

The Queensland Major Contractors Association (QMCA) is the peak industry body representing Queensland's leading construction contracting companies and is dedicated to making the construction industry safer, more efficient, more competitive and better able to contribute to the development of Queensland and Australia.

This update gives an insight into progress on some of the Association's recent strategic priorities and the ways in which it works to improve the construction industry.

## Origin Alliance's Ipswich Motorway Upgrade wins QMCA 2011 Project Safety Excellence Award

The *Project Safety Excellence Award*, presented by the Queensland Major Contractors Association, is designed to recognise outstanding contributions at a project level and reward them for their efforts. It is an award that recognises the project team's commitment to safety. The recipient of the 2011 Award is the Origin Alliance for the Ipswich Motorway Upgrade.

Origin Alliance was formed in mid-2008 to deliver the federally funded \$1.95 billion Ipswich Motorway Upgrade: Dinmore to Goodna Project.

It is the largest road alliance in Australia and comprises the Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads, Abigroup Constructors, Seymour Whyte, Fulton Hogan, Parsons Brinckerhoff and SMEC Australia.

Creating an effective safety culture was always going to be a challenge due to each of the Alliance member organisations having their own way of doing things.

From the outset, the Alliance Manager, Mick O'Dwyer, was determined that safety would be embedded at a grass roots level on a site wide basis. The culture he has helped create is based on everyone who works on the project:

- having the knowledge, supervision and support they need to ensure they are both physically and mentally healthy; and
- personally choosing to work safely because they understand the risks if they do not.

"Safety on a major construction project like ours is not just about meeting our statutory and legal requirements. It's also about education and training. By changing our people's attitudes and behaviours we can continually improve the safety performance of the entire industry.



Project Safety Excellence Award winning Origin Alliance team at the QMCA 2011 Annual Dinner

Two years on we're getting to a transformational level where we really have moved on from 'you will do it' to developing a shared ownership and understanding about how we can work more safely.

For me, safety is all about doing the little things well, consistently on a site-wide basis." said Mick O'Dwyer, Alliance Manager.



The Origin Alliance Project has introduced the Safety Observer Program to ensure safe interaction of people, plant, equipment and vehicles.

# Presidents message



**The QMCA has been very active in recent months and it's a pleasure for me to introduce our Spring newsletter, which will update you on our activities.**

The current Executive have consistently delivered results based on the key strategic initiatives published in our Strategic Plan and they can be proud of their efforts in

developing the QMCA to be the recognised 'go to' peak industry body representing the State's major contractors.

In early 2012, the QMCA intends to develop a new Strategic Plan to ensure that our future activities respond positively to the challenges of the next three years. Potentially, these challenges will be amongst the greatest that we have faced as an industry in Queensland. They include compelling issues such as continuous improvement of safety performance, attraction and retention of our best and brightest, mobilisation of huge quantities of resources to remote sites, rising input costs, pressure on efficiencies and productivity, forecast labour and skills shortages and a change in contracting skill sets.

We welcome and value your input to the development of our new Strategic Plan so that it will be both balanced and tailored to meet our members' needs. Our Secretariat will be publishing details of how members can get involved and I encourage you to look out for this information and take the opportunity to contribute to a stronger Association.

At the recent QMCA Annual Dinner, I noted that the Association, in some form or another, has been representing Queensland contractors for around 33 years and as the QMCA since 1996, making this our 15th Anniversary. Never before in our history, would our contracting members have faced such an overwhelming demand for their services. At a CEDA function recently, the Premier noted that the total value of known investment projects in Queensland either committed or under construction surpassed \$81 Billion as at June 2011 – that's the highest on record. In the Bowen Basin alone there are some 38 new projects to be developed in the next six years, including 23 new coal mines, 12 CSG projects and three mineral projects. So the signs are that we're all going to be busier than ever and at the QMCA

we're committed to making sure Queensland contractors get the most from this opportunity.

QMCA has had a number of strong achievements in the past 12 months, with significant energy invested in:

- communicating with Government and industry
- promoting good practice in procurement
- supporting skills development; and
- promoting the importance of safe work.

At our recent annual dinner, I identified three key areas of focus: skills development, worker welfare and community investment. The challenge for QMCA members is to meet these corporate and social responsibilities as well as maintaining healthy profitability. The QMCA will be a strong industry voice and assist its members to achieve these outcomes.

**Steve Abson**  
President  
Queensland Major Contractors' Association

## Survey shows way forward for QMCA

**During 2011, the QMCA Executive conducted a members' survey to guide the future activities of the Association and to validate its progress in meeting members' expectations. The key responses indicated that QMCA is considered to be relevant and to effectively represent civil contractors, rather than general contractors.**

Respondents identified three areas for future priority: OHS outcomes, training and skills development and advocacy.

Following assessment of the survey results, the QMCA Executive formed a sub-committee to prepare a recommendation for future representation and advocacy by a paid representative. The guidelines for the recommendation are to ensure the independence of any future appointment, to provide definitive roles and responsibilities, to identify cost and funding options and to ensure a good fit with QMCA's documented strategic direction for the future.

# Suicide prevention network extends its reach

**MATES in Construction (MIC) is expanding its network in a continuing drive to become Queensland's leading industry suicide-prevention organisation and to reduce the very high suicide rates in the building and construction industry.**

"Since MIC started in 2008, we have been achieving great outcomes for construction workers by using industry structures and networks to raise awareness of suicide prevention and intervention and by building support among the construction industry and broader community," Jorgen Gullestrup, MATES in Construction Chief Executive Officer, said.

More than 14,000 Queensland workers are now involved in the MATES in Construction's suicide prevention program. The MIC programs are designed to highlight mental health and well-being as an important issue and to increase awareness that suicide is a preventable problem facing the industry. They are also designed to make getting help easy and to ensure the help offered is appropriate to the needs of the worker.

"MIC's programs are active on over 150 sites across Queensland. We connect two or three at-risk workers

to support every working day and we intervene to prevent a worker's suicide plan once a week on average," Gullestrup said.

"The more MIC-compliant sites and organisations we have, the stronger, safer and more resilient our Queensland construction industry will be."

The MATES in Construction network is about to expand in the Gladstone region where there is a significant increase in construction activity.

"Many of these workers will be working away from home with all the issues and problems associated with this," Gullestrup said.

The Building Employees Redundancy Trust (BERT) owns and funds MATES in Construction.

QMCA is part-owner of BERT and therefore strongly supports MATES in Construction. Following the lead of BERT, a broad cross-section of the industry is supporting the MATES in Construction initiative directly or indirectly.

The Gladstone initiative has been established with the support of Contracting Industry Redundancy Trust (CIRT), the redundancy trust for the electrical contracting industry.



## IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**PRESENTATION BY  
NICK TAMBURRO**

**Thursday, 3 November 2011**

**3pm to 6pm**

Presentation by Nick Tamburro, Director, Commercial Division, Victorian Department of Treasury & Finance on emerging thoughts on the review of tender strategies in D&C and traditional contracting.

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Monday, 21 November 2011**

**5.30pm for 6.00pm**

**The Greek Club, South Brisbane**

## QMCA Major Projects Report update

**The QMCA Major Projects Report has been widely regarded as an important document in the process of informing and focusing attention on the key resource issues effecting the construction industry.**

With significant expansion and ramp-up of activity in both the mining and resource sectors planned for the next 5 – 10 years, work has begun on updating the bi-annual QMCA Major Projects Report.

This year, QMCA welcomes Construction Skills Queensland as a partner in jointly funding the cost of preparing the new Major Projects Report.

This is an important strategic initiative and highlights QMCA's recognition of the importance to work in partnership with all sectors of both Government and industry. This partnership will be of particular importance in addressing likely capacity constraints in the industry.

The Report will be released at an official launch function early in the new year.



# QMCA's 2011 Annual Dinner

Approximately 500 leaders from the contracting, engineering, consulting and government sectors filled the Ballroom at the Sofitel Hotel Brisbane on the evening of 6 October for QMCA's annual dinner and presentation of the QMCA 2011 *Project Safety Excellence Award*.

The dinner was proudly sponsored by: BERT, Boral, Cardno Bowler, Construction Skills Queensland, the Construction Training Centre, Hastings Deering, Piling Contractors, Salmon Earthmoving Services, WorkPac.

The MC for the event was Pat Welsh, one of Australia's leading sports journalists and commentators.

The after-dinner speech was given by Rachael Robertson who returned to Australia after 12 months in the Antarctic where she successfully led the 58th Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition to Davis Station.

Hers was a story of success and achievement that explores the ability to adapt to a changing environment; the trials and tribulations and the laughter

and the tears that come with 18 strangers living together, around the clock, for a year – with no way out.

Rachael talked about how she brought together a group of very different people and got them working as a successful and resilient team; even the electrical engineer from Germany and the plumber for Mudgee worked together really well in the end.

She spoke of the importance of looking after yourself, and each other, especially during tough times. Rachael talked about her three day "are you okay?" policy and how, just like the Mates in Construction program, she confirmed how one conversation can really change a life.

She mentioned the role of the leader through the tough times, and shared the story of a plane crash that happened early in the expedition and her role not only in managing the search and rescue effort, but also leading her community through this incident.

The presentation also included plenty of hilarious stories about bacon wars, haircuts, sexual tension, e-bay and what to do when your carpenter is the theatre nurse and your IT guy is the anaesthetic assistant.



Project Safety Excellence Award trophy

Her presentation ended with a slideshow dedicated to Rachael's niece, who was born while her Aunty was away, which captured the stunning beauty and breath-taking isolation of Antarctica.

Ken Andrews, from Bengalla Mining Company contributed to proceedings with his compelling positive concept of safety.



Theming in the ballroom



MC Pat Welsh opens proceedings



Guests at the Origin Alliance table



QMCA President, Steve Abson, delivering his address



Steve Abson, congratulates Peter Lyons on his Honorary Membership



Guest speaker, Rachael Robertson



Origin Alliance Award entry team



Chairman of Judges, Harold Downes (Freehills), Mick O'Dwyer (Origin Alliance), John Bradley (Dept of Premier & Cabinet)



# QMCA bestows honorary membership to Peter Lyons



**In the presence of 500 leaders from the contracting, engineering, consulting and government sectors, the QMCA recently bestowed Honorary Membership to Peter Lyons. Honorary Membership of the Queensland Major Contractors Association (QMCA) is given to persons who have made a significant contribution to the advancement of the Objects of the Association, or have given distinguished service to the industry.**

Peter Lyons has made a significant contribution to the Queensland construction industry through his long-standing involvement with the QMCA, his work with many of Australia's leading major contractors, and his commitment to improving training and skills development within the sector.



Steve Abson, Peter Lyons, James Schirmer presenting Honorary Membership to Peter Lyons

He commenced his career with Hornibrook (now Baulderstone) in the mid 70s after successfully completing a Bachelor of Civil Engineering at QIT (now QUT). During the 80s and early 90s he went on to enjoy project and construction management roles with Thiess, Thiess Watkins White, and Leighton Asia in Hong Kong before returning to Thiess in 1992 to take on the role of Civil Manager (Qld and NT). In this role, he was responsible for several prominent projects including the Pacific Motorway Upgrade, Cannington Port Development, Darwin LNG Project, Awoonga Dam and the Comalco Alumina Refinery Project. In 2006 he joined BMD Constructions as their Chief Operating Officer and

was instrumental in the company's growth from a mid-tier contractor to a major contractor turning over \$1 billion nationally. Today, Peter is sharing his knowledge and experience, consulting to the infrastructure and resources sectors.

His involvement with the QMCA began in the mid-90s when he was elected Vice President. In early 1998 he became President of the Association. In the same way that he provided leadership for the QMCA, he provided leadership for the sector and major contractors working on the challenging Pacific Motorway Upgrade by collaborating with Queensland Department of Main Roads representatives to develop a relationship enhancement strategy to facilitate improved relations between the various contractors. During his tenure as President and since then as an Executive member, his approach has always been one of enthusiasm, commitment and collaboration.

Peter is passionate about training and skills development, and over the years he has helped to shape and enhance the careers and skills of many people in the construction sector. Working closely with industry and educational institutions he has helped to improve access to training programs for existing workers and new entrants, and also delivered many training and skills enhancement initiatives.

Arguably one of his greatest achievements in this area was assisting with the development and accreditation of the Bachelor of Engineering – Construction now offered at QUT. Here he has been able to influence a new generation of young engineers as they are graduating with degrees focussed on construction.

Peter Lyons' selection for Honorary Membership recognises his outstanding contribution to Queensland's construction industry and is also a vote of thanks for his support and leadership as QMCA's Vice President and President from 1996 to 1999.

Congratulations Peter.

## Safety first according to QMCA's Safety Sub-Committee

**Continuing best-practice and the sharing of experiences and innovations which ultimately help to strengthen the safety culture on construction sites across Queensland are the primary aims of the Queensland Major Contractors Association (QMCA) Safety Sub-Committee.**

Established in July 2008 to provide a forum for Safety Managers representing the top tier major contractors in Queensland, the sub-committee is enjoying strong support from QMCA's member companies.

With the Queensland construction industry the third largest industry workforce employing over 150,000 people, the sub-committee is focussed on strategies and actions which will help to reduce harm and promote safety amongst its members and across the sector generally.

One of the sub-committee's first priorities was to develop a three-year strategic plan, which was recently updated, to help drive the group's efforts.

Notable achievements include improvements to the criteria for the QMCA's annual Safety Excellence Award, initiatives to improve how major contractors and their sub-contractors record and report incident statistics, and the development of the QMCA Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Statistical Report (2005-2009).

The OHS Statistical Report was designed to measure QMCA member's WH&S performance as a whole against the typical industry lag indicators to inform the member companies and the Queensland construction industry as a whole. In parallel, it was intended to address conjecture

amongst various major contractor clients and potential clients in the Queensland civil construction industry that the sector's safety record was low by world standards. The report showed that from 2005 to 2009 the member companies all exhibited a general decrease in the Total Recordable Injury Frequency Rate (TRIFR), which is accepted by the industry as the best indicator for overall safety performance.

Emanating from the development of the OHS Statistical Report, the sub-committee is developing a proposal encouraging a review of the Australian Standards relating to injury classifications and definitions to ensure they are up-to-date and consistent.

Additionally, the sub-committee is committed to progressing a number of actions over the coming two years including:

- developing an annual Industry Statistical Report
- continuing to engage with government and industry to ensure the QMCA and the Safety Sub-Committee are represented in the appropriate forums
- working with QUT to include safety education in the Bachelor of Urban Development (Construction Management) degree course
- preparing a feasibility study for the creation of a QMCA Health Bus which visits the QMCA members' sites and provides health checks and education for workers
- developing a standard guide on Verification of Competency
- providing support to the members on harmonisation implementation.

Presently chaired by Stephen Moehead, MacMahon Queensland Safety Manager (Construction), the sub-committee meets every third Thursday and all QMCA members are invited to nominate a representative to attend.

For further information please contact Stephen Moehead on 3840 5300 or email [smoehead@macmahon.com.au](mailto:smoehead@macmahon.com.au)

## Welcome to new Executive Members of QMCA

### Tim Phelps

Tim is currently National Engineering Manager for Fulton Hogan Construction. He is a Fellow of the Institution of Engineers Australia. He has more than thirty years of industry experience in delivering a wide range of civil engineering infrastructure in Queensland and New South Wales.

### Denis O'Brien

Denis is Regional Manager-Infrastructure North for Laing O'Rourke and is responsible for growing the business across the region. He is a qualified civil engineer with more than 35 years' experience delivering major projects in the mining, civil and marine infrastructure sectors. Over the past 18 years, Denis has undertaken a number of leadership roles

on alliance and JV boards to deliver major mining and marine infrastructure projects. Denis' leadership, communication and technical know-how supports QMCA's important vision of working with government and the wider industry to improve the efficiency and sustainability of the construction industry in Queensland.

### Jason Spears

Jason is General Manager of Thiess Queensland and has 20+ years experience working as a contractor in the industry. He has worked on a variety of major infrastructure projects in the rail, road, water, mining and process sectors across Australia and South East Asia. Jason is a qualified civil engineer and has held various positions in the industry from site engineer to general manager across various contract delivery forms including construct-only, design and construct, early contractor involvement and alliances.

### Peter Ward

Peter Ward has grown with the Australian construction industry, progressing through a range of roles to become General Manager Qld, NT and Pacific for Lend Lease. Peter's experience includes working as Operations Manager for the Southern Region of Lend Lease where he was responsible for the delivery of both construction activities and business performance in three States. As part of the senior leadership team in Victoria, he was responsible for business expansion from a \$350 million annual turnover in 2006-07 to a projected turnover of \$1 billion 2009-10. Under Peter's leadership, Lend Lease in Queensland consistently delivers timely, profitable, quality projects while at the same time reducing incident rates to some of the lowest in the industry. Safety continues to be Peter's number one driver.

# QMCA / CFMEU Apprentice Program investing in the future

**Forty-three apprentices, stretching from Cairns to Coolangatta, and the major contractors employing them are currently benefitting from the successful QMCA / CFMEU Apprentice Program.**

A joint initiative of the QMCA and CFMEU, the apprentice program was established in 2008 to help meet the present and future training and apprenticeship needs of Queensland major contractors.

Under the care and direction of QMCA / CFMEU Apprentice Coordinator, Doug Spinks, the program has gone from strength to strength and today it is widely recognised as a leading provider of motivated and well-trained apprentices.

"It's a well-known fact that about 60 per cent of workers in the construction industry are over 55 years. Yes, they have great experience and know-how, but if we don't have young people coming through the ranks then we are just heading for trouble."

"It's important we keep the construction industry moving forward by equipping young and mature-age people with the skills and experience necessary to support its growth and development," explained Doug.

Since it began, the program has provided a win-win situation for all parties involved. Working directly with many major contractors, Doug currently has forward requests for 20+ apprentices and knows employers view apprentices as valuable team members who make a real contribution to their businesses.

"Employers of apprentices know that they are not only helping young people to kick-start a fulfilling career, they are also helping to develop a highly skilled workforce for the benefit of the industry and region," said Doug.

"I started as an apprentice carpenter at age 16. I've worked hard over the years, but I couldn't think of any other sector I'd rather work in. It is rewarding to give something back to the industry by driving this program

and supporting and mentoring the many apprentices involved."

The QMCA / CFMEU program offers Civil Construction Traineeships and Apprenticeships.

For further information please contact QMCA / CFMEU Apprentice Coordinator Doug Spinks on 0410 667 805 or [dspinks@qld.cfmeu.asn.au](mailto:dspinks@qld.cfmeu.asn.au)

## Acciona joins QMCA as 19th member



**The Association is pleased to welcome its nineteenth member company – Acciona.**

Acciona is a global leader in the development and management of infrastructure, renewable energy, water and services. Its infrastructure division covers all aspects of construction, encompassing engineering and project execution. All of Acciona's activities are undertaken considering the economic, environmental and social aspects measured against global criteria of sustainability.



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