

CSR Limited

9 Help Street Chatswood
NSW 2067 Australia
T +612 9235 8000
F +612 9235 8055
E-mail investorrelations@csr.com.au
www.csr.com.au
ABN 90 000 001 276

New era in local glass manufacturing begins

Glass has commenced flowing from Viridian's furnace at Dandenong, following an upgrade by a team of 300 engineers and contractors. The resumption of glass manufacturing is a major milestone in a \$130 million investment to upgrade the plant.

The Dandenong glass manufacturing upgrade was officially opened today by Treasurer of Victoria and Acting Minister for Industry and Trade, Mr John Lenders MP, and Managing Director of CSR Limited, Mr Jerry Maycock.

The project included rebuilding the furnace and upgrading the complete line with the latest technology, including new raw materials batch plant, production line, glass cutting and processing equipment. Production capacity has been increased from 120,000 tonnes to 165,000 tonnes per year and a new high technology CVD (Chemical Vapour Deposition) glass coater for making energy efficient low-e glass, partially funded by a Victorian Government grant, is on schedule for completion in early 2009.

Mr Maycock said the project represents a significant commitment by CSR, supported by the Victorian Government.

"We are delighted that glass making has recommenced again. It brings Australian glass manufacturing into the twenty-first century and provides the building industry with unique opportunities to use glass in new, value added ways."

"The plant will play an important role in helping to address energy consumption of residential and commercial buildings by delivering an exciting range of high performance glass products to improve energy efficiency of Australian homes and workplaces," he said.

The project also incorporates the use of state of the art manufacturing technology to increase the energy and water efficiency of the plant.



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John Hodgkinson, Chief Operating Officer CSR Building Products, thanked the Victorian Government for their commitment and support of the project, which will have state and national significance in conserving energy and helping to address the abatement of greenhouse gases.

“When other stages of the project are completed, Viridian will have the most advanced glass manufacturing facility in the region - and one of just a handful of such plants around the world,” he said.

“The CVD coating plant is on track to begin supplying the market early next year and will allow high performance, low-e coatings to be bonded to the surface of hot glass during manufacturing for excellent durability.

There are a wide range of coatings for different applications and performance levels, including a range of low-e glass products to meet the growing demand for energy efficient glass. The low-e coating helps to insulate the glass from heat loss in winter and heat gain in summer, improving energy efficiency performance and comfort.

“Viridian's local production will mean we can meet market demand for prompt supply and flexibility, and replace imported product,” he said.

Viridian's logistics planning for maintaining continuity of product supply during production downtime has gone according to plan, with sufficient inventory being available to cover customer requirements throughout the upgrade period.

Viridian was created through CSR Limited's acquisition and merger of Pilkington Australia and New Zealand with DMS Glass in 2007.

For more information about Viridian please visit www.viridianglass.com

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Media enquiries:

Jill Johnson or Sam Vassos- OMC Media- (03) 9867 6822 or youicom@bigpond.com

