



New iQ Surface flooring debuts in Aware Super refurb

Project: Aware Super, NSW

Product: iQ Surface

Tarkett's latest addition to its premium iQ range of homogeneous flooring has been used for the first time ever in Australia in the refurbishment of the Aware Super (formerly First State Super) head office building in Sydney's CBD.

Tarkett iQ Surface brings a new architectural dynamic to vinyl flooring with its terrazzo tile-like patterns and colours, opening up worlds of new possibilities for architects and designers seeking distinctive, high-end finishes with practical functionality at a vastly lower price-point than natural stone.

Tarkett collaborated with renowned Swedish practice, Note Design Studio, to co-develop the new iQ Surface collection.

Note is considered one of the most influential and progressive studios in the fields of design and architecture, with a range of successful collaborations with clients from all over the world. iQ Surface premiered as part of Note's acclaimed installation at Milan Design Week 2019, where its versatility as an architectural surface covering was displayed with prowess across a range of sculptural shapes and furniture, as well as walls and floors.

Aware Super engaged leading interior design and architecture practice, Futurespace, to lead its office refurbishment.

Futurespace design lead and project coordinator, Marissa Byron, said Futurespace design director encountered Note's iQ Surface installation from Milan Design Week and this was the driver of iQ Surface's first application in Australia.

"Our design director, Gavin Harris, saw the stand and was impressed by how beautifully presented it was and how it was brought to life as a 3D element, so we reached out to Tarkett for some samples that we could evaluate and present to our client," said Ms Byron.

Futurespace predominately specialises in workplace fit-outs, building upgrades and workplace strategy, and Ms Byron said the Aware Super project is a stellar example of the practice's work.

"We try to bring new and exciting products to our projects, so it was nice to bring something that people hadn't seen yet," said Ms Byron.

"We liked that it had never been used before in Australia, it was something different in flooring. The terrazzo like pattern tied in beautifully to what we were proposing on a larger scale within the atrium floor, and the reference of a natural finish fit the overall concept."

Aware Super holds the top seven floors of the office building, from level 22 to 28. An atrium space on level 24 features an oversized terrazzo natural stone floor that is visible from above.

"The atrium space has a large-scale terrazzo tiling pattern and we wanted to continue that design theme," Ms Byron



said. "What we wanted for the other typical floors was a supporting, smaller scale version of that Terrazzo pattern, which iQ Surface was perfect for, making a nice connection between the two areas, in different scales.

"We were familiar with Tarkett products so it wasn't too much of a leap, we had the reassurance that it was going to perform well, but iQ Surface was very new at the time and we needed the actual product samples to evaluate and show to our client - as it turns out we were the first ones to use it anywhere in Australia.

"It was fairly seamless in terms of the conversations we were able to have, the information that was provided and getting the product samples."

Two different products from the iQ Surface range were selected: Surface Rouge Airy and Surface Sober Multi and these feature at circular lobby entries and tea points on each floor.

"We liked the idea of combining the two contrasting tones in an area that doubled as both a lobby and social tea-point space. The floor helped to define a pathway, so that people have a clear direction around to the lifts and out into the floor, the central area defined for people to gather and meet," said Ms Byron.

"It was really important that these circular lobby spaces were bright and inviting and a point of interaction. There's a lot of informal collaboration happening on those floors and the Tarkett iQ Surface flooring was really important in activating that, showing it was a social hub for people.

"Also because there's a lot of coffee and tea making in this area it was important the flooring was impervious. It had to be durable and easy to clean."

Tarkett NSW Senior Specifications Manager, Sonia Ahumada, said iQ Surface, like all other iQ product ranges has a Self-Regeneration property that are activated with buffing. "So it remains looking like new and lasts a very long time," said Ms Ahumada. "We have a standard 10-year commercial warranty that provides peace of mind."

Futurespace's Ms Byron agreed this is an attractive feature of iQ Surface. "The way that iQ inhibits wearing was really important," said Ms Byron. "It's cleanability was at the forefront of our minds in terms of maintaining it for the duration of its lifecycle.

"Our client was also mindful of sustainability and recyclability and iQ Surface has those credentials, so that really factored into our product selection as well."

Now the project is complete, Ms Byron said her favourite things about the flooring area is "The natural pattern and soft colour palette, which creates a beautiful effect. Also that it will wear well and be easy for the client to maintain in the future," said Ms Byron.

"In terms of the overall project, I love the variety of spaces and the way it has opened-up the floor plan, which has become very connected and flooded with natural light.

"We were able to use iQ Surface in a fittingly quite light and natural colour that would wear well. It has a really lovely calm feeling in the space, whilst also using pattern and scale to activate areas and bring the space to life."