

Scottish Galvanizers offers the largest galvanizing facility in Scotland, with a fast turnaround, unrivalled customer service, top quality product and superb value for money. The Glasgow based business is part of the UK wide Wedge Group Galvanizing LTD. The company's experienced team is always ready to provide free advice about galvanizing requirements and to assist with steelwork design for optimum galvanizing quality. In addition the Glasgow facility offers a state of the art in-house blasting facility offering pre-galvanizing treatment and well established links with highly reputable powder coaters or painters for post galvanizing treatments. All works undertaken is hot dip galvanized strictly in accordance with BS EN ISO 1461:2009 and under the control of ISO 9001.



## Excellence in Galvanizing

### WEDGE

### Business Improvement Academy Project

Alistair Moon, Assistant Works Manager at Scottish Galvanizers explained how within the production focused factory it can be quite easy to identify and observe areas of waste. However a lot of waste goes unnoticed or just becomes accepted as people work within their "Scotoma" (within a zone of denial). To kick off the project, Alistair took a step back to look throughout the factory and identify a number of areas of waste which he explains, in his words, throughout this case study.

The most obvious areas included:

#### The White Yard (Outward material that has been treated and galvanized) -

Where galvanized steel is stored before being collected by the customer. Work sitting in the white yard is a great example of inefficiencies, we have the work ready, but the customer doesn't want it yet! Work being buried behind other work making it time consuming to find which leads to extra movement increasing the chance of damages and jobs being split up and placed in different areas causing customers to leave without part of their loads.

**The Equipment storage throughout the factory** - no designated place for a lot of our equipment leads to problems when the equipment is needed.

**PPE management** - Having no real system leads to a lot of time chasing up orders or running out of PPE.

**The Black Yard (Input end for non-treated metal)** - Where work is stored before it is galvanized.

#### Project Analysis

With a project focus on the "Black Yard" it is important to understand that we cannot galvanize hollow

steel section until we have vented it sufficiently. Analysis demonstrated where work was being vented at the last minute leading to:

- Work on the days programme not being ready to galvanize
- Work not being ready for customers
- Venting being missed risking the safety of pot men
- Work not being counted as it arrives - this doesn't directly waste time at the black yard but it can have a massive impact further down the line as shown.
  - FLT driver ~1 hour+
  - Management ~1hour+
  - Supervisors ~0.5hour+

We have a small yard for our throughput tonnage (no way around that) so we need to make sure that we optimise logistics to reduce the constant movement of materials. My project was to resolve these problems and maintain improvements. We set up a "Black Yard" improvement team to engage with all operators and we introduced new checks on work being booked in to the system. We developed a "5S" programme and created a Fabrication area inside the factory to optimise space. Managing an improvement team can be very

## Business Improvement Academy Scottish Galvanizers Case Study

difficult requiring constant facilitation to really drive the project from the bottom up, a key to any successful lean initiative. Making a significant impact in a short timescale has been challenging as we run a production factory, getting work through the door and back out is the number one priority for the shop floor.

By deploying the tool kit provided through the Academy we have managed to make many positive improvements. As we focused on productivity and poorly vented materials we began to assess the number of venting near misses that operatives log through our H&S management system. It is not uncommon to have mini explosions where zinc overflows significantly creating extra work (NVA) whilst potentially compromising Health & Safety.

We reviewed measures that had been implemented in the past to reduce the strain on the "Black Yard" and reduce venting near misses. Surprisingly many of the previous actions were not having the desired impact upon detailed analysis. The improvement team designed a new "stop and think" check in the form of the goods in checklist and implemented this at the time of booking in jobs. We are now measuring the impact going forward and early analysis is highlighting a significant reduction to the number of near misses we receive for venting.

### Creating an Action Plan for Change

With the new system in place, drivers booking in jobs now have to make sure that the work is ready for galvanizing. This is linked to the tracking system throughout the factory to allow anyone involved in the process see if there is any extra work required before the job is galvanized. Now our fabrication team are working a pull system to

get ahead of the venting needs as requirements are highlighted as soon as a job is booked in as opposed to when it is programmed. The monitoring system has seen a 70% reduction within the first month and the focus now is to maintain and improve this.

### Business Benefits

We are now starting to see significant health and safety improvements that come from being ahead of the game with venting work. The production controller's job is becoming less stressful and we are improving accuracy in customer delivery schedules. With staff more involved in the improvement initiatives we are seeing a new "kaizen" approach to problem solving. As a result "5S" is taking root within the factory and transportation waste is being reduced. Analysis of costs associated with the improvements compared to previous activity demonstrate an expected cost reduction of £6,720 a year.

[www.wedge-galv.co.uk](http://www.wedge-galv.co.uk)

*"All in all the Business Improvement Academy has been a great way for me to be introduced to a number of improvement theories and techniques. It has really highlighted to me where we need to get to and while I initially struggled a bit with the implementation I now believe that over time I will get to grips with on-going improvement and see the bigger impact throughout the business."*

Alistair Moon – Assistant  
Production Manager

**accelerate,**

