

Distinguished Member – John Drury

Summary of an Interview with John Drury

1 June 2026

John Drury has been awarded Distinguished Membership of the Aerosol Association of Australia in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the aerosol industry.

John spent 43 years with the same organisation, beginning with Aerosols of Australia and later continuing with PAX Australia following a name change and relocation to Ingleburn, NSW. He started out as a QC chemist and, over time, moved into more senior R&D and Technical Management roles for most of his career.

What was your career highlight?

John said one of the most rewarding parts of his career was working with the local PAX team and international colleagues and partnering with multinational companies to bring innovations to different markets. He valued the cross-cultural learning that came from collaborating with people across the world. He also noted that PAX remains involved in the One Asia Network, a partnership of successful contract manufacturers across the Asia-Pacific that understand the differing needs of markets throughout the region.

He also described the transition away from CFC propellants as one of the standout achievements of his career. This was an industry-led initiative designed to stay ahead of possible government intervention. During that period, John worked on reformulating a range of CFC-based products, including hairsprays, antiperspirants and cooking oils, replacing them with hydrocarbon versions. Because the new propellants behaved differently, the work involved some complex formulation changes and had to be completed under very tight development timelines to meet industry deadlines.

What changes have you seen in aerosol products?

When asked how aerosol products have changed over time, John remarked that the chemical backbones of many product categories remain very similar and familiar, although there have been some notable innovations over the years, particularly in safer and more environmentally friendly raw materials and packaging. He also pointed out that the relatively small size of the Australian market can make it difficult for major innovations to gain traction, simply because the return on investment is not always there.

What has been your involvement with the Aerosol Association of Australia?

John has been an active member of the Aerosol Association of Australia throughout his career and continues to be a strong advocate for the industry. He spoke about the Association's important role in educating and training the next generation of scientists and technologists, particularly in areas such as safety, manufacturing technology, formulation expertise, and the emerging understanding of chemicals of concern.

The Aerosol Association of Australia is proud to recognise John for his outstanding contribution to both the Association and the aerosol industry over the course of his career. We wish him all the best in his retirement and thank him for the significant contribution he has made.
