



COVID-19 may be hampering some industries right now but residential building is still open for business. *HOUSING* talks to suppliers and operators in Australia about why they're busier than ever, and discovers more about their products that aim to improve onsite efficiencies, and produce quality, durable builds.

COVID-19 has disrupted business as we know it, with few industries operating in the same ways they once were. As governments moved to shut down much of the economy during the first wave of health cases, the housing industry came within a hairsbreadth of being closed for business. Fortunately, HIA outlined to government how home building could continue to work safely, and businesses along the supply chains moved to accommodate safe working practices in order to stay open and functioning. So far, industry has continued to manufacture, trade and build, with some businesses even finding an increase in activity.

Coronavirus is likely to shape how we go about our personal and professional lives for some time to come, with fresh outbreaks and tighter restrictions on our movements illustrating how rapidly it all can change. In such a climate, gaining a competitive edge is more important than ever, as you continue to remain relevant and consolidate new customers.

**HIA outlined to government how home building could continue to work safely**

With so many variables impacting our lives, it is understandable you'll be looking for surety where you can get it. The businesses *HOUSING* has spoken to for this article offer quality of product,

Story: Laura Valic

# BUILDING ESSENTIALS



Photo courtesy Dincel



Photo courtesy Dincel

and local manufacturing services to keep your projects moving forward. In light of recent reports questioning whether the virus can contaminate imported goods, even potentially surviving in cold storage, buying local may benefit your project in more ways than one.

### Formidable formwork

Dincel, an Australian-owned manufacturer that produces a permanent formwork system that differs to traditional concrete formwork, has fortunately been one of the businesses in the pandemic to continue with minimal disruption. Like all companies in any industry, it has had to implement new strategies to adhere to government and health recommendations to ensure the safety of customers and employees, but Chairman Burak Dincel says the Dincel factory and state warehouses remain in full operation.

### All Dincel products are locally manufactured in Australia at a plant located in Erskine Park, NSW

'We have not experienced disruption to our supply chain,' he says. 'All our products are locally manufactured in Australia at our plant located in Erskine Park, NSW. We are well stocked with all products for delivery within days for any size project, and we have a steady supply of raw materials.'

The Dincel product has many features that suit residential builds. Consisting of polymer (re-engineered) PVC panels with a unique patented snap-lock joint for fast and easy installation, the panels deliver a structurally sound wall when filled

with concrete. Natural or painted Dincel panels or coloured render are a popular design alternative, while cladding such as stone or timber are easily applied.

Since the panels require no craneage they are ideal for limited access sites or building tight against adjoining structures.

'Dincel panels are lightweight and offer safety and easy manoeuvrability onsite, with one person able to carry the panels across a construction site if needed,' Burak says. 'They can be installed relatively quickly, with two people typically able to comfortably install 25 square metres of panels per hour.'

The use of Dincel permanent formwork achieves greater concrete strength by minimising moisture loss throughout the curing process. The permanent polymer skin also prevents moisture from entering the wall and therefore eliminates the risk of corrosion to steel reinforcement and concrete cancer.

'Utilising Dincel load bearing walls in multi-level building designs can result in reduced concrete slab thickness and steel in floor slabs, which leads to a significant reduction in carbon footprint, as endorsed by Swinburne University of Technology. This results in less material, labour and waste, and translates to real financial savings.'

'Dincel concrete walls can even be used in BAL-FZ (Flame Zone) conditions. Assisting with this bushfire resistance is the fact that the system does not require weep holes or crack-control expansion joints, which in turn prevents embers from entering through the wall.'

Dincel has been issued CodeMark certification of conformity that verifies it is compliant with the Building Code of Australia for external and internal loadbearing wall applications. >



Photo courtesy Dincel

**'DINCEL PANELS ARE LIGHTWEIGHT AND OFFER SAFETY AND EASY MANOEUVRABILITY ONSITE'**



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## CLIPSNAP

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- **For Extreme Environments**  
Freezing to Fire prone areas
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Great for coastal areas
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Rated to BAL-40
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- **Meets Australian Standards and Building Codes**



## GUTTER BRACKET

- **5mm 125 Quad and Square Stand out Gutter Bracket**
- **Allows 5mm continuous overflow gap between back of gutter and fascia**
- **Made using ZINCALUME® steel**



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STRUCTURAL WALLING

## BCA CodeMark Certified & BRAC Accredited

*The original and internationally patented permanent polymer formwork system.*

After a series of new large-scale tests in 2019, Dintel has been issued a CodeMark Certificate of Conformity to the BCA by certification body SAI Global and a product accreditation by the Building Regulations Advisory Committee (BRAC).



Certificate CM20242

Verifies that Dintel is compliant with the BCA for external and internal loadbearing wall applications.

**BRAC**  
Accredited

Verifies that Dintel is compliant with the performance requirement CP2 – Spread of fire, and subsequently confirms that Dintel can be used where a non-combustible external wall is required.

Download the certificates at [dintel.com.au](http://dintel.com.au)



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**Dintel sets the benchmark for fire compliance for your peace of mind.**

Photo courtesy Interline Manufacturing



THE CLIPSNAP RANGE IS A UNIVERSAL PRODUCT THAT IS GREAT FOR REPLACING GUTTERS BECAUSE THE BRACKETS HAVE CORRODED OR RUSTED

### Clever gutter clips

Brisbane-based Interline Manufacturing is an Australian-owned company that specialises in metal fascia and gutter bracketry components, including fasteners and metal roof battens. Not only is it continuing to service the Australian and New Zealand building markets during these uncertain times but the manufacturer has even released a new product range suitable for custom home builds and renovations, in particular, for properties located in extreme climates.

The ClipSnap product, which is a continuous overflow gutter system allowing a 5mm or 10mm gap between a fascia and gutter, is made from a UV-stabilised and glass-reinforced nylon. Its non-corrosive and heat-resistant properties, including a BAL40 rating for bushfire prone areas, means it is highly suited to coastal regions.

'We developed the idea for ClipSnap around 10 years ago for our New Zealand customers because they were having problems with their gutter brackets snapping in the cold,' says Casey Edgar, Manager at Interline Manufacturing. 'We proceeded to do a lot of research and testing into nylon as a material, and found it to be incredibly strong.'

Lightweight and simple to install, ClipSnap is a two-piece system made to fit most gutter profiles, and can be used as a spring clip in conjunction with an Interline Metal Overstrap or with the Interline nylon arm. The gutter clip can be used with either a metal or timber fascia.

Casey says Interline Manufacturing also has the expertise and flexibility to customise products to fit any profile. 'ClipSnap is really taking off in the Australian market. We've designed two new arms in the last couple of months for customers, and we've had feedback from tradespeople who have said how great the product is.'

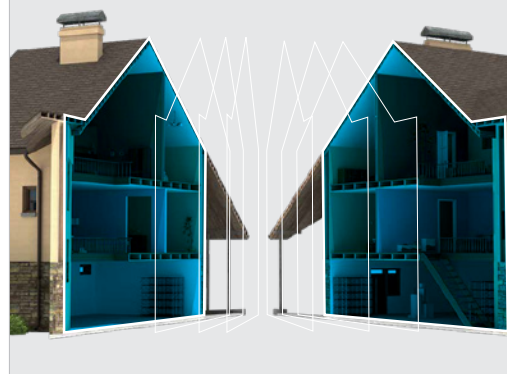
Photo courtesy Knauf



KNAUF

### InterHome

Separating wall system for low-rise multi-residential construction incorporating ShaftLiner or InterShield



'With the changes to Australian Standards regarding high front gutters and backflow, the ClipSnap range is a universal product that is great for replacing gutters because the brackets have corroded or rusted.'

Casey says ClipSnap meets the relevant requirements set out by the Building Codes of Australia and the Australian Standard AS/NZS2179.1. 'We also offer a warranty on the Duralon N6 30G HSBK106 material used for ClipSnap gutter clips and gutter arms if a full replacement of product is necessary due to a material defect. Though no installation or liability costs are covered in this replacement, the warranty lasts up to 10 years from purchase date.'

### Separating wall system

If you're looking to improve efficiencies onsite, in particular for larger developments, then opting for modular construction methods can simplify the build process and save installation time.

Manufacturers, such as Knauf, are producing more options for builders with systems that address a number of issues, such as fire safety, sound insulation and moisture or mould resistance in addition to easy installation.

With five manufacturing plants located in Victoria, NSW and Queensland all operating under a strict quality assurance system to relevant Australian Standards, Knauf's Managing Director Gavin Burton says that the company's operations are well placed to weather 2020's unexpected turn of events.

'At Knauf we are watching the situation very closely. The safety of our staff and customers is our top priority and we have introduced strict social distancing and hand hygiene measures on all our sites,' he says. 'Our factories are in full operation and we have not yet experienced disruption to our supply chain.'

In fact, Knauf recently introduced a new product to the Australian market, InterShield – an important >

# DON'T LET MOULD PUT YOUR PROJECT ON HOLD

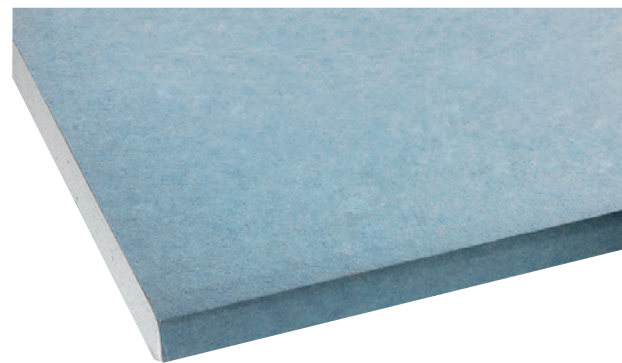


Knauf introduces **InterShield** - an improved and welcome addition to InterHome.

Knauf's InterHome is a separating wall system suitable for adjoining residential dwellings such as duplexes or townhouses. InterHome is well known for its ease of installation.

An important design element of InterHome is the central fire barrier that incorporates Knauf ShaftLiner – a 25 mm fire resistant plasterboard.

**InterShield** offers the same fire and acoustic performance as ShaftLiner but with the added benefit of superior mould and water resistance. It minimises the risk of interstitial mould in the building during and after construction, regardless of the weather.



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Water  
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resistant



Acoustic  
performance

Mould Resistant  
Water Resistant  
Fire Resistant  
Acoustic Performance

*Don't let mould put your project on hold  
– finish on time, every time*

[www.knauf.solutions](http://www.knauf.solutions)

# KNAUF



mould and moisture resistant addition to its popular InterHome System. InterHome is a separating wall system suitable for adjoining residential dwellings, such as duplexes or townhouses – which has been designed to satisfy the fire safety and sound insulation requirements of the Building Code of Australia (BCA) for separating walls.

An important design element that sets InterHome apart from conventional separating wall systems is the central fire barrier that incorporates Knauf ShaftLiner – a 25mm fire-resistant plasterboard made with a gypsum core and recycled blue liner paper.

InterShield offers the same fire- and acoustic-performance as ShaftLiner but with the added benefit of mould- and water-resistance, significantly minimising the risk of interstitial mould in the built structure during and after construction.

### **'InterHome is known for its ease of installation and the simple solution it provides when installing penetrations for electrical and plumbing services'**

The InterHome System includes two proprietary metal components: the H-Stud and the Knauf InterHome Aluminium Clip. Installed to support the central fire barrier, the clip maintains the fire performance of the system.

'InterHome is known for its ease of installation and the simple solution it provides when installing penetrations for electrical and plumbing services. When installed as a complete system, and to Knauf's recommendations, the InterHome System is backed by the comprehensive Knauf System Warranty. The unique Knauf System Warranty goes

beyond a product warranty to cover the full system for a period of 10 years.'

You can download the newly updated InterHome Installation Guide from the Knauf website.

### **Steel certification update**

A good number of residential developments in Australia today are made with some form of steel within its structure, so it makes sense that you should be aware of where it comes from for peace of mind you are using a conforming product. The Australasian Certification Authority for Reinforcing and Structural Steels (ACRS) says due to COVID-19 it has seen a big increase in calls this year from industry seeking assistance to verify the compliance of steel products for their projects.

'There has been a major upswing in unverified supply of construction steel because of pandemic induced effects on deliveries,' says Philip Sanders, Executive Director at ACRS. 'We've had a number of established suppliers who are properly certified who have reduced their supply into the market and what's happening is that free space is being filled by others.'

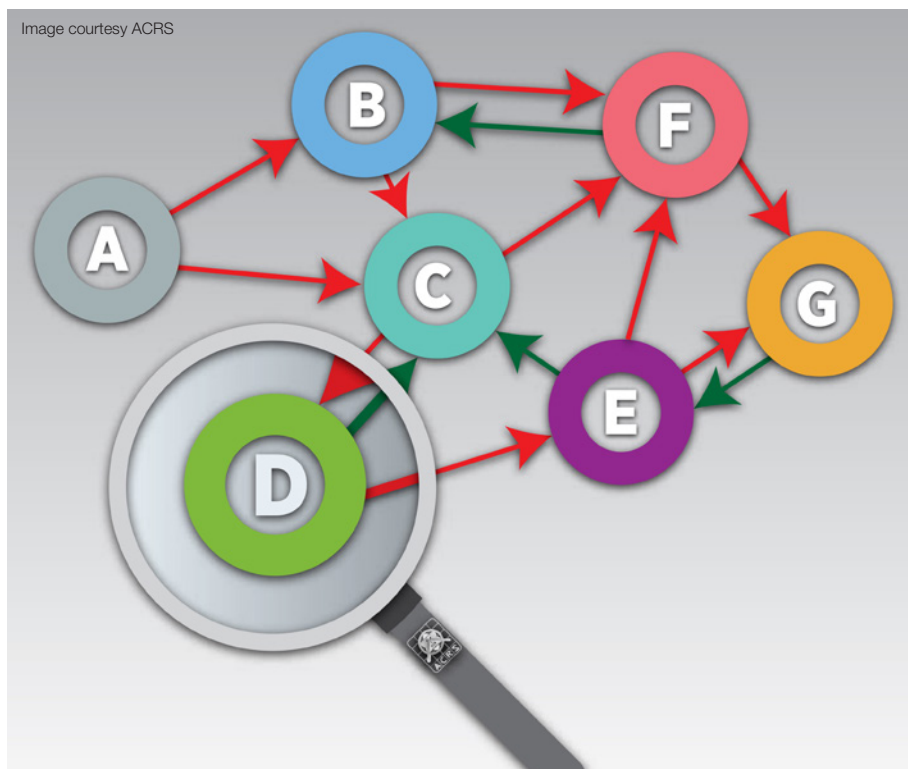
He adds that another equally concerning issue that the authority is dealing with is the 'shandying of product' – that is, a mixing of certified and uncertified product to a consumer who is expecting to get a certified product.

So, how can you be certain your ordered supplies conform to the minimum requirements of Australian Standards? Philip says proper documentation and product traceability are key.

'If it's an innocent mistake then the documentary evidence will flag it, but we've found ourselves spending a lot of time unpicking insufficient documentation,' he says. 'We are being given, in some cases, hundreds of documents to go through to try to get a builder, engineer or supplier out of a problem because they're not sure what they got from where.'

ACRS was created to provide industry with confidence in the sourcing of materials and the supply of finished steel, independent of steel suppliers. Since 2001, ACRS has offered an independent, consumer-oriented two-stage steel certification scheme (stage one for steel manufacture and stage two for steel processing and mesh manufacture, or structural welded section fabrication) that confirms steel products being delivered to construction sites have been assessed for conformity right through to a finished product.

However, in light of the unverified supplies circulating industry, Philip says ACRS has released a new steel traceability scheme to give end users additional confidence in the supply of steel products. In addition, following collaboration with industry stakeholders, ACRS certificates will show additional details from January 2021 to enable increased identification of certified materials. 'These conformity issues have shown the need to not only have product certification but to have full traceability of product,' Philip says. 'You want to ensure that steel is not only made by an ACRS-certified party but also then cut or welded by an ACRS-certified party and the traceability is covered appropriately by the ACRS product scheme and/or >



# SHANDYING...

**YOU WOULDN'T STAND FOR IT WITH YOUR BEER...  
SO WHY STAND FOR IT WITH YOUR STEEL?**

Are you getting what you ordered? (and what you PAID for?)  
Does ALL of the steel you're receiving comply with the right Standards?

The problem of mixed supply (or as it's more commonly known, 'shandying') can have serious consequences – even if you're specifying construction steels to meet Australian and New Zealand Standards.

Shandying can occur when conforming supply is ordered, but only a portion of the product supplied is sourced from ACRS Certified suppliers (and the rest is sourced from somewhere else). Using non ACRS Certified steel can leave you with non-compliant construction steel... and the risks that come with that.

By providing effective continuous review of both the manufacturer and the fabricator/processor, ACRS 2-stage steel certification scheme the new ACRS traceability scheme play a major role in reducing the risk of shandying on your project.

**Talk to us TODAY about how ACRS Certification gives you confidence in your steel supply.**



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ACRS - Independent, Expert Third Party Certification & Verification of Reinforcing, Prestressing and Structural Steels for Compliance with Australian and New Zealand Standards



Photos courtesy AFS



the traceability scheme. This is so you can be sure of what you're getting.'

He adds the influx of non-conforming products 'is happening across the entire range of steel products but the ACRS schemes are an effective preventative and ongoing system of measures to give surety to builders and procurers, designers and specifiers, and the public'. 'People need to check their documentation. If it's inadequate then challenge it and don't accept it. If it is adequate, then when you have to do your due diligence, if you have both the ACRS stage one and stage two certificates then it's really easy.'

Though when in doubt, get in touch. 'As a not for profit for public benefit, HIA members can always call or email ACRS and we're happy to answer any questions.'

### Medium-density boom

HIA member Australian Framing Solutions (AFS) has also noticed a surge in industry activity, particularly in medium-density construction in Queensland

where the business is based. Jake Gundry, CEO, says orders for steel framing have skyrocketed despite COVID-19, with the company's production increasing by 20 per cent in the past six months.

'Since the start of the pandemic, what we've noticed is a real increase in our output requirements for medium-density projects,' he says. 'We believe this stems from a push towards more affordable housing which appeals to a variety of purchasers, and the fact that volume builds can be completed faster than individual properties.'

Jake says AFS is the largest fabricator of steel frames in South East Queensland and has produced more than 1800 tonnes of steel framing in 2020 alone, equivalent to materials required to build 542 townhouses. He says he expects demand to remain high throughout the rest of the year.

'We don't expect to see things slow down any time soon. The new \$25,000 HomeBuilder Grant applies to apartments and townhouses which commence construction by the end of the year and this is encouraging developers with shovel-ready medium-density projects to take action.'

**'We have made a decision as a company that we will only purchase Australian steel, and we have done this to support Australia and our local economy'**

The company, which mostly services Queensland but has projects often going in other states such as NSW, Victoria, the NT and WA, has the capacity to design and install framing for large-scale projects, collaborating with builders to improve quality and efficiencies. The lift in demand has enabled AFS to increase its workforce to deliver a large volume of product across multiple projects.

Jake adds that the impact of COVID-19 has also influenced its purchasing decisions. 'For many years AFS has used a mixture of imported steel as well as Australian steel,' he says. 'Although supply has not been an issue during this time we have made a decision as a company that we will only purchase Australian steel, and we have done this to support Australia and our local economy.'

With the unpredictability brought on by the coronavirus pandemic, it is difficult to gauge where home building activity will be next year and beyond, following on the heels of the buoyancy supplied by the HomeBuilder grant. But members can take measures to safeguard an advantage by choosing quality products manufactured in Australia, with peace of mind they will help to get the job done and to required standards.

This article was compiled with contributions from Dintel, Interline Manufacturing, Knauf and ACRS. For more information about product benefits, compliance and to download resources, such as installation guides, visit the following:

[www.framingsolutions.com.au](http://www.framingsolutions.com.au)

[www.dintel.com.au](http://www.dintel.com.au)

[www.knauf.solutions](http://www.knauf.solutions) or call 1300 724 505

[www.interlineman.com](http://www.interlineman.com) or call 07 3265 6677

[www.steelcertification.com](http://www.steelcertification.com) 