



Aluminium building elements made to measure in domestic production facilities for individual building projects  
Photo: Aluminium Industries, Victoria



Growth segment: high-quality PVC windows with European opening types  
Photo: Energy Efficient Windows

## Fenestration Solution Australia

# Window production increases in Australia

■ **Hardware dealers** “I believe that, following the natural disasters we’ve experienced in our country this year, window manufacturers will be seen in a new light in future,” says **Shane McDuff, Managing Director of Fenestration Solution Australia (FSA) in Melbourne.**

FSA has been supplying Australian window manufacturers with components for many years. In the past, companies followed two strategies to stand up against the price-aggressive competition in China. Some producers concentrated on supplying traditional, simple timber windows at a favourable price. Others underwent continuous further development to become experts in high-quality, made-to-measure aluminium and PVC windows used in individual building projects. “The majority of standard PVC windows used in Australian housing construction used to come from China ready for assembly,” explains McDuff.

### Painful insights

2020 hit the Australian construction industry hard in several ways: 1. The very simple timber windows used widely throughout the country were completely destroyed by fire. 2. The compensation home-owners received from their building insurers following house fires was vastly inadequate for enabling them to switch over to PVC or aluminium windows that comply with the Bush Fire standard, which would be safer in the event of another fire. This means they would have to use their own savings. 3. The extreme dependence on Chinese pre-production of many building elements and constructions has the potential to paralyse Australian construction projects during crises such as the corona pandemic. For McDuff it’s obvious:



The company, founded in 2008, has worked together with Roto since 2011 and supplies window manufacturers throughout Australia as well as New Zealand.

**“Australia must refocus on its own efficient building element producers.”**

Delivery times of several months for windows that are urgently required for rebuilding houses after bush fires are considered to be unacceptable, as many families are still without homes. This problem is the result of insufficient production capacity in the country and the fact that Chinese manufacturers were forced to halt production shortly after the fires due to the coronavirus pandemic. According to McDuff, it may not be possible to recover from the decline in housing construction caused by the drop in window imports in the first quarter of 2020.

### Greater demand placed on Australian manufacturers

The fact that private and commercial builders are responding to experiences such as these is being confirmed by an increasing number of window manufacturers and customers of FSA. Their order books have been filling month on month, as financially strong Australians are now opting increasingly for more effective aluminium and PVC windows produced in their own country. McDuff is convinced:

**“More home-owners than ever before are demanding high-quality windows.”**

FSA is also benefiting from this. As a hardware dealer, the company has already been procuring and supplying high-quality components for windows and doors for many years. These originate predominantly from European manufacturers. “Roto is one of our most important partners,” reports McDuff, “especially when it comes to aluminium window construction.” Taking into account the fact that manufacturing timber windows is becoming increasingly expensive and difficult due to national logging regulations, it is quite possible that Australian home-owners will also be opting for high-quality PVC windows with European opening types in future. “Profile systems and hardware from Europe will then be in greater demand than ever.”

### Promising start with Roto Patio Inowa

Systems with hardware such as Roto Patio Inowa, whose operating convenience and sealing far exceed the previous standard in Australia, have sparked particular interest among Australian manufacturers.

**“This year, FSA is in demand as an ambassador for innovations such as Roto Patio Inowa.”**

In major towns and metropolitan areas in particular, interest in thermally insulated and soundproof windows that meet the European standard is increasing continuously. The majority of these are currently still made with aluminium profiles that are manufactured in Australia. But renowned European system suppliers of PVC profiles are also attracting increasing attention.

Until now, PVC sliding systems with Roto Patio Inowa came predominantly from China. The tried-and-tested typhoon safety of the sliding systems has sparked particular interest and is being actively advertised with the sale of high-quality apartments, according to McDuff. “The comfort provided by Roto Patio Inowa is appealing to an increasing number of families who are looking to build a family home. Since these families represent a particularly attractive target group for our customers, we are actively supporting the introduction of the intelligent sliding hardware for tightly sealed sliding systems.”

### Extensive storage in Melbourne

FSA procures Roto products from both Leinfelden and Singapore. The level of stock on hand is high, as the delivery times of five to six weeks are considerable. “Demand, however, is constant, so keeping a high level of stock does not represent too high an economic risk,” explains McDuff. “Both manufacturers and retailers who made the decision to work with ‘European windows’ are remaining loyal to this market segment and FSA. Together with them and with strong partners such as Roto, we are shaping and developing the market. We’re striving for both an increase in quality and satisfied home-owners.”

Is FSA therefore expecting even greater demand? “Definitely,” nods McDuff. “However, it’s not erratic, but organic growth that we want. Our regular customers feel a connection with FSA, not only because of our high-quality products, but also because of our exceptionally comprehensive services. These should remain our trademark, which means ensuring that the team’s planning capacities keep pace with turnover.”

[www.fsa-aus.com.au](http://www.fsa-aus.com.au)



Shane McDuff, Managing Director, Fenestration Solution Australia