



THE LINK

Showcasing the successes, innovation and developments in the Fencing, Gate and Wire Industries



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

GLOBAL TRENDS IN STEEL AS I SEE IT Global Steel Market Dynamics

The global steel industry is facing transformations driven by sustainability targets, technological advancements and shifts in geopolitical trade patterns. The push for green steel production and renewable energy integration is reshaping the sector. As a result, key steel-producing regions are focusing on decarbonisation, fostering innovation in electric arc furnaces and

hydrogen-based production.

How does this change impact on Australasia? Competitive pressures from Asia and evolving environmental standards are necessitating local adaptation for businesses to remain viable globally. However, a shift in supply chains could create opportunities for the Australasian steel sector with the correct people to drive it.

Sanjeev Gupta and Confidence in Australian Steelmaking in SA

The acquisition of Whyalla Steelworks by Sanjeev Gupta through GFG Alliance/Liberty initially bolstered confidence in Australia's steelmaking future. However, recent financial challenges and reports of operational uncertainties have raised concerns in some quarters about Whyalla's future operations.

The importance of stability and strategic investment in local steelworks cannot be overstated in maintaining the integrity and confidence of our industry. While Whyalla has certainly had its production capabilities significantly tested over the past several months, Mr Gupta recently had this to say about its future:

"This town is not going anywhere, this steelworks is not going anywhere, LIBERTY is not going anywhere ... It has made steel for the last 60 years and it will make steel for 60 more years and beyond in the future. For now, we need to focus on getting this blast furnace running, that's our primary target. In due course, green steel will come."

Workforce Challenges in the Wire and Steel Industry

Businesses are struggling to attract younger employees, with trades and manufacturing industries often perceived as less appealing compared to tech or professional services. Promoting the exciting innovations and sustainability efforts within steelmaking can help reshape this narrative.

Retaining young talent is equally challenging due to competition, limited career pathways, and work-life balance concerns. As a result, businesses must focus on fostering a culture of continuous learning, mentorship, and providing opportunities for growth within. Utilising the AWIA Training Award should be front of mind for all member companies.

The Business Landscape in 2025

By 2026, businesses in the steel and wire industries will need to operate with an even greater focus on sustainability. They will need to be leaner and greener. Digital transformation, automation, and smart manufacturing will become cornerstones for efficiency and competitiveness on the global stage.

Economic pressures, such as rising energy costs and inflation, will push businesses to innovate and diversify revenue streams. Collaboration within the industry and government support will be critical in overcoming these hurdles.

Preparing for 2025 means investing in training programs, apprenticeships, and partnerships with educational institutions to secure a steady pipeline of skilled workers.

Graham Braithwaite



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

As we head into the festive, described by some as the silly, season, it's a good opportunity to look back on the year that's been and consider ways to improve for the future.

For those of you who were not able to attend the AGM in November, the 2024 year provided the AWIA with a small surplus despite an increasing focus on boosting free, or significantly subsidised, member services. These additional benefits came

in the form of our subscriptions to the CreditorWatch debtor reporting service and the IBISWorld industry analysis reports. Not all members are taking advantage of these benefits yet, and those who have not tried them are encouraged to do so.

To further extend member benefits, an arrangement is being put in place with Standards Australia for the provision of Standards to members on an annual subscription basis which will significantly lower the cost to access those Standards common to most members. Further details about the service can be found on page 2 of this newsletter.

President Graham Braithwaite has penned his report for this edition on global trends in steel and mentions the keywords, sustainability and digital transformation. To progress this focus, you will find in this edition an article about environmental product declarations (EPDs), which, although in use now for a few years, are becoming more of a focus for procurement teams.

A new section for this edition of the newsletter is Technology Tips which is planned to become a regular column to deal with all things digital. It starts off with some advice about managing your Inbox, so fairly basic stuff, but will progress to more technical topics as this new section develops. Let us know if there is a particular digital roadblock you are encountering.

Industry stalwart, Peter Johnstone, founder of member company Wiretainers, sadly passed away in September. Peter's son Charles, our AWIA vice-president, has provided us with Peter's history as documented by Peter himself, and an abridged version can be found elsewhere in this newsletter. Peter's influence on others, both within the wire industry and outside it, was immense, as could be seen by the hundreds of attendees at his celebration of life. Our thoughts and condolences go out to Charles, and the entire Johnstone family.

Since our last edition, two highly respected AWIA members have retired from the industry, and we are very sad to see them go. Steve Wade, initially with sponsor company Sanwa, and more recently with new member company, Central National, sat on the AWIA committee for many years and was always a great source of knowledge and advice. We wish him safe travels into a motor cycling future. Our other notable retiree is Grant Murdoch from Downee. Grant also sat on the AWIA committee and will be sorely missed, especially for his good humour and his knowledge about gate automation.

Thanks to all of you who have been so supportive of the association in 2024. We wish you a very happy festive season and a prosperous and healthy 2025.

Richard Newbigin

(Tel:1300 942 500 Email: richard@wireassociation.org.au)

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STANDARDS AUSTRALIA

NEW AGREEMENT FOR PURCHASE OF STANDARDS

The AWIA is pleased to announce that an 'in principle' agreement has been reached with Standards Australia for improved member access to relevant Australian and New Zealand Standards.

The agreement will enable participating members to access a defined set of Standards for a single annual fee. The fee will cover current, superseded and revised issues of these Standards including any amendments and rulings and will provide participating members with access as a registered user.

Several members have been active in pursuing this member benefit, and it has taken some time to come to fruition, but all members are encouraged to participate and update their Standards libraries.

The AWIA spends a significant amount of time and resources to develop and maintain product Standards for the benefit of members and compliance with these Standards forms part of the Association's Purposes and Rules. Ensuring that your products meet with appropriate Standards is a positive way to differentiate your products from those of your competitors.

Members interested in participating in this scheme should contact Richard Newbigin (richard@wireassociation.org.au) to discuss the Standards required and cost.

AS 5394 HIGH SECURITY ANTI-INTRUDER FENCES IN WELDED WIRE MESH AND OPEN STEEL PANELS

Monthly working group meetings and a technical committee meeting held in September have further progressed this new Standard which is on track to be completed in 2025.

While this completion date has been pushed out from earlier expectations, the committee is continuing to ensure that the Standard is comprehensive and robust to meet industry needs well into the future.

AS/NZS 4389 ROOF SAFETY MESH

This Standard was last revised in 2015 and is due for revision next year. Any members who have changes to propose to this Standard, or who wish to be represented on the BD-092 technical committee should contact AWIA Director/Secretary Richard Newbigin email: richard@wireassociation.org.au. New Zealand members are especially welcome to register their interest following the request for assistance from Standards New Zealand.

Involvement on a Standards technical committee is an important way for members to impact the future direction of their industry. It is also a very good way to meet, and exchange ideas with, other industry professionals who may have a variety of additional technical skills.

DR AS 4672:2024 STEEL PRESTRESSING MATERIALS

The draft revision for this Standard is now open for public comment and will remain open until 22 January 2025. This document specifies requirements for high tensile strength steel to be used for prestressing or post-tensioning of concrete and other similar purposes (e.g. masonry structures). Interested members may access the draft by registering with Standards Australia via the QR code.



STANDARDS AUSTRALIA APPOINTS NEW CEO

After a brief seven-month stint as Chief Executive Officer, Emma Harrington has been replaced by Rod Balding, who joins Standards Australia with extensive experience in finance, commercial, and risk management sectors and significant contributions to the not-for-profit sector through his involvement with entities such as the International Basketball Federation (FIBA), the Women's Basketball World Cup, the Australian Sports Foundation, and Basketball Australia.

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RETIREMENTS - GRANT MURDOCH

The AWIA recently spoke to Grant Murdoch after news broke of his retirement at the end of 2024. Grant kindly provided us with some background on his life, career, views on the industry and his plans for the future.

Tell us a bit about your work history

Since leaving school, I pursued an electrical trade, which enabled me to move from technical service, into technical sales and sales management. I made a point of changing industry with each position change, to broaden my knowledge and learn new experiences.

I joined the workforce in 1978 as an apprentice electrician with Hercus Engineering in Adelaide, which included wiring of new machine tools, development of CNC machine tools, and plant maintenance. I was at Hercus for about 10 years.

I then moved into the photographic industry joining Fujifilm for 6 years, initially as a field service technician, progressing into capital equipment sales, then State Manager.

After Fujifilm, I took up the position of State Manager at Sebel Commercial Furniture, a position I held for 5 years, managing major projects including stadium seating and lecture theatre seating systems, before moving to Crown Equipment as their State Manager.

It was then that I made the move to Downee (RMD industries) where I stayed for 16 years. I initially joined in 2008 as State Manager SA/NT, then progressed to Regional Sales Manager in 2010 SA/NT/WA/QLD. I also managed Downee NZ for 18 months during this time.

What are some of your career highlights?

When I was with Crown Equipment I orchestrated a \$1 million single sale of capital equipment to one customer. I also opened the Darwin branch which was a rewarding achievement.

At Downee I had many highlights including:

- Hosting 16 customers on a 2-week European visit to selected Downee suppliers including the R+T Trade Exhibition in Stuttgart in 2018.
- Relocation of the Qld branch from Acacia Ridge to Mansfield.
- Introduction of the new DA range of Industrial Gate Operators, now manufactured in Australia by Downee.
- Member of the Downee Executive Team; and
- Member of the Gate Task Force of Fencing Industry Australia.

Are there any people you'd like to acknowledge as being important to your career and the industry?

A big shout out to my fellow work colleagues and senior management at Downee, for the support and opportunities that were provided to me throughout the past 16 years.

Also, a big thank you to the Downee customers and industry stakeholders that I have forged valuable relationships with, and being able to assist with technical advice, particularly with Gate Automation and the more sophisticated Gate Hardware solutions for specific applications.

What are some of the challenges the industry is facing, in your view?

One of the main challenges would be education and industry adoption of best practice for design, manufacture, installation and service of automatic gates within Australia and New Zealand. Whilst steps are being taken, the urgent need for an Australian/NZ Standard for Automatic Gates is paramount and long overdue for the Fence & Gate Industry.

Finally, what does the future hold?

I am going to spend the next 12 months working on a semi-rural property that we purchased earlier this year in Mannum, South Australia. We may choose to reside there permanently at some stage.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - ON THE PATH TO CONNECTIVITY AND COLLABORATION

The annual general meeting (AGM) of the AWIA stands as a pivotal event in the calendar, bringing members together to reflect on the past year and foster a spirit of collaboration. This year, for the second time, the AGM was held via an entirely online format, embracing the digital age and opening new avenues for participation and engagement.

The AGM provides a formal occasion to review the association's activities, financial performance, and strategic direction. It is an opportunity to celebrate achievements, address challenges, and set the agenda for the forthcoming year. The shift to an online format underscores the association's commitment to inclusivity, flexibility, and innovation.

One of the foremost advantages of hosting the AGM online is the enhanced accessibility it offers. Members from diverse geographical locations can participate without the constraints of travel, thereby increasing attendance and ensuring a more representative gathering. This inclusivity fosters a richer exchange of ideas and perspectives, strengthening the association's collective voice.

By opting for a virtual AGM, the association also makes a positive contribution to environmental sustainability. The reduction in travel-related carbon emissions aligns with broader efforts to minimise the industry's ecological footprint, demonstrating a commitment to responsible and sustainable practices.

Direct networking is, of course, more difficult with an online format. As online tools develop however, opportunities for direct interaction should improve, and collaboration between members should follow.

In the infancy of digital AGMs for the association, the intent is to encourage greater participation by members to better understand the work the association is doing, and to take a more active role in setting its future agenda. The inclusion of guest speakers will be considered to add to the member benefit from attending the AGM.

A comprehensive review of the past year's activities, achievements, and financial performance also provides members with a clear understanding of the association's progress and areas for improvement.

The transition to an online AGM marks a significant milestone for the association, demonstrating a commitment to embracing change and leveraging technology to enhance connectivity and collaboration. By creating an inclusive, interactive, and forward-looking event, the association not only addresses the immediate needs of its members but also sets the stage for continued growth and success in the years to come.

VALE - PETER JOHNSTONE



Since the last edition of the newsletter, we sadly lost one of our industry's best – Peter Johnstone. Peter's son Charles kindly provided us with some words that Peter penned on his life and career. It is a privilege to be able to reproduce this for you below.

John, (Peter's brother), while completing his bakery apprenticeship, baked for the family most Friday nights and experimented with Hot Cross Buns which he convinced Mum the bakery should have a go at. As we knew where to source the best ingredients, they were a quality product and became very popular and it was all hands to the pump each Easter.

The proceeds each year were used to purchase bread crates from ARC Engineering, as they were an almost indestructible quality product, did not go stale and could be sold at any time, all concepts which attracted me to apply for a job. I started in the office at Sunshine with Jim Money and then selling crates around Melbourne and regionally.

ARC was moving to value adding in the Rural and Domestic markets and not just selling reinforcing to the booming building trade but was entering the rural market with products like weldmesh fencing, sheep and cattle yards and the hessian lined mesh wheat silo.

The products were new and exciting and easy to sell and the company was respected and we provided great back up. My sales were so good that my area was split into three and I was brought back into Melbourne and within my first year we won an order for 100,000 wine flagon crates and 1000 stillages for Ford - more work than the factory could handle. Management in the following year decided the manufacture of these items were not showing the profit forecast and was taking space that was needed for mesh, so they shut the Container Department. I think it fair to say they never really accepted value added manufactured product, the mind set was in reo tonnes = the thousands of tonnes of reo for the Snowy or the Westgate verses the manufacture of a few crates! I remember looking out the window as train full of reo was backing into Sunshine and when I asked why was told it was a mistake. I decided then that if I ever went into business I would not make mistakes; now after 60 years I have decided if you are not making mistakes you are not making anything; they also kept promoting executives above me who I did not think were worthy which started me thinking as they were stored upright in the bottle yards and came to him with water or tomato sauce!

I had been working on an idea for the Brewery, all bottles were reused and the bottle washing company (Hec Westwood) relied on the bottle being empty and as they were stored upright in the bottle yards came to him with water or tomato Sauce or some other residue inside. I designed a crate that stored bottles upside down so they arrived dry and it made it easier for Hec to wash them. Brilliant, so the Brewery wanted to order 100,000 but the upper echelons of ARC (after we had spent countless hours, made samples and submitted a price) decided as there was little mesh in them that they were not interested, so I had to crawl back to the Brewery and tell them.

George Coleman the Chief Engineer of the Brewery said you have developed this why don't you make them?

So Wiretainers was formed and as they say in the classics, the

rest is history.

We started in the Bakery building with Eddy; a hand bender and two second hand spot welders and were going great guns when George rang and said he wanted to see me!

Castalloy Adelaide had imported a 200-tonne plastic moulding machine and had copied my crate in plastic and although more expensive, it was light, noiseless and fitter for service; although devastated I realised the brewery had to go with it.

George asked me to present him with an invoice for the machinery and stock we had bought; when I presented it he tore it up and told me to go away and think about it. So thinking I had asked for too much I went to Hec with my tail down! He increased my invoice and submitted it to the Brewery which George not only paid but added a bonus.

So four months into my new life we had the company, the commitment, the machinery and stock but no work so we had to diversify which in retrospect was the making of Wiretainers. The friendships I had formed over the previous years were vital at this time, Hec and the Brewery gave us work, my old employer ARC and the Zoo gave us work and we were successful with several Government tenders and then animal cages. The Mouse box which started out as an electricity insulator cover with a plated wire top and morphed very quickly into a Co Polymer Polypropylene Box made in our own die and with a chrome plated and eventually a polished stainless-steel top quickly became the standard for Australia. I must mention the Howard Florey Institute, Margaret Holmes and Gus Nossal for supporting us through the process and giving us our first order for 10,000 units and ending up with a million mice in our cages in the animal house on the corner of Nth Princess St and the Chandler highway in Kew.

Wiretainers quickly gained a reputation for quality innovative wirework. Institutions started building dedicated specially designed animal houses and we became the preferred supplier with our main opposition from overseas.

Our biggest big job was ANAHL (Australian National Animal Health Laboratories) Geelong where we contracted to supply all animal holding equipment to the site, from mouse boxes to chicken cages, sheep and cattle yards which were not only stainless steel but epoxy coated over. The laboratory had three environments; one normal, one under low pressure (whatever they were working on could not escape), one under high pressure (no outside contamination could leak in). This made our name for quality and reliability and led to us working for other Research Institutions and Universities.

There were no animal husbandry courses existing and finding qualified staff for these new facilities was difficult and with Margaret Holmes we formed the Animal Technicians Association who designed and ran an accredited course and I became a casual lecturer.

We went on to do specific Monkey Houses for Melbourne, Werribee, Monash, Latrobe, Churchill, Women's Hospital and worked in Sydney, Adelaide, Perth and then the new Gorilla House at Melbourne Zoo where we developed a remote hydraulic system to open the heavy doors which we had been trialling on an off-limits Wombat enclosure. This exhibit was later upscaled to hold the Pandas which Melbourne had on loan for a few years. We did many interesting projects for the Zoo from rewiring the Great Flight Aviary, for which we built a scaffold trolley which travelled on and over the parabolic arches (probably would not be allowed today) also the Terracal cages (which are still standing) to a design conceived by Zoo staff and ourselves (no Architect, Engineer Etc). This definitely would not be allowed today. We also did many Aviaries, the Arboreal Apes, the Bear dens (they had previously been kept in large deep concrete pits) the internals of the Giraffe enclosure and many off limits experimental conservation projects, Leadbeater's Possum etc.

We were fortunate to be in at the start of the materials handling revolution and I was not happy unless we had three months' work ahead of us, at least 3000 crates and 1000 stillages per year. We also did several pedestrian bridges including one over the Coburg Lake - which still stands - for the Red Scheme which was a scheme to employ those on the dole. We had built and installed the structure and the authority, along with dole workers, was supposed to install the timber deck. A week before the due date of opening the Authority gave up and commissioned us at cost, plus to install the decking and complete the bridge.

TECHNICAL NEWS

TECHNOLOGY TIPS

Emails have become an indispensable part of our daily communication, both personally and professionally. However, an overflowing inbox can lead to decreased productivity and increased stress. Cleaning your emails regularly can help maintain an organised and efficient workflow.

Benefits of Cleaning Emails:

- **Increased Productivity:** A clutter-free inbox allows you to focus on important tasks without unnecessary distractions.
- **Time Management:** Spend less time searching for specific emails when your inbox is well-organised.
- **Improved Mental Clarity:** A tidy email space can reduce stress and improve your overall sense of control.
- **Enhanced Security:** Regularly purging old and irrelevant emails can reduce the risk of data breaches.

Steps to Clean Your Email Inbox:

1. Unsubscribe from Unnecessary Newsletters

Begin by unsubscribing from newsletters and promotional emails that no longer interest you. This will reduce the influx of non-essential emails.

2. Create Folders and Labels

Organise your emails by creating folders and labels for different categories. For example, you can have folders for work, personal, finance, and projects.

3. Use Filters and Rules

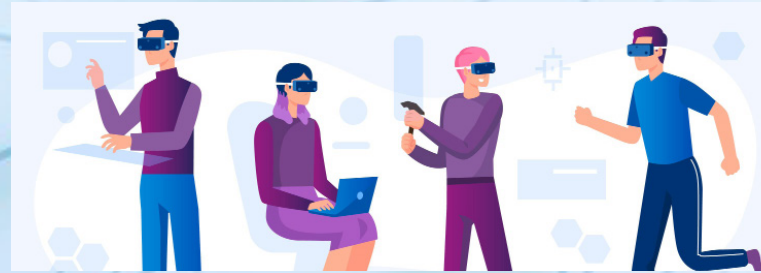
Set up filters and rules to automatically sort incoming emails into the appropriate folders. This can save you time and keep your inbox clutter-free.

4. Archive Old Emails

Move emails that you need to keep for reference but do not require immediate attention to an archive folder. This helps keep your main inbox clean.

5. Delete Unnecessary Emails

Go through your inbox and delete emails that are no longer relevant. This includes old promotional emails, outdated notifications, and spam.



6. Prioritise Your Emails

Identify and flag high-priority emails that need your immediate attention. Respond to these emails promptly to avoid them piling up.

7. Schedule Regular Cleaning Sessions

Set aside specific times each week to clean your inbox. Regular maintenance will prevent your inbox from becoming overwhelming.

Consider the use of email cleaning apps like Clean Email which assist to unsubscribe from unwanted emails, block unwelcome senders and automate email tasks.

Maintaining a clean and organized email inbox is essential for productivity. By following the steps outlined above, you can create an efficient email management system that will save you time and reduce stress. Start cleaning your emails today and experience the benefits of a decluttered digital space.



*Merry
Christmas
and Happy New Year*

ENVIRONMENTAL PRODUCT DECLARATIONS: A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE FOR THE STEEL WIRE INDUSTRY

Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) have become a crucial aspect of sustainable business practices, particularly within the steel industry. As global awareness of environmental impacts grows, stakeholders, including customers, regulators, and investors, increasingly demand transparency regarding the environmental performance of products. This article aims to provide members of the AWIA with an in-depth understanding of EPDs, their importance, and how to effectively implement them.

WHAT IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL PRODUCT DECLARATION?

An Environmental Product Declaration (EPD) is a standardised document that provides transparent and comparable information about the environmental impact of a product throughout its lifecycle. EPDs follow the guidelines of international standards such as ISO 14025 and EN 15804, ensuring credibility and consistency. They cover various environmental aspects, including raw material extraction, manufacturing, transportation, usage, and end-of-life disposal. One could probably compare them to the nutritional information now included on so much food packaging.

KEY COMPONENTS OF AN EPD

An EPD typically includes the following sections:

- **Product Description:** Detailed information about the product, including its functional and technical characteristics.
- **Declared Unit:** A quantified measure of the product's impact (e.g., per kilogram of steel wire).
- **Lifecycle Stages:** Assessment of environmental impacts across different stages such as production, transportation, use, and disposal.
- **Impact Categories:** Specific environmental impacts like carbon footprint, water usage, air pollution, and energy consumption.
- **Additional Information:** Optional data on social, economic, or other environmental aspects relevant to the product.

IMPORTANCE OF EPDS FOR THE STEEL WIRE INDUSTRY

The steel wire industry plays a significant role in various sectors, including construction, automotive, and manufacturing. Implementing EPDs offers multiple benefits:

Regulatory Compliance

EPDs help companies comply with increasingly stringent environmental regulations. Governments and international bodies are mandating transparency in environmental reporting, and having EPDs in place ensures adherence to these requirements.

Market Competitiveness

As sustainability becomes a critical purchasing criterion, EPDs provide a competitive edge. They demonstrate a company's commitment to environmental responsibility, appealing to eco-conscious consumers and business partners.

Risk Management

Transparent environmental reporting through EPDs helps identify and mitigate potential environmental risks. This proactive approach can prevent regulatory fines, reputational damage, and operational disruptions.

Innovation And Efficiency

The process of developing EPDs encourages companies to analyse

their production processes in detail. This can lead to innovations in manufacturing techniques, improved resource efficiency, and reduced environmental impact.

STEPS TO DEVELOPING AN EPD

Creating an EPD involves several key steps, which can be navigated with the support of industry standards and specialised consultants.

1. Define the Scope

Determine the product or product range for which the EPD will be developed. Define the declared unit and the lifecycle stages to be assessed.

2. Conduct a Lifecycle Assessment (LCA)

Perform a comprehensive LCA to evaluate the environmental impacts of the product. This involves data collection, modelling, and analysis of the product's lifecycle from raw material extraction to disposal.

3. Compile EPD Documentation

Using the LCA results, compile the EPD document. Ensure that it includes all necessary sections as per ISO 14025 and EN 15804 standards.

4. Verification and Certification

Submit the EPD for third-party verification to ensure accuracy and credibility. Once verified, the EPD can be certified and published.

5. Publish and Communicate

Make the EPD publicly available through appropriate channels. Communicate the results to stakeholders, including customers, regulators, and industry partners.

CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

While EPDs offer numerous benefits, there are challenges to consider:

Data Collection

Accurate and comprehensive data collection is critical for a reliable LCA. This requires collaboration across the supply chain and may involve significant time and resources.

Cost

Developing and verifying an EPD can be costly, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises. However, the long-term benefits often outweigh the initial investment.

Standardisation

Ensuring consistency and comparability across EPDs requires adherence to international standards. A thorough understanding of these standards is essential for effective implementation.

CONCLUSION

Environmental Product Declarations are an invaluable tool for the steel wire industry, driving sustainability and transparency. By adopting EPDs, companies can enhance their market position, comply with regulations, and foster innovation. The journey towards developing EPDs may present challenges, but the long-term rewards make it a worthwhile endeavor. As members of the steel wire industry association, your commitment to environmental responsibility through EPDs will contribute significantly to a sustainable future.

NEXT STEPS

For those interested in developing EPDs, consider starting with a pilot project on a specific product line. Engage with experienced consultants and leverage industry resources to navigate the process. By taking these steps, you can position your company at the forefront of sustainable practices in the steel wire industry. *Members wishing to develop a product or an industry EPD should contact Richard Newbigin (richard@wireassociation.org.au).*



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THE FEMININE LINK

Meet Rebecca Site HQ, VIC

The brainchild of AWIA platinum sponsor Vater Hardware Australia, The Feminine Link is a regular feature of The Link newsletter showcasing the talented and diverse skills of the female members of our industry, as well as a way to get to know the personal sides of our colleagues and friends. In this edition we get to know Rebecca Astin, Business Development Manager for Site HQ, the sales arm of 1300TempFence.

Nickname: Bec

Favourite Sport: Rugby Union (true All Blacks supporter through and through)

Pets: 3 Fur babies and 15 rescue Chickens from the battery farming industry (we need to stop that cruelty and hopefully battery farms will be a thing of the past by 2026)

Favourite colour: Red

Favourite food: Seafood

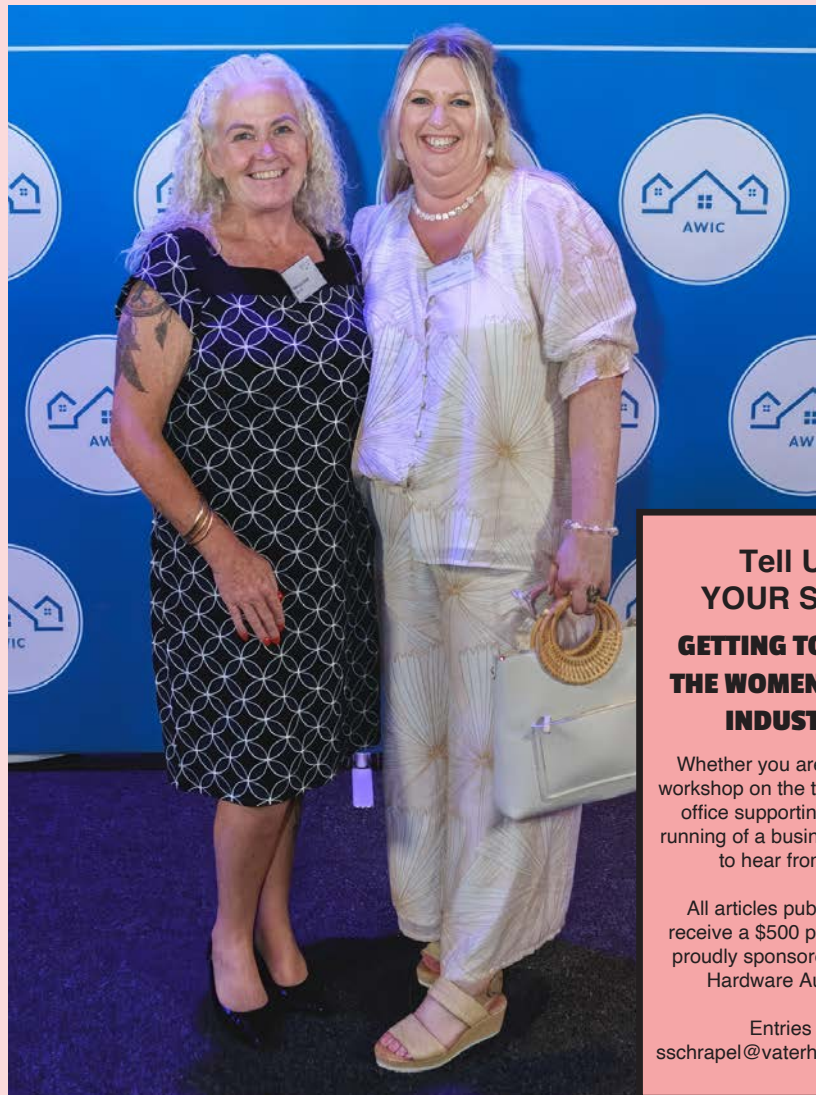
Favourite drink: Weekends Gin and Tonic, weekdays a good Coffee

Favourite TV series: Big Bang Theory

Mantra to live by: Be kind, be honest and give more than you receive

Something people may not know about you: I am a Black Belt in the art of Tae Kwon Do.

Words of Wisdom: Lol, not sure if it is wise but we are in an industry that is coming into probably one of the most exciting times, for QLD specifically, with the infrastructure and growth period coming into the Games in 2032. If we work together, build each other up we can all succeed.



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sschrapel@vaterhardware.com

Rebecca was recently awarded with the 'Awesome Women in Construction' Award (AWIC) Sales Extraordinaire

MEMBER UPDATES

UNLOCKING THE ADVANTAGES OF LOCAL SOURCING FOR MANUFACTURING SUCCESS

Originally published in Industry Update Manufacturing Magazine for Marsh Alliance

In the intricate dance of global supply chains, the COVID-19 pandemic cast a glaring spotlight on the vulnerabilities of overseas sourcing, prompting a re-evaluation of traditional practices. In recent decades, Australian businesses have been drawn to offshore suppliers, enticed by lower costs and perceived efficiencies. However, the pandemic, plus other ongoing geopolitical tensions in Europe and the Middle East, have laid bare the risks associated with this approach.

There is a growing awareness of the untapped benefits of prioritising local Australian suppliers for critical components. According to a 2023 report by the Capgemini Research Institute, 71% of surveyed Australian businesses stated they were actively investing in regionalising and localising their supplier base to help insulate them against global risks. The report also found that by 2025, procurement from offshore suppliers is expected to drop by 7%.

Australian manufacturers can be competitive preferred suppliers against overseas counterparts, but is a like for like part price comparison fair? These simplistic comparisons significantly diminish the added value Aussie-base producers represent to you, and in turn, your customers.

Consider the following benefits gained from purchasing within Australia:

GREATER SHELTER FROM ADVERSE GLOBAL ECONOMIC EVENTS AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE MOVEMENTS

Australian manufacturers offer a shield against global economic uncertainties and foreign exchange fluctuations. Offshore supply chains are prone to disruptions caused by wars, natural disasters, and regional conflicts, often leading to unexpected shortages. Major disruptions to logistics, like the 2021 Suez Canal obstruction, are often more easily managed when businesses source their products and components from Australian suppliers. During the global COVID-19 pandemic, disruptions in international supply chains were widespread. Australian manufacturers, however, experienced fewer interruptions, showcasing the resilience of a localised supply chain. Additionally, currency fluctuations that occurred during this time had a lesser impact on businesses sourcing locally.

GREATER CERTAINTY OF QUALITY RAW INPUTS AND ETHICAL SOURCING

Committing to sourcing raw materials locally ensures a consistent level of quality and adherence to ethical standards. Australian producers are bound by internationally leading employment and industrial relations laws, reducing the risk of unethical practices and modern slavery. This commitment to ethical sourcing enhances the reputation of businesses and ensures that products meet the highest quality standards.

REDUCING LEAD TIMES FOR YOUR CUSTOMERS

Localising the supply chain in Australia significantly reduces lead times. This allows businesses to streamline their operations by minimising inventory stock holding and warehouse overheads. Quicker lead times contribute to efficient working capital management, helping to reduce costs associated with inventory and stock management.

GREATER RESPONSIVENESS AND SUPPORT TO PRODUCT DESIGN CHALLENGES

Local suppliers in Australia offer invaluable support in navigating product design changes and improvements. Leveraging local technical expertise expedites the development process, ensuring

a competitive speed to market. This advantage is particularly crucial compared to offshore suppliers who may face challenges in effective communication and collaboration due to an over-reliance on virtual meetings. Communicating with local suppliers in Australia also reduces language barriers and the challenges of significant time zone differences.

DEALING WITH A SUPPLIER WELL-VERSED IN THE AUSTRALIAN MARKET

Long-standing local suppliers in Australia possess extensive knowledge of the domestic market. This ensures that clients are not treated as minor customers and enables businesses to avoid competition for factory space with larger multinationals relying on offshore channels. The familiarity with local market dynamics also facilitates better alignment of products with consumer preferences and regulatory requirements.

QUICKER ENGAGEMENT WITH TRANSPORTATION AND SUPPLY CHAIN INTERMEDIARIES

Local suppliers in Australia have established strong relationships with domestic transport companies, providing businesses with flexible speed-to-market options. This proves invaluable in situations where unforeseen delays may arise, offering a distinct advantage over foreign manufacturers. The close proximity also allows for more efficient communication and coordination, reducing the likelihood of transportation-related disruptions.

In conclusion, the feat of achieving cost efficiencies coupled with a resilient supply chain will always be an ongoing balancing act for businesses. The upfront cost advantages of offshoring can often go unrealised in the face of poor responsiveness, long lead times and inferior quality materials. There's no shortage of Australian based manufacturers who are ready and willing to cater to those looking to adopt local sourcing and production.

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Source: Capgemini Research Institute, "Illuminating the path: Building resilient and efficient supply chains in the consumer products and retail industry," 2023.

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AUSTRALIAN ECONOMIC UPDATE

Economic growth is expected to be supported by an increase in household consumption. Main drivers are growth in real incomes as the Stage 3 tax cuts take effect, lower interest rates and easing inflation. Residential construction is expected to improve in 2025.

There are weaker forward construction activities in public sector non-residential and infrastructure projects, however there is still a large pipeline of engineering work yet to be done and projects included in government budgets:

- Q2 2024 GDP growth rose by 0.2% q/q and 1.0% y/y. Growth in FY24 was 1.5%, the weakest annual growth (excluding COVID-19 pandemic) since 1991-92 which had gradual recovery from the 1991 recession. Household demand was subdued. Government spending was driven by continued strength in social benefits to households.
- Annual inflation in the September 2024 quarter rose by 2.8%, a significant drop from 3.8% in the June 2024 quarter. This is due to a fall in electricity prices (caused by the Federal & Queensland Governments' rebates) and automotive fuel. Annual services inflation was at 4.6% due to higher prices for rents, insurance, education and medical, dental and hospital services.
- The Westpac-Melbourne Institute Consumer Sentiment Index has risen further to 94.6 in November 2024. This is the second month of strong increase in sentiment. Consumers are seeing further easing of cost of living, no longer concerned with any future rise in interest rate and are more positive about the economic outlook. The 'time to buy a dwelling' index rose strongly by 11.3% to 86.8, the highest level in nearly 3 years.
- Business conditions in October 2024 were stable with higher trading conditions, steady profitability, and lower employment. Business confidence increased sharply and is now around average and at its highest level since early 2023. There were improvements in business confidence across most industries except for construction (8pts lower) and retail (2pts lower).
- The unemployment rate in October 2024 remained at 4.1%. Increase in employment by 15,900, with full-time jobs rising by 9,700; part-time jobs increasing by 6,200. Job ads in October 2024 fell by 3.1% after 3 months of marginal growth.
- The Australian PCI® (construction) in October 2024 eased by 21.1 points to -40.9, one of the lowest readings in the series. Builders reported delays in projects due to slowing property

markets, rising material and labour costs, and increasing land prices.

- Total number of dwelling approvals in September 2024 rose by 4.4% m/m to 14,842. Multi-dwelling approvals increased by 8.4% m/m to 4,950. NSW only had 160 units approved for high-density apartment blocks (4 or more storeys) whereas approvals in Victoria hit 1,312, the highest monthly approvals since January 2023.
- Detached house approvals rose by 2.4% m/m to 9,891. SA recorded the strongest growth (+10.8%), followed by QLD (+8.5%) and WA (+5.3%) whereas declines were seen in both NSW (-2.4%) and VIC (-3.1%).
- Non-residential value of work approved in September 2024 rose by 3.6% m/m to \$5.6bn with the strongest month for office building approvals whilst approvals for aged care were the best in 5 years across the East Coast.
- Infrastructure projects have been affected by persistent construction cost pressures and delays to renewable energy projects.
- The RBA has downgraded its GDP forecasts to 2.3% for FY25 and 2.3% for FY26 (previously 2.6% & 2.5% respectively).

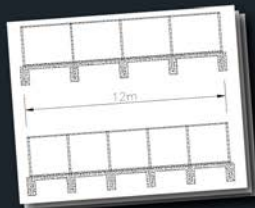
Future expectations for Australia include:

- Economic growth is projected to be supported by growth in household consumption, driven by growth in real incomes as the Stage 3 tax cuts take effect, lower interest rates and easing inflation.
- Detached house construction is expected to improve due to the pick-up in approvals over the past year.
- High rise apartment and commercial building construction is expected to pick up from late 2025 due to lower interest rates and declining construction costs.
- Slightly weaker growth in public sector non-residential and infrastructure projects as some of the major projects have reached completion and some new projects have been deferred. This weakness is expected to be temporary as there is still a large pipeline of engineering work yet to be done and projects included in government budgets.

Article courtesy of Mei Leong, InfraBuild

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HR UPDATES

WHEN DOES A TERMINATION TAKE EFFECT?

The Fair Work Commissioner (FWC) handed down a decision that has reiterated the importance for employers to engage in appropriate processes when terminating an employee and complying with legal obligations.

In 2019 the FWC dealt with over 13,900 unfair dismissal cases. And while each case is different, the FWC examines, in some form, the way an employee was dismissed and whether it was fair. Since then, the FWC handed down a decision that has reiterated the importance for employers to engage in appropriate processes when terminating an employee and complying with legal obligations.

In this article, we'll discuss how important it is for employers to follow correct dismissal procedures, confirm terminations appropriately, and explain when termination takes effect. So, let's take a look at a case that highlights why confirming the termination date is so important.

STEVE PETKOVSKI V M J LUFF PTY LTD T/A BORDER EXPRESS [2021] FWC 5936

A parcel sorter from Tullamarine, a suburb in northwest Melbourne, was dismissed via an email on 22 July 2021 containing a letter of termination "for serious misconduct, specifically [his] violent behaviour" in a meeting "where [they] had gathered to discuss other misconduct". This "violent behaviour" referred to the employee's actions of flying into a fit of rage, swearing, threatening, and damaging a room during a disciplinary meeting. The employee later received a confirmation letter via registered post on 27 July 2021, five days later.

The sorter filed an unfair dismissal claim following his termination. However, as per the statutory 21-day time limit to lodge a claim, the employee was a day late outside of this period, as calculated from the date of his termination was communicated by email. But the sorter alleged that he didn't receive the email confirmation because he no longer used the email account, claiming that his termination date should instead be 27 July 2021 when he received the letter via registered post.

When hearing the matter as an out of time application, a third possible termination date was identified: when the Transport Workers Union representative told the parcel sorter of his termination on 22 July 2021 during a phone call. The Commissioner determined that in "circumstances where a relationship of agency was established between the [employee] and the [union]...the dismissal to an employee through their representative would

constitute communication of the dismissal by the employer". However, it was established that no evidence suggested such a relationship of agency existed in this case.

Ultimately, the FWC identified that the sorter wasn't given a reasonable chance to find out he was dismissed on 22 July 2021, due to his inactivity with his email account, although it's "understandable" the employer sent such an email as they didn't know it was longer in use. The Commissioner concluded that the employee's termination didn't occur until 27 July 2021 when the letter was received by post, and because dismissal doesn't take effect until it's communicated with the worker, the employee's right to lodge a claim within the 21-day time limit was upheld.

WHEN IS AN EMPLOYEE DISMISSED?

Following the FWC's decision, "a dismissal does not take effect unless and until it is communicated to the employee who is being dismissed". Furthermore, an employer cannot terminate an employee's employment unless written notice has been provided to that employee stipulating the date of termination, which must not be before the day the notice is given (other than in cases such as serious misconduct or for casual employees etc.).

It's also important to note that once employment has been terminated, it's best practice, and required by most modern awards, that the employer pays out all relevant entitlements and final pay within seven days of the employment ending.

WHAT TO REMEMBER

Employers should ensure the contact details they have on file for employees are kept up to date so they can send communications with confidence that they'll be received. In this case, the employer's decision to send a second letter by post meant that the employment was found to have eventually been terminated. Employers should also be conscious of who may constitute an employee's 'agent' such as their union or representative.

When delivering important documents to employees, such as final termination letters and notifications, employers should always attempt to confirm with the employee if the document in question has been received.

Article courtesy of Citation Group



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PRESERVING LEGACY IN FAMILY-OWNED BUSINESSES: THE ROLE OF SUCCESSION PLANNING

Family-owned businesses are more than just economic entities; they are living embodiments of family traditions, values, and principles passed down through generations. These businesses often carry a deep sense of history and purpose, with a reputation and identity shaped not only by the products or services they offer but by the family behind them. Preserving this legacy is a key aspect of what makes family businesses unique, and ensuring its continuity requires careful, thoughtful succession planning.

Succession planning in a family business isn't just about choosing who will be in charge next—it's about preserving the heart and soul of what makes the business special. It involves passing down the intangible elements like the family's vision, values, and approach to business. This process ensures that the next generation doesn't just inherit a company; they inherit the responsibility to maintain and build on the family's legacy.

The Importance of Legacy in Family-Owned Businesses

The legacy of a family business is often what sets it apart from larger, more impersonal corporations. The sense of continuity, of family values shaping the way business is done, can create a strong emotional connection with both employees and customers. Many employees in family-owned businesses are drawn to the sense of belonging that comes from working for an organisation rooted in shared values. Customers, too, often feel a sense of trust and loyalty, knowing that the company they are supporting is built on generations of dedication.

In this context, succession planning becomes not only a strategic business decision but a cultural and emotional one. It's about ensuring that the next generation is equipped to take on the leadership mantle while preserving the family's identity within the business. A successful transition will maintain that close-knit culture, the reputation for reliability, and the customer loyalty that has been built over decades.

Succession Planning: More Than a Change of Leadership

Many people think succession planning is simply about choosing a successor—someone who can run the business once the current leader steps down. While identifying the right person is crucial, succession planning in a family business goes far beyond that. It involves developing a strategy to ensure that the company's core values and traditions are passed down alongside business responsibilities.

The question isn't just "Who will take over?" but also, "How will they continue the family's vision and philosophy?" This means the successor must not only be a capable business leader but also someone who understands and respects the family's long-standing traditions.

For instance, a family business that has always been known for its commitment to customer service must ensure that the successor continues to prioritise that same level of care. If the business is deeply connected to community values or sustainability, those principles need to be upheld by future generations. Without thoughtful planning, a change in leadership can sometimes lead to a drift away from these values, ultimately harming the brand's reputation.

Challenges in Preserving Legacy

While preserving a family business's legacy sounds straightforward, it comes with its own set of challenges. Family dynamics can often complicate the process of selecting a successor. Siblings or cousins might have differing visions for the business or may not share the same level of passion for maintaining the family's traditions.

Additionally, external factors such as market changes, technological advances, or shifts in customer expectations might push the business to evolve in ways that challenge the traditional values held dear by previous generations. Balancing innovation with tradition becomes a critical part of succession planning.

There's also the emotional element—passing the business to the next generation is deeply personal, often fraught with anxiety about whether the chosen successor will be able to live up to the family's standards. Long-standing family businesses have a legacy to protect, and handing over the reins can be a difficult decision for the current generation, who may worry about whether the next leaders will safeguard that legacy.

Best Practices for Preserving Legacy Through Succession Planning

Despite these challenges, there are proven strategies that can help ensure a smooth transition while preserving the legacy of the family business:

1. Start Planning Early

Succession planning should begin long before the current leader steps down. This allows for plenty of time to prepare the next generation for their roles, instill in them the family's values, and ensure they have the skills and knowledge necessary to carry the business forward. Starting early also helps avoid the pressure of making hasty decisions when the time for transition arrives.

2. Involve the Whole Family

In many cases, it's helpful to involve multiple family members in the succession planning process. This ensures that everyone feels included and has a say in the future direction of the business. Open communication is key, as it helps prevent misunderstandings or conflicts about roles and expectations.

3. Document the Family's Vision and Values

A formal document outlining the family's vision, values, and business philosophy can be an invaluable tool in succession planning. This provides a clear reference for future leaders, ensuring they have a concrete understanding of what the family business stands for and what is expected of them in terms of preserving its legacy.

4. Train the Successor

Training the next generation isn't just about business management—it's about mentorship and passing on the family's approach to leadership. This may involve years of shadowing the current leader, learning the ins and outs of both the business and the values that underpin it. In some cases, outside education or professional development programs can help equip the successor with the skills they need to thrive in their role.

5. Focus on Leadership Development

A well-prepared successor is one who has been nurtured and guided into leadership. Leadership development programs, mentorship, and on-the-job experience will help the future leader grow into their role, not only managing day-to-day operations but also upholding the family's traditions and values.

6. Adapt While Maintaining Core Values

In an ever-changing business landscape, it's important for family businesses to evolve. The key is to strike a balance between innovation and preserving core values. Succession planning should include discussions about how the family business can adapt to modern challenges while staying true to its legacy.

7. Review the Plan Regularly

Succession planning is not a one-time event but an ongoing process. Families should regularly review and update their succession plan to reflect changes in the business environment, family dynamics, or leadership readiness. This ensures that the plan remains relevant and can effectively guide the business through its next phase of leadership.

Learning from Successful Family Business Transitions

There are countless examples of family businesses that have successfully preserved their legacy through effective succession planning. One notable example is McCain Foods, a multinational family-owned company. Through strategic leadership development and a commitment to their core values, McCain Foods has maintained its status as a global leader in the frozen food industry while upholding the family's legacy.

The key to their success was the recognition that succession planning is about more than just business continuity; it's about preserving the heart of what made the company successful in the first place.

Succession planning in family-owned businesses is about more than ensuring a smooth leadership transition. It's about preserving the legacy that has been built over generations and passing on the family's vision and values to future leaders. Thoughtful planning, open communication, and a strong commitment to the family's traditions can help ensure that the business not only survives but thrives in the hands of the next generation.

When done correctly, succession planning allows the next generation to not just take over a business but to become stewards of a rich and meaningful legacy, ensuring that the family's values and reputation live on for years to come.

Acknowledgement: Bert Weenink, Certified Executive and Business Coach @ ActionCOACH

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Celebrating Christmas at the Classic Car Museum provided a unique and charming setting for this year's AWIA Christmas party. The museum, filled with vintage and classic cars, served as a memorable backdrop for an evening of fun and festivity.

Located in Melbourne's Docklands, the Fox Classic Car Museum features a vast collection of historical cars. Upon arrival, guests were greeted by the sight of beautifully restored vehicles. From vintage cars to iconic sports cars, the collection spans a wide range of makes, models, and styles, including those from Mercedes Benz, Jaguar, Porsche, Ferrari, Bentley, Volkswagen, Ford, Rolls Royce, MG, Lexus and Nissan between 1923 and 2024.

The museum building itself is of historic significance as well and is known as the Queen's Warehouse. The warehouse was initially built in 1889 as a Customs bonded store for seized goods and was transferred to the Commonwealth in 1901. Between 1908 and 1924 it was Australia's first postage stamp and bank note printing works. In 1995 the Commonwealth agreed to hand over the building to the State of Victoria for a nominal sum to become the home of the Fox car museum.

Guests were welcomed with a cold drink on a warm Melbourne evening and a friendly greeting from the staff. Old friends reconnected and new connections were made as guests mingled in the museum's entrance hall. Attendees were able to explore the collection at their own pace, whilst chatting with their fellow members about the year's events.

It was terrific to see such a broad array of members at this event. Not only did many members make the trip from interstate, (SA, NSW and QLD members attended) but we were especially pleased to have representation from our New Zealand cohort as well. Of note as well was the attendance of Teigan Otter and Harrison Montalto who are the fourth generation of the Otter family to be working at Otter Fencing. A big thanks to everyone who came along to make the night so special.

The event featured a lavish buffet with a variety of dishes to satisfy all tastes. Highlights included roast meats, seafood, salads, and an array of dessert options.

As the night came to an end, guests took a final stroll through the museum, reflecting on the memorable evening. The festive atmosphere and classic cars made the event special, celebrating the season and the classic car community.

One attendee summed it up perfectly: "There is no better way to celebrate Christmas than surrounded by classic cars and with people who appreciate them."



At the end of the evening and everyone is still standing



Sonya (Edgesmith), David, Marcus and Daniel (Concept) and Louis (ITF) enjoying pre-dinner drinks

SEASIAN REPORT

There is some optimism that with Donald Trump just winning the USA election, more companies could switch possible investments to SEAsia, rather than China. Also existing exporting companies, particularly in Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia will be hungry to replace possible lost Chinese exports when the expected duties kick in next year.

Politically, all has been fairly quiet, with the new Indonesian president safely installed and recruiting a giant 40 ministers to help him continue the positive changes put in place by his predecessor. Malaysia's Government looks stronger than it has done since the last election and they have finally started to reduce the petrol subsidies that have held Malaysia back for many years.

Thailand and the Philippines continue to plod on though some uncertainties in both countries remain.

Even Singapore has had some embarrassing problems with the brother of the former Prime Minister accepted for political asylum in the UK.

The whole region continues to grow economically and ASEAN can look forward to 2025 with a lot of optimism.

Article courtesy of Andrew Marshall

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SUPACOTE

Supacote is a startup Powder Coating business servicing the Fencing and Gate industry, located in the southeast suburbs of Melbourne at 12B Kitchen Road, Dandenong South. Supacote has a team of experienced and dedicated staff, who have been in the powder coating industry for several years, so they know what you are looking for and how to achieve the right outcome.

The purpose-built batch plant was designed specifically for the fencing industry to combat inferior coatings and represent excellence, co-designed and built, plus commissioned by Garnic Technologies, a well-known and highly regarded manufacturer not just in Victoria, but right across Australia for powder coating equipment.



Supacote operates a large batch oven system, which is capable of coating product up to 10m long; 2.5m high, with quick colour change over times owing to the two spray booths that support its hungry appetite.

Supcote's mantra involves a high degree of focus on producing a superior quality finished product, with guaranteed adhesion, which other powder coaters in this country seem to struggle to achieve on a consistent basis. Pretreatment is extremely critical to achieve the optimal result.

The key to Supacote's advantage is a 5-stage chemical pretreatment dipping process, which ensures superior adhesion, a quality finish and long-lasting protection backed by salt test spray proof.

TRAINING AWARD 2025 – CALL FOR NOMINEES

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LIGHT HOLLOW SECTION SUPPLY WARNING FOR HOT DIP GALVANIZING

THE PROBLEM

Hot dip galvanizers in Australia have noticed a recent influx of local fabrications manufactured from light hollow sections unsuitable for galvanizing due to a reactive chemistry producing excessively dull, thick and brittle galvanized coatings, sometimes falling off in the galvanizers yard. The sections used in the fabrications have been imported from multiple suppliers and countries. These sections are typically used in fencing and pergola applications.

STEEL CHEMISTRY

As discussed in AS/NZS 2312.2 Clause 9.1 and Table 9.1 and explained in GAA Advisory Note AN 35, certain combinations of silicon (Si) and phosphorus (P) in steel presented for galvanizing are known to produce very thick coatings, usually dull grey and sometimes rough in appearance. These are known as reactive steels. Sometimes these coatings do not form properly and can fall off or be more susceptible to handling damage. In most cases they will not be suitable for painting or powder coating.

SOLUTIONS

When the Si content of the steel is in the range of 0.04% to 0.14% there is a high risk of dull, excessively thick coatings occurring. Sometimes, hot rolled steel with a P content of 0.02% and above is produced, and this chemistry can also cause rough coatings to form. For hot rolled steel hollow sections, the ideal chemistry is when the Si is 0.04% and below and P less than 0.02%. In addition, when Si + 2.5P is 0.09% and below the coatings are normally shiny. With cold rolled steel used in these examples, the combination of Si + 2.5P needs to be 0.04% or less for a shiny coating to develop. The galvanizer will not know the chemistry of the steel without seeing the test certificate and cannot control the appearance of the coating which is naturally occurring based on the chemistry of the steel and the fabrication design. As noted earlier, this is not a new problem, so the manufacturer of the hollow sections should be aware and be willing to purchase steel strip to ensure the hollow sections can be batch hot dip galvanized to AS/NZS 4680. All international galvanizing design Standards including ISO 14713-2, ASTM A385 and AS/NZS 2312.2 contain similar advice on avoiding reactive steels when purchasing steel for batch hot dip galvanizing. AS/NZS 2312.2 Table 9.1 provides advice on the best steel chemistry for applications such as fencing panels and patio tubes where the initial appearance is often desired to be shiny. Usually, the best option is to request category A steels with Si ≤ 0.04% and P < 0.02%. Where the thickness of the coating is critical, best practice is to also request steel with Si > 0.01%. For further information please go to Technical Publications or scan the QR Code.



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- 5 March**
AWIA Committee Meeting
Online event
- 13 March**
IICA Technology Expo
Newcastle, NSW
www.iica.org.au/Web/Web/Events/Event_Display.aspx?EventKey=IICANSWNC
- 25 - 27 March**
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Baltimore, MD, USA
<https://www.nfmt.com/Baltimore/2025/default.aspx>
- 2 - 3 April**
Stainless 2025
Brno Exhibition Centre, Brno, Czech Republic
www.bvv.cz/en/stainless/
- 9 - 12 April**
wire Eurasia
Tüyap Fair Convention and Congress Center
Istanbul, Turkey
www.wire-eurasia.com
- 6 - 8 May**
Made in Steel
fieramilano Rho, Milan, Italy
www.madeinsteel.it

6 - 9 May
Australian Manufacturing Week
Melbourne Convention Exhibition Centre
Melbourne, Victoria
<https://australianmanufacturingweek.com.au/amw-melbourne-2025/visit/>

13 - 15 May
Interwire 2025
Georgia World Congress Centre
Atlanta GA USA
www.interwire25.com

23 May
AWIA Mid Year Conference
TBA, Adelaide, South Australia

4 - 5 June
Hire25
Melbourne Convention Exhibition Centre
Melbourne, Victoria
www.hriaconvention.com.au

15 - 17 September
Australian Steel Institute Convention
Manly Pacific Hotel, Sydney, NSW
www.steel.org.au/news-and-events/steel-convention-2025/

17 - 19 September 2025
wire Southeast Asia 2025
Bangkok International Trade and Exhibition Centre, Bangkok, Thailand
www.wire-southeastasia.com

28 November
AWIA AGM
Online event

12 December
AWIA Christmas Party
TBA

2026

13 - 17 April
wire 2026
Dusseldorf Exhibition Halls
Duseldorf, Germany
www.mdna.com/show/wire



Letters to the Editor

If you have suggestions for future articles or want to voice your opinion on important issues facing the sector, please feel free to drop the AWIA a line. Email editor@wireassociation.org.au

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