

# Newcastle Court House



## A NEW ERA FOR JUSTICE

After years in planning and construction, the New South Wales city of Newcastle has a new \$94 million court house. As part of a rejuvenation of the heart of Newcastle, the new Newcastle Court House replaces the old building that had been operating for more than 120 years. It is a state of the art facility, representing the largest and most technologically advanced court complex outside of Sydney.

### **Precaster**

Asurco Contracting

### **Builder**

John Holland

### **Client**

NSW Department of Justice

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## FUNCTIONALITY AND AESTHETICS

The Newcastle Court House was designed to be sympathetic to the surrounding urban environment, while offering a point of difference to the other buildings in the commercial precinct. The stunning redevelopment showcases the versatility of precast that is reinforced using glass fibres – or Glass Reinforced Concrete (GRC).

Adelaide-based GRC specialist and National Precast member Asurco Contracting manufactured the 70 distinctive and eye catching façade panels which set this building apart.





## THE GRC PROCESS

Each GRC project is unique and demonstrates the scope of the product for custom-made intricate patterns like this one.

Once the design was supplied by the architect, over the next two months Asurco's experienced team set about creating a detailed master mould from which the panels would be cast. A master mould was fabricated from plywood and a Reckli rubber mould was then made, into which GRC was sprayed. Manufacture of 70 panels were made in two halves at the rate of one panel a day.

According to Mr Pawelski, while the process is labour intensive, the end result makes the effort worthwhile. "For this project, both sides of the panels had to be particularly high quality as each side of the panels is visible from the both the inside and outside of the building," said Mr Pawelski.

The 70 GRC panels, which were each 3.75 metres high and two metres wide, were loaded onto trucks, transported more than 1500 kilometres to Newcastle and erected into position. The GRC panels not only add spectacular street appeal, they have a practical purpose too, allowing natural light to filter into the building.

## FINAL RESULT

The new Newcastle Court House has also been recognised for its design and was shortlisted in the prestigious 2016 NSW Architecture Awards. Mr Pawelski says such a landmark building needed to look fantastic and, in his view, that outcome has been achieved. "The team feels like they've done a satisfying job when it turns out so well, which it has. Hopefully it should get more architects thinking about GRC as a viable option when they want to achieve complex shapes".

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