

Fabricator audits underway, first certification granted

By Manager, Steelwork Compliance Australia ALAN NIGHTINGALE

The ASI National Structural Steelwork Certification Scheme (NSSCS) is gaining tremendous momentum since going live in late 2014.

A number of fabricators have now been certified in accordance with the Scheme requirements by Steelwork Compliance Australia (SCA).

First cab off the rank was Brezac Constructions in Brisbane. It is pleasing that they have the honour of being the first company to complete the audit process.

Brezac have recently moved into new, purpose built fabrication facilities in Crestmead representing a significant commitment to the steel industry.

Brezac and other interested fabricators have also demonstrated their support for initiatives to address non-compliant product in the market place and for the establishment of a more level playing field for fabricators.

Idec Solutions, Compliant Steel, Network Steel, Skrobar Trojan Structural Steel and Structural Challenge have all completed the audit process and we congratulate these businesses.

We have another 15 fabricators that have commenced the audit process. A further 10 companies have expressed interest in the Scheme and the SCA is providing further information and support to these businesses on the Certification process.

Typically a fabricator will make contact with or be referred to the SCA and organise to complete an Assessment Application. Following discussions with the SCA the fabricator can proceed to the Stage 1 Desktop Audit at which point the fabricator can take Certification to Construction Category CC1 or progress to the Stage 2 Site Audit to facilitate Certification to the higher levels of CC2 or CC3 (provided compliance requirements are demonstrated).

Based on information provided by the fabricator along with some definition of their longer term aspirations, the SCA will provide a gap analysis to ensure that the fabricator only progresses further into the audit process (with the associated time and cost implications) with a reasonable chance of a mutually acceptable outcome.

We are finding a number of fabricators are looking to introduce quality improvements to their fabrication



(L to R) Brezac Constructions Director, **Peter Brezac** (centre) welcomes his company's formal certification to the NSSCS from ASI State Manager – QLD & NT, **John Gardner** and SCA Manager, **Alan Nightingale**.

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activities and find the audit process very helpful in checking they have met their objectives.

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The ASI continues to engage with government agencies, builders, owners, developers and other stakeholders to develop further awareness and support for the Scheme.

While there are clear benefits for the fabricator to become involved in the Scheme, the benefits to the builder/purchaser and engineer are significant, particularly in being able to define a standard of workmanship with some certainty of compliance whilst demonstrating an appropriate level of risk management for these safety critical procurement activities.

The Australasian Procurement and Construction Council (APCC) in late 2014 released *A Guide to Achieving Compliance*

which states in part that: "Evidence suggests that the market penetration of non-conforming products in several key construction product sectors in Australia may be up to 50%. This is a sobering and alarming statistic."

This statement is supported by key reports including from the Australian Industry Group: *The quest for a level playing field: The non-conforming building product dilemma, 2013*.

Funded and developed by the ASI, the NSSCS is broadly based on the CE Marking scheme adopted by the European Union.

The ASI National Structural Steelwork Compliance Scheme fundamentally supports and meets the '12 Principles for Procurement and Conformance of Construction Products' as set down in the APCC Guide.

Further information can be found at the SCA website (www.steelworkcompliance.com).