



# BIM verification for Design and Construction. Helping model the modern company

“BIM Level 2 certification for design and construction will help differentiate us from our competitors and prove, again, our commitment to the highest standards and to using cutting-edge technologies to serve our customers better.”

**Alan Harris,**  
Quality Manager, voestalpine Metsec plc

## **voestalpine Metsec plc in brief**

voestalpine Metsec plc is a British manufacturing company, founded in the iron and steel heartland of the West Midlands 85 years ago. The UK's largest specialist cold roll-forming company turns over £85m a year, supplying a range of products, primarily aimed at the construction sector, to a wide range of companies — from architects to electrical contractors. In June 2016, it became the first cold-rolling company to be certified to BIM Level 2 for design and construction by BSI.

## **BSI Certification: the business benefits**

BSI certification for BIM, design and construction:

- Promotes collaboration and innovation
- Endorses corporate values such as quality and service
- Helps differentiate a company from its competitors
- Improves efficiency
- Increases a company's knowledge base.



## Customer background

voestalpine Metsec plc started life in 1931 as Metal Sections, a small Birmingham business converting steel strip into sections for use by other manufacturers. Early customers included car and coach makers.

Bought by another Midlands company, Tube Investments, a year or so after launch, it expanded rapidly — and diversified to new sectors and new products. The war years saw contracts from the defence industry, and the decades that followed from the booming construction industry, as the company started to design and manufacture metal purlins and steel systems for ceilings and walls.

Today, voestalpine Metsec plc is the biggest cold-rolled forming company in the UK, with some 380 employees, and three large factories at its site in Oldbury, near West Bromwich. It supplies purlins, side rails, mezzanine floor systems, lightweight steel framing systems, dry lining systems, cable management systems and bespoke metal products to a wide range of customers in the construction and manufacturing industries.

The company has been through many changes over the past 30 or so years. Divestments by Tube Investments led to a management buy-out in 1981 and a reduced workforce and product range, but the 'reborn' company grew quickly and developed more new products. In 1985, it floated on the Stock Exchange as Metsec plc.

The following ten years saw further growth and, in 1998, Metsec became part of the metal forming division of the Austrian company voestalpine, a global leader in material processing and metal engineering with revenues in excess of €11bn a year.

## Corporate values

Amidst all the change, one thing has remained constant: the company's core values. "High-quality, value added design and manufacture, technical excellence and excellent customer service — these are the things that have always mattered to us and that matter to us today," says Alan Harris, Quality Manager.

The company's commitment to the highest possible standards is reflected in a number of certifications—including the BSI Kitemark for Cable Management, awarded in 2015. "Our strategy is to be at the forefront of the industry by being the first to adopt all new legislation and

## BSI Case Study: voestalpine Metsec plc

### Certification: BSI Verification for BIM Level 2 Design and Construction

to win certifications that allow us to innovate as a business and, in turn, add value to our customers," Mr Harris adds.

In 2007, voestalpine Metsec plc achieved the international standard for environmental management, ISO 14001, and the Steel Construction Sustainability Charter Gold Standard, and in 2011 became the first manufacturer in the UK to CE mark its purlin and framing systems.

2016 was another landmark year: voestalpine Metsec plc became the first cold rolling company in the UK to achieve Level 2 certification for building information modelling (BIM) from BSI.

### Why BIM and why BSI?

BIM, which helps ensure the effective flow of information at every stage of a project and between all parties involved, and, therefore, mitigates risk, is the future of design and construction. Since April 2016, the UK government has required companies tendering for centrally procured government projects to be working at Level 2 for BIM.

Essentially a digital environment in which information and 3D computer-aided designs are shared through a common file format, Level 2 benefits everyone in the supply chain. "A common set of design processes and an integrated, digital model for communication improve efficiency," Mr Harris explains.

For a forward-thinking company committed to being a leader in its field, independent assessment for BIM Level 2 was an obvious step. "We had many of the structures and procedures already in place and we knew third-party certification would ensure our compliance to the highest standards possible," Mr Harris continues.

Choosing a certification body for BIM was an equally easy decision. "BSI is seen as the market leader for certification, and we had a long running relationship with them. We knew how professional their audits were and how knowledgeable they were — they were the clear choice for BIM Level 2."

### The certification process

BSI ran initial training courses on BIM for the company, and, once the formal application for certification had been made, carried out a gap analysis to discover where current practices fell short of Level 2. Everyone in the company —

directors, design managers, structural engineers, designers, detailers and project co-ordinators — was involved.

More BIM training followed further assessment, but the certification process was not protracted — and proved easier than the company had expected. "We did have some issues interpreting the standard and its requirements at first," Mr Harris says, "but we overcame them and, after making some minor amendments to procedures, we were awarded the certificate in June 2016 — just four months after we'd make the initial enquiry to BSI."

### The future

Mr Harris believes the certification process has added to the knowledge base of the company. "BSI training was the biggest benefit," he says. "It was provided to all key people involved in the process, and gave them a good understanding of BIM requirements and how they related to their job role/function."

He also believes that, while BIM is still not universally recognised in the construction industry, certification to Level 2 is a good investment in the future. "It will help differentiate us from our competitors and prove, again, our commitment to the highest possible standards and to using cutting-edge technologies to serve our customers better. We're already using the certificate for advertising and marketing purposes, and we've already seen the number of enquiries rise."

The company now hopes to progress to the BSI Kitemark for BIM Design and Construction, developed in 2016. "We believe the BSI Kitemark will not only further strengthen our position as market leader, but also give customers confidence in our ability to work collaboratively with others in the supply chain, and prove we have the expertise to provide a service that goes above and beyond the standard BIM offering," Mr Harris adds.

**Contact us to find out how BSI certification can help your business make excellence a habit.**

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