

Dave's switched on to success

By Janine Martin

Corporate development manager Dave Sammut's first-ever job was at technology company Intec, bucketing mud from place to place at its pilot plant at Chatswood in Sydney.

His first night shift was especially memorable.

"My shift boss, Tina asked me to switch a pump off, and I was faced with a bewildering array of switches from which to choose. I followed the lead to what I hoped was the correct switch, reached out, and pressed the 'off button,'" he said.

That simple action resulted in the entire plant grinding to a halt.

Every light and heater, every agitator and pump shut down.

"Standing in the darkness, I punched the 'on' button for all I was worth, but nothing," said Mr Sammut.

Fortunately the glitch turned out to be a coincidence, as a blackout had hit at the exact moment Mr Sammut turned off the "correct" switch.

The story doesn't end there.

"The next night I was having a stress dream, and said out loud 'I'm so sorry Tina'. I woke to find my wife sitting bolt upright in bed next to me: 'Tina?'"

It's been a long journey for Dave Sammut since that first sticky shift in the mid-1990s.

But even now, each day at Intec throws up a new bank of

switches, and he strives always to hit the right one.

Mr Sammut's initial stint at Intec was supposed to be three weeks of work, while he awaited another offer.

Those three weeks became seven years.

By 2002, Mr Sammut felt a need to broaden his resume and headed out to work in the consulting business.

He ended up spending the last couple of years in Canada, running his own consultancy firm, primarily to do with environment management.

Upon returning to Australia last year, Mr Sammut rejoined the Intec family in a new and challenging role, using both his technical and business degrees to help build the bridge between technical and corporate areas.

Actively involved in helping to make the Intec Hellyer Residues Project in Tasmania a reality, Mr Sammut's role is diverse.

His duties are as diverse as developing the environmental and other regulatory approvals for the coming plant, investor and media relations, and liaising with potential users of the Intec Process technology.

"Every day is different. I like to joke that my real title should be 'executive gopher,'" he laughed.

Based in Intec's head office on the grounds of Sydney University, Mr Sammut believes he is living the

highlight of his career.

"I have made the transition from being primarily a technologist to a role in the corporate side of industry, in a company of which I can be proud (for an excellent technology, for its diversity, and for the ethics that underpin every action taken), working towards a goal by which, I and my colleagues truly believe the world will benefit – environmentally and economically. I could not be happier," he said.

Mr Sammut is also living his dream at home – with wife Chantelle, and after 10 years of marriage, nine-week-old son, William.

Sharing a passion for travel and photography, husband and wife are also writers, and together have published *The Dropbear Chronicles*, a travelogue of 50,000km by road across Canada.

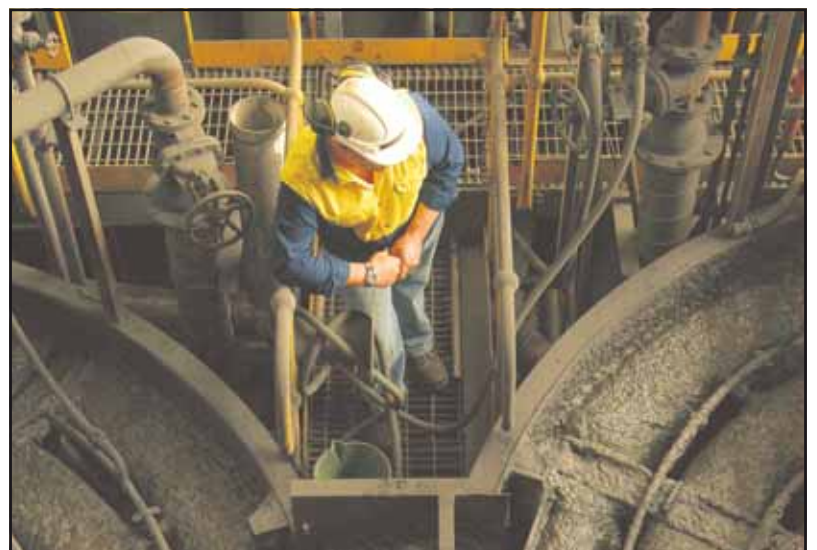
Two more books – *The Dropbear Chronicles II: Loose in the Top Paddock* and *Art & A Thousand Words* – are in the publishing pipeline.

"We are both working separately on our own books as well, it now being a bit of a race to see who finishes first ... If Chantelle publishes first, it won't matter what I ever write after that. No matter how good my own efforts, I will forever be known as 'Chantelle Sammut's husband,'" said Dave Sammut proudly.

No arguments then, this is one switched-on guy. ■



Corporate development manager Dave Sammut is proud of Intec's excellent technology and diversity.



A worker oversees a run at the Intec Hellyer Mill.

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