CLAIMS:

1. A force detecting collar for use with a bodymaker for forming metal can bodies using an ironing process, the collar being cylindrical and configured to locate around an outer surface of a nose portion of a ram of the bodymaker, between a circumferentially extending shoulder of the ram and an end face of a punch sleeve, the collar comprising one or more load cells fixed to the collar and configured to generate electrical signals indicative of forces applied to the collar, between said shoulder of the ram and said end face of the punch sleeve, during operation of the ram.

2. A force detecting collar according to claim 1, wherein the one or more load cells are fixed to an inner surface of the collar.

3. A force detecting collar according to claim 1 or 2 and comprising first and second circumferentially extending end shoulders defining therebetween an inner circumferentially extending recess on an inner surface of the collar, the one or more load cells being fixed within the recess.

4. A force detecting collar according to claim 3, wherein the inner circumferentially extending recess extends completely around the inner surface.

5. A force detecting collar according to claim 3 or 4 and comprising a plurality of said load cells, the plurality of load cells being substantially equally spaced about the inner circumferentially extending recess.

6. A force detecting collar according to any of claims 3 to 5, wherein said circumferentially extending end shoulders of the collar further define therebetween an outer circumferentially extending recess on an outer surface of the collar.

7. A force detecting collar according to any preceding claim, the collar defining a channel extending between an inner surface and an outer surface of the collar and accommodating one or more wires coupled to the one or more load cells for communicating, in use, the generated electrical signals from the one or more load cells to external equipment.

8. A force detecting collar according to claim 7, wherein said channel is defined by a bore extending through the collar or by a clamping plate secured to an inner surface of the collar, the clamping plate configured to inhibit movement of said one or more wires relative to the one or more load cells.

9. A force detecting collar according to any preceding claim, wherein the length of the collar is substantially 25mm to substantially 50mm and a ratio of an axial length of the one or more load cells to a length of the collar is substantially 0.72.

10. An assembly for use with a bodymaker for forming metal can bodies using an ironing process, the assembly comprising:

a ram comprising a ram body and a nose portion and defining a circumferentially extending shoulder between the ram body and the nose portion;

a punch sleeve comprising an end face and being located coaxially around the nose portion such that said end face is opposed to said shoulder; and

a collar according to any of claims 1 to 9, the collar being located around the nose portion of the ram, between the circumferentially extending shoulder of the ram and the end face of the punch sleeve,

the assembly being configured such that forces applied to the punch sleeve axially towards said shoulder of the ram are transferred to said collar.

11. An assembly according to claim 10, wherein the collar is not axially fixed to the nose portion of the ram other than by way of abutment with the circumferentially extending shoulder of the ram and the end face of the punch sleeve.

12. An assembly according to claim 10 or 11 and comprising a punch nose fixed to a front end of the nose portion of the ram and at least partially received within the punch sleeve, the assembly being configured such that forces applied to the punch nose axially towards said shoulder of the ram are transferred to the nose portion of the ram and not to the punch sleeve.

13. An assembly according to any of claims 10 to 12, comprising a collar according to claim 7, and wherein the ram comprises an inner surface defining an inner chamber, the ram further defining a channel extending between the inner chamber and an outer

surface of the ram, the channel accommodating the one or more wires such that the one or more wires are received within the inner chamber.

14. An assembly according to claim 13 and comprising a radio transmitter located within the inner chamber, the radio transmitter coupled to the one or more wires for receiving said generated electrical signals and retransmitting them over a radio interface.

15. A can bodymaker for forming metal can bodies using an ironing process and comprising an assembly according to any of claims 10 to 14.