

HIGHWAY ENGINEERING AUSTRALIA

MAY 2011

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PRINT POST APPROVED - PP535283/0009

THE KEY PIECE OF THE PUZZLE



ACRS

A Critical Link in the Chain



As an independent third-part certifier, the Australian Certification Authority for Reinforcing Steel Limited (ACRS) has been responsible for providing certification of suppliers' product conformity to designers and buyers, through testing and certification of reinforcing products, manufactured both locally and internationally since 2003. The ACRS testing and certification process provides conformity verification through the reinforcing steel supply chain, from product manufacturing, through to cutting and bending by steel processors – providing a critical link in the 'Chain of Responsibility' for suppliers, designers, specifiers, builders and owners.

Needless to say, in these days of widespread litigation and an ever-increasing emphasis of Chain of Responsibility legislation, the use of 'non-Australian Standard' compliant materials can spell disaster for engineers, specifiers, suppliers and builders.

While to the casual observer, all steel may look to be created equal, in reality this is far from the case. Whether as a result of incorrect or inappropriate manufacturing processes, manufacturing to alternative, non-conforming Standards, or inappropriate processing of finished materials, there are steel reinforcing products which, quite simply, do not meet the minimum requirements of the Australian Standards.

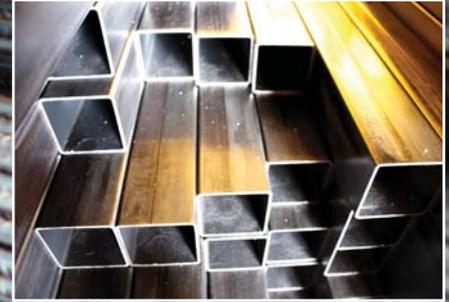
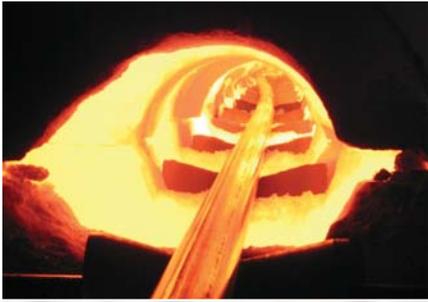
Unfortunately, recent years have seen a marked increase in incidents of non-conforming products being supplied into the Australian marketplace.

With that in mind, ACRS has been working with a number of end-users and other stakeholders to further enhance the certification system, resulting in the creation of a totally revised website and a new, updated two-page certificate. These enhancements provide users with an easy and accurate method of checking the conformity of all products used.

ACRS Executive Director, Philip Sanders, explained: "Under the current Standard (AS/NZS 4671:2001) customers and specifiers are required to actively confirm the conformity of products that are supplied to them – not merely be passive recipients of supplier paperwork, unless they consciously and deliberately choose to assume the risk from not doing so."

"With that in mind, our newly expanded certificates and website have been developed with a specific emphasis on enabling customers and specifiers to discharge their Chain of Responsibility duties quickly and easily, and with a high level of confidence," he said.

Upon meeting the certification criteria, ACRS issues a Supplier one or more of six different types of certificate, namely:



of Responsibility

- Type 1. Bar and Rod manufacture
 - Type 2. Wire manufacture
 - Type 3. Mesh manufacture
 - Type 4. Prestress manufacture (PC bar and/or PC wire & strand)
 - Type 5. Non-producer, and
 - Type 6. Steel reinforcement processing
- When verifying that a product is ACRS

approved, it is important to ensure that the product type, process and size are included on the certificate and that the certificate is of the relevant type. The list of certified products which is included on page two of the each manufacturer's ACRS certificate is an integral part of the certificate, and as such, all products received that

are warranted as coming from that manufacturer should be checked against this list to ensure that they are genuine, ACRS certified materials.

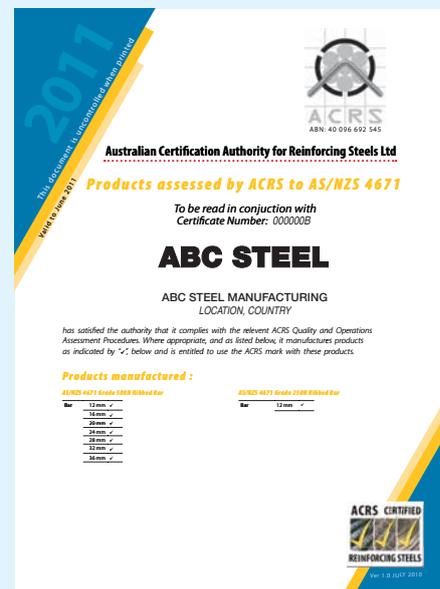
Importantly, if a product is delivered that is not listed on page two of a steel manufacturer's ACRS certificate, it is not ACRS certified!

New Two-Page Certificate

The new two-page ACRS certificate has been specifically designed to provide engineers, designers, builders and end-users with full details of certification in relation product categories and individual products within each category in a clear, concise and easy-to-read format.

Page one of the new certificate is in the same format as previous certificates, detailing: company name and logo; location; scope of certification; certificate number; and date of validity.

Page two of the certificate details individual Product Declarations, showing each individual product, grade and size that is covered by the ACRS certificate.





Expanded to Include Structural Steels



In what is being seen by many as a major step forward in both safety and Quality Assurance for the Australian construction industry, ACRS is now also offering certification for structural steel materials.

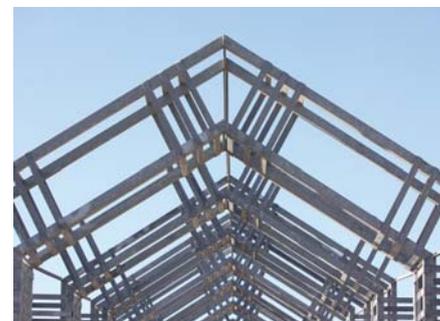
From 1 January 2011 ACRS started providing certification to manufacturers of structural steel materials who wish to demonstrate conformity to the two new Australian/New Zealand Standards:

- AS/NZS 1163 - Cold-formed structural steel hollow sections, and
- AS/NZS 3679.1 - Structural steel - Hot-rolled bars and sections.

ACRS invited manufacturers to submit an Expression of Interest in certification to these new Standards as an opportunity to participate in the development of

ACRS conformity programmes for both product categories.

Not surprisingly, the response to the newly expanded certification categories has been extremely positive, with ACRS already working together with several manufacturers on the certification of products.



Fully Updated Website

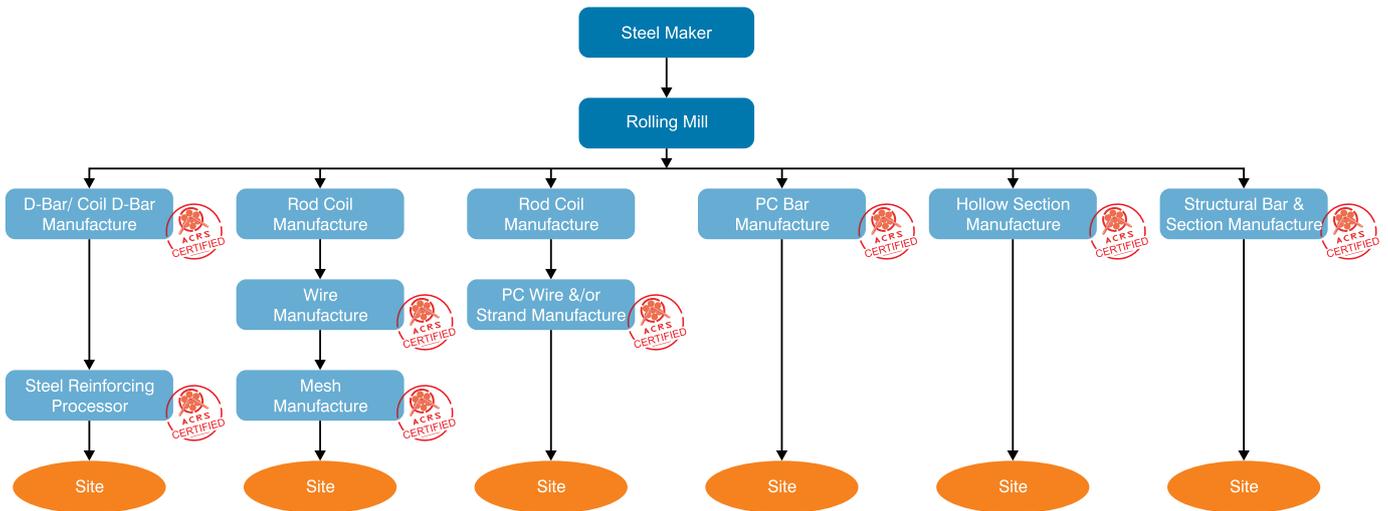
The ACRS website (www.acrs.net.au) also forms an integral part of the process of verification of supply claims.

The new look website has been totally revised to include full detail by company, location and product category for all current ACRS certificate holders. Visitors to the website are able to search for certified suppliers by location (globally) and/or product category.

Search results include a full listing of all certified suppliers for the selected criteria, detailing: company name; location, certification status and certificate number. The certificate number also provides a 'link' to a pdf version of the current certificate. Most entries also contain additional 'links' which provide visual details of product markings, together with a scanned example of an actual product tag from the supplier.

This provides the end-users with a valuable 'double-check' of the current certification position of every certified supplier, thereby eliminating any risk of potentially misleading claims of conformity.





ACRS Certification - The Facts

By providing a centralised, streamlined certification process, ACRS is able to provide a 'one stop shop' for demonstrating compliance with nominated Standards – providing peace of mind for architects, specifiers, engineers, contractors, owners and developers.

ACRS certification of fabricators and processors is the vital link between the steel manufacturer and the end-user on the construction site, ensuring that:

- All reinforcing steel is from an approved manufacturer and satisfies the requirements of the relevant product Standard
- Reinforcement is correctly handled and processed so that material performance is not compromised during processing
- The necessary procedures and documentation are in place to ensure adequate product traceability from steel mill through bar scheduling and processing

For steel reinforcing products to be ACRS certified they must meet the specifications of the relevant Australian Standards at every phase of production. Any break in the

'chain of certification' will result in the product not being certified.

Importantly, when it comes to ACRS certification, there are only ever two options, either:

1. A Supplier IS ACRS Certified and all of its materials are declared, assessed and verified

Or

2. A supplier IS NOT ACRS Certified (and therefore the onus is on the customer to verify the supplier's claims of conformity)

REMEMBER

Supply of steel reinforcing materials:

- Is not just a matter of ordering and taking delivery
 - Is not just a matter of 'strength'
 - Is not just manufacture – it is also processing
- And especially

- Is not just a matter of price... It is a matter of:
- **CONFORMITY** - where the material is measured against a number of

IMPORTANT
IF YOUR STEEL PROCESSOR DOES NOT HAVE AN ACRS CERTIFICATE, YOUR STEEL IS NOT ACRS CERTIFIED!

compulsory measures in each Standard

- **COMPLIANCE** - whether or not the supplier meets the sum of the conformity requirements
- **TRACEABILITY** – which requires both documentation and product markings to ensure that compliance with the Standard has been achieved
- **RESPONSIBILITY** - your responsibility DOES NOT 'Expire'

Independent 3rd Party Certification is the only proven, internationally accepted model that provides documented compliance verification, and ACRS is the only systems that assesses construction steels to Australian Standards.

For further information about certification or the validity of certification for any materials being supplied into your project, please visit the ACRS website at www.acrs.net.au or contact ACRS, Ph: (02) 9965 7216.

ABOUT ACRS

- ACRS is a voluntary, third-party product certification covering steel reinforcing and prestressing materials, cold-formed structural steel hollow sections and hot rolled structural steel bars and sections
- ACRS certification fosters Australia's world-class construction techniques
- Experience shows that Certification does not affect availability or competitive price levels

- Certification at source prevents the costly reintroduction of individual site inspection and testing
- ACRS has been established with the support of leading building and construction industry groups, such as the Master Builders Association, Housing Industry Association, Austroads, Engineers Australia and the Australian Constructors Association to provide assurance of the quality

and fitness for purpose of steel reinforcing materials, regardless of origin of manufacture

- ACRS is independent of any commercial interest. No company that might be certified can sit on the ACRS board
- ACRS is providing certification for products manufactured to Australian Standards from 40 companies in 14 countries around the world