

Impacting the Industry

AWCI'S Committees at Work

Of all the membership benefits in AWCI, perhaps the greatest is the opportunity for an individual member to make a significant impact on the industry by molding the present and helping to shape its future. Over 354 AWCI members are doing just that through the association's committee structure; a committee structure that makes the association responsive to member needs.

For example, the finishing of drywall

that will be painted, especially in critical lighting areas, has frequently been a problem for the owner, the specifier, and the drywall contractor. Recognizing that the basic problem has primarily been in the area of communication and specification, AWCI's Technical Subcommittee No. 3 has been working over the summer on a document that will define levels of finish. The Gypsum Association, Painting and Decorating Contractors of America, and the Ceil-

ing and Interior Systems Construction Association have joined in the effort to create an industry-wide document for specifiers and owners.

Also, much has been written and discussed about the shortage of skilled tradesmen to install exterior insulation and finish systems. Members of AWCI's Technical Subcommittee No. 7 decided to do something about it. A steering committee was formed to develop a comprehensive pre-

apprenticeship training program for introduction into the vocational school systems in the U.S. and Canada. The development of training course materials has already begun and pilot programs will be started in early 1990. Widespread use of the training course is anticipated in the near future.

Within the past few years, the inspection and acceptance of spray applied fire-resistive materials has created a nightmare on some projects. Fireproofing contractors are encountering inexperienced and/or unqualified inspectors far too frequently, and the result is escalating cost for inspection and materials. AWCI's Technical Subcommittee No. 4 recently worked with Underwriters Laboratories representatives, and U.L. will amend its tolerance criteria to agree with AWCI's historic $\pm 1/4$ -inch thickness criteria.

Also, a task force from the committee is working over the summer to produce an update of Technical Manual 12-A on inspection procedures, and the main committee, armed with a more comprehensive manual, will develop an educational program for inspection personnel.

While other AWCI technical committees are also working on molding present and future standards and installation criteria, volunteer members on other association committees are working equally hard in other areas that have a direct affect on how you do business, and on your potential profitability.

Four separate committees form the Labor-Management Group for apprenticeship and labor liaison activities with the international unions. Industry trades involved include carpenters and lathers,

laborers, painters and tapers, and plasterers. Many AWCI member contractor firms are signatory to the national labor agreements which this group develops. A new multi-trade agreement with all four unions is now in the final stages of negotiation.

AWCI member contractor firms are nearly evenly divided between union and nonunion firms. AWCI's Merit Shop Committee provides an excellent vehicle for nonunion contractors to meet and positively affect their present and future needs. Working with representatives of the Associated Builders and Contractors in a cooperative effort, a task group from the committee has already published the first of a two year apprenticeship training curriculum for drywall, and is nearing completion of the second year of the program. The training materials are

being favorably received by contractors for in-house use, and formal training programs have been established at the regional level.

AWCI has approximately 71 committees, and those mentioned above are the tip of the iceberg-almost literally.

Our political action committee (WAC/PAC) has grown to become one

of the largest in the construction industry. Topping off at over \$100,000 in the most recent election cycle, WAC/PAC makes donations to campaigns of pro-business candidates for the U.S. House and Senate. It has helped make AWCI even better known and respected both on "the Hill" and at the White House.

Much of AWCI's work is guided by a series of internal committees: Audit, Budget, Financial Advisory, Bylaws, and so forth. The association's showcase convention is the result of the work of hard-driven Convention and Exhibitors' Committees and the top rated annual AWCI Academy as well as convention educational program and stand-alone seminars are handled by AWCI's Academy Council.

The association's think-tank is the Continuing Study Council which meets for two solid weeks each year to review all association programs and possible services. Communication of services to the members is under the authority of the Communications and Marketing Committee which also handles AWCI's image enhancement, having taken over the role of the Public Relations committee.

This article is not intended to describe each and every committee, but to show the reader how AWCI is a committee-driven organization, reaching down to the grassroots for direction and ideas. Few associations have the high member involvement of AWCI, or successfully respond to industry and member needs so quickly and effectively. 