Concrete IQ is the official newsletter of the Master Concreters Association of Queensland – MCAQ Inc.

MCAQ supports the companies and organisations that support us.

WINTER 2012

concrete IQ

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INDUSTRY AWARDS SHOWCASE HIGH QUALITY PLACING BY MEMBERS

The annual MCAQ Excellence in Industry Awards was held on Saturday 2nd June at Moda, Portside. Once again manufacturers, suppliers and other key industry stakeholders joined with our concrete contractor members to recognise and celebrate the exceptional standards of concrete placing by our members.

The Hon Dr Bruce Flegg Minister for Housing and Public Works also attended the evening, which was another rousing success.

The evening kicked off with a fireworks display on the Brisbane River before the guests moved into the venue for the more formal part of the evening. Following on from the success of last year’s awards, there were over 250 guests in attendance and as with last year we will be looking for a venue to cater for an anticipated 300 plus guests at the 2013 event.

The award winners, photos and details of the projects have been included in this special ‘Industry Awards Edition’ of Concrete IQ.

ABW Industries (Award Finalist)
As we approach the end of the Financial Year I look back to this time last year and note that margins are still tight and activity levels are still far from ideal. Continuing global uncertainty constrains our two speed economy and we are still to see a bounce in the general construction industry that many believe comes off the back of a strong mining/resources sector. We have all grown accustomed to operating in this environment and it will be some time before activity levels increase.

On a brighter note, our annual awards dinner was held on the 2nd of June at Moda, Portside. I am pleased to report that this year was another resounding success. This year saw an increase in nominations and a considerable increase in the numbers in attendance. We have once again received very positive feedback from those who attended the evening, both contractor and non contractors alike.

An activity such as this requires considerable planning and effort and I would like to thank all the members of the association who contributed their time and effort in making the event the success it was. The Hon Dr Bruce Flegg MP and his partner attended the event, with the Minister addressing the guests. Minister Flegg was introduced to many of our stakeholders from our manufacturing and supplier community, who also have issues that they need to raise at a political level.

Once again various groups from within the concreting industry and those who support our business owners with various products and services came on as sponsors for the event. As was indicated on the night I thank all our sponsors for supporting our event.

Going forward, the association has formed a strategic alliance with six other subcontractor employer associations who will collectively engage with government on issues affecting sub-contractors. Notwithstanding, our CEO David Lingard and I will be meeting with Minister Flegg to discuss various issues that directly affect concrete contractors.

I would also like to mention, the raised profile of the association. Awareness of the association across the construction industry and general public continues to grow with ever increasing visits to our website and more and more calls to our office by consumers who are seeking a quality product, delivered by professional contractors. We continue to receive very positive feedback from organisations and representatives in the wider construction industry who are highly supportive of the work we do in raising the standards of the concreting industry.

Finally, the Board of Directors and our CEO have set a number of key milestones that we will achieve in the next financial year and we will be seeking the support of our members as we move forward and continue to grow the association. As the industry continues to experience week activity levels the association is continuing to make a positive difference for our members. I encourage all members to become involved in as many of the association’s activities as they can, which will only increase the support the association is able to provide to its members.

Chris Jones, President

FROM THE PRESIDENT’S DESK

When placing exposed-aggregate finishes the aggregates (the stones and/or sands) near the surface are revealed. These would otherwise be concealed by a thin layer of cement paste. There are a number of techniques for producing exposed-aggregate finishes, each creating a different and distinctive appearance.

CCAA has prepared a briefing note that discusses techniques that are widely used to expose the aggregate for flatwork applications – floors and pavements. To find further information on this topic click on the following link or go to CCAA and search for Briefing 02 Exposed-aggregate Finishes for Flatwork.

Nucon is a 100% Australian owned supplier of ready-mixed concrete to commercial, government and residential building projects. The company operates 8 concrete plants from South Brisbane to Ballina ensuring extensive coverage in the rapidly expanding South East QLD and Northern NSW corridor.

Nucon’s customer offering is exceptional in a competitive business environment. The Group offers expert technical support, including specialised mix design and mix testing from their NATA Registered Lab; proven on-site capacity from a large fleet of agitators; and an extensive range of mixes. Most importantly, Nucon has a focus on exceeding customer expectations from quoting and ordering through to delivery and testing.

With first class products, a service driven approach and local area knowledge, Nucon Concrete is respected by customers and the industry, as a consistent and proven supplier. Nucon supplies grey mix, coloured-through and exposed concrete. The coloured-through range includes over 100 options and the range of exposed pebbles and crushed aggregates is extensive; with Nucon sourcing crushed aggregates and natural pebbles from across eastern Australia to give customers the widest choice. An extensive range of normal grey mix designs are available with typical mixes including slabs, footings, pool spray, kerb and channel, block fill, no-fines and early age strength.

As long-time preferred supplier to the GCCC, Nucon’s range of standard and decorative concrete is on display along the length of the Gold Coast including prominent projects such as the Southport Parklands, the foreshore walkway and Palmbeach Parklands.

 Owned by the Neumann Family and part of the larger Neumann Group of Companies, Nucon is an independent, 100% Australian owned and managed business. For over 40 years Nucon Concrete has been an active member of the community in all the areas in which they operate. Through the Company’s award-winning Good Neighbour Programme, Nucon is actively involved in, and contributes to, the needs of the local community including schools, sporting groups and charity organisations. Michael Cooper, General Manager explains, “Nucon works hard to foster strong partnerships with our customers and community groups. We are proud to be Australian-owned and to be able provide practical and financial assistance to community projects, groups and individuals.”

Area Manager for Nucon Concrete is Jason Egan. Jason has over 20 years experience in concrete and quarries across Australia; through this he has brought a wealth of industry knowledge and expertise to the business. Talking about what is unique about Nucon’s customer offering, Jason said; “We have a professional and dedicated team and our size and structure gives us advantages that the multi-national or smaller companies don’t have. With our plant network and fleet have the ability to service all customers, but important decisions can be made quickly. Importantly, Nucon’s customer service model is different in that we don’t have a call centre – our customers speak directly to their batcher which means we know exactly what our customers’ need.”

Speak to Jason Egan at Nucon for your concrete needs. Phone 0412 289 039. www.nuconconcrete.com.au
CONCRETING INDUSTRY CELEBRATES THEIR SUCCESS

MCAQ contractor members, manufactures, suppliers and key industry stakeholders gathered at Moda Portside on Saturday 2nd June 2012 to recognise and acknowledge high standards of concrete placing by MCAQ members.

Following the success of first awards night, held in May 2011, the concreting industry once again came together to recognise and acknowledge the high standard of work carried out by members of the association. This year the event was moved to cater for a 25% increase in numbers. This was easily achieved with over 250 guests attending and a venue that was filled to its capacity.

The Hon Dr Bruce Flegg MP, Minister for Housing and Public Works was the guest speaker for the event and noted the work of our members as sub-contractors and the difficulties our members face.

The evening kicked off with a bang, literally, with a fireworks display on the Brisbane River, much to the enjoyment of our guests.

Once again the gala event showcased building projects where the concreting scope of work was completed by MCAQ members. The judges acknowledged the high standard of all entries into the awards. A key theme which came through from the principal contractors and clients was the professionalism shown by MCAQ concrete contractors.

As was evident by the standard of nominations received, MCAQ concrete contractors continue to deliver a quality product, which is often not the case, in today’s extremely tight market.

Congratulations to all our winners. Once again, highly positive feedback has been received from many stakeholders in our industry. The awards night continues to raise the profile of our industry and the work of the association. Planning is underway for next year’s event and we look forward to seeing everyone at the 2013 MCAQ Excellence in Industry Awards.

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Q LEAVE BEST RESIDENTIAL PROJECT AWARD
WINNER
Manly Concrete
Haig Street Wynnum Project

Andrew Stephenson (Q Leave), Brent Dowton (Manly Concrete), Hon. Bruce Flegg MP

HY-TEC BEST DECORATIVE PROJECT AWARD - LESS THAN $50,000 (DECORATIVE COMPONENT)
WINNER
CITICRETE
Mary River Motor Inn Decorative Project

Hon. Bruce Flegg MP, Adam Westlake (CITICRETE), Alex Mason (HY-TEC)

CONCRETE COLOUR SYSTEMS BEST DECORATIVE PROJECT AWARD OVER $50,000 (DECORATIVE COMPONENT)
WINNER
McGinn Concrete
Kedron/Luytwyche Busway Project

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Boral Best Construction Project Award - Less Than $3 Million (Total Project Cost)

Winner
Bess Concrete
Ensell Warehouse Murrarie Project

Hon. Bruce Flegg MP, Gary Deacon, Richard Leford (Bess Concrete)

Wagners Best Construction Project Award - Over $3 Million (Total Project Cost)

Winner
Austech
Masters Store Springfield Project

Hon. Bruce Flegg MP, Lisle Stephenson (on behalf of Austech), Cameron Coleman (Wagners)

Construciton Skills Queensland Innovation, Sustainability and Safety Award

Winner
Insite Concretors
Ferny Grove Train Station Upgrade Project

Jeff Heath (Insite Concretors), Scott Bilby (CSQ), Hon. Bruce Flegg MP, Tim Harders (Insite Concretors)

Hanson Supreme Award

Winner
McGinn Concrete
Kedron/Luytwyche Busway Project

Hon. Bruce Flegg MP, Shaun Fuller (McGinn Concrete), Danny Cooper - Regional General Manager (Hanson Construction Material)

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Will Premier Newman Really Help Sub-Contractors as Dr Flegg Implies...

There has been a lot of talk, particularly in the media, about the Newman Government helping the sub-contractors’ lot.

The Courier Mail in particular has run a series of articles about sub-contractors being done over, generally by unscrupulous builders. The real issue that needs to be addressed is, “What actual steps can the Government take to improve things for sub-contractors?”

The Problem
There are weaknesses in the legislative arrangements, failings in industry practice, including by sub-contractors themselves and systemic problems in the bureaucratic framework within which the whole building industry operates.

What’s Happening?
A number of industry bodies representing sub-contractors have been meeting with Dr Flegg, the new Minister for the industry, and discussing various options designed to improve the lot of sub-contractors.

More significantly, eight of the sub-contracting industry peak bodies in Queensland recently met and agreed to work together to:-

- Identify realistic, actual steps the Government can take to remove some of the problems facing sub-contractors and the building and construction industry more generally;
- Make submissions directly to the Minister and his department with practical recommendations on what can be done; and
- Work together in a co-ordinated way to maximise the opportunities to get the message through and effect real change.

So far, Minster Flegg has been saying all the right things. However, it is up to the sub-contracting industry to provide the Government with the solutions and the options available to it.

There are weaknesses in the legislative arrangements, failings in industry practice, including by sub-contractors themselves and systematic problems within which the whole building industry operates.
Question:
I am seeing all over the news that the Hastie Group has collapsed. What does this mean for the Hastie company I have a contract with?

Answer:
The Hastie Group has over 40 companies. All have been placed into administration, with PPB Advisory as the administrator. Some of the companies are continuing to operate through receivers and will keep trading while the receivers organise to sell the businesses. A building contract does not automatically terminate when a company is placed into administration. However, most formal contracts will contain a clause which terminates the contract upon either party going into administration and/or liquidation. You need to read your contract and seek legal advice if you are unsure. If you do not have a formal contract, or there is no termination clause, then the contract remains on foot and all your rights and obligations under the contract still stand. This means you should not terminate the contract just because of the collapse, as you could be liable for damages. You should seek legal advice on whether there are any other grounds that would enable you to terminate the contract.

Question:
I have heard that builders are going to try to pass the cost of the carbon tax on to subcontractors. How are they going to do this?

Answer:
We are not entirely sure at this stage but whatever you do, make sure you read your tenders and contracts very carefully, particularly any clauses which refer to passing on unanticipated costs, taxes and government imposts. Beware!

For further information regarding the collapse of Hastie Group please contact:

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For further information regarding carbon tax please contact:
David McKewin
(07) 3223 5900 or dmckewin@mckayslaw.com
Sean Diljore
(07) 3223 5909 or sdiljore@mckayslaw.com

THE CLEAN ENERGY ACT 2011 (Cth) and associated legislation establishing a national carbon pricing scheme has been passed into law. This amounts to what is known in the real world as the Carbon Tax.

WHY DO WE HAVE A CARBON TAX?
Well, the Australian Government has chosen to lead the world in this area. It is a bold and some may say premature step by a nation producing less than 1% of the carbon emissions. Time will tell if other countries follow our lead.

WHAT IS TAXED?
The carbon tax covers 4 of the 6 Kyoto Protocol greenhouse gases and applies in 5 areas:
1. Stationary energy (e.g. electricity generation);
2. Industrial processing (e.g. aluminium smelting);
3. Fugitive emissions other than from decommissioned coal mines (e.g. emissions from the extraction of coal, oil and natural gas);
4. Emissions from landfill waste and waste water treatment; and
5. Heavy On Road Vehicles potentially covered from 1 July 2014.

WHAT DOES THE CARBON TAX DO?
The scheme imposes a carbon price on operating facilities that emit more than 25,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide per annum. These are commonly known as the bigger emitters or large producers of carbon.

WHAT DOES IT COST?
Each big emitter will pay a fixed price for emissions above the carbon cap.

HOW IS IT CALculated?
A single permit is expected to be around $23 each. Each permit relates to one tonne of carbon emitted in the initial year.

WILL THE CARBON TAX BE INCREASED?
A fixed price for emissions will be in effect for three years from July 2012. It will then move to a flexible, market-based pricing mechanism from July 2015. The scheme covers direct or ‘Scope 1’ emissions, capturing around 300 to 500 liable entities from 2012.

How many people will pay the tax? The tax only directly captures approximately 300 to 500 entities.

ITS EFFECTS ON YOU?
Like all business costs, if the electricity generator’s costs increase so do, eventually, their charges to every person consuming their product. Hence, ultimately all Australians will see this cost passed on to them through increased charges. For electricity the Treasury has estimated that carbon pricing will raise electricity prices by 10 per cent immediately and a further 16 per cent over the next five years.

IN MORE DETAIL, HOW DOES IT WORK?
There are two types of entities that are directly liable to pay the tax:
1. Entities that have operational control over activities that emit 25,000 tonnes or more of CO2; and
2. Certain Supplies of Natural Gas (directly through a pipeline).

Liability for the emissions from activities that exceed the above amount is imposed on the entity that has ‘operational control’ over the activity. An entity will have operational control over an activity where it has the authority to introduce or implement operating, health and safety, or environmental policies for the activity or possibly have some element of financial control.

Liable entities will have to surrender permits to meet their liability. In other words, they “buy credits” to cover their carbon emissions.
Though it may be unlikely that members of the Master Concreters Association will be directly liable for the carbon tax, the introduction will still have an impact on the cost of everything in the entire community.

However, advice should immediately be obtained if any member:
- is involved in a joint venture, including an unincorporated joint ventures, with a directly liable entity; or
- is involved in an activity that would exceed emissions of 25,000 tonnes; or
- exercises “operational control” over an activity that creates a liability to pay.

**COMPENSATION?**
To offset the overall cost to all Australians the government has provided for one-off pass backs, some targeted payments and some changes to other taxes. How effective these will be in the medium to long term is a matter that will only be known over time.

For more information about how the Carbon Tax works please call Paul Evans on (07) 3223 5903 or plevans@mckayslaw.com or Sean Diljore on (07) 3223 5909 or sdiljore@mckayslaw.com.

**TENDERING AND PRICING JOBS**
Probably the most important thing arising out of the carbon tax for your business is to make sure that when tendering or pricing a job you bear in mind the increased cost of doing business resulting from the new tax.

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**MCAQ HOTLINE**

This facility is available to MCAQ members when the inevitable day-to-day technical problems arise.

Board members are available as first point of contact. Their details are:

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Feel free to email all Board members, or an individual if preferred, or if it is more convenient, call the office on 1300 884 544 and they will start the ball rolling.

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