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## **Parliament Of New South Wales**

### **Statement to the Standing Committee on Natural Resource Management (Climate Change) from BlueScope Steel.**

Chair and committee members, thank you very much for inviting BlueScope Steel to appear before the committee to discuss the issues related to Urban Heat Island Effect and how BlueScope Steel's products and services can help reduce this effect. We are also pleased to be able to describe the environmental and sustainability features of our new Western Sydney COLORBOND® steel manufacturing facility.

With regard to Urban Heat Island Effect BlueScope Steel has known and promoted the benefits of light coloured roofing for individual buildings for many years, in fact BlueScope Steel has the widest choice of standard light colours for roofing in Australia.

In more recent years the issue of Urban Heat Island Effect has been recognised and investigated by BlueScope Steel. Although this work is still in its infancy we have, as has been reported to this committee, had discussions with Greening Australia concerning potential future studies in Western Sydney and continue to source key research findings from both Australian and overseas sources.

BlueScope Steel believes that cool roofs (being roofs with a high solar reflectivity as opposed to simply being light coloured) can have a significant impact on Urban Heat Island Effect in high density residential, commercial and industrial urban landscapes when combined with green open space, vegetation use, street design, landscaping, mass transport and other urban planning tools.

We feel it would be advantageous therefore to place an increased emphasis on the use of cool roofs in existing regulatory frameworks such as BASIX and the development codes. Currently the BASIX regulation does mention light coloured roofs as one way of helping to obtain the required points, this could be strengthened with specific points for cool roofs.

The voluntary rating systems such as Green Star have rating tools covering not only high-rise commercial but also schools, healthcare, multiunit residential and soon to be released industrial buildings. None of these tools have focused on Urban Heat Island. Green Star in particular has some significant errors in methodology that require addressing before it will effectively make wide reaching and significant change to the actual impacts of the built environment. The Green Star materials section, for example, does not foster the use of the most sustainable products, product combinations and actually works against good sustainable design practices.

BlueScope Steel strongly supports the use of full Life Cycle Assessment as a key tool in the measurement of overall building and product environmental impacts and we are supporting the development of a National LCI database and methodology via the RMIT/CSIRO AusLCI project. This is in line with the methodology included in the Australian and New Zealand Government Framework for Sustainable Procurement and the recently released Federal Government report on 'Energy use in the Australian Residential Sector 1986 – 2020'. We believe that voluntary rating tools currently available need to move to an LCA basis for assessment and should include increased emphasis on sustainable design and cool roofing, to address Urban Heat Island Effect, and to deliver on the espoused aim of reductions in environmental impact from the built environment.

Turning now to our new Western Sydney paint line facility at Erskine Park....

The Western Sydney Paint Line has recently been successful in the Minister for Western Sydney Industry Awards in the Large Business category. The plant was a finalist in the following categories:

- Excellence in Business Practice Sustainability (Winner)
- Excellence in Business Practice People Management (Highly commended)
- Finalist in Judges choice

The key sustainability and environmental features of this plant include:

1. Water storage on site @ 40% capture of the roof area
2. A Regenerative Thermal Oxidiser (RTO) unit, which makes a significant contribution to reducing gas consumption on the paint line.
3. The Administration building lets in natural light to minimise energy consumption
4. Ground water testing prior to any activity on site and ongoing testing to ensure we are not impacting on the water table.
5. Drought tolerant plants on the site to minimise water consumption.
6. An improvement plan focused on:
  - a. Energy reduction
  - b. Water savings
  - c. Green house gas emissions

The majority of employees at the site were recruited from the local Western Sydney area. All employees have received comprehensive induction training in relation to BlueScope Steel policies and procedures. Key areas include:

- Safety systems and procedures
- Environmental system and procedures
  - o Accreditation to ISO14001
- Community involvement, including participation in the Clean Up Australia day in St Clair

Chair and committee members, thank you very much again for the opportunity to speak to you today.

We would be happy to answer questions and have some power point slides available to support and illustrate the key points.