

## JANUARY

We had a great team of staff who finished their holidays early to make sure the factory was prepared for the start-up (it normally takes a few days to restart our complex production process correctly). We added 7 new staff in the first week and extra hours are worked by most of the team to increase our output.

## FEBRUARY

We complete our external Telarc audit of our Quality Assurance ISO 9001:2015 system including all process and procedures and receive a “pass with flying colours” result, which is due to our constant attention and detailed updating of this “living document”. We welcome two new senior positions to NZI (Ceramicist and Compliance Manager) both of these roles plus our other new recruits making a positive impact on NZI.

Cyclone Gabrielle settles in for a few days, creating massive damage to many electricity networks across NZ, prompting NZI's focus of meeting the needs of those networks most badly damaged to assist with repairs.

NZI directors visit the Kumeu site for a strategy session, providing a well-set business plan for 2023/24.

## MARCH

Planning starts on our annual staff winter clothing issue, a free issue to all NZI staff to assist keeping warm in the coming cooler months.

Our QA and H&S teams get a boost in numbers to make sure the profile of these very important aspects of NZI business is well supported and everyone continues to be informed on our hard work and progress achieved.

We complete separate Fire & Earthquake emergency evacuation drills (practice) but who would have known we will need the earthquake evacuation later in the year.

## APRIL

Our annual, companywide 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, although our waistlines got stretched a little after a visit from the Easter bunny with chocolate and Easter treats and a few hot cross buns thrown in as a good measure. Our porcelain recycling program continues and we crush recycle 426+ tonnes of porcelain, which is obviously great for the sustainability of the environment and instantly reduces landfill by 426+ tonnes – Great work NZI.

## MAY

It was also time for NZI to review our Emergency Business Continuity plan, something we review on a regular annual basis, of course in the hope it's never required. But essential planning for NZI, just in case.

Our directors visited NZI Temuka and we all had an enjoyable day showing off all the progress and improvements we've made in the factory since their last visit.

We realign our factory focus to manufacture a core range of insulators to align with network requirements meaning some traditional products get discontinued in the initial stages to create more production capacity for new industry standard products.

## JUNE

Planning gets some real momentum for our 100-year celebrations planned for February 2024, what a great accomplishment for NZI to continue to operate and proudly support the New Zealand Electricity Industry for 100 years and proactively change with the times and shifting demands.

Our staff are an important part of this 100-year history and it's something we are very proud of. Hopefully this is something you are also keen to be involved with, registrations close on 15th December (check out the 100-year tab on our website home page).

## JULY

Our ceramics laboratory receives a new Mastersizer 3000E to replace our old 2000 model. This state-of-the-art machine, uses laser diffraction to measure particle sizes based on light scattering, measuring particles from 0.01µm to 3.5mm. We're excited about its potential and it will help enhance our ability to improve the strength of the insulator body and ball milling efficiencies, which of course improves our insulator strength.

## AUGUST

Upgrades to our Sulphur Cement assembly area plus the addition of another cement line to help process the increase in porcelain insulator demand and improve product flow.

The addition of another lathe specific for turning 33kV line posts adds a welcome boost to our output through the factory and onto our customers. This is in addition to our record high production of 11kV line posts and other key NZI porcelain products.

We embark on training improvements with an elite part of the Temuka team training as “train the trainers” to make sure correct skills are passed across the business and to new employees.

## SEPTEMBER

Planning starts for our Christmas function (always a great event for staff and partners).

NZI attend and exhibit at the Connexis Linesman Competition in Invercargill, which was well hosted and another great industry event, despite the weather providing challenges to competitors and exhibitors alike. Again a great chance to meet up with so many of our special “friends of NZI”.

NZI got to put into practise our Earthquake evacuation skills when a magnitude 6.0 earthquake, centred about 45km north of Geraldine, at a relatively shallow depth of 11km, attempted to shake NZI off our feet, a good drill, no damage although we did have a few frayed nerves for a couple of days.

## OCTOBER

It's nice to have good stock of most product lines for our customers now, although due to demand we still have a few pinch points. 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. Whilst 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 Christmas event was the traditional “good time & let your hair down type of event”, well appreciated by all staff and their partners, especially after a long hard year that we've all had.

We continue our recruitment campaign to support business growth, staff numbers start to increase which is great and many existing staff are still putting in the hard yards committing to hours and hours of overtime work to help our customers receive products on time.

## DECEMBER

Final last-minute checks and changes to our revised 2024 NZI product catalogue with its updated new look, new layout, easy to use index – keep an eye out for it.

We lock in our Christmas/New Year shutdown period and maintenance plan over that period, it's time for some of us to have a holiday.

**Over the year we celebrated the following staff milestones, all celebrating their place in the NZI 25 years plus club:** Rayleine P – 44 years, Warren C – 43 years, Heather G – 36 years, Debbie C – 33 years, Peter C – 32 years, Ian C – 32 years, Gary A – 32 years, Peter Q – 31 years, Debbie S – 29 years.

We also celebrated Margaret D – 22 years, Brendon S – 21 years as they approach their 25 years' service.

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

It's been another successful year for the NZI team – well done.

To our customers, suppliers and supporters of our business – thank you all for the continued support during 2023. We all hope that 2024 is another successful year for you all and of course 2024 will be a year for New Zealand Insulators to celebrate 100 years of proudly supporting the New Zealand electrical industry, that's an impressive milestone for any business.

**Chris van der Werff** | General Manager