

At the 41st ASSCT Conference held in Toowoomba, 2019, I was honoured to have received the Peter Guernieri Engineering Award - Donated by SEW-Eurodrive.

On the 6th December, 2019, I was fortunate enough to experience the scope of the facilities at SEW-Eurodrive Australian Headquarters in Melbourne. On arriving, I felt very comfortable due to the friendly and welcoming environment. The positive workplace atmosphere is a testament to the leadership of the Managerial Team.

The Melbourne Headquarters are comprised of three separate warehouses each housing a different manufacturing line. Smaller sized SEW gearboxes and motors are manufactured in the first warehouse. The efficiency of the production line is clearly evident through the electronic barcoding systems ensuring traceability, to the cleanliness and organisation of spare parts and equipment. Each gearbox is assembled to completion by trained employee/s before the next is begun; demonstrating a productive, lean manufacturing approach.

I was informed about the improvements that have been made over the years, various trials conducted to improve efficiency, with employees taking a central role in suggesting ideas. It is great to see proactive employees that are proud of their work and strive for excellence.

Electronic equipment and the electrical workshop are housed in the second warehouse, all logically stored and well laid out.

The largest of the three warehouses comprises of well-structured storage for drive components and the production line for large gearboxes and motors. I witnessed condition monitoring being performed for product compliance and artificial intelligence apparent through the automated robots distributing incoming deliveries to the storage area.

It was great to witness SEW's strong safety culture and innovative ideas that have been implemented. The centralised chemical/oil compound is an efficient use of space and provides a safe working environment by minimising the risks of spills throughout the factory. The automated oil dispensers are an effective time management strategy and the floating devices on the base of equipment ensure manual handling is minimised, a proactive safety control.

I thoroughly enjoyed my day at SEW Eurodrive, learning about the company's history and 21st Century marketing strategies being implemented. The pride each employee takes in their work is a testament to the 'Family-orientated' company who empowers each employee to strive to be the best they can be.