



# Alumni Profiles: George Barnett

**BSc (Hons) 1970; PhD 1974**

After graduating with BSc Honours in 1970 I went on to complete my PhD in 1974. I worked with Dr Meryvn Cooper for both degrees.

From there I joined the Explosives Section of ICI Australia Central Research Department in 1974 and worked there until 1978, with a brief period at the Plant Development Section of ICI Yarraville Chloralkali plant in 1978.

Continuing my association with ICI I took up a position for two years at ICI in Cheshire in the United Kingdom working on a new chlorine manufacturing technology using ion exchange membranes. I returned to Australia in late 1979 to run a major project in chlorine membrane technology.

In 1980 I became Inorganic Section Leader at ICI, which involved running projects across a diverse range of business areas with a team of 20 scientists.

In 1983 I joined ICI's Management Services as a Business Consultant in the area of Information Technology. This involved implementing new business computer systems across company sites around Australia. I had no previous experience in this area. It taught me about finance, manufacturing, payroll systems, purchasing etc as well as how to handle a very diverse range of people and situations. At the end of this time I was working on approving R&D and technology management as part of a team of five people with McKinsey & Co on a project for ICI.

From 1984 to 1989 I was Technology Manager, ICI's Advanced Ceramics (Z-Tech), which is a high technology zirconia ceramics start-up business. I worked with a small team to develop technology and to carry out market development in Japan, USA and Europe. I set up and ran a sales group for Australia and Technical Services Group for Global Business. I was also involved in 3 business acquisitions during this time, one in Melbourne and two in the USA.

From 1990 to 1991 I held the position of Business Manager (Refrigeration) at ICI Australia. As ICI had not sold CFCs historically, I was required to build up a new market from scratch using alternatives to ozone-depleting CFCs which was both challenging and very rewarding.

In 1991 I returned to the United Kingdom where I stayed for three and half years as Global Product Manager in 134a refrigerant gas at ICI Klea, which is based at Runcorn. During this time I also acted as Marketing Manager for Eastern Europe, South America, Australasia, Middle East and Africa. This business had one pilot plant in 1991 and three major manufacturing plants in USA, Japan and the United Kingdom by the end 1994. This was a high growth rapid change business.

From 1994 until 2001 I was Business Manager of Chlorine & Derivatives at ICI Australia and subsequently Business Manager, ChlorAlkali at Orica Australia - a \$150M business. I was responsible for logistics and distribution, marketing, Australia-wide sales force, purchasing and technical services. I also ran a company-wide program on Product Stewardship to increase environmental awareness and responsibility across the global organisation (1995-2001).

From 2001 I joined Orica Adhesives and Resins as Division General Manager where I remain today. This position sees me overseeing sales, finance, manufacturing, marketing, technology and human resources for businesses based in Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia and China. Adhesives and Resins make formaldehyde-based adhesives mainly for the wood product industry such as plywood, particleboard and medium density fibreboard (MDF).

In summary I have enjoyed a widely varied career spanning many technical and commercial areas. I have been given the opportunity to travel, including two very interesting overseas placements. You may find it interesting that out of four Division General Managers in Orica's Chemicals Business, two are PhD Chemists and the others are Chemical Engineers. Both my Australian and New Zealand Business Managers are qualified chemists.

**If you would like to read more about Orica Adhesives & Resins visit our website at <http://www.oraica-adhesives.com/> .**