

Good guy for the Green Eye

Greg Morrison is and always has been a great one for keeping up with and getting the most from new and emerging products. He also has strong opinions on why certain things work and others don't.

That's why Raja Mahendran – Bayer's Environmental Science manager until 2005, when he left to pursue a career overseas – so often chose Greg to trial new technologies.

"Greg Morrison is a consummate professional. He is meticulous and pays tremendous attention to detail in terms of following protocols and procedures. We always knew he'd handle products and gear correctly and report, without fear or favour, in great detail." Raja said.

"He is also genuinely interested in getting the most out of new technologies ... fascinated by where things are heading and always keen to be involved in new product development.

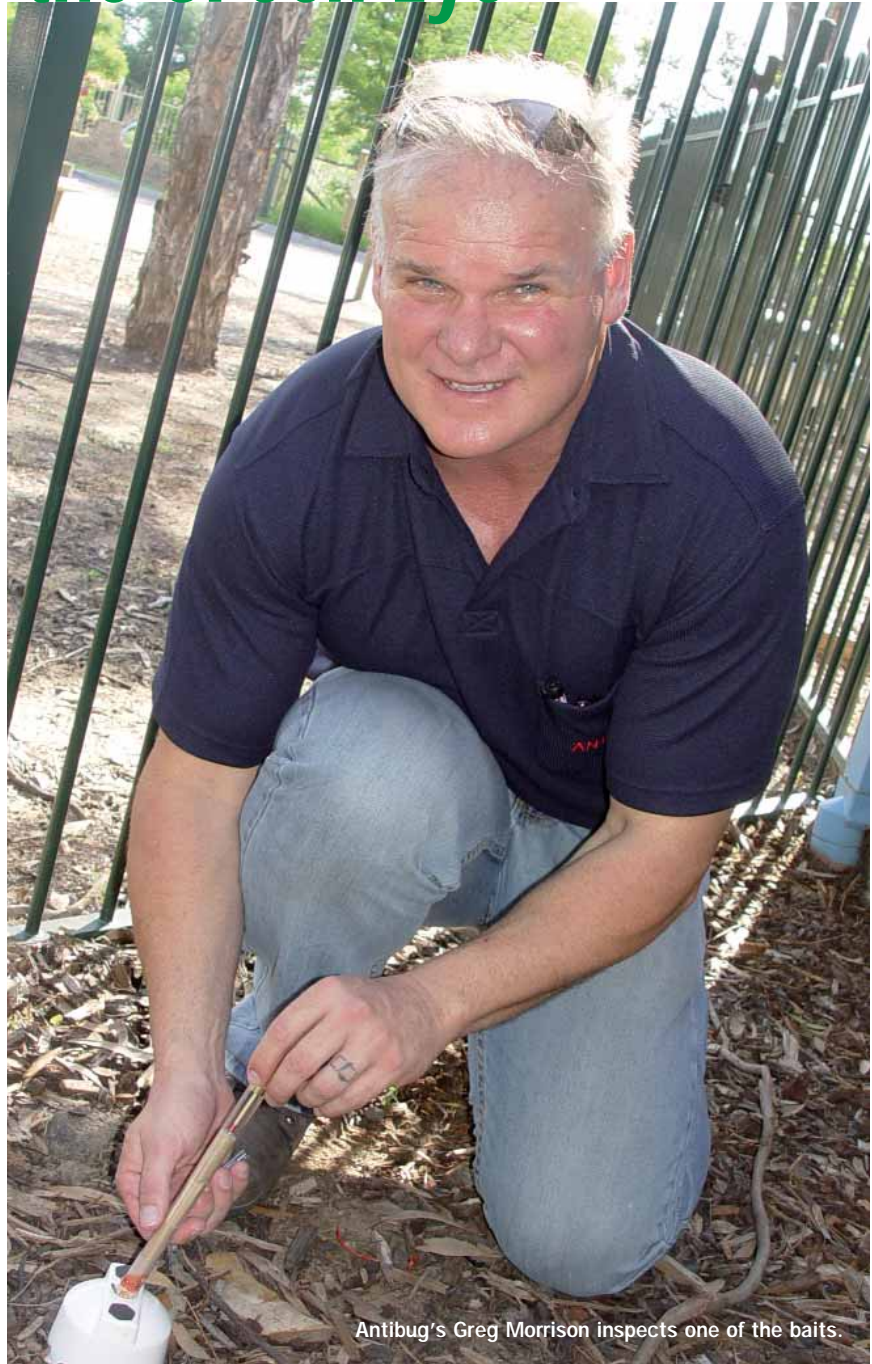
"And he is transparently frank and honest in his findings and feedback, which I have always respected."

Raja has moved on from his career with Bayer and, later, Syngenta, to establish a thriving consulting business in Basel, Switzerland, from where he helps new and emerging technology companies market and promote their latest offerings to the pest management and other industries world wide.

When Raja was approached to help Florida based Angel-Leigh Pest Control Products introduce the Green Eye Alert termite monitoring and baiting system into Australia, he could think of nobody better to test it under local conditions than Greg Morrison.

Professional Pest Manager (PPM) met up with Greg on the site of his first Green Eye installation, a pre-school in Sydney's western suburb of Doonside.

For government agencies (hospitals, schools, public venues, etc.) compliance with strict risk management protocols and demonstrated commitment to the protection of public and environmental health and safety is critical to winning tenders. This is why Greg's professionalism, hard won reputation, and PestCert accreditation has helped him win substantial



Antibug's Greg Morrison inspects one of the baits.

government and semi-government business.

Antibug had been called in to manage termites (*Coptotermes acinaciformis*) in the 40 year old pre-school after it had been seriously attacked ... \$100,000's worth of attack ... in spite of being protected during and after construction.

But, why would Greg want to use a monitoring cum baiting system, as part of his termite management program, in this particular case.

The pre-school, which faces east, abuts houses on its southern and western boundaries and a four hectare timbered reserve on its north. The land slopes gently from north to

south and both run off and seepage water tends to pond in front of the north facing side of the building during and after rain.

"These eucalypts," said Greg, with a sweep of his hand to the north of where we were standing, "provide termite heaven."

"And the trees closest to the building have roots ... potential termite highways ... head straight towards attractive moisture and the promise of a good feed," he said.

After treating the termite infestation, and organising the local council to undertake repairs, Greg installed a Camilleri injection-reticulation system to deliver a continuous, 200mm –

Right: Three of the six Green Eyes keeping watch on termites coming in the reserve.

Inset: Green Eye Alert termite detector.

300mm deep synthetic pyrethroid 'barrier'.

"We have not discovered any signs of termite entry or attack since," Greg said.

So, why put in Green Eyes?

"We deliberately positioned six Green Eye's to enable us to monitor termite activity coming in from the adjacent reserve. That's where they came from before. And, with all the surrounding conditions as they are, that's where they'll most likely come from again," Greg said.

"The idea was to integrate protection and monitoring service, something we are able to provide for just a few thousand dollars.

"Within the budget, we'll check the monitors every three or so months and, every six months we'll test drill up to ten trees near the building."

Greg says he develops strategic management programs based on four main criteria:

- what he already knows about the area and also about termites and their behaviour;
- what he can find out, by asking and collecting evidence, about the building and its history;
- what he and his team are able to find by thorough investigation and inspection; and
- what he is able to discover as he goes along.

For Greg, the emphasis is and always has been on management.

"Management ... as opposed to storming in blind and nuking a place with sprays and the like in the hope that whatever is there will cop it in the neck ... is something Raja Mahendran always preached and something I've always believed," Greg said.

"These days, we've some fantastic termite management tools; prime among which are termite monitors and baiting systems.

"We are never going to fully control or eliminate termites ... or most other pests, for that matter. But, I believe we can, if we are smart, make really good money if we learn how to manage them and play them at their own game."

So, what does he think about the new Green Eye system?

"I really like it," Greg said.



"I found Green Eye monitors exceptionally simple to set up and install.

"And they are exceptionally easy to monitor, because you don't have to spend time pulling them up or taking off the lid to see if you've had an attack. You simply look down.

"If you can still see the 'green eye', you know the station hasn't been hit ... yet. But, if you don't or can't see a green eye, you know you have termites having a go."

Now, touch wood (bad editorial insertion) none of the pre-school's stations have been hit.

"But, if ... probably when ... we get a hit, the Green Eyes are very easy to dust either with Intrigue or Termidor which means we can get toxicant easily back into the colony and chalk up a win for the good guys," Greg said.

Greg said he has been assured by the manufacturers and by Raja that the Green Eyes' cardboard-like cellulose matrix, contained within an easily accessed central insert, is highly attractive to termites.

"We have only had these in for a couple of weeks and already we are getting some fungus on the outside of the bait, which is good, because it shows there is sufficient moisture around to attract the termites.

"Even though the weather has been quite dry lately, we know we've set these units up in some top spots because they are already nice and damp and giving off all the right smells.

"All you need is a nail file or a knife blade to pop open the top when you want to get at the baits. It is really very simple and very neat.

Greg said termite baiting and monitoring had come a long way since

the early days of Phil Hadlington's "Tasty Baits" ... basically pieces of wood in the ground.

"Over recent times, there has been a major move away from spraying and putting down chemical barriers to deploying and managing monitoring stations," Greg said.

"And, they (monitors and baits) seem to be working.

"Pest managers around Sydney are telling me that despite all the wet and hot weather, there just aren't the termites around that there were a few years back, before baiting really took off.

"I am also getting the impression that the move away from spraying to baiting and monitoring stations is paying off for a lot of pest managers.

"And, where barriers have a place is only now, as part of a fully integrated management system.

"That's the thing about bait stations ... whichever ones we are talking about ... they require us to manage.

"We not only have to understand them and how they work; how and when they need to be inspected, replaced, recharged, and so on; but how and where to place them so they are most likely to pick up or be hit by foraging termites.

"But, hey. That's what we do. It's what we're here for. It's what we're known as ... pest managers!

"I reckon those who have embraced the new technology are doing well and getting good results. On the other hand, I think some of those who's only response to termites is to nuke 'em - the lazy sprayers, I call them - are running into serious trouble."

Greg Morrison is one pest manager who seems to be staying well out of trouble. ■