but it did identify a need to formalise and improve communication throughout the

company, both disseminating information from management to the shop floor, but also across different departments, and gaining feedback from employees.

What initiatives were most useful?

We instigated quarterly business update meetings for all employees, toolbox talks were extended on a weekly basis, and a greater emphasis was given to shop floor communication in the form of notice boards which highlighted key issues, KPI performance, and on-time delivery.

Safety issues have been highlighted through email communication, and monthly safety meetings, open to all employees who wish to attend, are held and minuted.

What benefits have you seen from F4N?

The benefits of going through the F4N programme have been seen across the company in the form of increased employee engagement in all areas of health & safety, quality and process improvement. Work areas have undergone 5S scrutiny, while waste and energy consumption are down.





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Where do you see the opportunities in nuclear?

As a specialist welding company we have experience with difficult to weld and exotic materials, as well as the welding of dissimilar metals. Much of our time is spent working with clients to ensure that the components they design can be manufactured to specification and overcoming their welding challenges.

We have a clean condition shop and can manufacture components in stainless steels and high performance alloys and state-of-the-art pressure test facilities for final testing.

Our workshops are configurable and can be set up for small volume production as well as batch quantities, while our multi-skilled workforce are recognised for delivering a high quality product.

How do you see your business in the nuclear sector in five years' time?

We hope to be seen as a valuable contract manufacturer and a reliable part of the nuclear supply chain, delivering safety-critical components to both the new build and existing nuclear fleet.

www.qaweldtech.co.uk
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Fit For Nuclear (F4N) helps UK manufacturers get ready to bid for work in the civil nuclear supply chain.



F4N is exclusively delivered by the Nuclear AMRC, and has been extensively developed and expanded to meet industry demand. The service lets UK manufacturers measure their operations against the standards required to supply the nuclear industry, and take the necessary steps to close any gaps.

Hundreds of companies have completed the online F4N assessment, with most receiving ongoing support and development from the F4N team of nuclear specialists and experienced industrial advisors.

Begin your F4N journey: namrc.co.uk/services/f4n



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