

The SoffitLine™ system installed in an office building

## Joint venture



CSR has released a new soffit system that provides stronger joints and reduces water absorption.

Over the past decade, more and more building designs have been specifying soffits, with architects showing a clear preference for the flush-jointed variety. In response to this trend, and industry feedback, Cemintel™ conducted an in-depth review of flush-jointed soffits, seeking the best way to prevent cracked joints.

This investigation led to the development of a complete flush-jointed soffit system—the first of its kind to be released to the market in Australia.

Called SoffitLine™, the system includes specifically designed sheets and compounds that are appropriately matched with top framing designs to deliver the best possible performance.

Rigorous testing by Cemintel™ identified moisture absorption by the sheet and the joint system to be the major contributing factor to joint deterioration. This influx of moisture causes the sheets to expand and contract while weakening the joint.

Temperature fluctuations cause expansion and contraction, which can also lead to cracking if the joint has deteriorated from moisture absorption, the research concluded.

The new SoffitLine™ system, which addresses these common problems, is

### CeminSeal™ SoffitLine™ —Advantages

- Reduced moisture absorption by up to 80 per cent
- Increased joint strength of 48 per cent\*
- 100 per cent paint adhesion\*
- Isolated frame design

\* Compared with 6mm Cemintel™ Fibre Cement Wallboard

thus perfect for large outdoor social areas such as restaurants that offer alfresco dining. The moisture reduction and setting times that the system offers are extremely advantageous in these contexts because they will prevent mould and damp. Further, the sheet sizes (1200 x 2400mm and 1200 x 3600mm) allow quicker and easier installation in these big spaces.

### A better sheet

CeminSeal™ Soffit sheets feature embedded waterblocking technology that prevents water penetrating the sheet.

The sheets are hydrophobic, but still vapour permeable. This means that they repel water while still 'breathing'. The sheets also reduce water absorption by 80 per cent, compared to 6mm wallboard, leading

to a dramatically reduced risk of cracking and joint deterioration.

CeminSeal™ Soffit sheets are 6mm in thickness and are, as mentioned, available in 1200 x 2400mm and 1200 x 3600mm to suit the most popular flush-jointed soffit designs.

All of these benefits work together to produce less risk, offering you and your customers greater long-term security.

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### Contact us

Getting more information on any of the products in *Club Gyprock* magazine is as easy as picking up the phone!

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(click on 'newsletters' under 'resources').

*Continued on page 3*

# Measured recovery

**Despite some poor results in 2009, the next 12 months is likely to see modest growth in housing starts and renovations, writes HIA Chief Economist, Harley Dale.**

The news on the global economy has continued to improve, although the aggregate recovery is still expected to be slow. China has performed very well, as has the wider East Asia region (excluding Japan), and that has been very important to Australia's improving economic prospects.

The Reserve Bank of Australia and the Commonwealth Treasury have both significantly upgraded their economic outlook for Australia. Treasury now forecasts Gross Domestic Product to grow by 1.5 per cent in 2009/10, compared to a previous forecast for a 0.5 per cent contraction. The economy is then forecast to grow by 2.75 per cent in 2010/11 compared to an earlier forecast for a 2.25 per cent pace.

The Reserve Bank of Australia has begun lifting interest rates and took the Official Cash Rate from 3 per cent to 3.5 per cent in two hits over October and November. The clear signal is that more rate increases are on the way.

## Give and take

The winding back of the First Home Owner Boost began on October 1, and from January 1, 2010 the amount of Federal money available to first time purchasers of both new and existing properties will once again be \$7,000.

As the boost is being wound back, the Social Housing Initiative (to build 20,000 public and community housing dwellings) is being revved up and the next rounds of the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) and the Housing Affordability Fund (HAF) are being rolled out.

In terms of a relatively short-term stimulus to new home building that reverberates through the market, the FHOB will not be completely offset by the other policies. That's because to date there has been a failure to adequately address the structural obstacles to boosting new housing supply, so current policies will work to mitigate the negative impacts of the housing shortage rather than overcome them.

## Modest approval recovery

While total building approvals increased by 2.7 per cent in September, the annual level of 149,712 in September was still historically low.

Approvals totaled 36,874 in the September 2009 quarter, an increase of 10.4 per cent on the previous quarter, but only 2.9 per cent up on the same quarter last year.

The growth in building approvals over the first three quarters of 2009 has been substantially slower than the lift in new home lending. Between November last year (the first full month of both interest rate stimulus and the tripling of the FHOG) and September this year the number of loans for construction increased by 83 per cent.

Meanwhile, between November 2008 and September 2009 the number of detached house building approvals only increased by 27 per cent.

Clearly the approvals process is bogging down the new home building recovery and consequently we still see a risk that the lift in housing starts in the final quarter of 2009 may be more modest than we would ideally like to see.

## Starts stop!

The number of housing starts in Australia plummeted in 2008/09, as widely expected. Starts fell by 18 per cent to 130,650 in reflection of sharp drops in Queensland (-36 per cent), New South Wales (-26 per cent), and Western Australia (-19 per cent). Starts were flat or higher elsewhere in Australia. In 2009 housing starts are expected to fall by 12 per cent, little changed from our previous forecast, to a level of 130,630. That will mark the seventh consecutive year of weakness.

Housing starts are forecast to grow by a modest nine per cent in financial year 2009/10 to a level of 142,310.

## Home sales fall

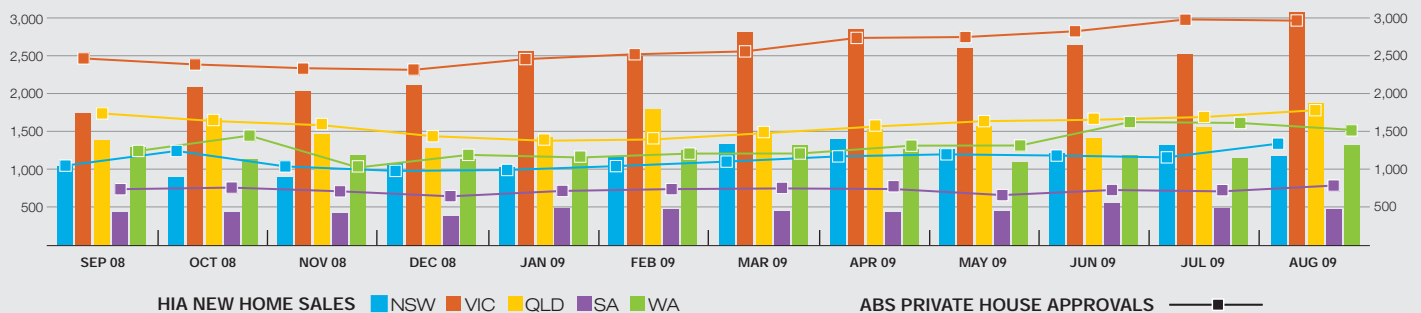
New home sales fell modestly in September 2009 after a strong surge in August. Total private new home sales fell by 4.5 per cent in September. Sales were, however, up by four per cent over the September quarter, 24 per cent higher than the comparable period in 2008. The relatively healthy quarterly result confirms that there will be life in first home buyer-induced construction activity into 2010.

## Record renovations

Total investment in the renovations sector came off the boil in 2008/09, falling by four per cent to a worth of \$29.85 billion. That was still a relatively healthy result.

With further house price gains and an increasingly resilient looking labour market, investment in renovations is forecast to grow by two per cent in 2009/10 and by a further eight per cent out to 2011/12. The renovations market is forecast to be worth \$32.8 billion, a new record, in 2011/12. ■

## Private house sales



# Meet the Pres

## AWCI President Perry Richardson wants to reach out to wall and ceiling contractors to ensure that the Association continues to meet their needs.

The Association of Wall and Ceiling Industries (AWCI) provides an outstanding service for its members, but too many contractors don't utilise the resource, according to newly re-elected National President, Perry Richardson.

Perry, whose term was recently extended for another two years, hopes that his presidency will see the AWCI reach out to members and non-members in the industry to better understand their needs and encourage more engagement with the Association.

"Certainly it's my vision to grow the AWCI membership, but I also want the organisation to be more representative of the large majority of wall and ceiling contractors across the country.

"As a starting point, we want to survey and better know our members, so that we have a good understanding of the services they require."

Perry is no stranger to the needs of wall and ceiling contractors himself, starting his own plastering business back in 1981. He joined then Queensland AWCI in 1986 and has been a member ever since. His first stint as State President occurred in the early 1990s and he was re-elected to that post in 2007.

He says that educating and up-skilling members will be among his primary goals as National President. "Skill and trade shortages are rampant across the industry, but particularly in the plastering area. So improving the skills of the current labour



Keeping in touch ...  
AWCI National  
President Perry  
Richardson

**"Few issues come up for contractors that we can't help them with, whether it's legislation, IR, tax, safety or sustainability."**

force and the encouraging of apprentices are key priorities for us."

Engaging members is another central goal. "We've had a lot of members for a lot of years, but unfortunately only a small percentage of them really engage with the Association on a regular basis."

He says that many people in the industry see membership as a mere insurance policy, rather than making the most of the huge range of services that the AWCI can provide.

"The truth is that few issues come up for contractors that we can't help them with, whether it's legislation, IR, tax, safety or sustainability."

"In addition, we work to create solid links between all the key players in our industry. Not just among contractors, but also with manufacturers, suppliers and relevant government bodies."

Perry says that two very important ways for the AWCI to keep in touch with members are the annual national conference and the national magazine, *On the Surface*.

"The magazine is really our key communication tool, because it goes beyond our membership base to some 15,000 contractors nationally.

"The isolation of those who aren't members can lead to uncertainty about acceptable practices and the best way to do things. On the other hand, the people that we as plastering contractors predominantly work for—builders—are extremely well organised in these matters.

"So another of my goals is to help contractors to become as well informed and aware of industry standards as builders are—and to take the AWCI to the level of sister organisations such as the HIA," he adds.

Perry paid tribute to CSR staff for the assistance he has received from them. "The support of all the major manufacturers is valued very highly by the AWCI. But in my time as President, I've had the privilege of working very closely with Rob Ferrari and Rob Sindel from CSR. I've found the relationship with CSR to be very beneficial, both to myself personally and in my role as National President." ■

## Joint venture *Continued from page 1*

### A stronger joint

To minimise moisture absorption in flush-set soffit joints, the SoffitLine™ system introduces jointing technology made up of three special components:

- PaperTape;
- SoffitLine™ External Jointing Compound; and
- SoffitLine™ Topping Compound.

The SoffitLine™ joint system ensures a 48 per cent stronger joint, compared to 6mm wallboard soffits, dramatically reducing the potential for joint cracking.

The SoffitLine™ frame design follows best design construction principals and isolates the soffit from the rest of the building to reduce the effects of structural movement.



The components of the system work together to provide stronger joints

The frame system can be suspended or direct fixed to furring channel and is designed for panel modules to better cater for expansion. ■



For more information contact Cemintel™ on 1300 CEMINTEL™ (1300 236 468) or visit [www.cemintel.com.au](http://www.cemintel.com.au).



CeminSeal™ Soffit sheets feature embedded waterblocking technology

# Building Australia's Future

The recent Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB) conference provided a great opportunity to discuss contemporary building matters, reports Michael Ryan, CSR DesignLINK.

Representatives of CSR attended the 2009 Building Australia's Future Conference held in September on the Gold Coast.

The conference featured presentations on topical issues relating to the built environment and the BCA, including climate change, performance through innovation and energy efficiency.

The climate change sessions included discussion on design for resistance to hail damage, revealing that in Sydney, hailstones up to 70mm in diameter could occur reasonably frequently. These would be sufficient to damage almost all houses of current design. Urban flooding and 'dry proofing' of houses, trends from the Department of Climate Change, and measures for environmental assessment and life cycle analysis were some of the other main topics.

Presentations on performance through

innovation included a global perspective on bush fire regulations (notably Australia and the US due to the coincidence of population in bushland and dry seasonal conditions), an aging population, and the management of dementia in building design. The roles of standards and regulations were

The conference featured presentations on topical issues relating to the built environment and the BCA, including climate change, performance through innovation and energy efficiency.

also discussed. The afternoon session on BCA interpretations of common situations was well attended and sparked some intense debates.

The energy efficiency topics almost needed a conference on their own. The range

included comparison of current rating tools with the deemed-to-comply (DTC) clauses; the change of ratings from energy use to green house gas production; regulation of cooking, clothes drying and lighting appliances; new products such as aerogels (transparent with high R value); views on

mass versus energy flow for comfort; and thermal performance in theory and in reality.

Participants appreciated the chance to update their knowledge of key trends and issues while networking with others in the industry. ■

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# Prize plastering

**A young contractor has won the top AWCI plastering award for his work on a Brisbane nightclub.**

Young Brisbane plasterer Daniel Dotta has taken out the top gong at the recent Association of Wall and Ceiling Industries (AWCI) Awards.

Daniel beat 62 applicants to become overall winner after first receiving the award for best 'Commercial Development Project under \$1 million' for his work on the Cloudland Nightclub in Brisbane.

The AWCI hosts the Awards each year to recognise outstanding work done by both members and non-members in the plastering sector. The judges consider detail, difficulty and overall appearance when deciding on the winners in each category. The 2009 Excellence in Plastering Awards were presented at a special event held on the Gold Coast in August and attended by over 400 people.

Daniel Dotta is director of Featureroom, a newly established renovation company in Queensland, and his unique approach involves modernising rooms without making any major structural alterations. Instead, he improves a room's appearance by developing its focal points, including lighting, space and colour, and through creative use of the latest materials and products.

"Featureroom is moving modern design and architecture in a new direction," says Daniel. "We try to use plasterboard and lightweight construction in a way that pushes the boundaries, bringing contemporary design trends into the home."

Daniel uses products from plasterboard manufacturer CSR Gyprock™ in many of his projects, including the Gyprock™ Flexible Plasterboard which is specifically designed for curved wall and ceiling systems.

"We used a lot of Gyprock™ Flexible



Daniel Dotta accepting the ACWI award and (left) his handiwork at Brisbane's Cloudland Nightclub

Plasterboard in the Cloudland project. It featured many curves, parabolic arches, domes and circular work, and appropriate board isn't really supplied by other brands," says Daniel.

Daniel hopes that manufacturing companies will begin to adopt the eco-friendly approach that Gyprock™, an industry leader for decades, is currently incorporating into its products.

Gyprock's EC08™ plasterboard range has been certified by Good Environmental Choice Australia (GECA) with the highest level of recycled content found in the Gyprocks™ list of fire grade and standard plasterboard products.

"We'd like to adopt an eco-option as products develop, especially the use of EC08™ in interior set-outs as a method

of recycling materials," says Daniel.

Gyprock EC08™ can also be recycled rather than adding to waste—an important factor in gaining the GECA certification.

"Recently, we have observed increasing interest from designers and specifiers who are eager to improve the sustainability of their developments," says Gyprock™ Commercial Marketing Manager, Rob Ferrari.

"This is an influential direction for the industry to be taking and is also positive news for the environment.

"At Gyprock™, we pride ourselves on keeping up with the needs of the marketplace and leading the way in terms of building practices," says Rob. ■



For more information on Gyprock™ products, contact Gyprock™ on 1300 306 556 or visit [www.gyprock.com.au](http://www.gyprock.com.au).

## Season's greetings!

On behalf of CSR Gyprock staff, we wish all our readers a very merry Christmas, and we hope that 2010 proves to be a happy and prosperous year.

We appreciate your feedback and hope that you continue to find Club Gyprock magazine a valuable resource in the next 12 months. Don't forget that you can now do something good for the environment and start receiving Club Gyprock by email. It's as easy as sending your name, address and email to [KFoxall@csr.com.au](mailto:KFoxall@csr.com.au).



# Getting technical

The newest member of the DesignLINK team is committed to improving the service it offers to customers.

CSR welcomes Joe Dorinko as the latest addition to the designLINK team. Joe, who has a mechanical engineering degree and more than ten years of experience in construction and building, says that he is proud to be part of the quality service offered by designLINK.

For over 10 years the service has offered technical assistance to customers who are designing and installing Gyprock™ and Fibre Cement systems.

"In my new role, I will interact with customers and offer them professional advice about both Gyprock™ and Cemintel™ products. In particular I will offer specific information about the acoustic and fire-rated properties of our wall and ceiling systems.

"People can ring us up with their project specifications and we can advise them about their BCA (Building Code of Australia) requirements and other needs, and offer solutions that work.

"We provide a professional service that provides a thorough understanding of the BCA and Australian Standards. We are also well equipped to offer Green Star



**"We have a great range of products and so we want to let customers know about how they can use them to add value to their projects."**



Expert advice ...  
Joe Dorinko

solutions to ensure that projects are as environmentally sound as possible," he says.

Joe is based in Melbourne and says he will be dealing with everyone involved in building projects from architects, building surveyors, building owners, installation contractors and design engineers, right down to DIY handymen.

"We are committed to offering customers an even more professional design service. We have a great range of products and so we want to let customers know about how they can use them to add value to their projects," Joe adds. ■

## Books on board

CSR has released new and updated support literature for a number of its products.

New support documentation has been released relating to the Gyprock EC08™ range of environmentally friendly boards and Cemintel™ Ceiling Systems.

The brochure on the EC08™ range introduces the three key products, EC08™ Partition, EC08™ Fire and EC08™ Impact. It offers comprehensive technical information that will help contractors and designers to choose the best board and system for their project.

The document also contains information on the environmental benefits of each EC08™ board, so that contractors will know how to meet the requirements of Green Star and better protect the planet.

In addition, an addendum has been written for the Red Book outlining the new systems that use products in the EC08™ range. It also explains the relevant fire and sound

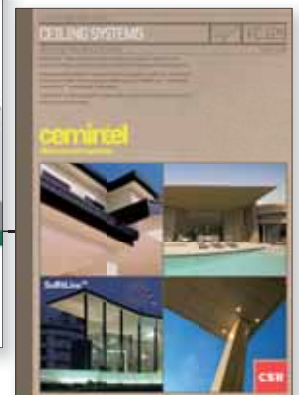
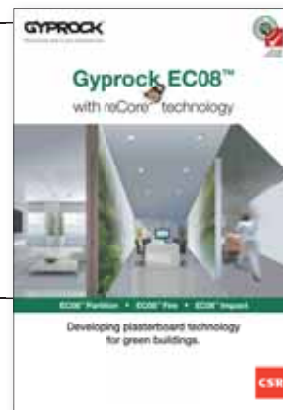
ratings offered by these systems. At present, the addendum is only available in an electronic version on the website.

Meanwhile, CSR has also released a new brochure on Cemintel™ Fibre Cement Ceiling Systems. It contains technical information on internal and external systems, including the new SoffitLine™ System (see cover story).

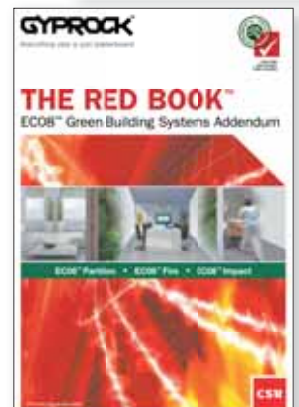
The document provides an explanation of common applications, components and accessories relating to each system. It also offers detailed information on installation including sheet preparation and jointing, supported by easy-to-follow diagrams. ■



For a copy of any of these support documents, please contact CSR on 1300 306 556.



Writing on the wall ... updates to the CSR range of support literature



# Fast finish

Plastering contractors will love the base coat that offers speedy setting times and is easy to sand.

When you're working against the clock to get a small job wrapped up quickly, you need the support of top materials that offer consistent performance without any hassle.

That's why Gyprock™ developed Base Coat 20.

Not only does the new product deliver the same workability—and high performance—as all the base coats in the Gyprock™ range, but it also sets in about 20 minutes. That's the fastest setting time of any Gyprock™ base coat!

This accelerated setting time means that you can finish the whole job more quickly, and even paint on the same day. Base Coat 20 is thus ideal for small jobs (such as one-room renovations), but also for large-scale maintenance (such as resetting joints).

In addition, Base Coat 20 is also extremely easy to sand. In fact, testing shows that the product outperforms leading competitors in terms of 'sandability'.

It is also easy to mix and offers all the other qualities that you have come to expect from

Gyprock™ base coats, including low shrinkage (which reduces the risk of cracking) and being easy to trowel.

Base Coat 20 comes in convenient 10kg bags. Issuing the product in this quantity will reduce waste, as the bags can easily be moved from site to site. ■



For more information on Base Coat 20, visit [www.gyprock.com.au](http://www.gyprock.com.au) or call Gyprock™ on 1300 306 556.

This accelerated setting time means that you can finish the whole job more quickly, and even paint on the same day.



## Base Coat 20—Advantages

- Fast setting time
- Proven 'sandability'
- Convenient 10kg packaging
- Easy to mix and trowel
- Low shrinkage

## Correction

Please note that system CSR 932 on page D16 of the 2007 Red Book™ contains a typographical error. In the book, the system is specified and drawn with lining on both sides but the lining table states that it is only on one side. This should read "Both Sides" as per the other systems in the table, the drawing and the specification. A new PDF file of the Red Book™ is available from [www.gyprock.com.au](http://www.gyprock.com.au).

## TOOL TALK WITH JOHN RAE, CSR GYPROCK™ PRODUCT MANAGER HARDWARE ACCESSORIES

# Nailing it

Whatever the job, Koala is likely to have the strip and the screw to maximise efficiency and effectiveness.

Koala Collated Screws are recognised as the "premium" collated screw brand in Australia.

Koala has built up its extensive knowledge of manufacturing nails over many years. The company was founded in 1981 and began manufacturing collated screws in its Sydney factory in 1997.

Koala has kept up with changes in auto-feed screwdrivers over recent years, utilising the latest plastic design technology to offer collated screws that function without fault.

Koala offer two types of collated screws strips, white extruded strip and red injection molded strip to function with all quality flat belt auto-feed screwdrivers. It's vital that the strip must be manufactured to conform to the auto-feed tools, however the quality of screws used in the strip is also very important.

Koala sources all drywall screws from quality-assured manufacturers in Taiwan.

So whichever auto-feed screwdriver and application you have, Koala has the strip and screw to suit your demands.



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For full details visit [www.cemintel.com.au](http://www.cemintel.com.au).

The competition closes on 18 December 2009.



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