

New Zealand Insulators 2018, the year in review

JANUARY

Full production in the Temuka factory started on the 8th January to help us keep up with the forward demand for NZ and Australian customers. Keeping with tradition some final copies of our 2018 NZI catalogue were delivered to all our customers. We reconfirm our 6.00am start times with a 2.30pm finish for all factory staff although this proves to be hard work starting at 6.00 after a long holiday. The local Temuka water supply continues to provide some (water quality) problems for our production team to work around. We add Ice Blocks to the canteen refreshment list to help counter those Hot South Canterbury Days. We celebrated with Heather G, 31 years at NZI as great effort.

FEBRUARY

We appoint five new "Line Managers" each will oversee particular areas of the factory and productions. Rayleine P celebrates her 39th NZI anniversary – what a great effort. Installation of a new fire system & panel keeps us ahead of new fire safety regulations.

The sudden death of Donald, a long serving colleague (16+ years), who died at home on the weekend certainly rocks us and reminds us all in regard to the fragility of life. Apart from their regular weekly visits, EAP Services certainly earned their money this week.

We undertake annual factory noise level monitoring via personal dosimeters, as we have added a few extra bits of machinery into the factory – we receive the all clear and a well done for double checking. Our Technical Director Ian Clark celebrates 27 years with NZI, another great effort.

MARCH

Easter Bunny arrives at NZI with chocolate eggs, bunnies and lot of hot cross buns. We undertake our Quality Assurance external audit as part of our migration to AS/NZS ISO9001:2015 once again we pass with flying colours. Completion of our fire extinguisher training gets us all used to using the extinguishers if that unlikely event occurred. Our directors have a site visit to Temuka and view our factory upgrade work and enjoy a shared lunch with our management team. WorkSafe visit for a regular factory inspection and after reviewing the site from top to bottom find no areas of concern. Certainly our management objective is getting everyone home safely every day and something we are proud of.

APRIL

Free company wide influenza injections are offered to help keep us healthy over the coming winter period. All staff take part in the NZI annual hearing tests and the factory gets systematically checked for hearing risks (a clean bill of health for everyone including the factory). Debbie C celebrates 28 years with NZI – well done. We all enjoy a staff BBQ breakfast as part of our the quarterly company update and breakfast BBQ meeting. A NZI team of management and sales staff attended the Innovate 2018 conference in Timaru, this certainly helps motivate our business planning and strategy along with having a strong focus on wellness of those within our business.

MAY

We embark on a recruitment campaign to employ more staff as part of the factory growth strategy and also focus on staff training with systems and manual handling techniques. Our regular monthly H&S team meetings continue with a representation from all areas of the business. Warren C clicks over 38 years with NZI and Peter C celebrates 27 years (what a great effort guys). NZI winter clothing issue to all staff, starts to prove useful for the imminent cold weather.

JUNE

NZI have the official launch of our partnership with Narada Stored Energy Solutions at the EEA conference at SkyCity Auckland, the system integrates with solar, wind and traditional energy sources to provide on and off grid solutions for the supply of energy. It was a fantastic exhibit at the annual 3-day event and NZI was again well supported.

We upgraded our Temuka café and replaced the old electric heater with a heat pump system and compliment that with new ceiling insulation, it's now nice and toasty ready for the cool South Canterbury winter and of course, to keep us cool during our scorching summers, when the norwesterly (Foehn wind) kicks in. Dave J celebrates his 42nd NZI Anniversary, another fantastic effort.

JULY

Our NZ, Australia and Pacific Island partnership agreement with Long Controls (Long & Crawford Switchgear) parts and accessories kicks off with training sessions from Dunedin to Auckland with the UK specialists in attendance. This compliments the supply on NZI stock spare parts and tools.

Peter Q slips into 26 years with NZI – great effort and I believe last year's 25-year gold watch is still keeping good time. Plans for this years Christmas party get started, seems ages away yet...

AUGUST

Our Directors enjoy a quick factory tour of the Temuka site in time to see the "Ball Mill" refurbishment project starting. This will take several months and a big financial injection to improve production capability.

SEPTEMBER

We complete an inhouse retirement planning seminar for all staff to hopefully assist with the different levels of planning requirements needed when this change comes around. It's all about being prepared and the information was certainly useful for anyone between 16 and 80 years of age.

We invested in a couple of new pallet lifters and get to retire a couple of units that have done us proud. We host a contingent of project managers, engineers and logistic staff from Connetics and provide a history of our manufacturing business and overview of today's manufacturing techniques in the Temuka factory.

OCTOBER

Daylight saving kicks off (summer must be on the way) and we continue our 6.00am start and 2.30pm finish times (certainly helps to get some odd jobs completed at home after work each day).

Our turning line staff show off some hidden "chef talents" during our last quarterly staff BBQ breakfast/business update for the year. Craig J celebrates 34 years with NZI – what a great effort. We again exhibit at the Connexis Linesman Competition held in Christchurch this year, a great event although the weather was a challenge for the contingent attending from the NZI Temuka factory.

NOVEMBER

We commission the first of our Ball Mills after major refurbishment and redesign work is completed. This prototype design will be the template to upgrade the remaining mills.

We continue developing and auditing our factory SOPs (standard operating procedures) for all major tasks and works so we better manage our manufacturing consistency. These SOPs create and simplify an effective system approach to our manufacturing process and aligns with our ISO9001:2015 certifications and approvals.

DECEMBER

Last minute adjustments to the new 2019 catalogue (these will be out any day soon) so keep an eye out for them. We are also completing some final adjustments to the January 2019 price reviews. We haven't started the holidays yet but already planning the start-up and production schedules for Jan/Feb/March 2019.

But maybe at last, there's a little slow down and a chance to look back on the year past and our successes and get ready for our Christmas function when we fly staff and partners in to Temuka from across NZ, so we can have one event to celebrate another great year in the history of NZI.

Throughout the year we celebrated these staff milestones, all celebrating their place in the NZI 25 years plus club: Peter Q, 26 years; Ian C, 27 years; Peter C, 27 years; Gary A, 27 years; Debbie C, 28 years; Heather G, 31 years; Craig J, 34 years; Rayleine P, 39 years; Warren C, 38 years; Dave J, 42 years.

I reckon we can all clock this up as another successful year - well done team. Thank you all for the support during 2018 and we all hope 2019 is another year to remember.

Chris van der Werff
General Manager