

# ALISTAIR WOOD

MARKET DEVELOPMENT MANAGER,  
REID

**Since Alan Reid established his company in 1921 in Sydney to supply wire rope to the construction, mining and manufacturing sectors, Reid™ has grown through innovation and perseverance to become leaders in the field of precast and tilt-up concrete construction and associated products. In combining inventive engineering with dedication to service and safety, Reid delivers products which make concrete construction easier, safer and more efficient. Reid's Market Development Manager, Alistair Wood, explained how Reid has achieved their success to date, and plans to build on their achievements in the future.**

Interview by Willow Aliento

**WA** Which of Reid's services are the most sought after?

**AW** Predominately our technical expertise is the most sought after segment of our business. We have our own in-house Engineering design team who certify and design how concrete elements need to be lifted, and ensure that all of the procedures and products that are used conform to the relevant code/standard. We place a huge emphasis on safety and will not sign off on anything unless it is safe to lift and the appropriate product has been used.

Our products and our people have one aim – to reduce the total cost of concrete construction, by making it faster, safer and more efficient.

**WA** What factors contribute to the company's success?

**AW** We have a team of specialized engineers, and are constantly introducing new, innovative products. Reid has representation in every state, and is a diversified company – we do not just sit in the space of Concrete Lifting, we also have a presence in Heavy Construction, Concrete Formwork, Concrete Connections, Engineered Drafting services and Reinforcing products. By spreading our expertise over every aspect of precast concrete, we offer customers a broader range of products and services. As part of the global Illinois Tool Works group of companies, Reid can access a vast resource of engineering talents, which helps us to continually improve, test and refine our products.

**WA** What have been the key milestones in the company's history?

**AW** Reid pioneered the introduction of pre-stressed concrete in Australia during the 1960s, and in 1973 Reid established the Reinforced Earth Company in Australia, which gave the business its first exposure to precast concrete retaining walls. This led to the introduction of the Swiftlift™ clutch and lifting anchor system in 1977, which has expanded to a complete range of Concrete Lifting Systems that can provide a solution to any lifting, anchoring or bracing challenge.



Having built a reputation for innovation in the field of precast and tilt-up concrete construction, in the 1990's Reid applied that creativity to the field of Reinforcing Systems for in-situ concrete construction. In 1995 Reid introduced ReidBar™ – a fully integrated continuous reinforcing system based on a patented, threaded bar and coupling mechanism.

**WA** How has the company evolved as the construction industry has moved into the Green Star, carbon-conscious era.

**AW** We have introduced “green” water based concrete release agents to the Australian Market. Nox-crete has a range of Green Engineered Form release and Concrete cure agents which have been designed to the highest quality standards using the safest ingredients available. They are water based, biodegradable, manufactured from renewable materials, and easier and safer to apply. We are constantly on the search for sustainable products for the Green construction market, and closely observe the trends in overseas markets.

**WA** How would you describe Reid's approach to clients?

**AW** Generally our approach is to form partnerships with our clients and work together with them on solutions to their problems, as well

as identifying opportunities where we can help save them money and/or time. We are also involved with a variety of industry associations, including NPCAA, CIA and the NPCA in America, this connection to the broader industry helps us have an extremely clear picture of all the options available for our clients.

**WA** What are some of the projects you are most proud of?

**AW** There have been many great projects. Some of our more recent major projects have included the NTH/STH Tunnel in Brisbane, East Link Freeway in Melbourne, Gateway Duplication in Brisbane, Freeway Projects in Sydney and Eureka Tower in Melbourne. One of our more challenging recent projects was the ‘entry statement’ for Port Hedland in WA, where our West Australian operation was approached by artist Jahne Rees of Scape-ism with drawings for an “Entry Statement” sculpture comprised of two rings; one of steel, the other of reinforced concrete. The concrete ring was to be poured on its side in Perth, then transported to Port Hedland. What he needed from us was an answer as to how this could be done, what lifting devices would be required, and where to put them so as to not damage the slender 16 tonne arc of reinforced concrete. Our engineering solution was work of art in itself – and it worked.

**WA** What are some of the innovations you are most proud of?

**AW** In partnership with Germany's IDAT Software, we have just introduced a specialist 3D drafting, design and shop drawings software for precast concrete to the Australian market. Based on AutoCAD by AutoDesk Inc, IDAT gives enormous scope for precast concrete designers, to quickly go from idea to documentation, calculate quantities, resolve buildability issues and see outcomes in three dimensions. As the Australian distributor for IDAT, we can also give clients full technical backup with the software.

Another very exciting innovation is Flexus™ bendable concrete. This is a specially formulated Engineered Cementitious Composite mix made up of Sand, Cement, Fly Ash, PVA Fibres and a few other special ingredients. It does not require reinforcing, is lighter than traditional concrete, and due to the recycled Fly Ash content, has a lower impact on the environment than traditional reinforced concrete.

In our core business of lifting technologies, we are proud of our “Jaws” anchor lifting range, which have a unique design and are engineered to the highest standards. Another of our core product lines are connections for concrete elements, and our new OrbiPlate System resolves an extremely common and time consuming problem for concrete construction. The OrbiPlate system allows for generous tolerances in all directions, overcoming any alignment issues with cast in ferrules. It can be used for connecting concrete to concrete, steel to steel, or steel to concrete.

**WA** Where do you see the main growth opportunities for Reid over the next decade?

**AW** I see the big growth areas for us as being increased activity with concrete residential construction, and growth in our involvement with Heavy Construction projects including Multi Storey Buildings, Bridges and Road Projects. I also see huge opportunities for growth in the Flexus bendable concrete products, and expansion of our Engineering IDAT software and drafting services.

**WA** What do you see as the main challenges, and what opportunities do they offer?

**AW** A major challenge is overseas companies entering our market space, and cheap or non-conforming product being imported into Australia. We pride ourselves in providing Australian engineered/manufactured product where possible and on forming partnerships with reputable overseas companies in order to introduce innovative systems to the Australian market

**WA** Where do you see the greatest need for innovation in the industry in terms of methods and materials?

**AW** There needs to be more recognition by the building industry that construction of buildings in precast concrete is a far more efficient method – both in time saving and material saving, than the traditional ways of bricks and mortar, or steel frames with concrete poured on site. There are ways of making concrete look as attractive as any building made from other materials. We have begun to supply and advise the industry on concrete patterns and decorative methods for concrete, we are the Australian supplier for Fitzgerald FormLiners, specialists in creating designs for architectural concrete elements.