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Aussie company export success in construction materials, innovation and technology

Australian company Durra is hitting runs on the world stage with a revolutionary product that offers time and cost advantages in constructing ceiling and wall systems where superior noise attenuation and thermal insulation is a necessity.

"We achieved an export sales increase of 50 per cent in the 2004-05 financial year, and we are on track to achieving a further 100 per cent increase in 2005-06," Durra's Managing Director Derek Layfield said. "Durra ceiling and wall panels are strong, durable, and impact-resistant."

"They contain a thick, densely compacted fibre core, made from either rice straw or wheaten straw, both of which are plentiful, renewable resources that we are able to process without using chemical binding agents or producing toxic waste."

"Durra's densely compressed fibre core carbonises when exposed to flame, and with a fire-rated, panel-to-panel joint, Durra has a one-hour fire resistance rating."

Overseas demand is growing: Durra has signed a licensing agreement in many countries including Sri Lanka, the Philippines and the United States.

Back home, Durra ceiling and wall panels are now used in the Sydney Capitol Theatre, the Imax Theatre and Docklands studios in Melbourne, the Australian Synchrotron, the Melbourne Airport Hilton, projects where a premium is placed on noise isolation, cost effectiveness and ease of installation.

"I'm particularly proud of the success we achieved in constructing the ceiling at the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre, which has a 120dB sound leakage restriction placed on the venue" Mr Layfield said. "Durra ceiling and wall panels have been very effective in achieving a high degree of noise attenuation which is essential to the venues operating needs,"

Ceiling assemblies up to 100sq metres in size containing Durra panels, which enabled trades to walk on, were craned into place and held within a steel frame. The Convention and Exhibition Centre was completed on time and under-budget.

"Durra is now Australia's leading exporter of natural-fibre based ceiling and wall systems and we offer a range of products for commercial, industrial and residential applications," Durra's Managing Director Derek Layfield said.