

MILFORD

winter2002

matters

**Telstra Small
Business Awards**

**VLR:
The Entrapment
Debate**

**Corolla Quick
Release**

**Milford Modular
Launch Date**



Behind you all the way

Why a newsletter?

There is a danger when you are developing a business, as we are vigorously doing at Milford Industries, that communication with your established customers suffers.



Not necessarily in the volume of communication, but in the spread of day-to-day information which once flowed more freely. For new customers, it is often not possible to expose you to the true scope of our business when first introducing ourselves.

With this in mind, we thought that a very traditional style of contact in the form of a newsletter would be appropriate. We intend to publish three or four times a year depending on what is happening in our industries in general, and with Milford Industries in particular. We will continue to invest in other forms of communication, including our web sites, videos, point of sale, faxed or e-mailed information.

I mention 'industries' because of course we are heavily involved in both Automotive Accessories (our Vehicle Load Restraint division) and Materials Handling (our Intermediate Bulk Container division). We will be covering points of interest in both of these areas in the same newsletter.

I hope you enjoy the read!

*Nigel Smalls
General Manager*

Telstra Small Business Awards - So Far So Good

This year Milford Industries was nominated for the Telstra Small Business Awards in the Cisco Systems Innovation category.

Overall, there were some 1,200 nominees in South Australia alone. This is a measure of the prestige associated with the award.

Our entry was judged as being good enough to move to the

next level. As a consequence we were visited by the judges and assessed over a lengthy period. The next step is the finals in the South Australian section. At this occasion the State Premier, Mike Rann, will announce the winners in the four categories of Award.

There are four finalists in ours, so we are certainly in there with a chance.

click! 
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About Milford Industries

Rees Operations Pty Ltd, trading as Milford Industries, is a privately owned South Australian light metal engineering business involved in two distinct markets.

The best known of these is Vehicle Load Restraint where the cargo barrier, which is branded Milford, is the predominant brand in both the original equipment and after-market automotive sectors.

The other market is that of the Intermediate Bulk Container (IBC). Milford Industries is the specialist in design and manufacture of foldable stillages and containers. Its major customers for IBCs are Chep, TNT Automotive, Van Leer Industrial Packaging and Australia Post. Recently, it has for the first time

introduced its own range of containers, including the flexible Milford Modular.

John and Sadie Rees established the company in 1967 to make automotive accessories including roof rack systems. In 1993 the business decided to focus on the two market areas it is still involved with.

The company operates to the stringent requirements of the QS9000 automotive quality system to give customers piece of mind in their purchase decision. It has accreditation to ISO9001 for non-automotive product, and has recently achieved the Environmental Standard ISO14001. It employs 75 staff full-time and operates out of a well-maintained factory on a 10,000m² site.



New Manufacturing Facility

Standing still is no longer an option in our increasingly global world, and so it is at Milford. With two objectives in mind - increased productivity and increased volume - the manufacturing facility has been totally changed round. Hardly one piece of equipment stayed in the same place! Once fully operational, our response times to customer demand will be significantly improved. We will feature the move in greater detail in our next communication.

Oops!



During a recent 4WD club weekend, we were unfortunate to suffer a flat tire which caused our Prado to veer over an embankment and roll over twice, coming to rest on the passenger side.

The vehicle was eventually declared a right off by the insurance company. The occupants at the time of the crash (wife, two children and myself) walked away with only a few cuts and scratches from broken glass.

What was the major factor that prevented serious or possibly fatal injuries to us ? The Milford cargo barrier that had been installed and integrated into the design of our rear racking system !

During the accident it performed two vital functions:

1. It prevented potentially fatal missiles from entering the passenger compartment.

2. It augmented the vehicle's structural integrity, preventing the roof from caving in under the weight of the double roll over.

Many of the other people in the convoy commented that they had witnessed the true worth of the Milford cargo barrier. Some even suggested that they would now be adding it to their vehicles.

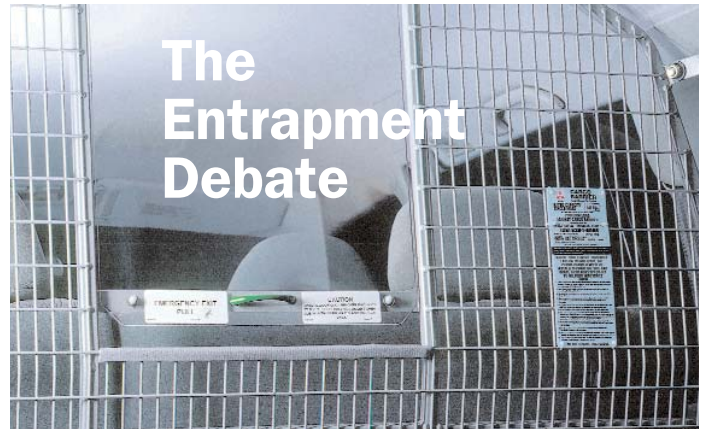
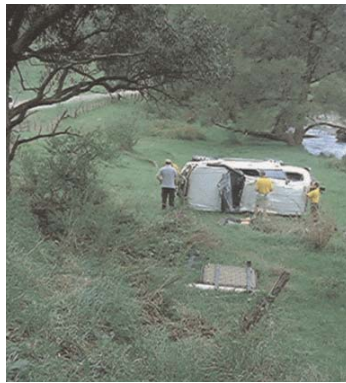
All of the equipment stowed in the rear survived the double roll over. This meant that we were able to salvage all of our equipment, a factor that would have been very important if the accident had happened in a remote area.

Congratulations on a world class, life saving product.

Yours sincerely,

David Lowe.

Member of the Toyota Land Cruiser Club of Australia (Sydney) and Trip leader.



The Australian Standard governing cargo barriers was updated last year.

The new standard provides that cargo barriers must have a "means of escape" from the vehicle for a 6 year old child. This has caused us at Milford significant headaches as we have had to redevelop virtually all cargo barriers manufactured for our automotive customers, as they have chosen to comply to the Standard by inserting an Access window in the barrier. In the after market, we have chosen, as have Toyota, to meet the Standard by the provision of a small hammer to break glass.

The question on our lips is why this revision to the Standard has occurred at all? While we passionately believe in the need for safety, and abhor the thought of children being killed when left unsupervised in a

vehicle behind a cargo barrier, we would argue that many more people's lives have been saved by having a cargo barrier installed. As the Standard is not mandatory, any imposition in cost makes it more likely that consumers will choose not to buy a barrier manufactured to the Standard, or consider the cost benefit as not being there - after all buying a barrier is an insurance policy. We at Milford continue to pursue the case for making the Standard mandatory. In other words, we would like to see a level playing field where the only cargo barriers sold are those that comply with the Australian Standard. The new Standard does however, present opportunity. It is now easy and clear for our customers to differentiate between product that does and product that does not address the entrapment issue.

Corolla's new 'Quick Release' barrier

When Toyota decided that it should focus on the Corolla rather than the Camry as its main fleet wagon, it discovered that it had an unexpected problem. The smaller boot size meant that the cargo barrier had to be moved from front to rear position much more often. "Two major fleet customers pointed out that moving the barrier took too much time and insisted that we must improve the design to gain their continued support"



Joanne Podoliak of Coca Cola fits the barrier

says Megan Forgan, New Business Fleet Manager with Toyota. Speedy work from Henry

Mercieca and the VLR development team led by Tony Jarvis saw the introduction of

the Milford Quick Release mechanism for the TCAM version of the Corolla. "The exercise was fruitful as it identified that incorrect and poor ergonomic methods were being used by Coca Cola and Goodman Fielder staff to move their barriers from rear to front positions" reports Henry. Training was carried out and together with the barrier improvements significantly reduced time taken and assisted with securing the business for Toyota.

Milford Modular Launch

Milford Industries now has its own range of intermediate bulk containers. The official launch of the 'flagship' Milford Modular will be at Bulkex in 'Jeff's Shed', Melbourne from 16 - 18 July. Feel free to come and see what we are so excited about.

What makes a Milford Cargo Barrier so safe?

There are competitor products in the market place, so what's so special about the Milford brand? Here are a few reasons to consider and support the brand:

- ~ Milford has easily the largest range of product.
- ~ Milford is the only product supported in the marketplace

through advertising, direct marketing, lobbying influence groups.

~ Milford is the leader in innovation in its product group, both in promotional and product development terms.

~ Milford's automotive focus is squarely on vehicle load restraint, unlike its major competitor brands.

~ Milford product is made by an Australian owned company.

~ Milford is manufactured to the highest automotive quality standards QS9000, and

designs are tested to NATA standards.

~ Milford has the only independently certified product able to carry the famous 'five tick' StandardMark™.



Vehicle Load Restraint (VLR), not cargo barrier!

You may have heard us mentioning that we are not a cargo barrier business, but rather are in the 'Vehicle Load Restraint' business.

Well, this is for a very good reason. The knowledge we have in this business, which is unrivalled in Australia, and perhaps the world, is the ability to stop interior objects in the rear of vehicles from hitting passengers in the back of the head! The traditional cargo barrier is one method, but is not the only method. In the future we will be offering to the marketplace variations of existing product as well as new products that suit different customer needs. We've already started with the Access Barrier.

Talking about VLR is about staying ahead of the competition and in tune with the changing needs of vehicles and their owners.

Employee Focus

Your first Port of Call. We thought that we'd introduce Fay Cornaggia as our first profiled employee.



Fay is our Receptionist, a role that she combines with sharing other duties including accounts payable, sales order and payroll clerk. Fay has been with the company for 6 years now, having started as an office assistant. "I like the flexibility and variety of the job, and at Milford we certainly don't have dull moments!" she said, reflecting the fact that as the initial point of contact, she speaks to a wide variety of customers and suppliers.

Outside of work, Fay keeps busy renovating her house which she shares with partner Rick.

Channel 10 visit

Peter Sellen, the motoring journalist for Channel 10, visited Milford Industries to interview Nigel Smalls on the cargo barrier entrapment debate.

The television crew took the opportunity to film the VLR assembly and testing areas. The segment went to air in Adelaide in late April and was shown nationally on the Channel 10 late night news.

This follows on from coverage on cargo barriers in general and the entrapment debate in particular covered by the RAA in their members' magazine 'SA Motoring'. We hope that this level of exposure will help to convince our law makers that

national safety standards for VLRs should be a priority.

Office of Road Safety

Two members from the Federal Office of Road Safety visited us in May. As part of their itinerary we demonstrated testing of one of our cargo barriers by dropping a 60kg weight from a height of 4.2m to simulate a head-on crash at 48km p/hour. The officers were impressed with the procedure and the result. The cargo barrier distorted but showed no signs of breaking away. The Australian Standard test is much more stringent than any accident situation as it assumes no seats are in place to assist with the load restraint.

Barrier Video and CD

For the full story on Milford Cargo Barriers, ask for our video or cd.



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Behind you all the way