

## Asian crisis prompts calls to rebuild manufacturing

AUSTRALIA must rebuild and reposition its manufacturing industries if the worst effects of the Asian financial crisis are to be avoided, according to the editors of a new book on industry, technology and employment.

Mr Rodin Genoff (senior industry analyst with the University of Adelaide's Centre for Labour Research) and Professor Roy Green (director of the Employment Studies Centre, University of Newcastle) are the editors of *Manufacturing Prosperity*—a collection of commentaries from some of the most respected economic forecasters, analysts and policy experts in Australia and New Zealand.

Contributors include Dr Frank Gelber, director of BIS Schrapnel Australia, Mr David Morgan, president of Ford Australia, Mr Peter Harris, senior economist with the NZ Council of Trade Unions, and Mr Peter Roberts, columnist for *The Australian Financial Review*.

Mr Genoff said the book was unique in that it represented the views of a diverse range of stakeholders, all of whom

shared the same vision for manufacturing in Australia.

"One of the key arguments of this book is that Australia's future depends on knowledge-intensive manufacturing," Mr Genoff said.

"Australia's traditional reliance on primary commodity exports has locked it into declining terms of trade, and hence lower living standards and higher unemployment than would otherwise be the case.

"Manufacturing currently accounts for 65% of all research and development and has a technological innovation propensity three times the non-manufacturing average.

"A strong technological and sophisticated manufacturing base in Australia would lead to a turn-around both in living standards and unemployment."

Professor Green said the Asian crisis should highlight to federal and State governments the need for greater support, and a new direction, for Australia's manufacturing sector.

"The main danger for Australia lies in complacency,

particularly about the prospects of a widening current account deficit.

"This will result primarily from exchange rate movements, weakening our export drive into Asia and enabling Asian producers to undercut our exports to Europe and North America," he said.

"Support for Australia's manufacturing sector has been a policy free zone for more than a decade. The present government has commissioned a number of reports in this area, but little has come of this debate.

"If it is not to be another wasted opportunity, the Asian crisis must sharpen the focus of government policy on Australia's manufacturing future."

In his foreword, international economics commentator and editor of the London *Observer* Mr Will Hutton wrote: "The importance of this volume is that it faces up to the choice of Australia's economic future. It canvasses new ideas for industry and regional policy and practical ways of exploring them."

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Adelaide's recorder virtuoso Jo Dudley is home for a while before heading off on a study trip to Japan. Those who missed her Festival concert have a second chance with a free extra concert on Tuesday 7 April. Ewart Shaw reports on page 8. Photo: Oliver Dudley

## National arbitration course to meet market need



Dr Clyde Croft and Vice-Chancellor Mary O'Kane. Photo: David Ellis

A NEW NATIONAL course teaching the skills and techniques of arbitration will be offered by the University of Adelaide thanks to a unique partnership between the

university and the Institute of Arbitrators and Mediators Australia.

The National Course in Commercial Arbitration will be the first of its kind in

Australia. Those who undertake the course, to be offered in seven capital cities through partner universities, will receive professional training in commercial arbitration.

Arbitration, mediation and other forms of alternative dispute resolution are increasingly being used to avoid costly and time-consuming litigation. Courts have the power to refer matters before them to arbitrators in a bid to resolve technical issues of a particular dispute.

The president of the Institute of Arbitrators and Mediators, Dr Clyde Croft, said the demand for professional, qualified arbitrators was on the increase.

"This course will meet an important need in the market. It will help the professions (accountants, doctors, lawyers, engineers, architects and so on) to develop people who are both expert in their particular subject area and also skilled in the techniques

of arbitration," Dr Croft said.

"It is in the interests of professional associations to ensure that they have a pool of members who are experts in arbitration so that complex, technical disputes can be resolved without recourse to litigation.

"This new, national course will be open to anyone with an interest in arbitration, and we expect it to attract people from a diverse range of backgrounds."

A general course will begin at the end of July this year, with an advanced course being offered in 1999. The academic learning materials for the one-semester courses will be designed by experts in the field with contributions from highly qualified legal professionals and practising arbitrators.

At the recent signing of the joint venture agreement with the university, Dr Croft said the institute had sought a

partnership with the University of Adelaide because of its excellent standing.

"The University of Adelaide is one of the pre-eminent universities in the country. This unique opportunity brings together the expertise of Adelaide's academic staff with highly skilled practitioners, lawyers and others, which will result in a first-rate education in this area.

"A pilot general course in arbitration was run last year by the university's Faculty of Law, and it was very successful," he said.

"I'm certain that this move will be viewed as an important one and that the partnership between the Institute of Arbitrators and Mediators and the University of Adelaide will be a model for universities generally."

—Una Spiers, Graduate School of Management  
—David Ellis