Council pumped about inflatables

NEW portable, inflatable light towers are proving popular with Newcastle City Council's night works crews.

The council recently bought seven Aust Light Towers and may buy more in the future, according to services manager Shane Humphries.

"We had been looking to purchase lights that gave off good light and were easily manoeuvrable," Humphries said.

"The Aust Light Towers are extremely compact for storage, they don't take up much room on the job site and they can be easily moved around a site to suit the situation. They make hardly any noise from the small generator that runs them and they are easy to remove when we are finished with a job."

The Aust Light Tower weighs 25kg and consists of an inflatable, adjustable semi-transparent tube that stands up to 5m high. According to the manufacturer it can light an area of up to 10,000 square metres. The tube inflates within 60 seconds using a built-in fan and after five minutes the sodium lamp reaches full brightness.

"I find the light the Aust Light Tower produces is perfect, as it is not too glary for motorists," Humphries said.

"We use the Aust Light Towers for a number of things, such as emergency lighting for call outs, night works for sign and line marking crews, night patch works, and we plan on using them for mowing median strips on main roads in the late winter afternoons when the light is fading.

"Where the Aust Light Towers have really helped us is to highlight traffic controllers, to the extent we now go without day markers as the light towers produce all the light we need. This goes a long way for ensuring the safety of my crews."

The tower is designed to withstand wind gusts of 70km per hour with the assistance of tension ropes. It sells for less than $5000, which the manufacturer claims is a third of the cost for similar lighting devices. It is available in a low-frame and high-frame model, with the high-frame model made to fit a generator.

Newcastle City Council has bought seven Aust Light Towers.