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MEDIA RELEASE

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Australian invention to improve road construction safety, reduce costs

Boral Limited today unveiled a new road surfacing truck to make the task safer for workers, increase product quality, help to reduce infrastructure costs to road agencies, and further cement the company's innovation credentials.

The new Boral FMAS, a Forward Moving Aggregate Spreader, revolutionises the method of spray seal road construction in Australia.

Until now, the process involved road crews working with reversing trucks that applied the aggregate through an elevated tipper body, increasing the safety risks to workers.

To improve safety and maximise visibility, the Boral FMAS disperses aggregate from the front of the truck via a conveyor belt and spreader box.

The Boral FMAS design brings value to our customers and their communities through quicker completion of works, and significantly reduces any potential infrastructure and overhead damage such as contacting power lines, trees and bridges.

Stuart Partridge, Boral's National Asset Manager – Asphalt, said Boral designed and developed a Forward Moving Aggregate Spreader following a call to industry by the Victorian roads authority – VicRoads – as a result of a serious accident involving a VicRoads worker some years ago.

"Surfacing roads has remained one of the most potentially challenging tasks faced by construction crews because of the nature of the material being used and the way that material is applied," he said.

"Rollover accidents, blind spots, and high reversing tippers that can be at risk of interfering with power lines or overhanging trees, are just some of the problems associated with the current range of spreaders.

"So, the task here was to come up with a solution to improve safety for road crews, including drivers, while at the same time making the process quicker, and more efficient with higher quality.

"This invention allows locally manufactured and approved trucks to be substantially modified while still meeting regulatory standards, which is why VicRoads has mandated that forward moving aggregate spreaders should be in use on all its projects by 2022 – a move we hope will be followed by other State road authorities nationally".

Boral Australia Chief Executive Joe Goss said the new Boral FMAS was a demonstration of the company's commitment to zero harm, placing the safety of all employees and the community in general, at the very centre of the company's mission.

“This invention speaks to the importance Boral places on keeping our workers safe and our commitment to innovation across all of our products and activities,” he said.

“I want to congratulate Stuart and his team for coming up with such an important invention – and one that will be embraced by the industry nationally and in our view, internationally also. It not only delivers a major improvement in safety standards but will also help to lower the cost of road surfacing because it supports a more efficient and productive process.”

For more information:

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