

Building the case, coast to coast

The ASI's political advocacy has stepped up as three separate state elections have occurred in the most recent months along with the several new measures being announced by the Federal Government.

Rescuing past efforts

Discussions are currently underway with the newly elected Queensland Government to pick up from where the Labor Party left off when it was previously in office developing a fairer regulatory regime for major project procurement. Back in 2011, an intense lobbying campaign was carried out jointly by the Queensland Steel Construction and Fabrication Industry Alliance (QSCFIA) partners ASI, AMWU, AISD, APESMA, GAA, ASSDA and the WTIA which prompted the (then) Labor Government to extend the Queensland Local Industry Policy to all major private sector projects that are subject to an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This was a major breakthrough and when implemented would have ensured local industry participation principles for government funded projects would also apply to major private sector projects at the early stage of their development, although no new legislation or regulation was proposed to effect the changes by the time that administration lost office. The subsequent LNP-led State Government decided not to proceed with the proposed changes to the EIS process, so the task at hand is to convince the new Labor Government to make sure its previous reforms are not wasted. The ASI is also working with partners of the QSCFIA which helped amass support for the reforms to regroup to once again bolster the advocacy effort. The ASI has also been contacting Brisbane City Council engineers to support structural steel compliance on the back of poor quality imported, fabricated steelwork on the new ferry terminals.

Some wins in the West

Policy and project engagement in Western Australia continues to gain some ground in a very difficult market with the resources boom still winding down. The ASI welcomed the awarding of a major steelwork contract for the new Perth Stadium to WA fabricator member, Civmec Construction and Engineering on the back of close consultation with the State Government. Announced on 4 March, the contract was awarded by Brookfield Multiplex (BM) as part of the consortium which committed to supporting the Government's 'Building Local Industry' and 'Buy Local' policies. The contract worth \$73 million encompasses the supply and installation of more than 14,000 tonnes of structural steel to support the five-level stadium superstructure and fabric canopy over most seating areas. It follows intense lobbying by the ASI briefing senior ministers and helping the Opposition regularly raise the question of engaging local industry in Parliament. It is a full BIM project and it is understood the BIM contract has been awarded to ASI detailer member, the Perth-based PDC Group although an official announcement had yet to be made at the time of going to press. BM also specified that the ASI's Architecturally Exposed Structural Steelwork guide be used by the stadium project architect. There has also been about 4000 tonnes of steelwork for the Roy Hill iron ore mine development work won back from offshore recently.



New Perth Stadium

Antidumping reforms

The ASI participated in an industry briefing session in December outlining new antidumping measures put forward by Parliamentary Secretary for Industry, **Hon Bob Baldwin MP** that addressed a number of the issues raised by the ASI in its submissions to the 2012 Brumby Antidumping Review. We particularly welcomed trebling of the number of Trade Remedy Advisors to assist antidumping claims by SMEs, the increased onus on foreign exporters to comply and measures addressing avoidance of dumping duties on slightly modified products. "These reforms will assist in levelling the playing field through a tougher approach to timeframes and remedies, and they will improve the process for Australian steel manufacturers through expanded information and support services. As such, the reform package represents some steps in the right direction to improve support for a fairer trade regime by providing enhanced remedies for upstream and downstream Australian steel manufacturing companies. We are continuing to work closely with the Federal Industry portfolio on this issue and compliance regimes with Baldwin's replacement as Parliamentary Secretary, **Hon Karen Andrews MP** having already met for an initial briefing in Canberra on 23 February. A House of Representatives committee is currently holding an inquiry into circumvention of antidumping measures which the ASI presented to on 5 March with BlueScope and OneSteel scheduled to present on 19 March. The Federal Industry Minister, **Hon Ian Macfarlane MP** recently granted the Antidumping Commission an extension until 18 March to investigate alleged dumping of galvanized steel into Australia from India and Vietnam.

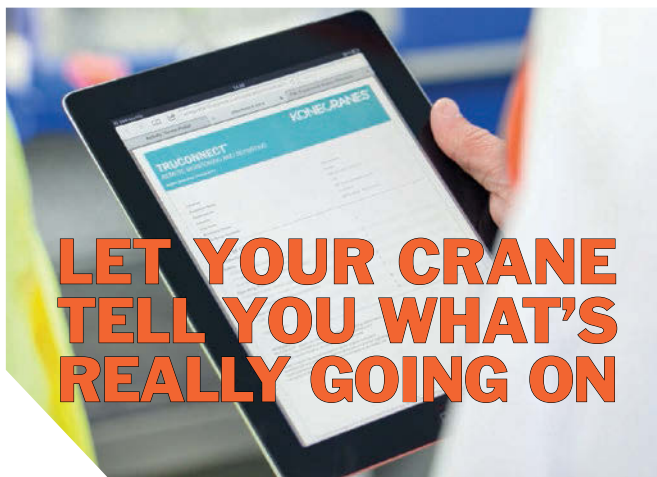
Free trade agreements

ASI advocacy is also helping guide the pursuit of free trade agreements (FTAs) so local industry is not unduly disadvantaged. We most recently worked with BlueScope and OneSteel on a joint industry presentation on FTAs to officials at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Canberra on 19 February. Our advocacy has so far helped ensure that the Australian Government has maintained industry's WTO rights in recent FTAs with South Korea, Japan and China, despite pressure from some trading partners

to water down the rules. We particularly maintain that it is essential that antidumping rights be fully maintained in potential future FTAs with other major trading nations like Indonesia and India in the pipeline.

Pre-poll push in NSW

Early and close liaison by the ASI with project manager Lend Lease on compliance issues helped secure an additional 2000 tonnes of BlueScope steel for temporary pile liners for bridges supporting the Oxley Highway to Kundabung upgrade of that leg of the Pacific Highway to a four lane divided road. The contract was won by Queensland-based ASI member, Bend-Worx involving 1750 tonnes of pattern plate for the first two bridges. That follows the awarding of 550 tonnes of steelwork for a casting shed supporting the North West Rail project to Idec Solutions largely won on the basis of the company being a member of the ASI's Environmental Sustainability Charter. The traction that the ASI is getting on these types of projects should bode well for greater engagement on more State Government funded projects, especially if the current Baird Government is re-elected later this month on its platform to boost infrastructure spending off the proceeds of its proposed long-term lease of electricity assets. Accordingly, the ASI is actively advocating for policies that would help provide more equitable opportunity for the local steel industry to bid for works, especially to avoid the industry being totally bypassed as it has been recently on landmark projects such as the redeveloped Exhibition Centre planned for Darling Harbour. ASI briefings have concentrated on NSW Coalition backbenchers in marginal electorates or those MPs in electorates with reasonable steel industry presence. Fundamentally, the ASI seeks commitment by the NSW Government to an Industry Participation Policy to maximise local jobs and content in NSW infrastructure projects similar to the Victorian model which includes 'strategic projects' whereby the Government can stipulate levels of local content, supported by an Industry Participation Plan and Advocate who can coordinate the engagement of local industry and maximise local content in government spends. It also advocates for major Government-funded works to adhere to guidelines presented in the recently released Australasian Procurement and Construction Council guide to achieving compliance in procuring construction products.



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