

INSULATION COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND (ICANZ)

PROFESSIONALISING THE TRADE

The [Insulation Council of Australia and New Zealand](#) (ICANZ) is a well-established peak industry body representing manufacturers of glasswool and rockwool insulation, as well as pliable building membranes.

Janine Strachan is the CEO of ICANZ and has worked in sustainable design and material for decades. Janine says she is passionate about the work ICANZ does because of what insulation products can achieve for households.

“Insulation enables householders to be healthy and comfortable at home, without spending large amounts of money on heating and cooling, which is particularly important for vulnerable households,” she says.

Insulation is also good for the environment as it means households are emitting less carbon.

“I have worked in the environmental area for over 35 years, and insulation and thermal performance is a core interest of mine for that reason. Reducing the need for heating and cooling while keeping people comfortable helps to reduce emissions, and in turn, benefit the environment,” explains Janine.

The manufacturing of insulation can also benefit the environment through its circular economy potential. For example, glasswool can be made of up to 80% recycled glass, giving this waste product a more valuable second life, and one which has a long life in the home.

“There is a lot of local manufacturing of insulation in Australia,” says Janine.

“The benefits of this include recycling and upcycling opportunities, jobs for local people, a resilient supply chain for the product, and the development of skills and experience in our local workforce.”

Innovation is a big part of the insulation industry, which Janine says is always looking for opportunities to bring new products to market that respond to local conditions, particularly in the move to 7 stars for housing and the retrofit market.

ICANZ was also closely engaged with the development of the 2021 [Roadmap for Quality Control and Safety in Insulation Installation](#).



“We got involved with this work early on because we wanted to respond to concerns about quality and safety in the industry in a constructive way,” explains Janine.

“ICANZ is committed to providing confidence to consumers, and also helping to unlock the benefits of insulation for the improvement of Australia’s housing stock and the greater good of Australian society.”

After the roadmap was released, the [Affiliated Insulation Industry Coalition](#) (AIIC), which is a collective of insulation trade associations representing different product types and installation services, was established. The AIIC then [partnered with the EEC](#) to pursue the vision set out in the roadmap.

“The AIIC is an opportunity for a range of organisations, including ICANZ, to work together to encourage governments to include insulation in programs for retrofit, improve regulatory conditions, and ensure high standards for the training of insulation installers, and the use of compliant insulation products” says Janine.

“The AIIC is product agnostic and really interested in making sure the best outcomes are achieved for homes and buildings.”

Janine notes it is a strength that each individual organisation involved in the AIIC remains active in their own areas of interest, undertaking a range of activities on behalf of their members.

Janine also notes that the advancement of an insulation installer association is one of the most exciting current developments in the insulation industry.

“The formation of the [Australian Insulation Installers Association](#) (AIIA) will bring together installation companies from across Australia that spans new builds, renovations, retrofits and from residential to commercial sectors, with a focus on fit for purpose products for thermal, acoustic and fire protection. The installation companies have a desire to professionalise their industry,” she says.

“Another exciting development is the ongoing creation and expansion of uniquely developed and contextualised training materials designed for insulation installers. This is an area that industry has been leading on, and work ICANZ is very proud to do.”

When asked what an ideal vision would be for the future of the insulation industry, Janine’s response is simple but powerful.

“True recognition by governments that insulation is a critical element to achieving emissions reductions in the built environment.”

Further to this, she hopes to see more recognition of the value of the insulation supply chain. This is because insulation delivers benefits all around. From products manufactured using circular principles, to quality installation by trained professionals, to better health, comfort, and environmental outcomes for households and building occupants for decades to come.

“I also want insulation installation to be considered a professional trade, by installers themselves and by other tradespeople. This isn’t some nuisance material to be ripped out during new build construction or renovations, it’s critical to providing a quality building, and offers benefits for decades of occupants,” says Janine.

The level of passion within the industry and from the individuals who represent it, such as Janine, is truly inspiring.

“I have worked in solar passive design of housing, building regulations and material compliance with the HIA, training and education with RMIT, and all of this comes together in my role at ICANZ,” says Janine.

“For over 20 years I have focused on sustainable design and materials. I never lose sight of the end goal – which is comfortable homes and buildings for occupants.”