



NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2023

UNDERFOOT

NEWSLETTER

FCIATA ENTERS SOUTH AUSTRALIA

CHANGES TO AUSTRALIAN
MIGRATION SYSTEM

APPRENTICES LEARN
FLOOR PREPARATION

RMH WORKSHOP
IS A SUCCESS

FCIA GALA
INVITATIONS

CHRISTMAS WISHES
FROM THE FCIA



FLOOR COVERING
INSTITUTE
of AUSTRALIA

NEW MEMBER COMPANY PROFILE: COTTER FLOORS

written by: Jarryd Bailey, Cotter Floors

Founded in 1955, Cotter Floors is one of the longest-standing commercial flooring companies in Victoria. Throughout the years, Cotter Floors have cultivated a strong and esteemed reputation within both the flooring and broader construction sectors.

Cotter Floors work is predominantly in the commercial flooring arena, specialising in tenders and working with builders. They offer an extensive array of services, including technical guidance, consultation, design, project management, and the supply and installation of diverse commercial flooring materials. These materials include floor preparation, sheet vinyl, safety floors, linoleum/marmoleum, rubber, resilient sports floors and much more.

Cotter Floors has a management team who have trade expertise and knowledge, which is complemented by a diversely skilled installation team. This combination ensures that any flooring project is executed successfully and effortlessly, minimising any challenges in the process.

Flooring seems to be in the blood of Cotter Floors. Stephen Bailey, Director at Cotter Floors, initially started his career as an installer at Cotter Floors and over the years worked hard to become the Director

and help make Cotter Floors the success it is today. Both of Stephens sons, Jarryd and Cameron joined the industry and have carved successful careers. Cameron was an apprentice, then installer and now has his own sub-contractor business and Jarryd, started as an apprentice, moved into estimating / project managing and is now General Manager at Cotter Floors.

Jarryd hopes that the trade could one day become licensed making it a more recognised and respected trade. It would also be great to attract more young people that would like to work hard and become part of a trade that can really set them up for life.

Cotter Floors is an advocate of the apprenticeship program and joined FCIA to support a body that is trying to improve the industry through training. Installing floors is a craft and it's important to ensure we try and attract new people to the industry, and they too become skilled crafts people.

For further information please contact Cotter Floors.

03 8795 7835
admin@cotterfloors.com.au
www.cotterfloors.com.au



THE ANNUAL FCIA GALA

FCIA looks forward to welcoming you to our Gala Ball. Join us in celebrating the achievements of the FCIA and the flooring industry. The night will include awards for apprentices and employers along with the FICA life time achievement award.

For more information email info@fcia.org.au.

When

**6:30PM - MIDNIGHT
2 MARCH 2024**

Where

**PLAZA BALLROOM
191 COLLINS STREET
MELBOURNE 3000 VIC**

Individual Registration

\$295
MEMBERS

\$350
NON-MEMBERS

Corporate Table (10 Guests)

\$2950
MEMBERS

\$3500
NON-MEMBERS

Premium Table

(10 Guests + Premium Benefits)

\$3950
MEMBERS ONLY

Register Today



FCIA TRAINING ACADEMY APPROVED FOR FUNDING FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA

written by: Fiona Wischnewski , FCIA Group

In a significant stride forward for the South Australian flooring sector, FCIA Training Academy has just received approval as a funded provider for the MSF30822 Certificate III in Flooring Technology. This accreditation positions FCIA at the forefront of molding the next generation of skilled flooring professionals.

With this exciting move, FCIA Training Academy is set to redefine the training landscape with its hands-on, on-the-job model. The academy's seasoned trainer and assessor, armed with over 20 years of flooring installation experience, will now deliver training directly to apprentices at their workplaces or worksites.

Operating out of the heart of South Australia, our trainer, a former owner and manager of a successful flooring installation business, brings an extensive skill set to the table. His expertise spans a wide range of flooring applications within both residential and commercial installation including:

- Wall and floor vinyl
- Coving
- Vinyl planks and tiles
- Rubber sheets and tiles
- Pattern work and borders
- Dual bond carpet
- Direct stick carpet
- Carpet tiles and planks
- Cork tiles
- Sheet install
- Tac tile indicators
- Indoor/outdoor carpets

Fueled by a passion for the industry, our trainer is geared up to share his skills and knowledge with the next wave of apprentices. FCIA Training Academy is excited to contribute to the skill development of aspiring flooring professionals in South Australia.

For more information or to get involved in

this transformative initiative, contact Suchitra Ahlawat at sahlawat@fcia.org.au. FCIA Training Academy extends an open invitation to stakeholders, enthusiasts, and prospective apprentices to join this new initiative journey, marking a new era for flooring excellence in South Australia.



FCIATA APPRENTICES LEARN FLOOR PREPARATION WITH MAPEI

written by. Fiona Wischnewski , FCIA Group

This October, 9 eager apprentices from FCIA Training Academy immersed themselves in a day of floor preparation training at Mapei. The event unfolded at Mapei's Strathfield South NSW office, featuring the vibrant and highly knowledgeable Jim Creswell as the charismatic conductor of the proceedings.

The training day unfolded in two parts, seamlessly blending theory and hands-on practical experience. In the pursuit of knowledge, the apprentices delved into the intricacies of primers, leveling compounds, and ramping—essential facets crucial to their evolving skill set as they progress through their training.

Recognising the pivotal role of floor preparation in the industry, the emphasis on the correct use of these foundational elements is paramount. Floor preparation lays the groundwork for successful,

enduring installations. Beyond the technical know-how, this training cultivates a sense of professionalism and meticulous attention to detail, qualities that will undoubtedly become cornerstones of the apprentices' burgeoning careers.

A heartfelt thank-you extends to Jim Creswell, Will Kelman, and the entire Mapei team for orchestrating these invaluable sessions. FCIA Training Academy extends an open invitation to all flooring installers, encouraging their attendance at this transformative training program to elevate their professional prowess.

Anticipation is high as FCIA Training Academy eagerly looks ahead to more of these enriching sessions slated for 2024, promising continued growth and development within the flooring industry.

Thank you to Mapei for their continued support of both the FCIA and Training.

Jim Creswell from Mapei teaches and trains young apprentices on floor preparation.



FCIA WRAPS UP 2023 APPRENTICE WORKSHOPS WITH RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE

written by: Fiona Wischnewski , FCIA Group

FCIA marked the end of its yearlong schedule of apprentice workshops with a final installment in late October. The setting for this workshop event was the Ronald McDonald House in Randwick, where three family apartments underwent renovations, providing a canvas for our apprentices to showcase their skills.

This time around, the workshop took on a unique format, split into two smaller sessions with a training day at Mapei sandwiched in between. Each workshop, hosting three diligent apprentices (per session), unfolded as a symphony of practical learning. The apprentices engaged in tasks ranging from the removal of existing floors to grinding, floor preparation, Polyvac operation, dry laying, adhesive application, and the meticulous laying of vinyl planks.

The commendable attitude and work ethic displayed by all

apprentices were nothing short of remarkable.

Collaborating seamlessly as a team, they not only successfully completed the tasks at hand but also delivered a finished product that exuded professionalism.

A heartfelt thank-you to the apprentices and their employers who graciously allowed them to partake in this charitable initiative:

- Dylan from Terry Bros Carpet Court Canberra
- Paul from Basha's Floors and Blinds
- Ryan from Ports Carpet Specialists
- Blake from Carpet Court Bondi and Mascot
- Dylan from Carpet Court Bondi and Mascot
- Max from Warilla Carpet Court

FCIA expresses deep gratitude to its members who generously contributed their products and

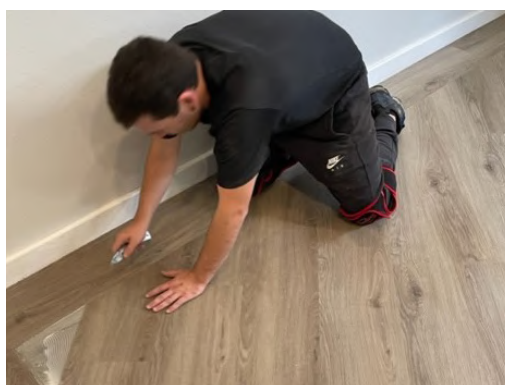
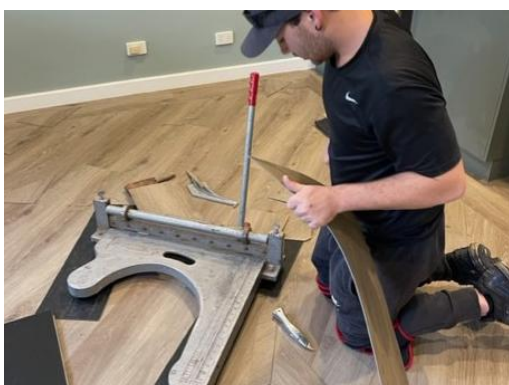
time to make this workshop possible, including Mapei, Karndean, and MJS.

A special note of appreciation goes out to Dianne and her dedicated team at Ronald McDonald House Randwick for opening their doors and hearts to FCIA. Their unwavering hospitality creates an environment where learning and giving back thrive.

These charity workshops serve as invaluable platforms for apprentices in the flooring industry. They not only acquire vital skills and knowledge for their assessments but also have the opportunity to learn from industry experts, further nurturing their craft.

For those seeking more information on these transformative workshops, please direct inquiries to info@fcia.org.au. FCIA remains committed to fostering growth, skills, and compassion within the flooring community.

Photos from the workshop at Ronald Macdonald House Randwick



YOUNG INSTALLERS ENROL IN ARDEX FLOOR PREPARATION PROGRAM

written by: Fiona Wischnewski , FCIA Group

This November, I, alongside a cohort of 7 skilled flooring installers, had the privilege of participating in an Ardex Floor Preparation program. The event unfolded at Ardex's facility in Campbellfield, Victoria, offering a firsthand exploration into the intricacies of floor preparation.

The team at Ardex trains apprentices on the correct way to prepare floors.



Under the guidance of the highly knowledgeable instructors, Paul and James, the training sessions proved to be a cornerstone in our professional development, particularly within the specialised realm of flooring installation. The interactive discussions and hands-on demonstrations heightened the learning experience, ensuring participants grasped key concepts with practical acumen.

An insightful aspect of the program was witnessing the consequences of deviating from instructions, providing a tangible understanding of the paramount importance of adherence to guidelines within the flooring industry. All participants walked away with valuable insights into the application of primers, leveling compounds, and ramping.

Heartfelt appreciation goes to Paul and James for infusing the day with not only educational value but also an element of enjoyment. These training sessions, with their blend of theory and practical insights, serve as a linchpin in keeping professionals abreast of the latest techniques, products, and industry best practices.

We recognise the role of continuous learning in specialised crafts like flooring installation, I strongly encourage other installers to prioritise attendance at such training sessions. This commitment to staying informed not only contributes to individual growth but also elevates the collective success of professionals in our field.

As we bid farewell to 2023, our anticipation is high for an even greater turnout of flooring installers at similar sessions in 2024. Let the journey of continuous learning pave the way for a year of heightened expertise and excellence within the flooring installation community.



10 BENEFITS OF LAMINATE FLOORS IN THE HOME

written by, Jessica Jones, Imagine Floors by Airstep

Laminate flooring is an incredibly versatile option suitable for most areas of the home. At Imagine Floors by Airstep our four core Laminate ranges - Adare, The Eucalyptus Steps Collection, Keeta and Masterpieces attain a Class Rating 23 across the board and are also suitable for many commercial applications. Today we'll be exploring ten benefits of these floors and looking at what makes Laminate so great:



Family friendly

There's no denying that the addition of children to a home adds an extra element of maintenance requirements. Play dates and dinner time can be messy, and pram wheels bring exterior elements into the home that can damage your floors. The good news is that Laminate can easily handle this and more.

Wear, stain, fade and scratch resistant

The aluminium oxide wear layer of our Laminate floors helps ensure that they're highly resistant to stains, fading, scratches and general wear and tear. This means that they are suitable for even the highest traffic areas of the home, making them incredibly versatile.



Low allergenic

As they are easy to keep clean and feature a closed surface, Laminate floors are an ideal option for those with allergies. This is thanks to the fact that they do not trap dirt or allergens, and all Imagine Floors by Airstep Laminate collections are FloorScore certified.

DIY friendly

UNICLIC and 5G locking systems make our Laminate flooring easy to install for those looking for their next DIY project. Simply lay your preferred underlay onto an even subfloor and follow our step by step Installation Instructions.



Recyclable

Imagine Floors by Airstep Laminate floors feature a 100% recyclable construction. This means that any offcuts generated during installation can easily be disposed of in an environmentally friendly manner. We are also committed to environmentally responsible manufacturing practices.

Easy to maintain

As long as our Laminate flooring is installed correctly, the maintenance requirements are incredibly low. Simply follow the Cleaning, Care and Maintenance Instructions and your floors will stay looking and feeling great for years to come.



Waterproof surface

In addition to ensuring superior durability, the aluminium oxide wear layer on our Laminate floors also provides a waterproof surface. Thanks to this, we are able to offer 72 hour spill protection on our Keeta, Adare and Masterpieces ranges as well as the Eucalyptus Steps Gloss and Extra Long variants.

Pet safe

Little paws and their claws can quickly make a mess of some types of floors. Laminate flooring is the most pet friendly floorboard option available, as the aluminium oxide wear layer is far more resistant to the activity of excitable pets than any other floorboard.



Realistic appearance

Designed with true-to-life detail, our Laminate floors offer a realistic appearance that is almost indistinguishable from natural timber. The pattern for each décor effortlessly mimics its natural inspiration and we are proud to provide a host of colours suitable for any design.

Real feel

The texture on our Laminate collections is either Embossed in Register or Woodgrain Feel. Put simply, this means that your floors will feel as good as they look, with ridges, knots and other features embossed on the planks for maximum impact.

A quick note on accessories:

Don't forget that all floating floors require underlay to be installed beneath them. Imagine Floors by Airstep has a selection of hard flooring underlays available, as well as colour match scotia and stair nosing to help you complete your new design with a seamless finish.

Email flooring@airstep.com.au, call us on 03 9794 3888 or visit imaginefloors.com.au to learn more.

imagine[®]
floors by Airstep.

LAMINATE



Your complete flooring solution

WOODCRETE'S CORK CONCEPT FLOATING FLOOR TRIUMPHS AS PREFERRED CHOICE FOR ANZ BANKS

written by: Tony Reed, Woodcrete PTY

In a resounding success for Woodcrete, their Cork Concept Floating Floor has emerged as the preferred flooring solution for Australia New Zealand Banking Group Limited following a successful trial with the company.

Woodcrete proudly announced its status as the chosen supplier to ANZ, a testament to the quality and appeal of the Cork Concept Floating Flooring solutions. This selection follows the successful application of the product in refurbishments at various ANZ branches, including those in Ocean Grove, ANZ Docklands, and regions of both Western Australia and South Australia.

ANZ's preference for this flooring system is attributed to its aesthetic appeal and the ease of installation it affords. The Cork Floating Floor stands out not only for its visual appeal but also for its seamless adaptability to meet stringent timelines, a critical factor in ANZ's annual refurbishment projects.

The feedback from both installers and ANZ representatives has been overwhelmingly positive, with accolades for the floor's striking appearance and straightforward installation process.

About Cork Art

Woodcrete are the Australian agents for Cork Art which hails from Portugal and boasts a rich history. The quality of Cork Art's products is self-evident, and the natural, recyclable, and biodegradable properties of cork, coupled with its exceptional insulating and acoustic features, make it an increasingly popular choice.

Photos of the Cork flooring installed in the ANZ trial program





As the world of cork expands beyond traditional dimensions, Woodcrete is poised for an exciting future. The resurgence of cork in contemporary designs reflects the growing interest in sustainable and eco-friendly materials. Woodcrete is thrilled to collaborate with major architects and builders, exemplified by the recent acquisition of a substantial 5000m² cork tile project in Melbourne.

For those curious about integrating cork into their homes or projects, Woodcrete invites inquiries for more information. The company is enthusiastic about the evolving landscape of cork applications, where the timeless appeal of this natural material is making a vibrant comeback. Contact Woodcrete for a deeper dive into the possibilities that cork can bring to your space. Founded in 1955, cultivated a strong and esteemed reputation within both the flooring and broader construction sectors. can really set them up for life.

WoodCrete
Trade Flooring Supplies





AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT MIGRATION STRATEGY: WHAT IT MEANS FOR FLOORING

written by. Garry Thomas, FCIA Group

The new migration roadmap released by the Commonwealth Government on 11 December will improve capacity to address skill shortages in the flooring industry and enhance FCIA members' access to Australia's migration program.

The new migration strategy, if implemented fully, will provide sharper focus on identified skills needs influenced by industry consultation, improved targeting, and more efficient visa processing.

Key government commitments will assist in attracting overseas qualified installers to the flooring industry:

- 1) **Replacement of Temporary Skills Shortage Visas** with a "core skills pathway" – will enable all employer-sponsored temporary skilled visa holders to have a clear pathway to permanent residency through a streamlined and updated points system.
- 2) A new 4-year "Skills in demand" visa will allow periods of employment with any approved employer to count towards permanent residence.
- 3) **Trailing employer fees** will reduce the upfront costs to the sponsoring employers allowing smaller employers to afford to sponsor an overseas worker.

4) **A Streamlined visa processing service** standard of 21 days will result in assessment within weeks rather than months.

5) **A new Core Skills Occupation List** (developed by Jobs and Skills Australia) will replace the current Skills Needs List. As a member of the Skills Insight Jobs and Skills Council, FCIA will have direct input in the promotion of flooring as a critical national skills need.

6) **A public register of approved sponsors** will enable FCIA to establish pools of committed employers offering “best practice” workplaces and paying annual wages above \$70,000 to attract overseas workers to the flooring industry.

7) **An improved approach to skills recognition** and assessment will reduce complexity and implement new standards, accountability, and transparency in how and when a visa applicant’s existing skills are assessed.

The Government has a lot of work to do to turn this blueprint into reality. Many more commitments are detailed in the 100-page migration strategy and a firm timetable has not yet been published. FCIA will work

closely with the Department of Home Affairs, Jobs and Skills Councils, State/Territory governments, and unions to identify priorities, processes, and implementation milestones to rejuvenate the current dysfunctional skilled migration program for the flooring sector. In the meantime, existing skilled visa pathways will remain in force as the new migration strategy is rolled out.

In parallel with our commitment to train local apprentices and recognise the skills of existing installers, FCIA will conduct industry webinars, issue member bulletins and consult with stakeholders to inform the flooring industry on how to engage with the new migration system to address our skills shortages in the short to medium term.

Download the summary Migration Strategy – At a Glance - [here](#)

Download the full Migration Strategy – Getting migration working for the nation - [here](#)

For further information or to discuss how the Migration Strategy could work for your business, please contact Garry Thomas, Company secretary FCIA on 0420 921 396 or



MEET OUR TRAINER: RYAN VAN DEN HEUVEL

written by: Niranjan Peter , FCIA Group

Ryan is one of the FCIA Training Academy's greatest assets. He has been working with us over the past year and covers most of the NSW and other states where we provide training. Ryan was born and raised in South Australia and has done flooring his entire adult life. The students in our apprenticeship program appreciate Ryans no nonsense attitude and have a lot of respect in his ambitions to install the right way. As a trainer he is stern and honest and focusses on equipping the future generations of the correct way to install without taking shortcuts. We sat down with Ryan to discuss his journey.

1. Tell us about your Flooring Career before you become a trainer? Either why did you choose flooring or what did you like about flooring?

I chose a career in flooring because it got me out of school. Either I had to start going to school or start going to work. Everyone in my family was in flooring so it seemed like the best career for me. My father owned a floor covering shop and at one point had three different stores whilst my mother worked I started a store. Started as an apprentice at about 14 to pursue a career as a flooring installer. The flooring apprenticeship has changed a lot and the apprenticeship back then was a lot harder without technology and longer hours.

2. What are some of the issues you see in the flooring industry?

Quality of installation, employers, products. The biggest problem are people supplying floor coverings ignoring Australian standards or not knowing them.

3. Why did you decide to become a flooring trainer for the FCIA?

I decided to join as a trainer because I wanted to share my knowledge and skills with people trying to enter the workforce. I have a passion for providing high quality installation and I believe that the best place to teach it would be at the beginning. The timing was also great for his career.



Ryan Van Den Heuvel, FCIA Training Academy

4. What have been some of the highlights of being a flooring trainer?

Actually teaching someone practically on a job where they can work and learn. It is also rewarding to teach them hard stuff.

5) What advice would you give to other Flooring professionals who are interested in being a trainer?

Being a trainer can pose challenges, particularly when there is not enough support for apprentices from employers to complete their tasks. However, the future of training holds promise, as certain aspects have the potential to undergo positive changes.



Ryan from FCIA/ATA trains apprentices at recent workshop



MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE FCIA GROUP

Dear FCIA Group Members,

As the festive season approaches and we all reflect on the challenges of this long and demanding year, let us also celebrate the numerous successes that have emerged. Each triumph, no matter how small, contributes to the greater vision we all share within the flooring industry.

In this season of joy and reflection, we want to acknowledge the integral role each of you plays in the success of our endeavours. Your dedication and collaboration have not only strengthened our community but have also propelled us toward our vision for the future of the flooring industry.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment and dedication. Together, we have laid the groundwork for a brighter future.

Wishing you and your family a very Merry Christmas and may 2024 bring you happiness and success.

Yours sincerely

Fiona Wischnewski
CEO, FCIA Group



**THE FCIA GALA
RETURNS IN 2024**

**2 MARCH 2024
PLAZA BALLROOM VIC**

Register Today

