

Australian steel stories

**FRM Refrigeration and
Air Conditioning**

**Steel. Aluminium.
Knowhow.TM**

Partnering for growth in the Northern Territory

“ We prefer to use Australian steel, both for the quality of the product and to ensure a viable economic future for all Australians. ”



Dependable and effective temperature control is vital in Australia's steamy Top End. Millions of dollars in produce and economic output relies on it. FRM Refrigeration and Air Conditioning is the business Territorians and Top-Enders turn to keep their businesses chilled, from schools to supermarkets, government buildings, defence establishments and large cold storage facilities.

Tony McCall established the business in Winnellie in 2012. He, wife Tasma, and their three sons now service all of Darwin and the Katherine regions and employ 70 local people. The team has extensive skills to design and manufacture tailor-made systems to suit each of these different settings.

Tony's a big believer in growing the local industry, by developing local skills, and utilising high quality Australian-made steel products. FRM has an in-house sheet metal workshop where his team works with the COLORBOND® steel - Surfmist® and Night Sky® coils; along with GALVABOND® steel coils supplied by BlueScope Distribution Adelaide.

The COLORBOND® steel and GALVABOND® steel is manufactured by BlueScope and freighted up the highway to Darwin when required.

"BlueScope Distribution relaunched into the Northern Territory in 2021 with FRM being one of the first customers since the move back and have been very supportive, a partnership built on reliability and mutual growth," explains FRM's Account Manager at BlueScope Distribution Adelaide.

Vicky Lapitz, FRM's Senior Project Administrator says, "having a supplier that is knowledgeable about our products is vital. We know what steel product is available and when. Our teams can contact BlueScope Distribution at any time for our requirements."

Local manufacturing hits new heights

Whether it's commercial refrigeration or the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning of large workspaces, FRM has the skills to design, engineer and install the product to each customer's specifications. And they provide the ongoing preventative maintenance that's so critical for reliable performance in such a hot and humid environment.

BlueScope Distribution Adelaide have enormous praise for the innovation of their NT client. "FRM have a de-coiler and plasma fabric cutting machine in their workshop. The new machine cuts the insulation on site, and they take full advantage of the cost efficiency and convenience of coils rather than flat sheets. FRM is a lean manufacturer, innovative and forward thinking," says FRM's Account Manager at BlueScope Distribution.

"We hold stock specifically for FRM to ensure it's always available when they require it. It's delivered just-in-time, so they're never left short. Sometimes we recoil into smaller coils, which makes it easier for FRM to handle, store, and manage."

A solid partnership built on innovation

"It's great partnering with a market leader who is forward thinking and innovative. There's more scope to grow in the Northern Territory. And with the quality and credibility of our steel products and solutions, we aim to grow with FRM. With our relaunch into the territory, we can fully support FRM's key requirements and help with their business challenges moving forward," says FRM's Account Manager.

“Partnering with our customers involves understanding what is important to their business and the customers they support. This allows BlueScope Distribution to offer supply solutions that are tailored to our customers’ needs. The COLORBOND® steel and GALVABOND® steel product quality, and the precise coil processing and ready supply solutions such as just-in-time delivery that BlueScope Distribution provides are a huge support for FRM”.

Vicky also appreciates the technical knowledge BlueScope Distribution has about their own products and for the FRM manufacturing process.

She says, “The benefits of our close working relationship mean we can offer more products and services, improve our efficiency, and there’s a benefit for the environment through waste reduction. We prefer to use Australian steel, both for the quality of the product and to ensure a viable economic future for all Australians.”

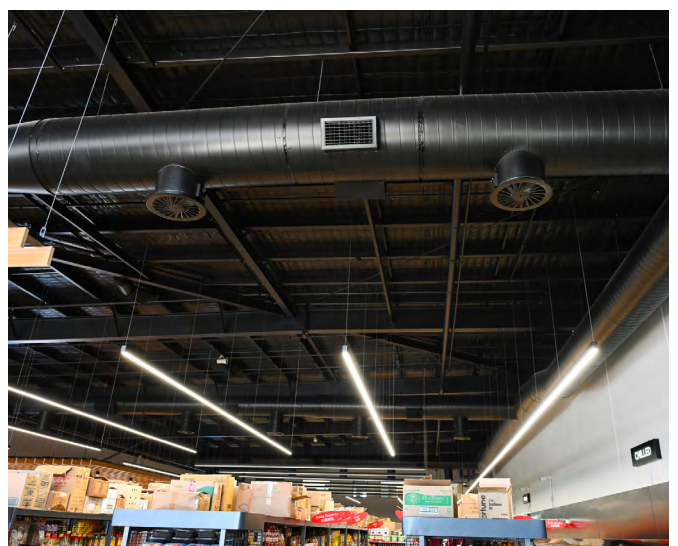
Train local, retain local

“Tony is a born and bred Territorian,” says wife, Tasma. “He’s very proud of the fact his three sons are all qualified refrigeration and air conditioning technicians, and he wants to create similar opportunities for local young people. Every year we take on work experience students from Territory schools. This gives them the opportunity to see if they like the trade. Many come back when they have finished their schooling, others commence as school-based apprentices”.

“Currently we have 20 apprentices across all our trades. We encourage all our employees to further their abilities with industry-related training. Tony is passionate about growing the industry and supporting local kids,” Tasma says proudly.

“From our early beginnings we’ve looked out for how we can support the local community. We provide cool rooms and spot coolers, free of charge, for schools and community events. We sponsor events like the Total Recreation Katherine to Darwin Bike Challenge, Palmerston Game Fishing Club’s Barra Nationals and Secret Women’s Challenge tournaments, Northern Cowboy Association Junior Rodeos and many other local sporting clubs”.

With smart investments, good relationships and a supportive community culture, the future looks bright for BlueScope Distribution and FRM.





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STEEL INDUSTRY**

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