

Distinguished Member – Tony Kennedy

Summary of an Interview with Tony Kennedy

2 June 2026

The Aerosol Association of Australia is delighted to recognise Tony Kennedy with Distinguished Membership in honour of his remarkable contribution to the aerosol industry.

Can you tell us a little about your career in the aerosol industry?

Tony's career in the industry began in the late 1970s, when he worked with household product manufacturers Samuel Taylor and Reckitt & Colman. From there, he moved into more specialised work, joining Precision Valve in 1988 and focusing on aerosol product development. He stayed with Precision Valve until retiring in 2018, capping off a long and influential career in the field.

What stands out to you as some of the major successes along the way?

Tony reflects on a time when many multinational companies, including Reckitt & Colman, Unilever and SC Johnson, were manufacturing aerosols and relying heavily on their collaboration with partners like Precision Valve to bring new ideas to market. In many of those partnerships, Tony played a leading role in shaping the technical direction behind the work.

While formulation development was usually handled by the companies themselves, much of the innovation occurred in the caps, valves and can construction. Tony recalls being closely involved in a major push to bring larger more sophisticated spray-through caps to market, replacing the old-style small button cap to improve both the aesthetics and convenience of aerosol products. Also, during this period, some customers moved away from traditional steel cans to more sleekly designed aluminium cans, especially in the personal care segment. These developments encountered many design and manufacturing challenges requiring close collaboration with the can makers as well as the brand owners.

It proved to be a significant step forward in product development and once the first products were launched, others in the market quickly followed. Many of the early prototypes and much of the manufacturing took place in Australia at the Precision Valve factory in Ingleburn, NSW, helping to restyle what the aerosol package looked like to consumers. Tony notes with a laugh that many of those original designs are still on the market today.

Tony also remembers that, during these years of collaboration and large-scale projects with global customers, Precision Valve's senior management encouraged him to develop a strong grounding in project management. That meant working through extensive training in the well-known stage-gate, or phase-gate, process — an approach that remains central to many R&D

systems today, helping businesses assess the commercial viability of new products before making major financial investments.

What has been a highlight working with the Aerosol Association?

Tony has also made a significant contribution to the Aerosol Association of Australia through his involvement in developing and revising the Aerosol Standard AS2278, which remains in place today. He brought valuable manufacturing insights to standard committee to ensure that consistency across the industry was built into the final outcome. Tony was also a member of the Association's executive committee for many years.

The Aerosol Association of Australia is proud to recognise Tony for his outstanding contribution to both the Association and the wider aerosol industry. We thank him for the innovation, expertise and leadership he has brought to the field over many years, and we wish him every happiness in his retirement.
