

## Media Release

### Australia ensures World Player Status as founding member for International Construction Research Alliance (ICALL)

*Driving excellence in built environment research to benefit industry and society*

Australia is not only playing the big league, it's structuring the game.

Australia's Cooperative Research Centre for Construction Innovation (CRC CI) is collaborating with World Leaders in construction research and development with the collective aim of creating World Best Practice in International Construction and Property Management.

The CRC CI's CEO Dr Keith Hampson represented 19 industry, governmental and research partners and stakeholders from the Australian Construction Industry in the first face-to-face meeting and subsequent launch of the International Construction Research Alliance (ICALL), on 24<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> February in Berlin, Germany.

"Our CRC provided the Australian Construction Industry with a worthy partner to join the alliance," Dr Hampson said. "Previously Australia didn't have this legitimacy, but in the last couple of years we have developed the competence and skills required to partner with powerful international players in the research and development scene."

CRC CI's role in strengthening Australia's international construction and property management skills arose out of the Commonwealth Government's commitment to up-skilling the property and construction industry as identified through the Action Agenda process of the late 1990's and the CRC program.

It is envisaged ICALL will contribute not only to Australia's economic growth, but will ensure world leaders know Australia is on an equal playing field in the property and construction Research and Development arena.

Dr Hampson believes the alliance is an excellent opportunity for Australia to make an impact internationally with significant positive spin-offs for our partners and the Australian industry domestically.

"This is an important step in the domestic construction community to ensure we do not reinvent the wheel and gain leverage from our key global partners," he said.

The 5 foundation members of ICALL include:

- Cooperative Research Centre for Construction Innovation (CRC CI), **Australia**;
- Centre for Integrated Facilitated Engineering (CIFE), Stanford University, **USA**;
- Centre Scientifique et Technique du Bâtiment (CSTB), **France**;
- VTT Building and Transport, **Finland**; and
- Centre for Facilities Management (CFM), Research Institute for the Built and Human Environment, The University of Salford, **UK**;

Members worked electronically for nine months to create their newly signed agreement, which is centred on 4 initiatives:

1. **Collaborative Research Projects** – developing, collaborating and benchmarking research projects across national boundaries for domestic and international benefit, including undertaking joint research within the fields of Business and Industry Development, Sustainable Built Assets, and Delivery and Management of Built Assets. The use of advance information and communication technologies underpins each of these three areas.

2. **Corporate Activities** – increasing global understanding and sharing of knowledge and aspirations. Australia's CRC CI will host the first ICALL conference scheduled for 2004, highlighting the role clients can play in driving innovation in the property and construction industry.
3. **Researchers and Exchange Students** – ICALL will provide opportunities for students, researchers and key international professionals to gain and share experiences with partner research venues in member countries. Researchers will also have the opportunity to work with leading researchers throughout Europe and America, and Australia will benefit from a source of International visitors.
4. **Promotion and Networking** – ICALL will promote itself as a collaborative leadership network to the international community, whereby they will promote with governments and agencies their ability to provide applied Research and Development capabilities at an international level.

“Our initiatives ensure ICALL members exercise maximum leverage off each other, providing the world stage with excellent resources and results,” Dr Hampson said. “The initiatives will develop professionals who can work in the global property and construction industry, while at the same time providing Australia with access to new and increased levels of funding internationally.”

ICALL's three year business plan and MOU will be signed off in June 2003 by foundation members, with strong endorsement for the initiative by CRC CI participant members.

#### **ENDS**

**CRC for Construction Innovation is a collaboration involving 19 industry, government and research partners and has been made possible through a \$14 million Federal Government grant through the CRC Program complementing \$50 million in other industry, research and other government funding.**

**More information:** Dr Keith Hampson, CEO, CRC CI,  
T: 07 3864 1393 [enquiries@construction-innovation.info](mailto:enquiries@construction-innovation.info).

**Media assistance:** Kate Finlayson, Communications Officer, CRC CI, T: 07 3864 9295,  
M: 0417 873 813, [k.finlayson@construction-innovation.info](mailto:k.finlayson@construction-innovation.info)

**Center for Integrated Facility Engineering (CIFE), Stanford University, USA**, in partnership with industrial members, aims to be the world's premier academic research centre for industry products, bringing extensive design and construction experience to all major types of construction. **CIFE:** Associate Professor Martin Fischer, Stanford University T: +1 650 725 4649 **Website:** [www.stanford.edu/](http://www.stanford.edu/)

**Centre Scientifique et Technique du Bâtiment (CSTB), France** plays a leading role in both European construction and international cooperation in fields as varied as the urban environment, health, communication sciences, economics and social issues. CSTB researchers are finding current solutions to future needs - working today to meet the requirements that builders, manufacturers, and end-users will have tomorrow. **CSTB:** Dr Luc Bourdeau, Head European Affairs, R&D Directorate T: +33 4 9395 6706 **Website:** [www.cstb.fr/](http://www.cstb.fr/)

**VTT Building and Transport, Technical Research Centre of Finland, Finland** is an impartial expert organisation that carries out technical and techno economic research and development work, via three types of activities: commercial activities, joint projects and self-financed projects. VTT also offers information services. **VTT:** Dr Pekka Houvila, Group Manager, Concurrent Engineering T: +358 9 456 5903 **Website:** [www.vtt.fi](http://www.vtt.fi)

**Research Institute for the Built and Human Environment, The University of Salford, UK** operates as an internationally recognised research centre of 34 Foundation companies and was set up in response to a growing need to promote strategic R&D in the property and construction sector. **CFM:** Professor Ghassan Aouad, Associate Head for Research, Professor of Construction IT and Management, School of Construction and Property Management T: +44 161 295 5176 **Website:** [www.salford.ac.uk](http://www.salford.ac.uk)