

AMCAVIEWS

April 2008

AMCA TASMANIA HELPS OUT IN KENYA

Peter Lucas of Christie and Wills Pty Ltd formed part of the team from Global Care Australia to undertake aid work in Kenya earlier this year. Before traveling to Kenya to install a solar-powered, ultra violet C, water treatment system for the Homa Bay Orphanage, the team traveled to Tanzania and found themselves rewiring a Pastor's home while waiting for the political unrest to settle in Kenya.

The work in Kenya was not easy. Discovering the existing water pipe was 20mm, and supplies bought in were 25mm, the team had to replace the entire line back to the main. Local "fundis" (skilled workers) were hired to help with the trench digging.

A UV-C reactor was installed inside the building with two pre-filters – one for sediment removal and the other for water discoloration and taste.



Instructing the locals on the operation of the UV-C reactor



Installing the solar panels using a hand made ladder

Solar panels were sourced from Kisii, after much negotiation with local merchants. They were installed on the roof of the building as traditional power generation was non-existent. As there were no ladders available, the locals cut a tree and made a ladder to gain access to the roof. In between heavy storms the solar paneling was wired.

The equipment was eventually installed, tested and commissioned and everyone was able to drink the freshly treated water.

The team had to leave to travel to Nairobi, but news came through that once the sun had come out the solar panels were working and the power readings for the batteries were increasing and the filtration system was running smoothly.

The local community were extremely grateful for the work undertaken by Global Care and

particularly wanted to thank the team and to AMCA Tasmania for donating the ultra violet C, water treatment system.

Further discussions have been undertaken to plan future works that could be undertaken, including replacing the existing battery cables and more solar lighting for the office, kitchen and another two buildings. It was also thought we could look at installing a windmill pump for pumping water from the river to the main storage tanks and possibly extending the suction pipe down to Lake Victoria, where the water is of better quality. Any donations for these works would be greatly appreciated by Global Care Australia. Peter Lucas can be contacted on 03 62720066 during business hours regarding sponsorship of any future projects.



Finally, clean running water

NSWNEWS

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My Say: Geoff Sheldon

BUILDING INFORMATION MODELLING (BIM)

Building Information Modelling (BIM) is an emerging design documentation technology that promises great benefits for airconditioning and mechanical sub-contractors, but it could be a little while yet before all the promises are fulfilled. Early adopters may find a lot to like, but could be left wanting more.

BIM has been used for some time in the USA, UK and Europe, especially in the defence arena. It is now beginning to be adopted for non-residential construction. As it is more widely adopted by architects, builders and head contractors, more and more sub-contractors are finding themselves obliged to embrace BIM systems and software, too, if they are to be able to communicate effectively with their clients.

BIM requires all participants in the design and construction process (architects, consultants, contractors, sub-contractors and even component suppliers in some instances) to document their designs in a shared, full 3D parametric model space environment. In current, non-BIM practice, each discipline can design and document in isolation from each other in a 2D environment. The coordination between the various sets of documents and design components usually happens manually. In a BIM environment, if one discipline makes a design change, it is automatically

updated in the shared model, which enables all other disciplines to see the effect of the change and respond to it. This gives the BIM model 'clash detection' capabilities. If the change created by one discipline clashes with other disciplines (eg. the structural engineer beefs up a band beam, causing a clash with the ductwork layout) the clash is detected and all parties are notified.

A true BIM model environment would also automatically calculate the cost of the proposed design change and the impact on the project programme. This is known as the Fourth Dimension of BIM (cost) and Fifth Dimension of BIM (time). Hence, BIM is also referred to as 5D, while the currently typical design/documentation process is referred to as 2D or sometimes 3D.

Sounds great, so far, but.....

Some important elements of the available BIM technology software and tools are still very much in the development phase, even though some software vendors are keen to tell everyone that their product can already do it all. The software cannot actually do anything at all: the people using it are where the doing gets done. No matter how advanced the software, for it to be effective requires that ALL disciplines in the design, documentation and construction chain adopt it, get their designers and drafters trained in its use, and then undertake new projects with everyone working in the same BIM environment. Great theory, but in practice there are as yet only a handful of people in the industry who are capable of using it.

Also troublesome is that not all elements of the total package of software products needed to create

a fully effective BIM environment are equally well-developed. The Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing (MEP) software is not nearly as advanced as the Architectural and Structural software packages which are being fairly widely used by larger architects and consultants.

Proprietary software developed for the Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing industries over a long period of time (Cad-Duct, Cad-Mech, etc) can already draw in full 3D and DO already have clash detection facilities. However, because they are vector-based software packages they cannot be truly interfaced into a BIM model. If a mechanical contractor decided to purchase one of the true BIM software packages, they could certainly draw in the BIM model and communicate in the same language with their BIM-speaking head contractor, architect and other disciplines. But can the component manufacturers and fabricators speak the same language? The mechanical contractor could have to re-draw the whole thing in their existing 2D or 3D software programs to allow manufacture and pre-fabrication to occur. For a BIM environment to be fully, practically effective, International Foundation Codes (IFC's) also need to be incorporated into the model, including products, materials, equipment, etc. Our industry is not close to achieving this.....yet. But BIM will certainly be coming to a project near you, soon, and you may be asked to start speaking its language sooner than you think.

What's on in NSW?

Date

9, 16, 23 April 08
16 April 08
29 April 08

Event

OHS Consultation
AMCA NSW Council Meeting
Alan Milz Seminar 'Improve cash flow and grow the value of your business'

Contact

Geoff Sheldon
Geoff Sheldon
Lucie Booker

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

AMCA Executive recently asked Peter Staedler (AE Smith & Son) to chair a revitalised Occupational Health and Safety Committee. We have also invited Mike Fox (Carrier) and Andrew Rowe (Rowe & Wood) to join the existing personnel of:

- Norma Saladrigas (Allstaff);
- Chris Cannon (AE Smith & Son);
- Ross Fearne (AG Coombs); and
- Peter Verberne (AMCA).

If there are any specific issues that members believe need to be addressed please feel free to contact any of the above.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The State Government has launched a new program to improve the health, safety and well being of Victorian workers. It's called "WorkHealth". The Government has asked WorkSafe to oversee the program. The program will commence in July and will progressively target geographical areas similar to the SafeTowns' initiative. The program provides a range of support incentives to employers to develop health and well being programs, and provide their employees access to free, onsite voluntary screening for chronic risk factors, such as, diabetes, depression and heart disease.

Whilst this may be laudable, there are inherent dangers for employers on a number fronts:

- Will the employer be responsible under WorkCover if a non work related disease is discovered through the onsite (during work time) screening process,
- Will the employer be compensated for the loss of productivity?
- Overweight employees are more at risk than others – will employers who tell those employees to lose weight be immune from prosecution under existing equal employment opportunity legislation.

AMCA will formally respond to these concerns in due course.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALLSTAFF

Early in March Allstaff Airconditioning was awarded the Premier Regional Business Award for the greater Dandenong area. There were eight categories in the awards in all, and Allstaff took out the top category.

These awards are designed to recognise the best performing businesses in each of the categories within the greater Dandenong area.

Congratulations to everyone involved.

ENERGY EFFICIENT HVAC SYSTEMS - A COURSE FOR DESIGNERS, INSTALLERS, COMMISSIONERS AND MAINTAINERS

This course will enable participants to view the environmental footprint of a building and suggest methods of reducing the energy usage via efficiency increases. Participants will appreciate their role in influencing the energy efficiency outcomes of a building and to become aware of what comes before and after in the HVAC supply chain process.

The target group for the course is experienced HVAC professionals currently operating in the industry. The participant mix will include engineers, design draftspersons, project managers, site supervisors, balancing/commissioning technicians, service managers and technicians.

AMCA has organised 4 courses in 2008, all of which will be run at the AMCA Office. If you wish to participate in this course or require any additional information on the above, please contact Laura Steedman laura@amca.com.au

GOLF DAY SHOOTS SUB PAR

While the weather looked threatening it did not cause anyone to think twice about coming to the AMCA annual golf day.

The weather held, the golf was patchy by some but excellent from others and the event as a networking opportunity for members and their clients was an outstanding success.

Melbourne's Metropolitan Golf Club is one

of the country's best golf courses. It is located in the middle of the Melbourne sand belt where all of the great courses are located.

AMCA President Alex Hall, thanked the sponsors for their support of the event. He also complimented the event as one of the best conducted industry golf days.

A new feature of the event this year was the on-course photographer who conducted a great animated show at the dinner.

A full list of the winners and the sponsors who supported the event follows. Our appreciation and thanks go to all of those who helped and supported the event to make it the success it was.



The winning team from Holyoake Industries

Final Results

Prize	Sponsor	Winner
Longest Drive	Fantech	Nick Eynon
Straightest and Longest Drive	Airepure	Paul Hendrick
Nearest the Pin - Hole 2	Celmex International	Ashley Trebelcock
Nearest the Pin - Hole 11	Willis Insurance	Neal Gray
Winning Team	Holyoake Industries	Mark Stewart Ned Gray Bruce Graham Gerry Nymyer

Our thanks are also extended to Automotive Logic who sponsored the on-course drinks and to ACADS – BSG who sponsored the golf balls.

What's on in VIC?

Date	Event	Contact
14 April 07	Victorian Members Networking Function	Lyn Dyason
21-23 Apr 08	ARBS Exhibition	Lyn Dyason
21 April 08	National Council Meeting held in Melb.	David Eynon

My Say:

Graham MacKril

NEW CHALLENGES FOR UNIONS

The commitment of the Rudd Labour Government to neo-liberal policies – what is being described as economic conservatism – will pose a real challenge for the union movement.

It has typically been a Liberal government which has launched attacks on public service jobs and created “razor gangs” to slash costs – this task now falls to the Rudd Government; where there is a real potential to put unions off side where the Government focus is on cost cutting and the task of controlling inflation is a core commitment of the Rudd Government.

An interesting comment from a union official recently indicated an acute awareness that Liberal Governments tend to drive unions together, while recent history suggests that Labour Governments have been instrumental in being a divisive force for unions.

The strength of Prime Minister Rudd in driving a new Labour agenda will be tested but based on his current support and popularity he would be virtually unchallenged, threatening the traditional political strength of unions to influence the agenda of the Labour party.

Maintaining relevance to the market place is an issue for all modern organisations and the current development of relationships based on a common need to address skills shortages through training initiatives appears to be the common ground on which both employers and employees will move forward.

AMCA QLD APPLIES FOR SKILLS CENTRE FUNDING

Through the Joint Industry Skills Training organisation, we have made application to the State Government for Commonwealth funding for Skills Centre funding to deliver the Mechanical Services Plumbing apprenticeship and a raft of other post trade training. From inception of the application only a few weeks ago, support has been received across the board. Building on the successful Fire School model, we propose delivering an apprenticeship for our industry, which was originally declared in 2004, with the capacity to deliver a multi-skilled tradesperson for our sector. The capacity for the public system to meet the current demand for apprenticeship places will remain a challenge for our State Government, despite a significant training policy agenda to close the skills gap that exists today. The ongoing development of private Registered Training Organisations will be significant for industry sectors which have demands for training, where that demand from a numbers perspective is considered to be a thin market. It seems quite amazing that given the focus on skills shortages only \$14 million is available for Skill Centre development. The Association, with support from the State Government, employers and employees will make every effort to secure funding for this Skills Centre.

ANNUAL INDUSTRY SKILLS FORUM

The recently convened Construction Skills Queensland Annual Industry Skills Forum acts as a crucial component of Construction Skills Queensland’s industry engagement strategy.

Industry leaders and representatives from around the State engaged in a series of workshop exercises, designed to highlight issues facing the building and construction industry and possible strategies to counter them. This report provides a summary of the findings of the forum.

Key findings:

Broadly, the emergent themes and suggestions from discussions are summarised as follows:

- Improving the flexibility and capacity of the training system;
- Identification of specific target groups, for example the under-representation of women in construction and the potential to utilise migrants to fill the skill shortage gap;
- How to better engage industry to facilitate a stronger training commitment;
- Improving pathways into industry through entry level training programs and broader promotion of the construction industry as a career of first choice;
- Improvement of apprentice and trainee retention numbers;
- Improve research and forecasting measures to better measure the labour market ;
- Infrastructure skills development through large scale projects.

What’s on in QLD?

Date

6 May 08
7, 14, 21, 28 May 08
15 May 08

Event

Service Managers Meeting
Drafting Cert IV
Council Meeting

Contact

Graham MacKril
Graham / Jannie MacKril
Graham MacKril

My Say: Alan Layton

Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard needs to "stick to her guns" and resist pressure from building unions to scrap the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC). The National Secretary of the CFMEU, John Sutton, has described the powers of the ABCC as "the worst in the world". He claims the powers "deny fundamental civil rights to building workers".

It has been reported that the ACTU and CFMEU are pushing the government to respond to recommendations of the International Labor Organisation (ILO) to reform building industry laws. The union movement is vowing to press ahead with complaints before the ILO which has already condemned the interrogation powers granted to the ABCC by the Howard Government and continued by the Rudd Government.

The facts are that the powers of the ABCC have played a central role in restoring industrial harmony and improve productivity on construction sites. It was no doubt with this reality in mind that Julia Gillard gave her assurance to AMCA and other industry associations that the powers and funding of the Commission would be retained until January of 2010 and any new arrangements thereafter would only be instituted after extensive consultation with industry stakeholders.

BUILDERS AND UNION SPAR

Building companies and the CFMEU in WA have begun sparring over the next round of enterprise bargaining agreements, due in October.

Early union advances over the negotiation of new 3-year enterprise bargaining agreements have indicated that the CFMEU is looking for annual increases of 8%. The Master Builders Association (MBA) says several builders and contractors have already signalled to the CFMEU that they would not agree to an 8% annual pay rise. MBA Executive Director in WA, Michael McLean, said that builders will refuse to negotiate with the union if its claims are deemed unreasonable. The union must not exploit the State's strong growth and lack of skilled workers.

The MBA believes the wage claim is part of an overall package which includes demands for increased allowances and superannuation, resulting in the annual cost per worker increasing by 10% or more. The WA Secretary of the CFMEU, Kevin Reynolds, says rumours that workers will seek a 10% increase are untrue. "Somewhere between 5 and 7% will be where we end up getting to," he predicted.

Kevin Reynolds said pay negotiations will begin mid-year and while there is a boom in Western Australia, workers will want their share of the profit. He also made reference to living costs commenting that "things are just sky-rocketing, whether it's fuel, whether it's food, rents, whatever, so 5, 6, 7%, somewhere around that region is not anywhere over the top."

GOVERNMENT ROLLS OUT TRAINING PLACES

The Rudd government has rolled out the first 20,000 of its 450,000 additional training places with its announcement of a 'road map for the reform of vocational education and training'. The initial batch of contracts has been delivered to the registered training organisations (RTOs) who will provide the training. According to the government, the scheme will provide much needed skills to those looking to work in occupations currently in severe shortage, such as building & construction, mining and childcare, and will much better match up training to the needs of industry. Targets have been set

to halve the proportion of Australians aged 24 to 64 without qualifications at Certificate Level 111 and above, and double the number of higher qualification completions (diploma and advanced diploma) by the year 2020.

WARNINGS ON ECONOMIC FRONT

Treasurer Eric Ripper said the State budget will focus on capital works and infrastructure, but warned that the government does not have unlimited financial resources. He expects WA will lose \$ 6 billion in GST revenue over the next 5 years and says industrial claims have pushed up the government's wages bill up by almost \$ 2.5 billion.

Eric Ripper will hand down the State budget on 8th May. It will be the government's final budget before the State election which is due to be held no later than February 2009. The Treasurer emphasised: "We will not be making wild pre-election budget announcements at the expense of prudent and sustainable financial management and a stable growing economy."

At the same time Federal Treasurer Wayne Swan warned that there will be 'pain' in the May federal budget. "It's going to be a tough budget, it is going to involve some pain, there's no doubt about that. We've got to put in place the settings which not only put downward pressure on inflation, but also make the investments for the future so we can lift the productivity of this economy and create wealth without creating inflation."

REFRIGERANT GAS LEVY TO INCREASE

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has issued a draft determination proposing to allow Refrigerant Reclaim Australia (RRA) to increase the industry levy on refrigerant gas and sold in Australia from \$ 1.50 to \$ 2.00 per kg. RRA submitted that the volume of refrigerants it is recovering continues to increase and, as a result, an increase in the levy is required to ensure the continued viability of the program.

RRA proposes to reduce rebates paid to contractors and wholesalers. The levy was initially set at \$ 1.00 per kg on refrigerant gases sold by importers of the gases. The ACCC granted authorisation in 2006 for RRA to increase the levy to \$ 1.50.

What's on in WA?

Date

16 April 08
13 May 08

Event

AMCA General Meeting
AMCA WA Golf Day

Contact

Alan Layton
Jane Dennis

SANEWS

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My Say:

PATTERN BARGAINING - ONE SIZE DOESN'T ALWAYS FIT ALL

(The following article has been taken from the ABCC Update2 – 4/3/08)

A large amount of agreement making is expected to take place across the building and construction industry this year when collective agreements are due to be negotiated.

The main object of the Building and Construction Industry Improvement Act 2005 is "to provide an improved workplace relations framework for building work to ensure that building work is carried out fairly, efficiently and productively for the benefit of all building industry participants and for the benefit of the Australian economy as a whole."

The ABCC encourages building employers, employees and unions to reach agreements that assist in making their operations more efficient and productive. A "one size fits all" approach which underpins pattern bargaining is not conducive to maximising efficiency and flexibility.

As a number of collective agreements in South Australia begin to be reviewed in the second half of this year it is interesting to reflect on the ABCC's views regarding pattern bargaining.

In the first round of collective bargaining agreements, collective agreements were not used, rather individual companies developed their own agreements, all referenced against an award.

This time around, with changes likely to the referenced awards and desire from the industry to consider working from a template agreement as a start point, it will be interesting to see if collective agreements in SA come anywhere near pattern bargaining.

NEBB TRAINING IN SA TO START SOON.

Following on from a presentation in February this year, AMCA SA members have so far committed to seven existing commissioning staff to undertake the NEBB Supervisor's Course.

This internationally recognised studies course will comprise a home studies component, to be completed over approximately eight months with students coming together once a month at a tutorial / review day, to be hosted at the AMCA Meeting Room.

Upon the successful completion of the course each student will undertake a two day review of the course before sitting a full day of exams.

It is expected that the next intake for this course will take place in 2009.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND BCA - SECTION J

On the 12 March, 16 members attended a presentation on Energy Efficiency with particular focus on Section J of the BCA (Building Code Of Australia).

Presented by Kevin O'Reilly from System Solutions, the seminar provided an extensive overview of Section J, along with a series of notes that were sent out to attending members after the session.

AMCA SA GOLF DAY - 2008:

Date and Location CHANGED

The new details for the Golf Day are as follows:

WHEN: Monday, 12th May, 2008.

WHERE: Kooyonga Golf Club, May Terrace, Lockleys.

As members have already been notified (via email), the annual AMCA SA Golf Day has been changed to move the event away from the upcoming ARBS Exhibition.

Both members and sponsors were finding it difficult to commit to both events.

The change of the date of the Golf day has also allowed us to review the venue for the event and we have been able to secure the Kooyonga Golf Course as the location.

Event Organiser - Judy Chinnery will be re-contacting members and sponsors soon and formal invitations to the AMCA SA Golf Day will be sent to members.

The new venue should provide an excellent venue for a great day of golf and dinner.

The Executive Committee is keen to build the numbers attending this event, hence the change to a metropolitan golf course and an afternoon start.

You have the opportunity to form teams of (4 players) which can be made up of your staff and your invited guests. Accordingly, teams participating in the AMCA Golf Day will be hosted by members and extended to their invited industry associate guests.

We look forward to seeing you on the day.

What's on in SA?

Date	Event	Contact
28 April 08	RDO 28	
6 May 08	Executive and General Meeting	Chris / Maureen
12 May 08	AMCA SA Golf Day	Chris /Maureen
19 May 08	Women in Air Conditioning	Chris / Maureen