



Media Release

IFC Supports Innovative Geotextile Industry Onsite Training Resource & Solution

Wednesday April 11, 2012. International Fibre Centre (IFC) Chief Executive Officer Mr. Joseph Merola has announced the funding of an innovative Geofabrics Australasia Pty Ltd new training resource and delivery infrastructure '*Geosynthetics in the Field*' that will complement and build upon previous successfully delivered IFC sponsored learning programs.

With IFC's support Geofabrics Australasia developed a number of electronically delivered learning resources through two major projects '*Geosynthetics Intensive Learning & Development Program*' in 2010 and '*Geosynthetics at Work*' in 2011. These previous programs created general resources for the industry and professional civil engineers in training.

An extensive range of instructional DVDs were created and made freely available over the internet for access by engineers, engineering students, academia and industry.

Building on the experience and knowledge from these previous programs, '*Geosynthetics in the Field*' will utilise the latest internet, Smartphone / tablet and social media platforms to ensure that important expertise, knowledge and insight are able to be accessed where needed most.

IFC CEO Mr. Merola acknowledges that the sustainability of the Geotextile industry is very much dependent upon a reputation that is built on a platform of successful application and track record. The most common applications for these Australian produced high tech products include drainage and filtration, separation, containment, reinforcement and liner protection.

The sector and key role model manufacturers like Geofabrics Australasia acknowledge that the industry cannot afford for these high quality and highly engineered products to be associated with any failures from knowledge deficiencies at installation.

Commenting on the new training initiative, Geofabrics Australasia Managing Director Mr. Brendan Swifte said, "Our Geotextile products are installed and used all over Australia, often in remote and difficult sites such as roadways, mines and coastal areas – and the successful and safe application of these products is highly dependent on the skill and knowledge of installers and consulting engineers."

"Geofabrics Australasia has developed an end-to-end solution that will

Continues...

address many onsite problems and issues that are currently being experienced with the application and use of Geosynthetic materials.”

‘Geosynthetics in the Field’ starts with a Quick Response (QR) code system whereby codes on product packaging can be read onsite by installers and consulting engineers, and via their mobile internet devices, access product technical specifications, installation guidance and instructional videos.

Mr. Swift continued, “Our previous educational initiatives, supported by the IFC have helped to alleviate this skills and knowledge shortage and contributed significantly to the sustainability of an important local industry. Through the application of the latest communication technologies, *‘Geosynthetics in the Field’* will take this support to a new and higher level.”

Major benefits for Geofabrics Australasia and its supply chain partners will include more efficient, safe and cost effective work practices and skilled engineers will be freed to focus on high value tasks including product research, testing, innovation, quality assurance and the development of new applications, products and product variations.

Geofabrics Australasia’s products are designed, developed and manufactured in Australia and perform competitively against fierce international competition. In addition, the Victorian head quartered operation invests heavily in R & D and in 2010 opened the Geosynthetic Centre of Excellence dedicated to supporting Australian engineers’ understanding of Geosynthetics and developing / testing new products, applications and quality outcomes.

“The use of Geotextile products as highly effective and economic solutions to a rapidly growing number of Geoengineering problems is expanding both in Australia and globally,” said Mr. Merola.

“However, the challenge for local manufacturers is the expansion of intellectual property into new products and applications whilst ensuring there is sufficient expertise and resources available to address onsite project and installation needs. Through the use of technology and modern learning / communication practices, the Geofabrics IFC sponsored training initiative seeks to address this situation.”



Ends

Issued by the International Fibre Centre

www.ifc.net.au

Media enquiries:

Mr. Joe Perri

Joe Perri & Associates Pty Ltd

Telephone/Fax: +61 3 9324 0362

Mobile: +61 412 112 545

Email: jperri@joeperri.com.au