



Media Release

Victorian Industry to Benefit from IFC Sponsored '3D Textiles' Technical Expert Program

Monday March 19, 2012. Following the report and recommendations of International Fibre Centre (IFC) CEO Mr. Joseph Merola's 2011 international study mission, two high profile projects have been approved by IFC that will facilitate the visit to Australia of leading overseas technical experts to provide an exceptional learning opportunity for both the Victorian fibre and textile industry and academia.

The first IFC project will support Mr. Christoph Carl Bach, Head of Production Systems for Lifescience & Smart Textiles at RWTH Aachen University to speak on future applications for 3D textiles including the integration of smart systems at the Technical & Textiles Nonwoven Association's (TTNA's) 2012 Annual Conference.

Also travelling from Germany is Dr. Dieter Veit – Dept. Director, Institute for Textiltechnik der RWTH, Aachen and he will outline Aachen University's approach to investment in education on advanced textile structures used for the production of composites covering material characteristics, latest automated textile processing and the textile preforming approach, composite processing, design and testing procedures.

RWTH Aachen University is a research university located in Aachen Germany with approximately 33,000 students enrolled in 101 study programs. The university has achieved international recognition in several fields of engineering and scientific endeavour, particularly fibres and their application as advanced materials.

In addition, over the past 15 years, CSIRO and RWTH Aachen University have benefited from a strong strategic relationship that will be further enhanced by the IFC funded project.

"Innovation is the driving force in fibre and textiles across the globe and demand for 3D fabrics is experiencing considerable growth due to their versatile physical, structural attributes and application scopes.," said Mr. Merola.

"Fibres utilised in 3D fabrics and textiles include carbon, ceramics, fibreglass and other specialty fibres for a growing range of applications in high tech industries including aerospace, automotive, defence, filtration, recreational, safety, medical, industrial, commercial, and many more."

These fabrics can be produced in various architectures which offers a great deal of opportunity to modify the weight, aesthetics, properties and cost of the various products.

Commenting on TTNA's upcoming conference – *Visions for Textiles & Fibres* – TTNA Executive Manager Ms Kerry Caulfield said, "Our objective is provide the very latest information, knowledge and training on 3D textiles to Victorian fibre and textile manufacturers that will enable them to apply these advances for commercial advantage."

A 3D hexagonal braiding machine (designed to manufacture complex 3D configured products with variable cross-sections from composites and medical textiles) will provide attendees first hand examples the new technology's application and versatility.

"Current applications of 3D woven fabrics are in composites made from textile preforms and in protective clothing. 3D fabrics cover a number of manufacturing methods including weaving, knitting, braiding and nonwoven assembly," added Ms Caulfield.

TTNA expects the conference's IFC funded international speaker Mr. Christopher Bach and Dr Veit will attract an enthusiastic audience of industry stakeholders from technical and nonwoven textiles and composites manufacturing and service industries eager to learn from the renowned overseas experts.

Also attending the conference will be representatives from downstream industries such as automotive and the R & D community, academia, RTOs and students.

"IFC will continue to support learning programs that enhance the application of new technologies and innovation for the Victorian fibre and textiles industry. We are confident that the international speakers will motivate local manufacturers to broaden their horizons and apply the new developments in their respective businesses," concluded Mr. Merola.

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