

Fabricators to fight back on non-compliance

A quorum of 25 steel fabricators has supported the start of the National Structural Steelwork Compliance Scheme by offering to start the process.

Their resounding support was conveyed during the latest ASI Fabricators Forum breakout session held at the Australian Steel Convention on 16 September.

Concerned by faulty product appearing on our shores and price pressures leading to a downgrading of steelwork standards here, fabricators have pledged support for a scheme to provide third party conformity assessment for all fabricators.

“We have a choice. We can leave it to the cowboys and rubbish imports and go out of business ourselves or we can maintain the bar to keep to Australian Standards and they either lift their game or go out of business,” **Braden Bullock** of Compliance Steel from Queensland said.

Following a very successful round of engineering seminars in conjunction with Engineering Australia, it was apparent that the engineering community are in the crosshairs when non-compliant product leads to rework. Organisations like engineering or building certifiers who have professional indemnity (PI) insurance seem to be unfairly targeted in this process.

ASI National Manager Marketing, **David Ryan** commented that the ASI is now receiving approximately one call a week from concerned engineers facing pressure to deal with non-compliant steel product.

The national steelwork compliance scheme works on a risk-based compliance model using the principles of the European mandated CE Marking scheme where the EU has decided structural steelwork is a safety item and hence quality must be mandated.

In the absence of any effective regulation in Australia, the ASI has introduced an open and voluntary scheme called the National Structural Steelwork Compliance Scheme with fabrication certified by the independent body, Steelwork Compliance Australia (SCA).

Attendees at the Fabricators Forum said:

“I was delighted for the way the meeting went and the support you had for what you are doing. Well done. It appears a lot of hard work is beginning to reap some dividends. In my view certification schemes are the ways forward for both of our respective industries if we wish to survive and prosper in the face of the challenge of cheap imports.”

– **Alistair Fussell**, Manager SCNZ

“The afternoon session was a very positive step forward from the Fabricators Forum last year. Last year there was uncertainty and some scepticism about the need for a fabrication standard. This year the mood appears to have changed and I think the majority of people there agreed it is the best way forward and will improve the industry. Having the two guys from New Zealand was very helpful and showed what can be done.”

– **Jonathon Wright**, Uptime Services Management Victoria

“The compliance framework which the SCA and ASI are promoting is a good idea and hopefully it gets some firm traction with all of us. We are also very proud to have been part of the team that won one of the National Awards. Everyone back here is actually very happy with the acknowledgment.”

– **Pablo Santos**, S&L Steel

The ASI is delighted by the support of its fabricator membership at this early stage.



Brett Mathieson
(Gay Constructions)



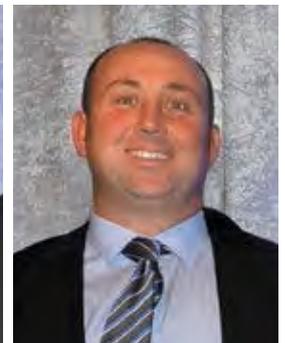
Pablo Santos
(S & L Steel)



Glen Gibson
(idec solutions)



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