



WELCOME

Welcome to the first issue of XLERPLATE® *Steel In Touch* for 2007.

The year ahead is already shaping up as an eventful and exciting one, with many opportunities and challenges facing our XLERPLATE® steel customers. We look forward to continuing our value-creating relationship for 2007 and beyond.

XLERPLATE® *Steel In Touch* will bring you the latest steel industry news, information about projects happening in your state, updates on the economic environment and XLERPLATE® steel product news.

If you're interested in reading previous *Steel In Touch*

articles, log onto www.xlerplate.com.au and search our archived editions.

In this issue we feature our new XLERPLATE® steel campaign – called *Backing the Aussie Spirit* – which is themed around the Australian quest to be the best. See page 2 for details about this exciting new XLERPLATE® steel initiative.

The BlueScope XLERPLATE® team and *Steel In Touch* look forward to bringing you the latest news on developments within our industry throughout 2007.

Ted Lojszczyk
State Sales Manager – SA & NT

FABRICATORS BRIDGING PORT RIVER EXPRESSWAY

South Australian fabricators Samaras Engineering and Air Ride Wind are working on the \$178 million Port River Expressway Stage 2 and 3 road and rail bridges across Adelaide's Port River for Abigroup Contractors Pty Ltd.

Samaras Engineering is fabricating the road and rail bridges, while Air Ride Wind (now RPG Australia due to the company being sold, see Page 2 story) is supplying approach and departure girders for the rail bridge.

Stage 2, expected to open in late 2007, is a four-lane, high-level, opening road bridge across the Port River between Docks 1 and 2. Both bridges consist of a 50-metre-high, wind-resistant bascule leaf.

Due for completion in mid-2007, Stage 3 is a single-track, dual-gauge, high-level, opening rail bridge,



Artists' impression of the road and rail bridges.

with connections to the existing rail system.

Samaras Engineering began fabricating the bridges in August 2006 and expects to deliver the rail bridge to Abigroup for erection in late April.

"This has been a challenging project because these are the only bridges of this type – with a very large gooseneck – in the country," Samaras Engineering Operations Manager Mark Crook said.

"They have been designed by a US company specifying Australian steel grades. We chose XLERPLATE® steel because BlueScope Steel could produce it in a special rolling size for this project."

The largest components of the rail bridge are two 180-tonne girders, each seven metres high, 760mm wide and 60.5 metres long.

Samaras Engineering has also completed drafting the four-lane, 300 metre-long road bridge.

"We're now in the process of fabricating the two main girders, counterweight, cross beams and battledeck," Mr Crook said. "The battledeck, which lifts and opens to allow waterway traffic to pass, consists of a series of support beams, a 16mm-thick base made from XLERPLATE® steel and a special road surface coating."

Because of this project's complexity, Samaras Engineering will pre-assemble both bridges at its yard, then pull them apart for delivery to site for assembly in their final position on the Port River.

Air-Ride Wind has fabricated 10 girders for the rail bridge's approach and departure runways.

The company has sourced 420 tonnes of Grade 350 XLERPLATE® steel for the rail bridge, while Samaras Engineering ordered 1800 tonnes of Grade 350 L15 XLERPLATE® steel for the rail and road bridges. Both companies sourced their steel through Smorgon Steel.



BACKING THE AUSSIE SPIRIT

XLERPLATE® steel has launched its "Backing The Aussie Spirit" Campaign.

The campaign promotes XLERPLATE® steel's quality, reliability, technical backup and sales support associated with using Australian-made steel, and support for the local economy.

The campaign follows on from its first successful "Xlerate" to XLERPLATE®™ campaign back in 2004. XLERPLATE® steel distributors and end users will receive five mail-outs in total over a period of three months, each with a unique Australian flavour.

The first mail-out, sent in mid February, is themed "Australian Made" and focuses on the benefits associated with Australian manufacture. The second mail-out sent recently is themed "Consistent Quality". The campaign draws upon imagery centred on sporting excellence and high achievers such as champion swimmer Libby Lenton and the Australian cricket team.

"We're associating great Aussie heroes – our sportsmen and women – with the quality and pride behind the XLERPLATE® steel brand," Stan Clark, National Sales Manager – Distribution and Manufacturing, said. "XLERPLATE® steel is designed for many Australian applications and buying it means you're supporting industry in your country. Like our heroes, it's Australian-made." Every mail-out contains a gift, and a unique



Images from Backing The Aussie Spirit campaign.

personal code that enables you to enter the competition to win great monthly prizes including tickets to the World Swimming Championships in Melbourne in March, or reserved tickets to the second day of the Australia vs. India cricket test in January 2008.

Entering all five draws gives you the chance to win one of three grand prizes, including an overseas trip valued at \$15,000 to one of the following events:

- 2007 Rugby World Cup in the UK
- 2007 Twenty 20 Cricket World Cup in South Africa
- 2007 FINA World Swimming Championships in Singapore
- Prix de L'Arc de Triomphe in Paris
- 32nd America's Cup event in Spain

We'll bring you winners' details in the next edition of *Steel In Touch*.

PKSW HOT STRIP MILL EXPANSION

The \$100 million expansion of the hot strip mill at Port Kembla Steelworks has been officially opened by Wollongong's Lord Mayor, Councillor Alex Darling. Councillor Darling unveiled a plaque at the Number 2 Walking Beam Reheat Furnace last December.

The furnace is now fully operational, and can convert an additional 400,000 tonnes p.a. of slab into hot rolled coil.

"The expansion has made the Steelworks much more competitive," BlueScope Steel's President Australian and New Zealand Industrial Markets Noel Cornish said. "Slab which is a semi-finished product is now transformed and value-added into hot rolled coil."



From left: BlueScope Steel's Aimee Allen, Noel Cornish, Antonio Lara and Cr Alex Darling.

He said the expansion, completed on time and on budget, was a positive step for employees and the community.

"It's a real credit to the BlueScope Steel people who managed the work, and to the contractors who carried it out," Mr Cornish said.

ENGINEERING ACTIVITY ON THE RISE

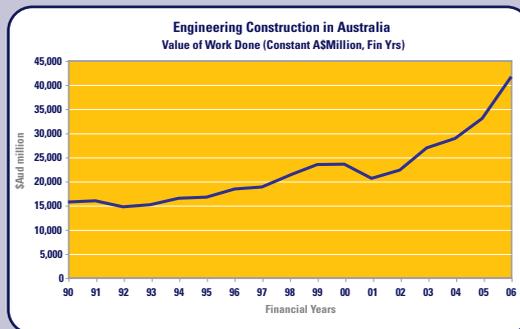
By BlueScope Steel Economists Max Serrano, Nick Scavarelli and Amy Davidson

Australian manufacturing continues to face a number of challenges, including the high Australian dollar and increased competition from Asia.

However, there has been a strong lift in planned engineering activity in the last 12 months, especially in mining-related investment, with high commodity prices underpinning planned expansions at many mine sites. Although commodity prices are expected to soften in coming years, they are likely to remain fairly high in the immediate future.

The latest Access Economic's Investor Monitor indicates a number of huge projects have been driving the lift in mining activity. These include the Dawson steaming coal deposit (valued at \$1.2 billion) and Fortescue Metal Group's iron ore mine (valued at \$3.7 billion).

This strong activity has produced some negative consequences however. It has substantially driven up costs, especially because of skills shortages. Consequently, a number of major projects are being delayed, and cost blowouts are widespread. The construction of Fortescue's iron ore and infrastructure project is behind schedule and BHP Billiton's Ravensthorpe nickel project has suffered cost overruns.



Mining plans for the future remain strong, including a feasibility study that is currently underway on a \$700 million planned development of the Wandoan coal mine. Statistics from the Australian Bureau of Statistics indicate that spending on mineral exploration has increased by nearly a third compared with this time last year.

Oil and gas investment is also strong. The North West Shelf gas fields and others in and around north Western Australia (such as the Vincent and Stybarrow oil fields) continue to lead spending in this sector.

Construction on the Thylacine and Geographe gas project in Victoria's Otway Basin is behind schedule after cost upgrades throughout development of the project. The final bill is expected to tip \$1.1 billion.

AIR RIDE WIND SOLD TO RPG



From left: RPG Australia Managing Director Barry Cox, RPG Australia Executive Director Mark McSweeney, and Air Ride Wind General Manager Mike Lewis.

Rollpress Proplate Group (RPG) Australia has bought major Adelaide-based fabricator Air Ride Wind.

The combined company, now called RPG Australia, is expected to turn over \$140 million next financial year, forming one of Australia's largest integrated steel processing companies.

"Air Ride Wind, South Australia's leading wind farm fabricator, offered the group a strategic position in that state, providing expertise in the growing renewable energy sector," RPG Australia Managing Director Barry Cox said.

Brisbane-based RPG Australia, which previously specialised in steel processing and manufacturing for major water, road, rail and mining projects, now offers defence and wind project expertise.

SAFETY MESSAGE: REBAR CAPS MAY OFFER LITTLE PROTECTION



Recent research conducted by the NSW Plant Consultative Committee has shown that plastic caps fitted to the ends of exposed steel reinforcement bars may offer little protection against serious workplace accidents, including impalement.

These findings support information from several suppliers who say rebar caps are only intended to provide bright visual warnings, and to protect against brush contact with burred ends of reinforcement bars.

Where possible, working adjacent to exposed rebars should be eliminated.

Where this is not possible, workers should be effectively separated from exposed bars by guardrails, screens or other barriers.

Scaffolds should also be fitted with edge protection.

Correctly fitted caps should only be used, and regularly checked.

FABRICATOR'S CORNER

MANUELE ENGINEERS

Leading Adelaide fabricator Manuele Engineers has won several more impressive South Australian contracts in its 40th year.

The Clovelly Park-based, family-run company specialises in structural steel fabrication, shop detailing and site erection. Its current project portfolio includes the Central City Bus Terminal, ABB Silos Support Structure and the OneSteel Project Magnet – Haematite Export Facility.

"We're now working on about 10 projects, but our record is 34," Managing Director Vince Manuele said. He said the company's Project Magnet contract with Thiess, which involves carrying out fabrication work for OneSteel's \$325 million facility at Whyalla, was nearing completion.

"We had fabricated 1000 tonnes of steelwork for a West Australian builder, including five 20-tonne hoppers made from Grade 250 XLERPLATE® steel, when this second 1000-tonne job came through," Mr Manuele said.

Other high-profile Manuele Engineers' projects include Adelaide Airport's Main Terminal Building, the Advertiser Sunday Mail building, and Ikea Adelaide.

"Adelaide Airport was our most time-demanding



ABB Silos Support Structure.

project because we were carrying out 2500 tonnes of structural steelwork on the city's busiest terminal," Mr Manuele said.

The seven-month contract involved drawing, fabrication, painting and on-site installation.

"We fabricated a series of grill-like trusses weighing up to 11 tonnes each that span and support the terminal which sits above a baggage handling facility," Mr Manuele said.

Manuele Engineers sources up to 1000 tonnes of XLERPLATE® steel a year through OneSteel, Adelaide. It employs 72 people, operating in an 8500-square-metre workshop equipped with CNC fabrication equipment and a lifting capacity of more than 40 tonnes.

Mr Manuele said the company had carried out third-party quality assurance certification for several years.

CUTTING EDGES THRIVES UNDER LOCAL OWNERSHIP

Cutting Edges Equipment Parts has experienced increased demand for its expanding range of patented wear parts for the mining industry in its first year under Australian ownership. The company is Australia's largest aftermarket supplier of equipment parts for earthmoving machinery and heavy-duty diesel engines.

Cutting Edges Equipment Parts' former Managing Director and now CEO Richard Andrews bought the company from United Kingdom-based owner Delta plc a year ago.

Mr Andrews said the company was succeeding as an Australian manufacturer operating in a global market after introducing new system designs and technologies.

"Downtime is critical for mining companies, so anything they can do to extend the working life of components and improve productivity as a result is taken very seriously," he said.



Cutting Edges Equipment Parts CEO Richard Andrews.

"We manufacture a wearplate product that uses a chromium carbide overlay on a Grade 250 XLERPLATE® steel base. We export this product, as it's ideal for high-abrasion, high-impact working environments around the world.

"We use this grade of XLERPLATE® steel to

make our CC1500 wearplate suitable for high-abrasion applications such as chutes, screens, dump truck liners, bulldozer mouldboards and bucket liners."

Cutting edges, flat grader blades and end bits, which are made from XLERPLATE® steel, are manufactured at the company's Sydney facility.

Mr Andrews said Cutting Edges Equipment Parts' products were tailor-made for local conditions, and did not compromise their quality to suit all markets.

Cutting Edges operates eight branches and a network of 10 distributors across Australia.

PLATE MILL PRODUCTION RECORD

Plate Mill output at the Port Kembla Steelworks exceeded 400,000 tonnes last year for the first time since 1996.

This increased production was due to improved process flow and productivity gains across all areas of the Plate Mill.

Impressive production levels were only part of the story. The delivery-in-full-on-time performance for 2006/07 to date is the highest result ever.

Major maintenance and repair work recently carried out to the hot leveller and furnaces was completed before schedule, on budget and with the best-ever safety performance.

This critical work will ensure XLERPLATE® steel production remains on track throughout 2007 and will also result in improved XLERPLATE® steel shape, surface quality and delivery performance.

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IN THE HOT SEAT TODD BRYERS

Name: Todd Bryers**Job title:** National Product Manager – Distribution and Manufacturing, BlueScope Steel**No. of years with BlueScope Steel:** 6**No. of years in the Steel Industry:** 6**Description of current role:** To deliver a superior XLERPLATE® steel market offer that benefits both our customers and BlueScope Steel**What I like most about my job:** Working with a diverse range of colleagues and customers**Time spent on the phone each day:** Less than one hour a day. Feel free to call and chat!**Emails received on average per day:** 30 plus**Person I most admire:** At the moment Mr Cricket (Michael Hussey)**Craziest thing I've ever done:** Worked as a Chocolate & Candy Chef in a Canadian ski resort**Earliest childhood memory:** Being beaten up by my big brother. Too bad for him, as I eventually grew taller**What kick starts my day:** Training for my first-ever triathlon**Best invention of the last century:** Jet travel**All-time favourite song:** *We are the Navy Blues* (Carlton FC theme song)**Worst television program:** *Today Tonight / A Current Affair***Hardest habit to break:** Sleepwalking**Favourite food:** Cheese, complemented by a nice drop of red**Best car on the road / favourite car of all times:** A Winnebago RV, to drive around Australia**My pet hate:** Road rage**I spend most weekends...** Outdoors as much as possible**If I had \$1m to blow it would be on...** A beachfront property in Wollongong**If I could have one person over for dinner, it would be...** Al Gore**Favourite holiday destination ever:** Drinking cerveza on the Mexican Caribbean coast

ANYTHING BUT STEEL

A debate between friends during a shooting party in Wexford, Ireland, in 1951 over what was Europe's fastest bird led to the founding of one of the world's most successful publishing ventures.

When one of the party, Sir Hugh Beaver, realised that similar arguments were going on every evening in more than 81,000 pubs across Britain and Ireland, he thought there might be a book in it.

One of his workers then commissioned Norris and Ross McWhirter's fact-finding agency in London to

compile the first edition, and 1000 free copies were distributed in 1954.

The following year, the book rocketed to the top of Britain's Best Seller list for Christmas. Ironically, Beaver had initially thought of it as a marketing give-away.

This annual is now the world's best-selling copyrighted book.

The name of this publishing phenomenon? The Guinness World Records.

ENDEAVOUR AWARDS ENTRIES CLOSE SOON

Entries close soon for the 2007 *Manufacturers' Monthly* Endeavour Awards.

The event, sponsored by BlueScope Steel's STEEL BY™ Brand Partnership Program, is open to all Australian manufacturers that have been operating for at least two years.

The awards, now entering their fourth year, cover eight categories, and include the selection

of an overall winner – Manufacturer of the Year 2007 – in recognition of the winning company's demonstrated innovation and excellence.

Nomination forms and conditions are available in the latest edition of *Manufacturers' Monthly* magazine or online at:

www.ferret.com.au/FerretAwards/Mmawards.asp

