



CASE STUDY

FROM BOMB-PROOF TRUCKS TO A CANNABIS VAULT:

HOW CMI SOLVED A DILEMMA FOR THE ENTOURAGE EFFECT



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From bomb-proof trucks to a cannabis vault: how CMI solved a dilemma for The Entourage Effect



When The Entourage Effect drew up plans to ramp up its distribution division, it hit a snag, and a sizeable one at that. Keen to prepare for future growth, the business wanted to install a large vault at its rented premises in the Sydney suburb of Greenacre.

The company already possessed a vault with capacity for 25,000 units in Alexandria, but this was on another level. Management were looking for a vault to accommodate more than three times that number of medicinal cannabis products. Eighty thousand to be precise.

Typically, vaults of the size required by The Entourage Effect would weigh more than 110 tonnes, constructed as they are with concrete and steel.

But the firm's landlord, unsurprisingly fearful of structural damage, was having none of it.



"The floor loading was a really critical issue for us as we're not the owners of the property. That was something we had to be extremely mindful of," explained Declan Garufi, The Entourage Effect's head of quality assurance and compliance, who led the Greenacre project. "Our landlord wasn't keen, so we had to find solutions."

Enter CMI Safe Company.

Together with Garufi and other senior executives at The Entourage Effect, CMI set about overcoming the hurdles, ultimately solving what on the face of it appeared to be an insurmountable problem.

Central to the success of the project was the design, manufacture and installation of a uniquely lighter vault, tailor-made by CMI for the needs of The Entourage Effect.

Aptly known as the CMI SKY LightWeight vault, it was made in Australia, using locally-sourced, recycled material.

Critically, at barely 50 tonnes, it was less than half the weight of the standard concrete and steel vault, delighting not only its customer, but just as importantly satisfying a wary and worried landlord.

With a floorspace of six by eight metres, and standing eight metres tall, the vault can even accommodate a forklift truck.

Garufi praised the professionalism of the CMI team for going **"above and beyond"**.

"CMI were terrific at problem-solving and providing us with various options, not just in relation to the weight, but with the layout of the vault, the design, how we wanted it arranged," he said.

"We also needed a fast turnaround. CMI delivered the vault in eight weeks which was faster than we could have hoped. That helped us enormously.

"From start to finish, CMI were responsive and gave us clarity. They presented lots of ideas and innovative solutions to overcome various hurdles."



CMI's Joe Davis, left, with Paul Garufi, centre, and Declan Garufi from The Entourage Effect in front of the SKY LightWeight vault

Discovered through CMI's international business links in South Africa, the specifics of the "barrier material" have not been publicly disclosed by CMI, although it will provide details to prospective clients.

But what can be revealed is that it is sourced from decommissioned mines, originally in southern Africa, and now Australia.

CMI national business development manager Joe Davis explained: "The material was being used in South Africa for bomb-proofing cash-in-transit trucks, that's how we came across it and began using it in the construction of our vaults.



A specialist team blew up four angle grinders as they struggled to penetrate a side panel during the testing phase of the project

"It is remarkably strong barrier material and, critically in the case of The Entourage Effect, enabled us to build a vault that was half the weight of a traditional concrete and steel unit.

"It's an innovative product with a worldwide provisional patent. We're not only looking at the local market, we're aiming to export it. In terms of Australian innovation and design, it's something we should be proud of."

Independently tested to Australian and New Zealand Standards AS/NZS 3809:1998, the SKY LightWeight vault is grade VII certified, the required grade for the storage of schedule 8 drugs, including medicinal cannabis.

In the testing phase of the vault – where independent contractors attempt to cut through a side panel – four angle grinders blew up and 90 cutting discs were used before the material was finally penetrated. The time it took went way beyond the maximum required timeframe to achieve Australian certification.

"When we started using this material we had to buy specialist cutting equipment from Germany which cost us A\$150,000. The overall design and construction of the barrier material makes it more difficult to penetrate than concrete and steel, given the same set of available attack tools to choose from," Davis said.

Over the past 12 months, CMI has used 12,000sqm of the recycled material in its SKY LightWeight vaults, and has committed to acquiring a further 98,000sqm, the equivalent of 70km.

The Entourage Effect vault alone contains – or has "locked away" as it is known – 1,000sqm of the material.

"This material can't be burned and can't even be put in landfill, so it's solving a big environmental problem and is of huge benefit to the Australian Government." Davis said.

Garufi said it felt "special" for The Entourage Effect to be involved in such a project.

"Given the global push towards sustainable manufacturing practices, it feels pretty special to be involved in what for us was a very large infrastructure project," he said. *"It's something both companies can be proud of."*

While CMI has been using the material for a little while, The Entourage Effect project was its largest to date, and its greatest challenge given the size and weight issues.

As a finishing touch, CMI staff even painted the exterior and interior of the vault, giving it a clean and polished appearance.

"Typically, a vault has a fairly rough appearance but I can honestly say I haven't seen a better-looking vault," Davis said.

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