

CONCRETE IQ

Concrete IQ is the official newsletter of Master Concreters Australia

ISSUE 1, 2016



COUNTDOWN TO 2016 MCA EXCELLENCE IN INDUSTRY AWARDS

With less than three months to our Annual Awards we are well and truly on the countdown to what will be another outstanding event. 2016 heralds the first time the awards will showcase projects from members outside Queensland and we look forward for the inter-state

rivalry that is sure to be to the fore. The Association looks forward to joining with our guests and members from the concreting industry as we come together to acknowledge the valuable contributions we all make.



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MCA HOTLINE

Our highly experienced members can provide advice on various issues affecting concrete contractors through our MCA Hotline.

Members may contact our Hotline representatives or if it is more convenient, call the office on 1300 884 544 and they will start the ball rolling.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2016 has commenced and I'm sure like myself everyone is extremely busy. We have an exciting year ahead of us at MCA. This is my second tenure as President of the Association and I'm looking forward to catching up with our existing members and welcoming new members this year.

With the start of the new year, this is a good time to reflect on all the work that you completed in 2015. Nominations are open for the 2016 MCA Industry Excellence Awards. I would encourage each and every one of you to take the time and submit your best projects for an award this year. The Association is well recognised in the industry and receiving an award gives your business and staff the recognition of the great work that we do.

After discussions with our New South Wales counterparts, we have expanded the Association to include like businesses south of the border. This is a great opportunity for Queensland and New South Wales Concreters, we will have the resources to learn from each other's experiences and create new standards on the Eastern seaboard.

This is a major milestone for us, and if it wasn't for the work we are doing with

CREATING A NEW STANDARD

training and the high quality of members that we attract this initiative wouldn't have been possible. We are currently exploring networking opportunities, so members can share knowledge and training. If you have any suggestions, please feel free to contact David and open the discussion – This is your Association and it needs to work for you!

Training our industry is a passion of mine, and many of you would have been to at least one MCA training session. Details of further courses will be advised through the office. To keep our standards improving in the concrete industry, you and your staff's participation in this training is essential. Time constraints are always an issue – however, make the time and you'll see improvements in skill and productivity with each project.

I look forward to seeing you at the Awards Night, please contact David for more information about nominations and tickets for our annual event. Again, thank you for your support. Without your participation in the Association, what we do would not be possible.

Chris Jones
President, Master Concreters Australia

MCA TRAINING

MCA is continuing to deliver training to members that is highly regarded by employers. Our attendees are seeing great benefit from receiving industry specific knowledge directly related to work and supervision on the coal face.

Chris Jones MCA President (L) and Antonio Amaro (De Martin & Gasparni) at the recent Concrete Leading Hand Course delivered in Sydney.



Welcome to this edition of the Association's newsletter. Once again it has been a busy start to the year for the Association and our members. Activity reported by our members has seen a steady flow of projects coming on line in Queensland and New South Wales is experiencing a strong period of construction. It was informally reported that approximately 285 cranes were in operation on various projects in Sydney which is clearly a reflection of busy times for our NSW contractors.

The Association is continuing to deliver training in Sydney and Brisbane which has been well received by our members and their staff. For far too long our industry has suffered from a poor training culture. The Association is firmly committed to raising the standard of our industry and our industry specific training is a key activity to this end.

As part of our growth into NSW the Executive has commenced a series of meeting with NSW State Ministers

to outline the roll of the Association and raise issues that affect our members. Many of these issues relate to an unfair burden being placed on the concrete sub-contractor. Examples of these include onerous terms and conditions being incorporated into contracts and builder retentions. We have also started the discussion on changing the concreting traineeship to an apprenticeship in NSW (declaring apprenticeships is a State by State function) which will truly reflect the complexity and trade requirements of our placers.

MCA has partnered with Thomson Geer Lawyers for the provision of legal support for our contractor members. See the article on page 5 in relation to unfair terms in construction contracts and how MCA members can access the complimentary help desk service.

Our Queensland members should note a review of construction licenses has commenced (see article on page 7 in

this edition). Further information will be provided as the review progresses.

The Association recently held the Brisbane Industry Golf Day and I commend all those who joined with us on a particularly warm afternoon for another enjoyable day.

Nominations have opened for the MCA Excellence in Industry Awards, which will be held in early June in Brisbane. This will be the first year that sees interstate entries and no doubt State bragging rights will be on the line. I encourage all our members to nominate for the awards and where possible join us for the night. For our newer members the evening is very much a partners event who join with us and see firsthand the many outstanding projects that our members are instrumental in bringing to completion.

I look forward to seeing as many members as possible on the night.

David Lingard
CEO, Master Concreters Australia



DIRECTORS PROFILE

LOUIE MAZZAROLO

General Manager (Director)
De Martin & Gasparini

Louie is the General Manager of De Martin & Gasparini Pty Limited (DMG) which is a specialist concrete structures subcontractor that commenced operations in 1947. In 1982 the company was acquired by Boral Limited.

Louie commenced working at DMG in November 1980 immediately after completing his HSC and has been there ever since. His goal was to one day step in his father's shoes and run the business that held the reputation as the leader in concrete pumping and placing in Sydney. He set about this the way he thought best by starting on the tools, gaining knowledge from experienced workers and colleagues in the industry but most of all his father Tony Mazzarolo. Through the years he gained valuable knowledge in a number of roles until he achieved the General Managers role in September 2000. During these years DMG has maintained a steady growth despite the highs and lows of the industry. In the early years DMG were only involved in the placement of concrete; however in the mid-eighties the opportunity arose to increase our range of services to our valued clients. While maintaining the core business of concrete placing on mainly high-rise and large structures the business has steered towards contracts

combining other elements such as concrete supply pump and place, supply and fix reinforcement and formwork, post tensioning, all under an experienced team that has now built a reputation for delivering on time, budget and quality, one of our proudest achievements was delivery Stadium Australia for the Sydney Olympics as a complete structure package.

Louie is a firm believer that a good business requires a good culture, a family culture, one where people are always there to try and help and support each other and enjoy themselves whilst doing so. A good business that puts the safety and wellbeing of employees ahead of production along with the right systems and processes and the right culture the rest will fall into place.

Louie welcomed the opportunity to join the MCA hoping his contribution will assist the association in gaining recognition and improvements the concrete industry deserves.



ABOVE: Winners, Bess Concrete

2016 MCA BRISBANE INDUSTRY GOLF DAY

MCA members and their guests gathered at Oxley Golf Club on the 29 February to contest the MCA Golf Trophy.

It was a typical steamy Brisbane summers day for our willing participants. The highlight of the day was an albatross on a par 5 hole by our eventual winners Bess Concrete. Thank you to everyone who came along and supported the event. Special thanks to our Principal Sponsor Hanson and to Wagners and BUSSQ who made sure everyone was fed and watered on course.

We look forward to seeing everyone at next years event.



AVOID EARLY CRACKING

Cracks appearing in concrete within the first few hours after placing are either early-age shrinkage cracks, plastic shrinkage cracks or plastic settlement cracks, all of which form in the concrete prior to it gaining its final set. Conditions leading to the appearance of cracks relate to ordering the concrete, the preparation for placing (and placing). Early protection and curing will reduce the effects of cracking.

A CCAA data sheet provides further information relating to cracking, preventative measures and can found at www.ccaa.com.au/imis_prod/documents/Library%20Documents/CCAA%20Datasheets/DS2005Early_Cracking.pdf

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SUPERSTREAM MAKES PAYING SUPER SIMPLE FOR TRADES INDUSTRY

Small business owners with 19 or fewer employees need to start paying super contributions and sending member information electronically through SuperStream.

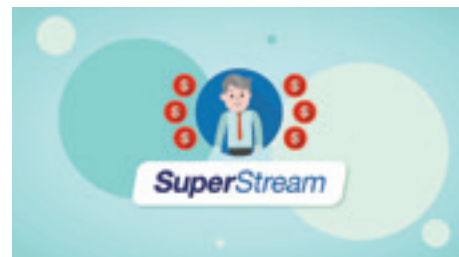
The new, streamlined process, which came into effect on 1 July 2015, provides a consistent and simplified way for employers to make super contributions on behalf of their employees.

Under SuperStream, those responsible for paying super contributions for businesses in the trades industry will be able to pay super to multiple super funds through one channel – saving time and money.

Over 350,000 employers nationwide, including around 250,000 small employers, have already made the switch.

Philip Hind, ATO National Program Manager, Data Standards and E-Commerce (SuperStream), said SuperStream is delivering real benefits for business.

"SuperStream is making super contributions super simple. For employers,



it is cutting red tape by making all super payments electronic and introducing a standard way to pay contributions."

"There are many options available to adopt SuperStream. The ATO's SuperStream employer checklist is a great place to start," Mr Hind said.

Members are urged to speak with their service provider, whether it is your accountant, bookkeeper, payroll provider, clearing house or super fund.

The ATO step-by-step checklist to help employers prepare can be found at www.ato.gov.au/SuperStreamChecklist

For further information visit the ATO website www.ato.gov.au



LEGAL

UNFAIR TERMS IN CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Contractors across Australia should be aware of upcoming changes in the law relating to “unfair terms”, set to come into effect later this year.

From November 2016, protections currently afforded to consumers from unfair terms will be extended to small businesses. While this date may seem distant, there are important practical steps businesses can take prior to their introduction to protect their interests.

WILL THIS AFFECT ME?

If you are a small business or contract directly with small businesses, these changes will likely affect you. Relevantly, terms may be declared void if they are:

- in “standard form” contracts (i.e. contracts offered on a “take it or leave it” basis);
- involving a “small business” (i.e. one that employs less than 20 people);
- for the “supply of goods or services”; and
- where the “upfront price payable” (i.e. contract price excluding variations and similar costs) is:
 - \$300,000 or less if the contract is for less than 12 months; or
 - \$1 million or less if the contract is for more than 12 months.

It has been estimated that more than 90% of businesses in the construction industry will be affected by these changes.

WHAT IS AN UNFAIR TERM?

There is no prescribed list of unfair terms. As such, it will be up to the courts to

identify whether a term is unfair. They will apply a variety of criteria when doing so including whether the term causes a “significant imbalance” of the parties’ rights and whether it is “reasonably necessary”.

Examples of clauses that may be found to be unfair are notice requirements for variation or EOT claims (“time bars”) and broad indemnities given by subcontractors to principal contractors.

WHEN DO THE CHANGES COME INTO EFFECT?

The amendments to the Act will come into effect from 12 November 2016 and will apply to those contracts entered into, renewed or varied (to the extent they are varied) after that date.

HOW CAN I BE SURE I’M PROTECTED?

There are potential advantages to small businesses as a result of these changes. For example, in some circumstances prudent subcontractors may elect to take on more contractual risk at the tender stage with the comfort that they will ultimately receive protection from any unfair terms. There are practical steps you can take to ensure that you enjoy the benefits, and not the detriment, of these new changes.

We recommend carrying out a review of all standard form contracts you intend to utilise, renew, vary, novate or assign after November 2016, to ensure that terms you rely upon are not rendered unenforceable.

THOMSON GEER

LAWYERS

Thomson Geer is a large Australian commercial law firm with offices in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide.

Our Construction and Infrastructure team is particularly well-regarded as having an in-depth understanding of, and extensive experience in, all aspects of construction and infrastructure projects. We provide pragmatic advice to subcontractors and contractors through every stage of a project, from drafting and negotiation of contracts at a tender stage to resolution of disputes post-completion, with a particular focus on ensuring timely payment for our clients.

In conjunction with Master Concreters Australia, we are offering all members complimentary access to the Thomson Geer Help Desk. This service enables you to access specialist legal advice from experienced practitioners at no cost to you and with the convenience of a phone call, so that you can make timely and considered decisions for the benefit of your business.

To access this service, simply follow these steps:

STEP 1

Contact the Help Desk using the below details and provide us with a brief outline of your query.

STEP 2

We will arrange for the specialist who is best suited to answering your query to contact you within 24 hours for a phone conference of up to 30 minutes.

STEP 3

During this conference, the specialist will attempt to resolve your issue or, if that is not possible, provide you with guidance on what steps to take and the costs involved.

For more information on the Help Desk, please contact:

P: +61 2 8248 5810

E: legalthelpdesk@tglaw.com.au

ATO CLAMPS DOWN ON SMES:

600 BUSINESS AND INDIVIDUALS TO BE REVIEWED THIS YEAR

The tax affairs of hundreds of SMEs will be reviewed by the Australian Tax Office this financial year, as the ATO ramps up its efforts to recover what it believes could be a \$3 billion shortfall due to tax evasion and misreporting.

And if the tax office identifies concerns, the reviews could be escalated to audits.

The ATO will commence reviews of 600 SMEs and individual taxpayers in the 2015-16 financial year, with the reviews to be conducted using data already held by the tax office.

A spokesperson for the ATO said the sample of 600 taxpayers will be made up of 300 small and medium businesses and 300 individual taxpayers. However, the spokesperson said the ATO will not be conducting random audits, in response to a Fairfax report today that said a "handful" of the 600 taxpayers will be subject to random audits, which could include letters and phone calls from the ATO but not door knocks.

During the 2014-15 period, the ATO recovered more than \$295 million from small businesses, compared to a pre-settlement target of \$447 million.

Tax Commissioner Chris Jordan said before the federal parliament's Standing Committee on Tax and Revenue last year that random tax audits could be expensive and may upset those businesses and individuals who meet their tax obligations.

Further information is available from the Smartcompany website, visit www.smartcompany.com.au

Article courtesy of Smartcompany

BETA
smartcompany

DESIGNING TO REDUCE SHRINKAGE

Producing a concrete mixture with low shrinkage potential for flatwork applications is of high importance. Early-age volume changes can cause significant shrinkage and cracking, but the focus of this article will be the shrinkage caused by the drying of concrete after the slab has been cured.

As concrete shrinks, tensile forces develop and may lead to warping and cracking of the slab.

Common factors for drying shrinkage potential include coarse aggregate type, aggregate size and volume, water content of the mixture, mixture temperature, cement type, and chemical admixtures. Tremper and Spellman (1963) studied the shrinkage of concrete and found the factors to be multiplicative. Three factors are discussed below with recommendations to reduce shrinkage potential of the concrete mixture.

COARSE AGGREGATE

The largest appropriate aggregate should be used to reduce shrinkage and warping of slabs.

High absorption, high shrinkage aggregates should be avoided when shrinkage potential is of concern. Additionally, the aggregate should be properly washed and protected from contamination during storage and handling.

The largest size, well-graded coarse aggregate consistent with placement,

workability, finishability, and durability requirements appropriate to the specific application should be used.

As the maximum size increases in a wellgraded aggregate, the void volume that must be filled by cement paste (cement and water) decreases. The shrinkage potential of paste is quite high when compared to the aggregates; therefore as the paste volume is reduced, so is the potential for shrinkage.

WATER CONTENT

The water content of a concrete mixture has a large effect on the shrinkage potential of the mixture. In addition to optimising the aggregate volume fraction, water content decreases may also be realised by avoiding high mixture temperatures, utilising moderate water-to-cementitious ratios (between 0.40 and 0.50), and using plasticisers to achieve adequate workability.

CHEMICAL ADMIXTURES

Chemical admixtures that contribute significantly to shrinkage, such as calcium chloride accelerators, should be avoided when possible. While some water-reducing admixtures may increase shrinkage potential, the water content reductions realised by their usage may offset these effects. In some cases, locally available materials, project conditions, or project performance requirements may dictate the use of shrinkage-reducing admixtures.

NEW MEMBERS

The President and Directors would like to welcome the following new members:

- Civic Concrete Pty Ltd
- CRETEK
- Paul Butler Concreting
- Twintec Australia



ABOVE: MCA CEO David Lingard and Joel Quillan Managing Director CRETEK



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QLD BUILDING INDUSTRY LICENCE CLASS REVIEW

The Queensland Government is currently reviewing all classes and grades of occupational and contractor licences issued under the *Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991* and the *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002*.

The licensing review is being undertaken by the Department of Housing and Public Works.

The objectives of the review include:

- simplifying licence classes
- modernising the licensing regime
- increasing mobility and employability across jurisdictions
- reducing costs for licensees and home owners while maintaining the high standards of competence within the industry.

Consultation on draft legislation is expected to occur later this year. In the interim, the Department of Housing and Public Works will be consulting with peak bodies.

Enquiries about the licensing review can be directed to Ms Anne Neuendorf, Manager, Building Industry and Policy, Department of Housing at anne.neuendorf@hpw.qld.gov.au

If you would like to know more about the role of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC), you can call the QBCC 24/7 on 139 333 or visit www.qbcc.qld.gov.au





Master Concreters Australia provides a range of services and support specifically for concrete contractors. All member companies are advertised through the 'Find a Master Concreter' Directory on the Master Concreters homepage.

- Access to technical information
- Industry helpline for concrete contractors
- Discounted training for members
- Business mentoring service
- Newsletters, industry news and information
- Networking opportunities with other contractors

To join Master Concreters Australia complete the application form below.

www.masterconcreters.com.au

Master Concreters Australia is the industry trade association working for and supporting concrete contractors.



Or scan and email to info@masterconcreters.com.au

*Members must hold appropriate license for scope of works.