

Brifen Wire Rope Safety Fence An Integral Part of Alpine Way Upgrade

Article by Anthony T Schmidt

In an effort to increase safety for road users and improve infrastructure at one of Australia's most popular tourist destinations, a multi-million dollar capital works program, funded by the NSW State Government, is being carried out by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. Extensive upgrades to The Alpine Way form a major part of the overall capital works program in New South Wales' Kosciusko National Park. Installation of Brifen Wire Rope Safety Fences, marketed exclusively in Australia by LB Wire Ropes Pty Ltd, are an integral part of the upgrades to The Alpine Way, KNP5 Route (Klandra to Cabramurra Road) and Guthega Road.

Largest National Park in NSW

Covering an area of some 690,000 hectares, the Kosciusko National Park is the largest National Park in New South Wales. The area was first reserved in 1944 as Kosciusko State Park, becoming a National Park in 1967, and coming under the control of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS).

The park contains the majority of Australia's snow area and all of the NSW ski fields and resorts. Some 3 million tourists visit the park each year, with approximately 60% of these during the winter months. An area of immense beauty and environmental significance, the Kosciusko National Park attracts some 1.2 million visitors during the remainder of the year.

High Accident Levels Due to Road Conditions

Many sections of road throughout the park have a combination of steep inclines and sharp corners associated with mountainous terrain. These factors can cause serious accidents when combined with the often treacherous road conditions in the Alpine region. Accidents due to slippery road conditions caused by snow, sleet and "Black Ice" are common. These problems are further compounded for many drivers, due to a general lack of the driving skills required to safely manoeuvre a vehicle in these types of conditions. For these reasons, plans for the infrastructure upgrades included the installation of safety fencing.

Wide-Ranging Safety Fence Selection Criteria

Many important factors were considered by NPWS prior to the selection of the Brifen WRSF for installation throughout the park. Together with the obvious safety fence performance and reliability factors, ease of repair, maintenance costs and aesthetics of the fence were also taken into account.

Another important consideration that must be made prior to the installation of fences in an Alpine region, is that of snow clearing. A large, solid structure would prevent the effective clearing of snow from the carriageway. After investigation into the available options, it was decided by NPWS that the Brifen WRSF met favourably with the selection criteria.

Descending into Leatherbarrel Creek on the Alpine Way, Brifen WRSF provides protection for motorists in hazardous winter conditions whilst maximising the efficiency of snow clearing operations.



Aesthetically Pleasing Design

In an environmentally sensitive area such as the Kosciusko National Park, overall appearance and environmental impact is an important issue. The Brifen WRSF is aesthetically pleasing and is designed in such a fashion as to reduce the visual impact as much as possible.

The first sections of Brifen WRSF installed in the

surrounding flora, it enables the NPWS staff to effectively carry out the required snow-clearing operations in the area by allowing the snow to pass through the fence rather than build up against it.

Reliable Heavy-Duty Design

The strength and reliability of the Brifen WRSF is well documented in both Australia and Overseas.



Another aspect of Alpine Way near Thredbo where visitor-use is high all-year-round. Here too, Brifen WRSF provides protection for motorists whilst having minimal impact on the views of Thredbo Valley.

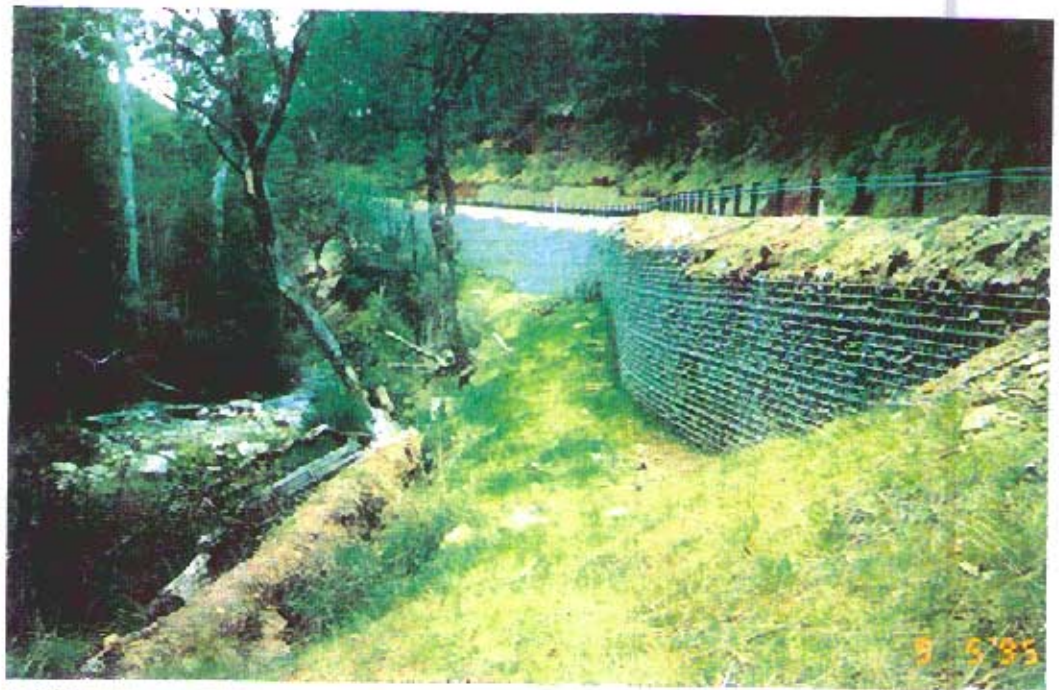


Brifen WRSF on the "Little Mick" ridgeline on the Alpine Way.

park were supplied with "Heritage Green" fence posts. Subsequent section of fence were supplied with custom-coloured "Olive Bronze" fence posts, which blend well with the landscape, reducing the visual impact of the fence to a minimum. The slim-line nature of the fence not only enhances the overall aesthetics by reducing visual obstruction of the

Installed at nearly 100 locations throughout Australia alone, the Brifen WRSF has been directly responsible for reducing the severity of many accidents since it was first introduced in 1991. In the vent of a vehicular impact, the fence "catches" the vehicle, supporting it and slowing it to a stop with minimal
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The climb out of Leatherbarrel Creek on the Alpine Way is protected by Briten Wire Rope Safety Fence.



Briten Wire Rope Safety Fence installed at "Reflector" corner on the Alpine Way - one of the many reconstructed sections of the road.



Another view of Leatherbarrel Creek on the Alpine Way, the site of recent major reconstruction works. One of the main considerations in choosing Briten WRSF was its low visual impact on the landscape.

