



Manufacturing News out of New Zealand With the Isaac Findings

Noted New Zealand based journalist, Peter Isaac, takes a look at the many facets of manufacturing in New Zealand

HASTINGS, HAWKE'S BAY, NEW ZEALAND, November 5, 2014 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Nanotechnology Collaboration, Metso retreat from Matamata and New Zealand Manufacturer of Polymer Rebars

BRITISH GOVERNMENT SEEKS COLLABORATION WITH NEW ZEALAND NANOTECH ORGANISATIONS

New Zealand has been recognised by the United Kingdom as a global point of focus in the advanced materials and nanotechnology sphere. This recognition has been braced and underlined recently by the move of Izon's headquarter to the UK. The firm started in Dunedin.

The British High Commission in Wellington is organising a UK deputation to a conference on the sector which will be held in Nelson February 8-12 next year. In effect the UK government will pay the return trip of selected delegates to the conference.

In recent years the UK trade apparatus in New Zealand has sought to define an area of technology in which New Zealand companies and research institutions demonstrated a pre-eminence. For a while this attention devolved around the wider IT sector and certain offshoots, notably computer games.

In the event the nanotech/advanced materials sector appears to have emerged as the desired area for what is described as "commercially orientated collaborative research" in New Zealand's "highly active materials and nanotechnology research sector."

Specially identified as areas of co-development are:-

*Photonics *Energy capture *Biotech interface

METSO'S MATAMATA RETREAT TO INDIA CLOSES ROLE MODEL ERA

The phased closure of Metso machining and manufacturing in the North Island town of Matamata brings down the final curtain on Finland's role as New Zealand's avatar for balanced and progressive industrial development.

Finland's Metso ran its New Zealand quarrying and mining equipment operations from Matamata making it one of the town's leading employers. Its interests there have been progressively sold off

since last year and the operation is scheduled to close its doors for the last time in December this year.

Metso at its peak employed around 20,000 people worldwide in extractive processing, pulp and paper, and in automation.

As recently as three years ago New Zealand's politicians routinely identified the sparsely-populated Nordic nation as the role model for balanced industrial development.

But then Finland's unemployment rate edged past New Zealand's. Finland's flagship high technology company Nokia buckled under salvos of innovation from US and Asian electronics companies.

In short, Finland's industrial strategy in practice proved to be flawed. It was insufficiently diversified. It had poured an unbalanced proportion of resources and expectations into one company, Nokia.. It was over reliant on primary industries when the US bank-bust detonated the current demand downturn.

In the event Metso's Matamata operations will be pulled back to the Finnish company's India domain.

At its peak in Matamata Metso employed 133 people.

Finland's tour of duty as industrial role model for New Zealand mirrored the growth of Nokia. Prior to that New Zealand was often cited as ideally following the Swiss growth path around a blend of pastoral development and diversified high value manufacturing technology.

NEW ZEALAND MANUFACTURER OF POLYMER REBARS EMBEDDED IN MIDDLE EAST

Gisborne is the base for a manufacturer often considered the world's foremost specialist in structural polymer civil engineering reinforcing products.

The company is Pultron Composites and the product is steel-substitute reinforcing bars. Its branded product is its Mateenbar and various types of associated Mateenbar bolts and dowels.

Pultron has markets in depth in North America. Also in the Middle East where salty soils are hostile to steel reinforcing. The science-strong company also has a strong marketing thrust based around its brands and their suitability for this terrain. The company is a visible presence in the Middle East in its modernistic factory in the Jebel Ali Free Zone of Dubai.

The company's beginnings fortuitously took place at the same time as the widespread alert to the dangers of concrete cancer in which atmospheric corrosives reach steel reinforcing causing steel rods and ties to deteriorate. Similarly in structures vulnerable to corrosive liquids such as chemical stores or milking sheds.

In the Gisborne manufacturer's early days also the non-magnetic features of polymer alternatives to steel reinforcing were starting to be appreciated, as was the benefit of non electrical conductivity.

An underpinning benefit is that the polymer bars are a fraction of the weight of their steel counterparts.

The Mateenbar range by definition is non flexible. This makes it more expensive as the structural components, many of them of a large scale, have to be pre-specified and thus pre-built off site.

These articles are penned by [MSCNewsWire](#)'s Specialist Technical Journalist Peter Isaac. Peter is author of New Zealand's first book on IT, Computing in New Zealand. His specialisation is in production control systems. His role in technology as practitioner and commentator has involved him in leading international tour groups into the world's industrial zones. He is president of the National Press Club. He writes exclusively for MSCNewsWire and [theFactoryFloor](#).

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