

National Precast Concrete Association Australia

Historic Olympic pool demands the best

Making its own contribution to an iconic landmark, National Precast Concrete Association Australia Master Precaster Waeger Constructions manufactured and supplied precast concrete elements for the North Sydney Olympic Pool Redevelopment.

Not many Olympic swimming pools enjoy a location as spectacular as the North Sydney Olympic Pool – an outdoor pool located on Sydney Harbour at Milsons Point, between the Harbour Bridge and Luna Park. Nor do they boast a history of setting 86 world records since opening in 1936.

Redevelopment of the complex after some 85 years has not come quickly. Since before 2013, discussions have been held about the need to upgrade, with the years and environment having taken their toll on the 50-metre pool, concourse and grandstand.

With approval for the redevelopment granted by North Sydney Council in July 2013, it wasn't until December 2020 that details were finalised, and Icon SI (Aust) was appointed to carry out the construction works.

With a historic reputation in an enviable yet demanding location, the \$63.9 million redevelopment had to befit the pool's prestige and rise to deliver a long lasting and durable solution.

National Precast Concrete Association Australia (National Precast) Master Precaster Waeger Constructions was awarded the contract to manufacture and supply precast concrete steps and plats for the new grandstand which would overlook the new pool and Harbour.

The precaster is known for another historically significant project, the ANZAC Memorial Walk in Newcastle. Its owner and Managing Director, Michael Waeger, has also just stepped down as President of National Precast, the precast industry's peak body.

"Jobs like this one excite me and the team," says Waeger. "We are proud to be able to make a contribution to such iconic landmarks that will serve the community for many years to come."

Waeger Constructions manufactured and supplied 42 plats measuring 8 metres long and 40 steps that were 2 metres long for the grandstand in grey concrete in a Class 2 finish. The company manufactured the



Seating plats manufactured by Waeger Constructions for the new Olympic Pool grandstand.

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Project

North Sydney Olympic Pool Redevelopment

Location

North Sydney, NSW

Builder

Icon SI (Aust)

Architect

Brewster Hjorth Architects

Master Precaster

Waeger Constructions



Artist's impression of the new Olympic Pool at North Sydney.

products in its purpose-built factory before delivering them to the redevelopment site, which resulted in its team only having to spend four days onsite. If these same works had been undertaken onsite, it would have taken several weeks.

Fifty megapascal concrete with a B2 exposure classification was used to ensure durability requirements were met, while also delivering a high quality, low maintenance finish that Master Precasters such as Waeger Constructions are renowned for producing. Waeger says that his company reconfigured the proposed lifting design to change the casting orientation so that the best finish could be achieved on the surfaces that would be visible once installed.

The upgrade is expected to be completed in July 2023 and, alongside a new pool and grandstand, the complex will offer a new state-of-the-art leisure and fitness centre.

North Sydney Mayor Jilly Gibson says the redevelopment will mean that regular swimmers will be able to enjoy their harbourside swims for many decades to come. "The redevelopment will also open the complex to new customers," says Gibson. "We'll have better swimming and play options

for families; older people will be able to enjoy gentle exercise in warm water pools and we'll be able to offer more aquatic and fitness classes and an expanded gymnasium."

Precast education now available to all

Silica dust management, bolted connections and payment for goods offsite are just three of the webinars already available from the National Precast Concrete Association Australia (National Precast).

National Precast's CEO Sarah Bachmann says more are being run every month and there are options for not just precasters, but for engineers, builders and other industry stakeholders.

"Almost twenty webinars are available for purchase from our online education portal nationalprecastonline.com.au," Bachmann says. "The good news is that anyone can now participate in future webinars."

These are scheduled on the association's main website, at nationalprecast.com.au/ events. Upcoming webinars include bracing



and propping, contracts, site testing of anchors and insurance liability.

A recent National Precast webinar on using digital enterprise resource planning to reduce process complexities in precast manufacturing, presented by IDAT's Sebastian Jovan and National Precast CEO Sarah Bachmann.