



Media Release

Release Date: 9 April 2008

Subject: IBS ENGINEERING SUPPLIES LAUNCH CENTRE OF ENGINEERING INNOVATION

Innisfail company IBS Engineering Supplies has endured two cyclones and a flood since its inception in 1979.

Despite suffering major physical damage and losing thousands of dollars worth of stock, IBS has overcome these obstacles to become the highly successful, innovative business it is today.

In a significant milestone for the company, IBS is in the process of relocating to a new site, with a launch date set for August 22.

This relocation will facilitate the development of the Centre of Engineering Innovation, which will focus the company's already unique talents and services, allowing them to become a leader in engineering research, development and innovation.

IBS managing director Bill Seawright said the relocation would benefit both the company and the community.

"The relocation will provide more job opportunities and restore confidence in the area after the devastation caused by Cyclone Larry," he said.

"It will also allow us to double our floor size and increase our retail product range.

"I had my eye on this block of land 10-15 years ago, so it is a dream come true for me."

This dream took a long time to come to fruition for IBS, which lost \$30,000 worth of stock during Cyclone Winifred in 1986 and \$100,000 worth of stock during floods in 1999.

In 2006, Cyclone Larry caused irreparable structural damage, more than \$136,000 worth of damage to equipment and machinery and more than \$50,000 worth of stock was destroyed.

IBS was forced to close for two weeks.

Mr Seawright said his greatest asset during these times of adversity was his staff.

"The staff really got behind us," he said.

"Although they were dark times, the staff were very positive and got really fired up.

"I've got a really good team behind me. The business wouldn't survive without good staff.

"Morale at IBS is excellent. The better your staff become, the more this reflects on your business.

"I don't see myself as the top dog. We're here as a team and I make sure I give my staff responsibility and the opportunity to bring their ideas forward."

Mr Seawright said a major advantage for IBS was being a family-run company.

It began as a father-son team with Bill and his father Ted, who were joined by Bill's younger brother Alex in 1988 and later expanded to include Bill's sons Adam and Damien.

"Being a family team allows us to work together, and it helps because we have the same focus and share the same vision of what we want to do," Mr Seawright said.

It is this family commitment that has contributed to the success of IBS, which has been recognised for its innovative ideas over the years and won a number of awards.

The company, which employs 28 staff, has become the leader in engineering innovation and is the driving force behind the design and production of high quality agricultural and industrial equipment.

A major achievement has been the design and manufacture of a conveyor system being utilised by the Australian Banana Company.

The system was designed by Visy Board in conjunction with ABC and manufactured and produced by IBS.

The conveyor system has allowed ABC to break daily output records.

Mr Seawright said IBS's closest competitor manufacturing this level of conveyor systems was in Sydney.

He said IBS had demonstrated its ability to compete on a worldwide level by exporting its Ozzy Bulldog power ladders to Taiwan and Hawaii.

IBS has also branched out into Non-Destructive Testing and computational stress and strain analysis.

Mr Seawright said IBS was the only company in North Queensland conducting stress analysis with this program.

Adam Seawright, the company's project and design engineer, who graduated a year ago from James Cook University as a mechanical engineer, said the concept had proved valuable for companies such as Bundaberg Sugar.

He said the facilities, which link with the company's 3D modelling system, allowed for the pre-empting of any material failures, thereby reducing production and design costs and allowing IBS to redesign the equipment to suit their requirements.

IBS's major goal is to become the leader in innovative engineering design solutions.

The company also aims to increase its export potential, break into industrial and mining markets and become the domestic market leader in agricultural and industrial hardware sales.

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