

NEW ZEALAND INSULATORS 2024 (*The Year in Review*)

JANUARY

On the 8th of January we cranked back into gear after a nice break, our factory start-up, which can take a few days of complex production work, started with relatively few gremlins, (a testament to our maintenance and shutdown procedures and planning). And of course we are again back into what will be another very busy year. We added several new staff in the first week and most of the team embraced working extra hours to help increase our output.

We completed our 5-year survey and Partial Discharge testing of NZI's in house 11kV cable network and all of our high voltage assets.

FEBRUARY

We completed a Telarc external audit of our ISO9001:2015 quality system for the NZI Temuka and Kumeu sites, achieving top marks with our auditor commenting that "NZI is better than most other similar sized manufacturing businesses he has audited" so again, that's a reflection of the hard work and commitment everyone is making to improve what we do and how we do it – well earned praise.

We sneak in a fire evacuation practice to make sure we all know what to do in case of an emergency.

NZI 100-Year Celebrations

Those who could attend (close to 300 people over the weekend), all enjoyed a complimentary "good time" of NZI history including factory tours, dining and dancing, reunions with past and present staff and many customers and suppliers. We all enjoyed so much delicious food and refreshments! Plus some nice "goodie bags" to take home. The cake looked and tasted fantastic and took us a few days to eat it all!

If you want to reminisce this fantastic event then check out this page on our website – <https://www.nzinsulators.co.nz/gallery/100-year-celebrations>

MARCH

We received a site visit to our Temuka factory from Rangitata MP – James Meager who after attending our 100-year celebrations "just had to see more of what we do". He was impressed on so many levels and surprised at how much work is required to make our products and the craftsmanship involved.

Easter Bunny has an early visit to NZI with chocolate and Easter treats and a few hot cross buns thrown in as a good measure just to test our waistlines.

APRIL

Our NZI directors Kevin & Rob get a chance to visit the Temuka site to get an update on our manufacturing progress and were also able to farewell Ian Clark who retired after 33 years at NZI – what a great effort.

Our annual, company-wide free influenza vaccinations get issued along with free health/hearing/respiratory checks for all staff, helping us all keep track of our personal good health.

We started a project for the prototyping and development of a new mechanical solution for dipping large line posts. We are excited about the potential of this project, which will reduce repetitive heavy lifting.

Our staff winter clothing orders get placed (utilising our \$150 allowance per person), this certainly helps us prepare for the upcoming cooler South Canterbury winter.

MAY

The Netzsch pug (clay extruder) gets a major service and rebuild as does our high-speed blunger, both are critical pieces of equipment that need regular up-keep to remain in optimal functioning condition, to help keep the factory flowing.

Our Quality Assurance (QA) team keep reviewing and auditing SOP's (standard operating procedures) with the assistance of our manufacturing team, with hundreds of SOP's in place the audit process is essential and helps NZI with consistency and compliance.

JUNE

Men's Health week gets a bit of a nudge and encouragement across the business (of course it's not just for the men as 1/3 of all staff at NZI are women).

We have one of our regular "NZ Customs" audits to check that NZI are maintaining the correct process and protocols in regard to our Export product. Due to our volume of regular large exports NZI remains on the NZ Customs audit cycle and of course we received a glowing review.

The end of NZI financial year keeps us all busy reconciling and making sure all data is up to date, including our favourite job of stocktaking, which due to our regular cyclical counts makes the job somewhat easier.

Road works started in Thomas St outside our Temuka factory and offices, the promised "2 weeks closure" turned into several months causing so many other issues. However, the final result is probably worth the wait!

JULY

Covid circled around again and as a result we had 40% of our staff off work at one stage, plus a few other winter ailments, it was a good chance for those still at work to learn the roles of others and this was embraced by all of NZI. We had some minor contamination (coal and heavy metals) working its way into our "slip" (liquid clay). This reminds us all that we work with a natural organic product (and that's why we can recycle it so well) and of course our laboratory and production team identified and eliminated the contamination issue as fast as it appeared (caused by a seam of coal and metals excavated from our Kakahu quarry sometime in the previous year). It certainly helps when we have the experience and knowledge of our 100+ year manufacturing history to solve these little issues so quickly.

AUGUST

Our Temuka team continue working extra overtime hours to keep up with the product demand, our directors visit and view areas where we are investing significant capital into new plant and equipment. We also took the opportunity to hold a top-level review of our annual strategic plan (which is a requirement of our ISO: 9001 certification).

Our SF pug (extruder) gets some well-deserved maintenance, we replaced the liners and rebuilt the augers which are all part of keeping this important equipment in premium condition.

Our 17 member Health & Safety team (after consultation with the wider business) set the new H&S objectives for the 2024/25 year, as normal NZI have some great work going on in this area of the business.

Rayleine Peattie decided to retire from NZI after 45+ years, what a great achievement and supporter of NZI.

SEPTEMBER

Several visitor groups (Customers, National & International Suppliers and Industry Leaders) visit our factory during the month to gain a better understanding of how NZI manufacture such quality products and of course we have an open invitation if you are yet to visit, it's really worth the investment of a couple hours of time.

NZI attended and exhibited at the Electrical Engineers Association (EEA) Conference in Christchurch, with a focus on NZI achieving our 100-year milestone, plus a celebration of our manufacturing and supply expertise. The complete exhibit and display was a culmination of hours and hours work by many NZI staff.

NZI was awarded the "Best Technology Exhibition stand" for the event, which is a very sought after award and title and it was very fitting for NZI to win this award which acknowledges our success.

OCTOBER

NZI staff were in Te Awamutu (Central North Island) attending and exhibiting at the Connexis Annual Connection (where the best of NZ's Cable Jointers and Line Mechanics came together to compete for National recognition & awards) and again it was a great chance to meet up with so many of our special "friends of NZI".

It's nice to have good stock of most product lines for our customers. NZI is in a great position that we don't have to rely on overseas manufacturers to make our product, avoiding most global logistic supply chain problems. We continue to own and operate our own raw material quarry and have a factory based in Temuka, South Canterbury manufacturing, testing, packing and dispatching to our customers.

NOVEMBER

Our staff end of year event was our traditional partners included "good time, let your hair down type of event", and the entertainment proved to uncover some hidden gems of information about all attendees. A great way to celebrate a successful year.

DECEMBER

Our new 2025 NZI product catalogue, with its familiar look and new layout with an easy to use index has been completed and distributed to our customers, so expect a copy soon (we have extras if you need them).

We lock in our Christmas/New Year shutdown period and review our maintenance plan over that period.

What a fantastic year for NZI. We have now operated for more than 100 years. What a great achievement and of course that longevity only comes from the dedication and support of our complete NZI team, so I think it's time for some well-deserved time off and enjoying some holiday time with family and friends.

Over the year we celebrated the following staff milestones, all celebrating their place in the NZI 25 years plus club: Warren C – 44 years, Heather G – 37 years, Debbie C – 34 years, Peter C – 33 years, Gary A – 33 years, Peter Q – 32 years, Debbie S – 30 years.

We also celebrated Margaret D – 23 years and Brendon S – 22 years, as they approach their 25 years' service.

What a great effort helping combine and retain NZI knowledge and experience.

We had two of our 25-year plus club members slip into a well-earned retirement; Rayleine P after 45 years' service, and Ian C after 33 years' service – well done and thank you to both of you for the fantastic service record.

To our customers, suppliers and supporters of our NZ owned and operated business – Thank you all for the continued support during 2024 and we all hope that 2025 is another successful year for you all.

New Zealand Insulators continues to be Proudly Supporting the New Zealand Electrical Industry and that's a good record to have after 100+ years being in business.

Chris van der Werff | General Manager