



AquaCote rolled on NIS 18 centreboard case.

AquaCote water based Polyurethane paint from BoatCraft Pacific

by ROBERT AYLIFFE

AROUND 15 years ago I tried the prototype AquaCote paint system.

I liked the idea of a non isocyanate polyurethane paint, especially one that had no toxic fumes and washed up in water. You can drink our thinners had a certain appeal.

Sadly, it was not a happy experience back then. Poor coverage, too runny and the colour range was not complete.

I was busy and lost faith in it.

Around 10 years ago I visited the home of Bruce McConkey, the industrial chemist who had first formulated AquaCote. He showed me a handrail he had painted with the reformulated AquaCote.

The rail was fire engine red. It was in direct Brisbane sunlight and weather all year. Red is one of the worst colours for fading. I thought he'd made a bad decision!

Last year, during August and September at Loganholme I worked at BoatCraft Pacific, where AquaCote is made. I noticed that AquaCote was a big seller in the shop. Once more I visited Bruce and Sarah at their home, and noticed what seemed to be a freshly painted verandah rail. The same one I had last seen 10 years previously.

Have you just repainted this, I asked Bruce.

Came the reply: "Robert, it has not been touched since you saw it, 10 years ago."

This really surprised me. I knew that Bruce had been running accelerated weather testing experiments in Townsville for a number of years, and I knew the results were very, very pleasing.

But I had not expected it to be this tough.

The next day I started to do some experiments of my own with samples of AquaCote in BoatCraft Pacific's Loganholme store. I tried various colours, and various applications, roller, spray, foam and regular paint brush. The only application that did not work was with ordinary paint brushes. Foam rollers, foam brushes and spraying all gave excellent results.

GLASS FIBRE REINFORCEMENTS

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Woven Glass Cloth in 125gsm, 200gsm and 300gsm.	1m wide. 200gsm also in 1.4m wide.
Uniaxial Glass Cloth in 300gsm and 450gsm.	1.27m wide.
Biaxial Glass Cloth in 300gsm, 450gsm and 600gsm.	1.27m wide.
Double Bias Glass Cloth in 320gsm, 435gsm and 600gsm.	1.27m wide.
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Quadriaxial Glass Cloth in 610 gsm.	1.27m wide.
Woven Glass Tapes in 155gsm,	38mm, 50mm, 75mm, 100mm, 150mm and 200mm wide.
Double Bias Glass Tapes in 435gsm,	100mm, 150mm and 200mm widths.
Woven Carbon Fibre in 200gsm.	1.07m wide.
Uniaxial Carbon Fibre in 150gsm.	0.61 wide.
Dynel Polyester woven cloth, Peel Ply, Release Film.	

We cut to length.

BoatCraft Pacific

www.boatcraft.com.au

We stock full rolls

22 Babdoyle St., Loganholme, Qld. 4129 Ph: 07 3806 1944
And all BoatCraft Pacific distributors.

Cloth weights are nominal. Actual weights vary.

It's different than other paints, as turps based paint is different to use than two pot isocyanate paints are. You just practice a bit, and suddenly you wonder why you'd ever go back to the older, more dangerous, environmentally dubious paint systems. This is a win all round!

It's very different to the prototype paint I tried all those years ago.

The coverage is so much denser. I found that the first rolled coat, especially in the lighters colours was sufficiently opaque to almost be the final coat. I watched Bruce spray it one afternoon and the result was an even better gloss and smoothness.

Application to sanding between coats seems to be about three to four hours in 25°. Full hardness is achieved in one to two days depending on temperature.

It's best painted over the AquaCote Hi Build Epoxy Primer, though some successfully paint it directly over sanded Bote Cote. Drips of cross linker are added prior to use, to tension and smooth the surface.

A major problem with all other two pot polyurethane paints is that if you have some of your mixed paint left after the job at hand, the remaining paint is lost because the chemical reaction cannot be stopped and the paint cures in the can.

Not so with Aquacote.

The surface tensioning cross linker that you added earlier loses its effect in the can after about four hours, so the can may be put back into storage, or rejuvenated the next day by adding another measure of cross linker and stirring. This even more significant than it first appears.

Aquacote not only has no atmosphere polluting and dangerous isocyanates and thinners, it also significantly cuts back on industrial waste, since its reusability and proven extreme durability means you waste less in your work and need to repaint less often.



Using the Aquacote painting system is environmentally responsible!

The next time I used it was on a commission from Premier Trailers in Adelaide. They in turn had a Defence Force commission to make a trailer for a big inflatable power boat. The trailer had to have the ability and toughness to allow the boat to be driven up under power onto the trailer without hanging around for retrieval crews. Premiers need a tough, smooth durable surface to permit the repeated sliding action of the inflatable during launch and retrieval without causing damage to the inflatable yet strong enough to cope with the watery abrasion.

Over a year of heavy use has gone by. Happy clients!

I am now using AquaCote on a new NIS 18 that I am building. The interior faces of the topside panels that I prepainted with a foam roller were leaning up against the shed wall prior to gluing onto the frames.

A boat building friend came in to fill in some time.

Spotted the AquaCote panels. Looked closely, then smoothed his hand over the painted surface.

'You glued laminex on these?'

'Right question!'

It was that smooth. Not blindingly shiny, but shiny nevertheless. Smooth, very hard but still flexible enough to withstand considerable panel bend, should it be needed.

Okay Bruce, you win. I am a convert.

AquaCote. Water based polyurethane paint for extreme conditions that is kind to the painter, and the world. Available in standard marine colours from all good Chandleries and Boatcraft Pacific outlets around Australia. ■



Rolled AquaCote interior faces for NIS 18.