

# Capability News

EIGHTH EDITION

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## New Winch makes Cable Recovery a Cinch

### Company Background

ENERGEX has owned and operated one of Australia's largest electricity distribution networks for almost 85 years. The electricity is supplied to ENERGEX through a high-voltage transmission network that is owned and operated by Powerlink Queensland, a government owned corporation. ENERGEX's distribution area of 25,000 square kilometres includes more than 50,000km of underground and overhead electricity lines and cables, over half a million power poles, some 43,000 transformers and more than 290,000 street lights. Today ENERGEX distributes electricity to more than 1.2 million residential, industrial and commercial customers. It has also developed a strong reputation for its network asset management capabilities including specialised engineering services, metering applications and energy solutions.

### The Situation

Replacing hazardous overhead cable conductors, whereby the 3 bare copper wires conducting electricity are replaced with one solid ABC cable or replacing old overhead copper with new aluminium cable, is part of the activities carried out by ENERGEX. To perform these tasks, ENERGEX deploys manually operated cable recovery winch trucks to retrieve and replace the cables. Due to the escalation of work and new wire technology, ENERGEX identified the need to manufacture and implement a new winch system that allowed for enhanced control, better utility and greater safety for the operator, as the former design had a slow three-wire recovery time and did not give the operator a lot of feedback or control.



*The new winch in action*

### The Solution

ENERGEX forwarded the specifications of the new cable recovery winch system to ICN engineers who drew on their knowledge of local industry to research the current capability of hydraulics design manufacturers. After visiting and considering the suitability of a number of potential manufacturers, ICN produced a short-listed report for ENERGEX which highlighted each of the nominated companies;

- Capability to manufacture the winch system to specification
- Capacity to deliver to the required time frame
- Established track record

After their own further evaluations of the nominated companies, ENERGEX gauged ICN's initial assessment and provided information as "most useful", and awarded Specialised Equipment Design the contract to design and manufacture the new overhead cable recovery winch unit. ICN identified the Brisbane company's potential and interest to expand into the energy industry, in view of their demonstrated capabilities in hydraulic and electronic control systems design, manufacture, and certification of machinery for the related industries of waste, agriculture, mining, rail, and material handling. The company additionally offered engineering stress analysis capability using 3D Solid Works design software which interfaced with CNC production machinery.



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## Results

After several months of working in collaboration with ENERGEX on a design to fulfil the specific requirements of field staff and overcoming construction difficulties, Specialised Equipment Design delivered the first 3-Drum recovery winch system to ENERGEX. It is currently deployed in the field to recover, replace and string new cables.

Brian Lehmann, Fleet Maintenance and Program officer at ENERGEX says "ICN played an integral role in this project"

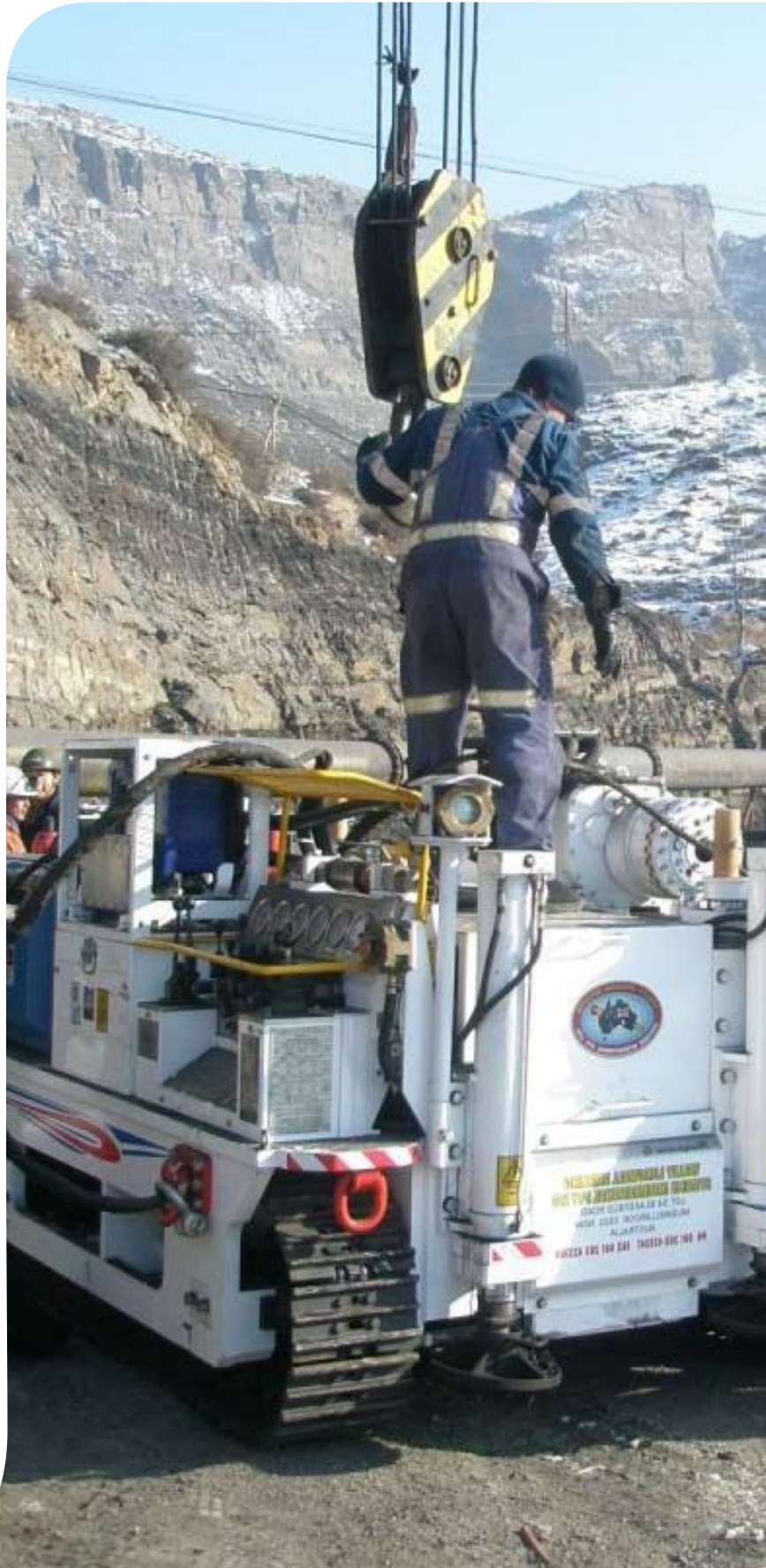
- Some of the benefits as outlined by Alan Heald, user and operator of the new winch system, include;
  - » New communication set up (head set and foot system) allows for greater communication throughout whole job site
  - » 20% improvement in speed and efficiency as a result of the new 3 drum set up.
  - » Faster, safer and easier to operate overall.
  - » Easy removal of wire cable with new drum design.
  - » Efficient use of cable rollers, conductor stocking & swivels complement the unit to make it safe and user friendly.
  - » New conductors aren't hauled up poles anymore and the heavy lifting has gone from the job reducing strain/sprain injuries.
  - » Excellent lighting for night time use.

### Benefits for Specialised Equipment Design

- Ability to manufacture machinery for the energy industry on an ongoing basis
- The use of this technology can be adapted to any other industry that requires communication or electrical cables
- A professional long-term supplier relationship formed with ENERGEX
- The opportunity to showcase the company's ability to a new industry

ENERGEX presented Specialised Equipment Design with a Supplier Quality Award for the successful outcome of the Winch System Project in early 2008. Opportunities to supply major companies like ENERGEX offer not only significant benefits for Specialised Equipment Design, but have a positive economic multiplier effect for the local community and energy industry. Simon Pritchard, Senior Sales Engineer at Specialised Equipment Design says "The energy industry is one we've wanted to work with for some time now, and ICN showed us the door for that opportunity."

For further information, please contact: Philip Glazebrook, Industry Capability Network (QLD) or email: [info-qld@icn.org.au](mailto:info-qld@icn.org.au)



Unloading Valley Longwall's Australian built equipment for



## ICN assists Australian Companies - into Chinese coal mining safety market

The Industry Capability Network (NSW) Ltd (ICN NSW), Australian Mining Services International (AMSI), and China Australia Mining Development Alliance (CAMDA) have worked together over the last 4 years to introduce Australian mining safety technologies and expertise to China's largest coal mining company, the Shenhua Ningxia Coal Group.

Each organisation has become a vital link in the supply chain providing much needed services to improve safety in Chinese coal mines, and open international business opportunities for Australian mine safety specialists.

Much deeper and more gaseous than Australian mines, Chinese coal operations are notorious for incidents related to the presence of methane gas, and it is a priority of the Chinese Government that the situation be rectified.

Australian companies that have won contracts to alleviate the problems include:

- GeoGAS is providing initial gas testing and analysis on coal seams before drilling and coal production.
- Valley Longwall Drilling is providing underground directional drilling to drain methane from the seam.
- Mitchell Drilling Corporation is providing specialised drilling services from the surface to seam, allowing methane to be collected at surface well-heads.

Gas is taken from the well heads as an energy source for industry as well as for domestic cooking and heating, leaving the mine safe for the workers, and reducing air pollution caused by methane seepage.

The path to success in winning Chinese coal safety contracts starts with Australian companies being introduced to AMSI by ICN. CAMDA, a joint venture between AMSI and the China Coal Industry Research and Development Centre (CCIRDC) then acts as an in country agent, providing commercial, communication and facilitation services to Australian exporters.

ICN Hunter Manager, Ken Ford visited Inner Mongolia and other provinces with AMSI in late 2007, by invitation of the CCIRDC to identify new customers, mine sites, and opportunities and to strengthen relationships throughout the supply chain. More trade visits are envisaged.

The Shenhua Ningxia Coal Group has utilised Australian coal mine safety technology on two of its mines to date, with another eleven mines being surveyed for potential gas drainage. Further opportunities will be offered to Australian specialists in other mines owned by the company. The company is one of many Chinese coal miners.

Chinese coal production dwarfs Australian output, with production of 2.5 billion tonnes per year. By comparison Australia produces approx 300 million tonnes per year.

ICN, AMSI, and CAMDA will continue to collaborate for the benefit of Chinese coal miners and Australian exporters.

For further information, please contact: Ken Ford, Industry Capability Network (NSW - Hunter Region) or email: [info-nsw@icn.org.au](mailto:info-nsw@icn.org.au)



Colin Donegan (right), Australian mining engineer, and "Tiger" Pengyong (left), Camda Mining Team Leader working together underground in the Shenhua Baijigou Coal Mine

or underground horizontal radial drilling



## Turning the Tide

At an estimated cost of around \$40m, the construction of BOC's helium plant in Darwin doesn't present as a headline act against the billion dollar plus projects currently on the books around the country. However, when you turn an import into an export industry with potential for expansion you are hitting the right buttons in today's environment.

The Northern Territory Industry Capability Network (NTICN) has signed a Framework Agreement aimed at assisting BOC and its sub-contractors in identifying and providing NT and Australian industry with full, fair and reasonable opportunity to participate in applicable aspects of the project.

This will be Australia's first helium plant and one of only 15 in the world when production commences in mid-2009. About one-third of the helium will be transported by road to Australian customers, reducing Australia's dependence on imports which come primarily from America. The plant will supply 2-3% of the world's helium demand.

BOC will recover the helium from Darwin LNG plant's nitrogen vent gas stream that would otherwise be released into the atmosphere. The helium will be purified and liquefied, before it is loaded into specially designed cryogenic containers which will keep the helium at an extremely low temperature for shipment.

The plant will be housed in a prefabricated steel building designed to survive heavy wind or earthquakes or tremors (this is an area of low seismic activity). About 150 loads of helium will be produced each year, with an average of three trucks leaving each week.

The helium produced at Darwin will be shipped as a cryogenic liquid. At atmospheric pressure, helium becomes a liquid at -268 degrees C. The helium will be transported to transfill facilities in Sydney & Melbourne, where the bulk product will be repackaged into smaller containers (small liquid containers called "dewars" or high pressure gaseous cylinders or tube trailers). The other two thirds will be shipped by container ship to Asian markets.

The future for the oil & gas industry in the Northern Territory is an exciting one. The Darwin LNG plant was a milestone in that a major multinational 'broke ranks' and established itself in a new location. An expansion to this plant is expected at some time in the relatively near future and other projects are in the 'pipeline'.

Supply to the BOC helium plant is not only assured, but has the potential to grow on the back of further expansion. It will remain a niche export market, but any project that turns an import into an export deserves recognition and commendation.

For further information, please contact: Industry Capability Network (NT) or email: [info-nt@nticn.com.au](mailto:info-nt@nticn.com.au)

## Electrical Contractor - a Central West success story

Seeking a lifestyle change, six years ago Craig Conlon relocated his family and electrical contracting business, Gozcon Electrical to Orange in the heart of the Central West of NSW.

The move to the region provided Gozcon Electrical with great opportunities and challenges for growth and expansion into new and exciting industries.

Owner/manager, Craig Conlon said, "I was introduced to a number of managers in the mining industry by ICN NSW, Central West Managers, Jeremy Cubitt and Ken Raymond who were aware of my capabilities and quality of service.

This provided a great opportunity for Gozcon Electrical to move into new areas and to provide services and carved out a reputation based on professionalism, reliability and effective servicing to the mining industry".

Due to a newly established contact in the Thiess - Kentz Joint Venture at Wilpinjong Coal Mine located at Mudgee and Barrick Gold in West Wyalong, Gozcon Electrical expanded its operation rapidly throughout the Central West providing a specialist service to both the mining and industrial sectors.

Gozcon commenced providing a service to the mining sector through a project at Lake Cowal, where it is now the preferred electrical installer and maintenance provider. The company has gone on to secure contracts in mines located at Orange, Mudgee, West Wyalong, Hunter Valley and Cobar.



This year the company is planning to expand services it already provides to the Ridgeway Deeps and Cadia East Projects with Newcrest Mining located outside Orange. Its work which commenced in July 2007 on the Bundamba Water Project will also continue by providing supplementary labour to Thiess Kentz.

Gozcon Electrical has experienced significant growth moving from a one man operation in 2001 to a dynamic small business employing around 30 employees in 2007. Mr Conlon adds, "to continue providing effective services that meet our clients' needs we plan to increase investment in developing and sustaining our skill base".

"The company now employs 4 apprentices, we have purchased our own premises and will continue to provide the best possible equipment for the efficient and effective servicing of our clients" said Craig Conlon.

"The change to the Central West has proved a great success both on a personal and business level. I have a passion for flying and am now able to often mix business with pleasure by flying to visit Gozcon staff and customers at remote project locations".

"Gozcon Electrical values the support and business relationships that we have developed over the last seven years, particularly with ICN NSW Managers for their introductions into the regional mining industry. We look forward to working together on many new projects in the future as the sky is the limit," concludes Mr Conlon.

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## Growth of Australian Supplier Oil & Gas Capability

The world's attention has been drawn to the rapid growth of the oil and gas projects in the North West of Western Australia including current projects such as the Phase V LNG Expansion (owned by the North West Shelf Venture), the Vincent Oil Development (owned by Woodside and Mitsui E & P Australia), the Pluto LNG Development (owned by Woodside) and the North Rankin Redevelopment (owned by the North West Shelf Venture).

The Industry Capability Network Western Australia (ICNWA) is an integral member of the engineering teams who are designing and constructing these projects. Whilst actively locating Australian capability for the projects under construction, ICNWA is also assisting a number of the proposed projects such as the Gorgon Project (owned by Chevron, ExxonMobil and Shell) to gain a strong knowledge of the growing Australian oil and gas supplier sector and associated capability.

Since inception in 1987, ICN has assisted our domestic suppliers of goods and services to capture in excess of \$1 billion worth of work against global competition. Some of the Australian suppliers who are growing their supply capability to serve the Australian and global oil and gas sectors include Western Process Controls (WPC), Direct Engineering Services Marine & Offshore (DESMO) and Modular Engineering.

Western Australian company WPC Director of Business Development Brad D'Cunha said the company's work with ICN has provided many opportunities to link in with Australian projects and global supply chains. "Our experience with ICN has been very positive," Mr D'Cunha said. "It has led to a number of opportunities to provide services to projects such as HISmelt, Ravensthorpe Nickel and the North West Shelf's Train 5."

WPC has grown to include service, automated valve and technology divisions to provide total process control solutions. WPC's commitment in supporting its customers with emerging automation BUS technologies (profibus and foundation fieldbus) includes a fully functional flow laboratory with control system which is utilised for customer training and design/system configuration.

A recent significant investment by WPC is the installation of a cryogenic valve testing facility. WPC are now capable of competing with the only other facility of this type in the world based in Japan. WPC has acknowledged ICN's project consultancy work together with its online system listing procurement opportunities, ProjectConnect, assisted with their investment decision in the cryogenic facility.

ProjectConnect, a free online system, provides direct web based communication between buyers and suppliers. It presents suppliers with a brief overview of the major projects being completed in Western Australia and allows buyers to list packages live on the site for suppliers to register their interest.

ProjectConnect also acts as a useful communicative tool for buyers to communicate up to date information to suppliers on a massive scale in a matter of seconds.

For companies interested in becoming actively involved and to grow in the oil and gas industry, please log onto [www.projectconnect.com.au](http://www.projectconnect.com.au) and register your interest for packages listed or contact ICNWA on 08 9365 7623.

For further information, please contact: [Industry Capability Network \(WA\)](mailto:Industry.Capability.Network@icn.org.au) or email: [info-wa@icn.org.au](mailto:info-wa@icn.org.au)



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## Rolls Royce - demonstrating commitment to local firms for construction of Australia's biggest shiplift

Rolls Royce has contracted RPG to build the steel platform for Australia's biggest shiplift at Techport Australia's Osborne site.

The 156 metre-long shiplift, being constructed at the Common User Facility, is part of the South Australian Government's \$400 million commitment to infrastructure at Techport Australia, to support the Navy's Air Warfare Destroyer Program.

Deputy Premier Kevin Foley said RPG's success could be attributed to the SA Government Industry Participation Policy. "This is a great example of a local supplier winning work at Techport against offshore competition," Mr Foley said.

In keeping with the SA Industry Participation Plan, Rolls Royce liaised with Industry Capability Network SA and considered local suppliers.

Rolls Royce Australia's Business Development Manager, Judd Smith said his company was impressed with the capability of South Australian supply chain companies.

"There are at least another 6 subcontracts still to be awarded in the shiplift contract and we're committed to considering local firms," Mr Smith said. "We're looking at them very seriously to be involved not only at Osborne but also in Rolls Royce's offshore projects," Mr Smith said

The General Manager of RPG Australia, Mike Lewis said the ICNSA had been very supportive in this and other infrastructure projects.

"We are really excited to be involved in the shiplift contract. It will secure existing employment and create future employment opportunities," Mr Lewis said.

For further information, please contact: Dermot Cussen, Industry Capability Network (SA) or email: [info-sa@icn.org.au](mailto:info-sa@icn.org.au)



*Australia's biggest shiplift at Techport Australia's Osborne site.*

## Biotechnology - can it replace the Petrochemical Industry

This is the third in a series of four articles by ICN Consultant Klaus Baumgartel looking at biotechnology, bio-processing, the opportunities both will bring to Australian industry and how they may shape the industrial landscape of the future. This issue discusses whether biotechnology will be able to replace or substitute the myriad of chemicals essential to providing and/or maintaining our standard of living.

Much of our standard of living has been underpinned by a chemical industry feeding many of the processes that provide us with the goods and products we need for our daily lives. Industries such as agriculture, plastics, textiles, food processing, papermaking, health and hygiene and many areas of manufacturing rely on chemicals to improve process efficiency and to increase productivity.

Not all, but many of these chemicals are products of the petrochemical industry. These rely on petroleum and natural gas based hydrocarbons to provide the precursors and intermediates required for the multitude of chemicals used by industry. Even those that do not use petroleum directly, such as many of the inorganic metal salts, alkalis and acids, are dependent on energy provided by the same source.

Could the world provide a similar suite of chemicals from biomass to maintain our standard of living if petroleum ran out?

Recent developments in the biotechnology area suggest that similar outcomes could be produced from biomass. Of course the chemistry would be based on carbohydrates, not hydrocarbons. Research is discovering possible routes to provide identical chemicals to those used today and other chemicals and polymers from the innate chemistry of the biomass but providing similar properties to those produced synthetically.

Future technologies will be based on a number of precursor products which can be easily derived from biomass. These include sugars, cellulose, starch, lignin and proteins as well as other less well defined products produced by the pyrolysis of organic materials. These precursors can be manipulated using existing technology to provide alternative routes to many existing chemicals. There will also be substitute products which can replace existing petrochemical based products.

This may seem futuristic, but there are many examples of where this is already done.

Popular belief is that ethanol has always been produced by the natural fermentation of sugars. It may be a surprise that until recently, the majority of industrial ethanol was produced synthetically using a petrochemical process. This was considered to be more



*Products made from Bio-Plastics*



*Products made from Bio-Plastics*

efficient than the fermentation and distillation route. More improvements in distillation technology and the desire to produce ethanol as a substitute for petrol, has reversed this situation. Petrochemical ethanol will no longer be able to compete.

The same technology can be used to create other alcohols such as methanol, propanol, butanol etc. All are currently largely made via the petrochemical process. All can be made via the fermentation and distillation route.

The impetus will come with the development of ethanol from cellulose which will have some of these other alcohols

as byproducts. These will also be suitable for addition to fuel ethanol and as volume capability develops, the petrochemical route will most likely disappear. The alcohols are also valuable intermediate chemicals for other chemicals such as flavours, fragrances, plastics etc.

Glycerin is used in the manufacture of cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, explosives and plastics intermediates. Until the 1990s, the vast majority was made via the petrochemical route. With the advent of biodiesel and the significant growth in production all glycerin is now derived as a byproduct of biodiesel production. This has forced the price down dramatically, and there is growing research into the use of glycerin as a precursor chemical for a number of key industrial products used in the plastics industry. As the technology is developed and the price of oil continues to rise, the industry producing glycerin derived intermediate chemicals will expand. This will add to the economic viability of the biodiesel industry.

Plastics have been a big part of the expansion in the packaging, electronics, automotive, textiles and consumer goods industries. The functionality and low weight of plastics has led to them replacing traditional materials in many applications. Plastics do come with an environmental cost if they are not disposed of responsibly, as they can persist in the environment for many years, posing problems for wildlife in the process.

Cellulose is a natural polymer that has been used for many centuries. Cotton is a well recognized form. With a small degree of chemical alteration it has been used to produce products such as rayon, a textile, and cellulose butyrate, a hard plastic.

The basis of the polymer industry is petrochemicals. These have now set the benchmark that alternative materials made from biomass will need to meet. There will be instances where the biologically derived intermediate can be used to make the monomer and hence exactly reproduce the existing polymer. More likely, there will be a gradual paradigm shift, where the bio-derived polymers will reproduce essential performance characteristics of existing products, without copying the chemistry. There are already examples of this. Poly Lactic Acid (PLA) is an evolving substitute for polyethylene in packaging applications. It is made from Lactic Acid which is derived from plant starch. It meets the physical requirements for the application and is also biodegradable.

Another is Poly Hydroxybutyric Acid (PHA). This is a more durable plastic which will compete with polypropylene in packaging and durable product applications. It too is biodegradable, but the important point is that it can duplicate the physical property profile of polypropylene, a plastic used in engineering applications. Polyethylene and polypropylene are the two highest volume plastics in the world.

Earlier mention was made that biomass will provide precursor chemicals with the mechanism to replace many petrochemical products. It is time to provide some examples of things to come.

3-Hydroxypropionic Acid can be isolated from biomass. It is a precursor which can be converted to acrylamide, acrylic acid, malonic acid and 1,3-propanediol. This will not mean much to the average reader, but all are significant in the manufacture

of acrylic polymers (textiles, surface coatings and clear plastics) and polyurethanes (coatings, automotive plastics and seating foam).

Similarly Succinic Acid, also able to be isolated from biomass can be converted to aliphatic polyesters (textiles and hard plastics), adipic acid (nylons) and 1,4-butanediol (polycarbonate, nylons, polyurethanes and polyesters).

Certainly, the change over from petrochemicals to bio sourced chemicals is only just beginning. Reduction in quantities of oil and rising prices will accelerate the research and its implementation. Current thought is that much of what is now available in chemicals and plastics (from petroleum), will either still be there in the future (from biomass), or be replaced by a substitute with equivalent utility.

The next decade will see a move from a petroleum based industry to a bio based industry. This will be largely beneficial in the long run, as it will be sustainable, will offer environmental benefits, will rejuvenate the agricultural sector and will benefit regional economies. The opportunity is there to largely maintain our material standard of living and to prosper into the future.

For further information, please contact: Klaus Baumgartel, Industry Capability Network (NSW Albury) or email: [info-nsw@icn.org.au](mailto:info-nsw@icn.org.au)

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## Industry Capability Network objective

The objective of the ICN is to locate and promote competitive local sources of supply, so helping to create additional employment and wealth in the community. Readers are invited to contact the ICN offices regarding the capabilities of local companies to produce goods and services which can substitute for imports.