

press release**File name: Raut -FC46 - 0607.doc****Ref: FC46 – (06/07)****Title: RAUTOMEAD 'QDC' TECHNOLOGY IN HORIZONTAL CASTING MACHINES BRINGS DIE CHANGE PROCESS DOWN TO JUST TWO HOURS****Release Date:**

Continuous casting technology specialists, Rautomead Limited, of Dundee, Scotland, are pleased to announce the introduction of their patented Quick Die Change technology to their highly proven RT range of horizontal continuous casting machines for brass and bronze semi-finished bar and hollow bar production.

The robust design of these machines has enabled them to give excellent service to customers over many years - indeed many units supplied in the 1980s remain in daily production. Rautomead believes that the introduction of QDC will provide RT machine users with a worthwhile and significant enhancement to the casting process.

Today's RT models are the RT 650 and RT 850. They can be charged with molten metal from a separate melting furnace, or can be used as integrated melting and casting machines. The machines can be configured to produce one, two or four strands according to product size. Maximum size is 150mm and minimum is 15mm. Output is influenced by product profile and the alloy in production, but 400 kg and 600 kg per hour is typical from the RT 650 and RT 850 machines respectively, when fed with molten metal.

The Achilles heel has been until now, there existed the need to cool the furnace to less than 400 deg C before changing the casting dies. This was necessary to avoid erosion of the graphite high temperature components when exposed to atmosphere. Cool down time was about 16 hours, followed by 2 hours to change the dies and a further 8 hours to reheat, before production could recommence. In conventional brass rod casting, the casting dies would last typically for three weeks, enabling a die change procedure to be carried out each third weekend, with no serious inconvenience.

Radically new concept

Now, however, Rautomead has patented and is introducing the radically new concept of Quick Die Change – a process that enables the casting dies to be changed without cooling the furnace. Die change time is therefore dramatically reduced from around 26 hours to 1 hour. This new QDC technology is best used in conjunction with a separate melting furnace, so that a fresh batch of molten metal is ready to pour as soon as the new casting die has been fitted.

Rautomead Limited
Continuous Casting Technology
PO Box 100
Dundee DD1 9QY
Scotland

t: (44) 1382 622341
f: (44) 1382 622941

sales@rautomead.com
www.rautomead.com

Using QDC, the RT 650 and RT 850 machines become highly efficient units for jobbing applications where relatively short production runs are undertaken before a need to change to another size. Rautomead expects that this greatly enhanced production efficiency will open up a series of new applications and new markets for their highly proven horizontal continuous casting technology.

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For more press information, please contact:

Rautomead Limited

PO Box 100

Dundee

Scotland

Tel: + 44 1382 622341

Fax: +44 1382 622941

E-mail: sales@rautomead.com

Web: www.rautomead.com

(Photo-caption)

Die change in just 2 hours, Rautomead's patented QDC technology.

Schematics of the old and new Rautomead technology:

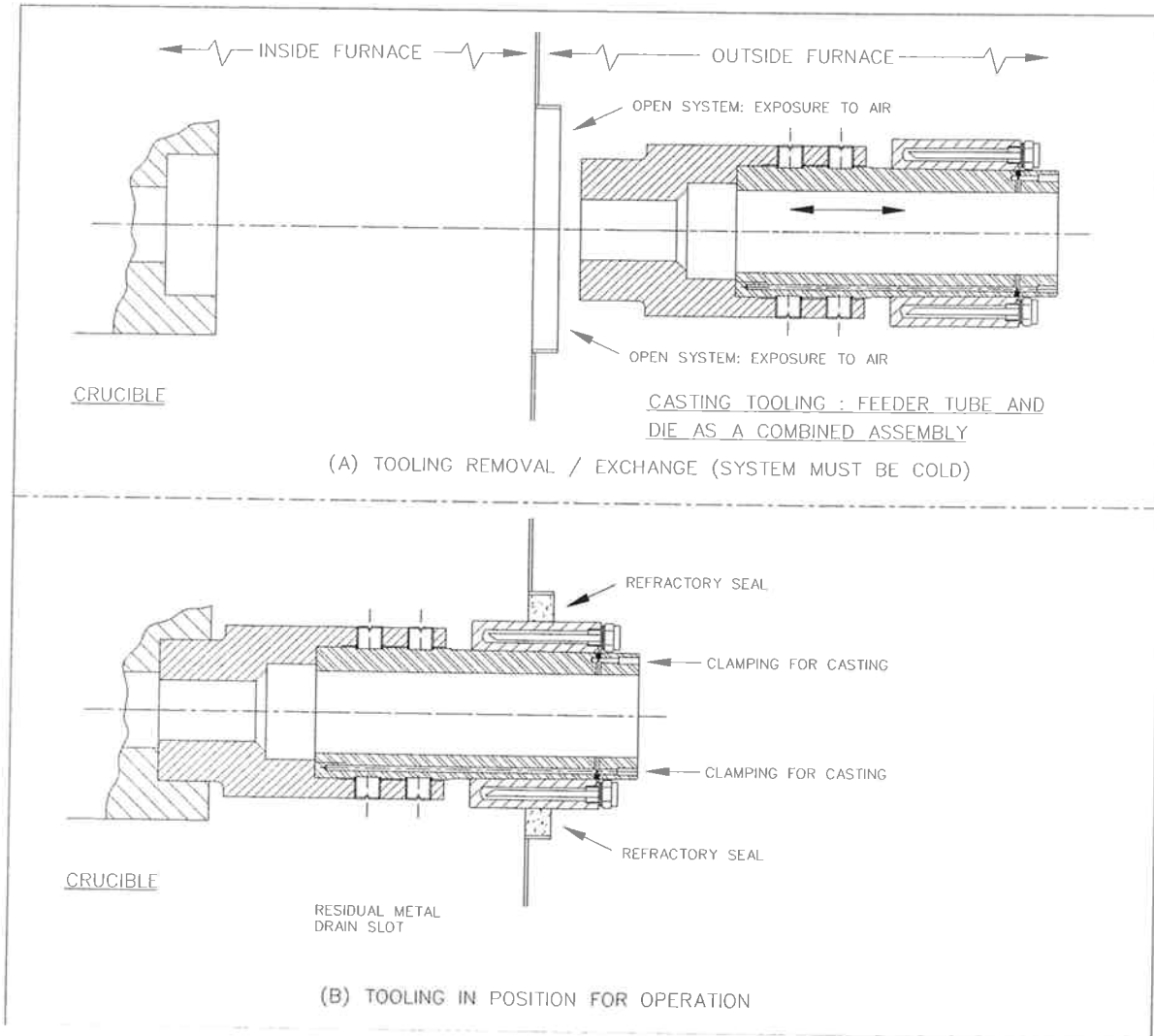


Figure 1 - Key features of the conventional Rautomead Continuous Casting system. Changing of dies normally conducted only when the furnace is cold.

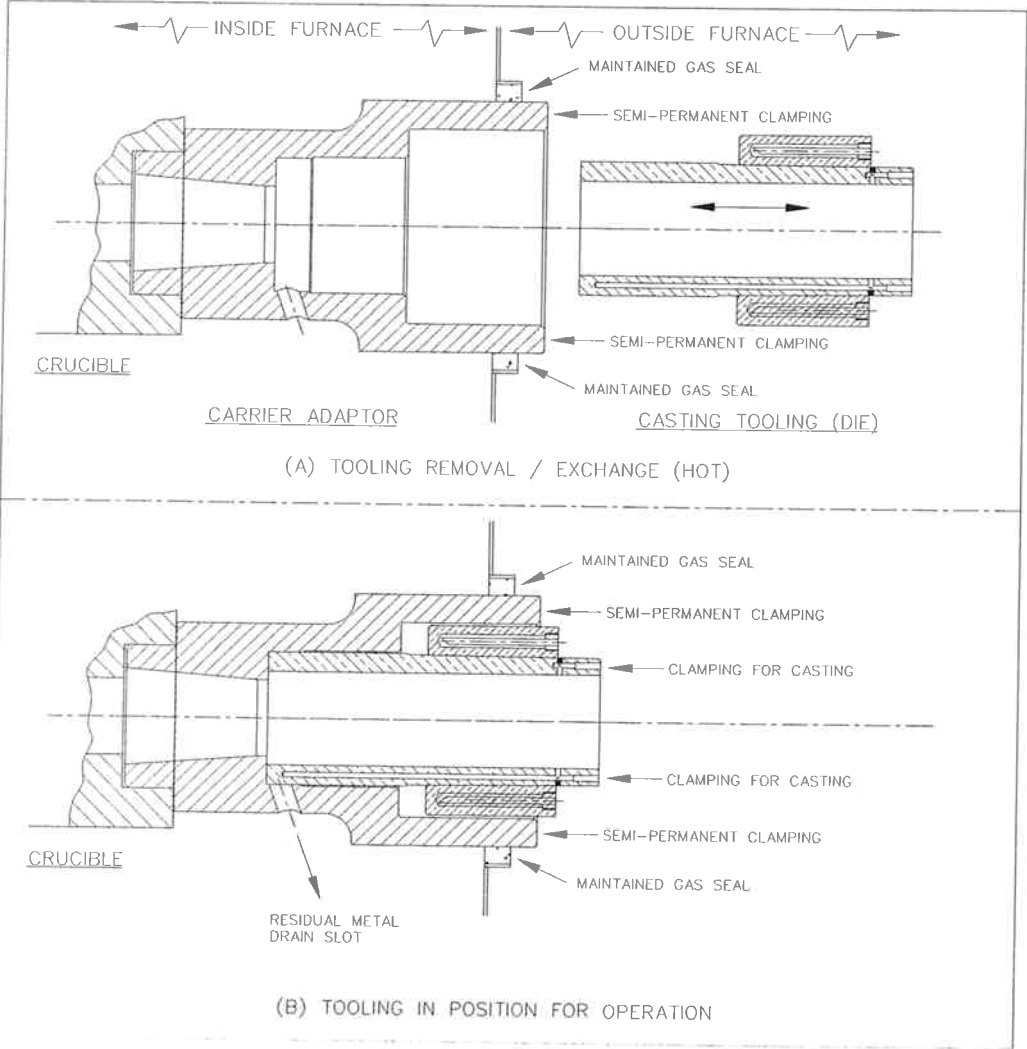


Figure 2 - Key features of the patented Quick Die Change system for changing Continuous Casting tooling when system is hot to minimise downtime.