

# Surfaces

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## Welcome

A warm welcome for all of our readers to the first edition of an occasional e-newsletter from the national office of the Federation of Wall & Ceiling Industries of Australia & New Zealand.

Subsequent to the appointment of an executive director – me - by the FWCIANZ Executive Committee in March there has been a lot of action and travel. More of that below.

This e-newsletter will complement the Federation website – [www.fwcianz.com](http://www.fwcianz.com) - and provide some snippets of information for our extended membership.

I am happy to field letters to the editor, inquiries and questions from the membership. In fact I encourage establishment of such communication channels.

Allen Morley  
executive director



## Officially accommodated

The national office has established a foothold downstairs from the AWCI NSW office. Located in Parramatta, this CBD is about 20 km west of the Sydney centre.

The office is small with a view over the Parramatta River and the passing rivercat ferries. It is quiet with easy access and some parking available.

The process of getting the office hooked up to the various communication media was certainly interesting. And slow.

But now contact can be made via e-mail, telephone and fax.

The office furniture came in flat packs, so a modicum of screwdriver dexterity and unclear instruction interpretation were necessary to make the desk and chair workable. The cupboard was a little easier and now completes a snug office layout.

Initially there was only a single visitor chair, so for one three-party meeting the empty printer box provided an additional seat. Now only the e-mail remains to be fully sorted.



## What's in a name?

Our state branches have the relatively easy acronym of AWCI by which they are known. It is both easy on the eyes and rolls of the tongue much simpler than the Federal acronym. The sister US and New Zealand associations are also AWCI, while that of the UK organisation is fpdc.

One of my KPIs is to achieve an organisational name change by October of this year; that is Federal Conference time. It would be expected that the Federation of Wall and Ceiling Industries of Australia & New Zealand name and associated acronym will morph into the Association of Wall and Ceiling Industries of Australia & New Zealand, with the acronym AWCIANZ.

Vale?



## All Around Oz

The induction program devised for the start of the executive director role included a visit to each of the mainland states. I have met with AWCI Committees in Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, Brisbane and Sydney. At this stage there is a good understanding of issues, priorities and personalities.



Bernie Biggs SA's executive officer and industry stalwart accompanied me to provide a familiar face and to transfer the contact arrangements.

I was exposed to TAFEs with active plastering students, training organisations, domestic plaster jobs, government departments and an occasional bottle of red wine over dinner.

My Tasmanian trip will take place in June and I am looking forward to learning more about the plastering industries in the island state.

## Conference

This year's FWCIANZ's conference is set down for the Hilton on the Park in Melbourne. This venue overlooks the Melbourne Cricket Ground and is located only a short stroll

from the top of the shopping paradise that is Collins Street.



The Victorian Committee is putting together an challenging program which will offer education, information and social interaction for all delegates.

And the highlight will surely be the gala dinner at the MCG – even for rugby and rugby league supporters!

Keep your eye out for the registration brochure and book early for this industry calendar highlight.

## Membership

The FWCIANZ is the voice for the wall and ceiling industries that it represents. Thus a major part of membership appeal must be the member benefits.

Unless we can offer a must-have membership package then the membership growth will continue to be slow. An emphasis upon training – especially fire and wet area – plus IR assistance, technical responses to inquiries and member forums is the central part of the pitch.

Three component initiatives are planned to make membership more appealing:

- an apprentice training scheme offering 'plaster ready' apprentices
- providing a Cert III accreditation pathway for tradesmen
- promotion of the industry and opportunities to school leavers and other potential industry entrants at a time when there is an acute labour shortage.

Look out for more detail, on these programs.

And in the meantime encourage other businesses you know – even competitors - to become members of your state AWCI. Tell them what you get out of membership and emphasise the need for a strong and active membership. Tell your AWCI executive officer and they can issue a membership pack to reinforce your message.



## Did you know?

The word astronaut is derived from the Greek words *ástron* (star) and *nautes* (sailor). Whereas, in Russia, a space traveller goes by the name *космонавт* (English: cosmonaut), which is derived from the Greek words *kosmos* (universe) and *nautes* (sailor).