

• Bulk Materials Handling

## Weigh to go

GLOBAL on-board weighing technology leader VEI claims to be increasing its Australian market in leaps and bounds with its products for the quarrying, mining and bulk material applications.

VEI designs and manufactures a wide range of products for wheel loaders, rigid and articulated dump trucks, load-haul-dumps, excavators including grapple arms, forklifts and container lifts.

This international company is already dominant in many countries worldwide and came to this country 18 months ago with the establishment of Brisbane-based VEI Payload Management Systems Australia.

On a recent trip to Handling Systems Australia of Perth, part of the national dealer network, international sales manager Guisepe Valerio said the company had

set itself the challenge of achieving up to a 40% share of the Australian market.

Coming into a market previously dominated by a single brand, VEI Australia had found the response across the country had been phenomenal. Major companies were switching to VEI because it was more operator-friendly and had the most consistency in weighing and data information, Valerio said.

"We are a diverse company with a broad range of on-board weighing systems to suit many applications."

VEI's ability to provide systems for articulated and rear dump trucks helped the company to win a major order to supply on-board weighing systems for a major dump truck fleet going into various Indonesian mines.



Finished belt being strapped for despatch from Apex Fenner's new plant.

## Belt production receives boost

APEX Fenner has increased its production capacity of wide conveyor belting by 50% through a \$2.5 million factory expansion that also includes a completely new state-of-the-art technical centre.

Fenner UK CEO Mark Abrahams officially opened the new extension at West Footscray, in Melbourne earlier this year. Apex Fenner is Australia's only manufacturer of fabric-reinforced rubber conveyor belts, which can be up to two metres wide and are used primarily in the mining industry.

Apex Fenner managing director David Landgren said the driving force behind the extension was the need to meet increased demand for conveyor belting.

"Our existing capacity on wide belting was continuously over-extended, resulting in a need to work excessive overtime and lengthen delivery times for our customers," said Landgren.

"Installation of a sixth Rotocure curing oven will allow the operation to improve delivery times to well below that of all imported competing products. This saves valuable production time for our mining customers and lowers their operating costs."

Apex Fenner's expansion program began in 2002 with construction of a new weaving plant, which was opened in March 2003. Later in 2003 the Apex Fenner plant received accreditation to ISO 9001, highlighting the importance of its new technical centre. A sophisticated laboratory in the centre carries out a range of tests on every belt the company makes, checking conformity to customer specifications and other standards.

In addition to Apex Fenner's new technical centre, the company has also upgraded its repair and inspection facilities, installed new belt sanding equipment, and built a drive-through loading bay which allows for more efficient and safer loading, as well as easier entry and departure of trucks from the site.

Apex Fenner has a yearly turnover of around \$100 million. Approximately 90% of its business is directed at the Australian domestic market and 10% for export. About 75% of its domestic business is aimed at the mining industry, with the remainder spread across quarrying, grain handling, cement, fertiliser and food production.

## Vei gets load right



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