

Alcoa Fastening Systems achieves a highly sustainable future with new manufacturing plant

SUSTAINABILITY COVENANT CASE STUDY

Since 2006, Ai Group has granted funding assistance for 25 sustainability and environmental projects involving 45 participating organisations.

More than \$320,000 was spent in the past two years, and just over \$600,000 has already been committed to projects in 2008/09.

Key Outcomes

GRANT: \$10,539

IMPACT:

ADDITION OF SUSTAINABLE DESIGN OF NEW MANUFACTURING PLANT

SAVINGS ON RUNNING OF PLANT

MORE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES BY COMPANY EMPLOYEES

Relocating a business to new premises can provide opportunities to move more than just a factory or offices: it can lead to a shift in thinking about far more sustainable ways to work.

When Alcoa Fastening Systems Australia (AFS) planned its move to a new plant, it wanted to incorporate sustainable building design principles to optimise the environmental performance of the building.

It was able to achieve a \$10,000 grant from the Australian Industry Group (Ai Group) to support the design development of more sustainable features for its new premises.

AFS is a manufacturing company that supplies a range of fasteners, thread inserts, installation tools and accessories for the mining, automotive, commercial transportation, industrial and construction industries.

The company employs more than 60 people, and about 70% of its annual \$27.5 million production is exported to markets in Asia, the United Kingdom, North America, South America, Pacific Islands, the Middle East and Europe.

AFS Director of Operations, Simon Bowen, said that when AFS made the commitment to expand operations in Australia with a new plant in Melbourne's Clayton Business Park, it was looking towards the future.

"We grasped the chance presented by the new building to work with Ai Group and EPA Victoria, to ensure that the building presented opportunities to not only improve but to actively reduce our ecological footprint.

"With the support of Ai Group and EPA Victoria, we ensured that we laid the engineering foundations that would enable

us to maximise existing technology, as well as preparing for future improvements."

Their new site is located within a 31-hectare commercial and industrial complex at Clayton that was a former car manufacturing plant.

When AFS approached Ai Group and EPA, the first two stages of the project had been completed. The site developer, Hallmarc, and AFS were already working on the design of a new manufacturing plant that would include a warehouse, office and reception on a concrete slab.

"The paid-forward benefit is now a workforce that is actively developing opportunities to reduce their impact and footprint on our home."

Simon Bowen

AFS wanted to explore inclusion of sustainable building design principles to the existing design, and approached Ai Group for funding to support development of a design with additional features including:

- Roof insulation
- Rainwater tank
- Arid landscaping that would not require water
- Exhaust fans to the roof
- Raising of the computer room floor for cooling
- Toilet flushing through rainwater tank
- TS21 high performance glazing to the warehouse for improved daylighting

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Further information

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- High grade carpet, which would provide better insulation in office areas.

Ai Group approved the \$10,000 grant, impressed by the fact that AFS had thought about the company's environmental impact and what it could do to improve it.

While a major redevelopment or relocation is the logical time to adopt improved environmental measures, many companies simply look at their production processes.

They often fail to consider how they can improve energy use in areas such as air conditioning and heating, even though this can reduce business costs as well as their environmental impact.

Late last year AFS moved into its new plant and the improvements have inspired environmentally-friendly efforts beyond the daily manufacturing operations.

