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# timber & FORESTRY *e*news

ISSUE 497 | February 8, 2018

## Loss of a legend

COVER STORY P15



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# Cypress the new gold rush for Chinese traders in Queensland

JIM BOWDEN

DISENCHANTED cypress sawmillers in Queensland have grave concerns about the buying power of Chinese traders who are paying up to three times more than the domestic market price for unprocessed logs and shipping big tonnages of the native timber offshore.

“It’s a mining venture, another gold rush for the Chinese, who must surely be heavily subsidised by their government,” said a western Queensland producer who sees his livelihood “going down the drain”.

The Chinese traders are reported to be scouring the bush for not only cypress but any timber – hardwoods, hoop pine and the acacias lancewood and gidgee – and they’re approaching sawmillers, graziers, farmers and other landholders “for any species, any amount” and they’re paying big money to logging contractors to pull it out.

“And here’s the rub – as a result, the industry is losing



**Trouble brewing... Queensland native timbers destined for China's ceremonial tea tables**

logging contractors; many of them have switched allegiance and it’s hard to blame them with the extra money they can earn,” a sawmiller said.

“And let me tell you, some of the logging practices on private land would make your hair curl and the mainstream industry will most likely cop the blame. There should be a call for an audit on these landholders on code of practice.”

Because of the tenuous

position they find themselves in, cypress producers we spoke to this week asked not to be named.

Another slap in the face, they said, was the faith and investment they had put into the cypress industry after

“VALUABLE RESOURCE ENDING UP IN EXPORT CONTAINERS

producers had won a new 25-year quota agreement from the state government five years ago only to see the resource end up in export containers to be processed in China for thousands of tea ceremony tables.

In one case, a sawmiller invested \$1 million in new equipment and upgrades at the mill on the back of the state’s quota guarantee.

“We helped fight for the agreement and there were boasts it had saved the livelihood of small western timber towns, which it did,” the sawmiller said. “In my case, a logging contractor invested close to \$500,000 in new equipment and another spent over \$1 million in his woodchip and waste business – all on the back of the forest access agreement.

“And let’s not forget the staff, buoyed by a so-called assured future, who bought new homes to stay in the town on the prospects of an industry saved.

Cont P 3



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From P 2

“All of this is threatened, more so by the departure of logging contractors to greener more lucrative pastures.”

He said he remembered only few years ago when it was illegal to export logs harvested from Crown land. That all changed when the federal government introduced free trade agreements with Asian countries.

“Why can’t we process the logs here and sell the sawn timber to these guys? Trump did this in the US to keep jobs in America,” he said.

But the sawmillers said

“INCREASE  
IN ROYALTIES  
BIGGEST FEAR



*Paying the price... cypress logs eagerly sought by Chinese traders.*

their biggest fear was the possibility of increased royalties with a royalty review expected in July.

“These could be enormous when state forestry factors in the high prices Chinese buyers are paying for the logs,” the sawmiller said.

T&F enews is following up similar scenarios in the Queensland hardwood industry where the same

Chinese buyers are negotiating ridiculous prices on native species such as blackbutt, tallowwood and spotted gum and in some cases plantation timbers.

Much of this activity has been spurred by the shortage of dense hardwoods in Africa and South America caused by claimed “wholesale clearing” of these species by Asian traders.

## AFA launches leading events partnership across Australia: the return of Furnitex

AN exciting new working partnership between the Australasian Furnishing Association (AFA) and the Australian Gift and Homewares Association (AGHA) will see the launch of new industry events and an upscaling of existing events across Australia commencing in February.

Both organisations are peak industry bodies representing thousands of businesses across Australia and this partnership will provide even more opportunities for members in a very cost-effective environment across a broader audience reach and specific target markets.

AFA CEO Patrizia Torelli, said the synergies between both organisations and the sharing of resources and capabilities was an exciting



*Patrizia  
Torelli...  
relaunch of  
Furnitex.*

development that could be rolled-out across many like-minded industry associations in the near future.

“We’re proud to be partnering with AGHA and sharing their extensive in-house event management capabilities and networks to complement those of our association,” she said.

“Between us we will launch some of Australia’s most exciting events and reboot some old favourites including the relaunch of the iconic Furnitex.”

Ms Torelli added: “In addition to all the new projects that we will be working on together, the relationship will add a new dimension and content to our already successful gift fairs. The members of both associations will benefit from the sharing of resources and the extended international promotional opportunities created by the new partnership.”

One of the most exciting ventures for the new partnership will be the relaunch of the Australasian Hospitality Industry Exhibition and Conference in Sydney in March (details to be released in the coming weeks)

AFA believes the partnership will also give a much stronger combined voice on industry matters.



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# Rolling out the Responsible Wood message to the trade and consumers

A STRONG message about Australia's timber legality and sustainably-managed forests is being rolled out across the trade in a national campaign by Responsible Wood.

• **Joining the promotion are Hyne Timber's Jeff Gibson, northern regional manager (left), and Andrew Proctor, customer service manager, pictured at one of Hyne's Queensland distribution centres.**

Hyne's manager, strategic relations, Katie Fowden said the Responsible Wood logo and its message were aligned to the company's wood sales and marketing policy.

"It sends a clear message to our customers – and their customers – through our national distribution network that the wood supplied is from a reliable source."



Responsible Wood CEO Simon Dorries said he was delighted by the wide acceptance of the logo at timber trade outlets across Australia.

"We're happy to 'beat the

drum' about the legality and sustainability of Australian wood products and that they are from sustainably-managed forests," Mr Dorries said.

He said more than half of the users of the previous AFS brand had taken on the Responsible Wood logo – only a few months after its launch, which was a brilliant result.

Australian Forestry

Standard changed its name to Responsible Wood in November, implementing a clear consumer-focused strategy about the sustainability of certified wood products.

Mr Dorries said Responsible Wood had developed new and updated marketing material to be used by participants in the RW scheme and had started a consultation process with retail and wholesale timber merchants.

"We're providing all the material they will need to add emphasis to their own consumer advice on certified wood products," he said.

Mr Dorries flagged the appointment soon of marketing officer who would take a trans-Tasman role in promoting Responsible Wood.

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## Radiata pine added to China design code: opening for NZ

THE revision of the Chinese Code of Design for Timber Structures GB50005, to be published on August 1, includes design properties for grades and sizes of NZ structural radiata.

The grades included are SG6, SG8, SG10, SG12 and SG15. Sizes included are 45x75, 45x90, 45x140,

45x190, 45x240 and 45x290. The timber must be graded and verified according to NZ standards and verified by NZS 3622, with third party auditing.

This means that for the first time, engineers in China will be able to design buildings using the NZ grades and sizes.

**FEBRUARY**

**5-9: Gottstein Trust wood science course – Fenner School of Environment and Society, Australian National University.**  
 Contact Gottstein Secretariat on (02) 6153 3044.  
 Email: gottsteinsecretary@gmail.com or apply online at [www.forestry.org.au/external-events/gottstein-wood-science-course](http://www.forestry.org.au/external-events/gottstein-wood-science-course)

**MARCH**

**6-7: ABARES Outlook 2018 – ‘Creating Value in an increasingly Connected World’ – National Convention Centre, 31 Constitution Avenue, Canberra.** Australia’s premier information and networking forum for the agriculture and economics sectors. Join delegates from across agricultural industries to hear from leading national and international speakers. Early bird rate if registered before Christmas. Visit [www.agriculture.gov.au/abares](http://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares)

**21: All-industry lunch – Brisbane.** Celebrating United Nations International Day of Forests. Time, venue program to be advised.

**APRIL**

**18-20: Timber Queensland’s 2nd Biennial State Conference – Royal International Convention Centre, Brisbane.** ‘Doing Timber Business

in Queensland: Room to Grow’. Visit [www.doingtimberbusinessinql.com](http://www.doingtimberbusinessinql.com)

**JUNE**

**18-19: FRAME 2018 conference and exhibition – Park Hyatt Melbourne.** Focus on timber offsite construction, expanding local and global markets for timber buildings and the digital future ahead in design, manufacture and construction of timber frame multi-residential and mass timber commercial buildings. Current initiatives with cloud-based digital platforms by both the construction and manufacturing industries, combined with new data technologies have the power to change the future of the built environment by creating smarter and more efficient processes for construction of sustainable and cost-efficient timber buildings. Delegate tours will visit a range of timber frame and mass timber construction sites, panelised prefabrication plants and recently completed buildings that are outstanding examples of timber construction. Contact Kevin Ezard, conference director, Frame Australia. Mob: 0419 538 638. Email: [kevin@frameaustralia.com](mailto:kevin@frameaustralia.com) Visit [www.frameaustralia.com](http://www.frameaustralia.com)

**20-21: FIEA Woodflow 2018 – Melbourne, Australia.**

**26-27: FIEA Woodflow 2018 – Rotorua, NZ.**

The objective, with 30-40% of delivered log costs being contributed by transport, is to improve efficiencies through the wood supply chain. It builds on the success of the HarvestTECH 2017 event. Unique opportunity to learn about innovations being developed and employed to assist in harvest and transport planning, logistics and operations. Visit [www.woodflow.events](http://www.woodflow.events)

**JULY**

**12-14: Tlnaugural International Furniture Show Australia – International Convention Centre, Sydney.** Presentations by Australian retailers and wholesalers and opportunity to deal directly with global furniture manufacturers from countries such as China, India, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines and Pakistan. Excellent platform for Australian manufacturers to reach out to buyers from within Australia and New Zealand. Contact Australasian Furnishing Association at [compliance@australianfurniture.org.au](mailto:compliance@australianfurniture.org.au)

**AUGUST**

**8: FIEA Forest Industry Safety and Technology 2018 – Rotorua, NZ.**

**15: FIEA Forest Industry Safety and Technology 2018 – Melbourne, Australia.**

Covering updates and developments in forest industry safety, as well as providing a

space for sharing ideas on how people, culture, technologies and systems are used to improve the safety of workers. Visit [www.forestsafety.events](http://www.forestsafety.events)

**SEPTEMBER**

**11-12: FIEA WoodTech 2018 – Melbourne, Australia.**

**18-19: FIEA Woodtech 2018 – Rotorua, NZ.** Drymill scanning, wood machining, timber manufacturing. Includes timber scanning and optimisation, timber gluing and laminating, finger-jointing, cross cutting, timber machining, kiln drying and timber finishing technologies. Visit [www.woodtech.events](http://www.woodtech.events)

**OCTOBER**

**19th Australian Timber Design Awards in Sydney.** Full details to confirm. Entries open February 12 and close July 6. Judging period July 16-20. People’s Choice voting July 23-August 17. Awards gala dinner mid-October. Visit [www.timberawards.com.au](http://www.timberawards.com.au)

**NOVEMBER**

**4-5: FIEA ForestTech 2018 – Rotorua, NZ.**

**20-21: FIEA ForestTech 2018 – Melbourne, Australia.** FIEA annual technology event for forest resource managers, remote sensing and GIS specialists and inventory foresters from throughout Australia and New Zealand. Visit [www.foresttech.events](http://www.foresttech.events)

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# Fire and sustainable design: UQ tackles the ‘elephant in the room’

## Good refresher course on the basics of timber design

THE future of sustainable building design was the topic for researchers and industry professionals at the University of Queensland recent launch of the Centre for Future Timber Structures’ professional development program.

World-renowned timber designer Professor Richard Harris and leading fire expert Professor Jose Torero led the centre’s first professional development course, including live demonstrations in UQ’s state-of-the-art fire and structures labs.

Course coordinator Dr Rob Foster said the course provided Australian building designers with the skills to design better and more sustainable buildings using timber.

“While it’s widely recognised that engineered timber is key to the future of construction, designing with timber does require some additional skills – and that’s where we come in,” Dr Foster said.

“UQ offers a course in the design of timber structures



**Fire testing... tackling the ‘elephant in the room’ at UQ are Hyne Timber’s Robert Mansell, Geoff Stringer and Rebecca Cherry, UQ’s Juan Hidalgo Medina and Xlam’s Jeremy Church.**

as part of our undergraduate civil engineering program but that’s not the case at most universities, so many current professionals are missing this vital skill-set.”

Product development manager at Hyne Timber Geoff Stringer, who participated in the two-day course, said it was not only a good refresher for the basics of timber design, but also outlined many of the latest trends in timber design and explained their evolution and motivations.

Industry-based PhD student Rebecca Cherry, who is

working on cross-laminated timber, was excited to be able to network with other colleagues who were so passionate about timber and its use across Australia and around the world.

The course combined two leading international experts with UQ’s own fire and structural timber expertise to provide unique content.

**“MANY PROFESSIONALS MISSING THIS VITAL SKILL-SET”**

Richard Harris, honorary professor of timber engineering at the University of Bath, UK, grounded the course in a deep understanding of the principles underlying the use of timber in structural design.

Prof. Jose Torero, director of the centre for disaster resilience at the University of Maryland, USA, and former head of school of civil engineering at UQ, also highlighted the importance of fundamental understanding as he tackled the ‘elephant in the room’ – fire.

Discussion about timber use in the design of tall buildings highlighted the challenges that designers and researchers must address in order to design such buildings safely. Encouragingly, many of these challenges are currently being addressed by research at UQ school of civil engineering and through the ARC future timber hub at the Centre for Future Timber Structures

UQ’s Dr Christian Maluk

Cont P 7

2nd Biennial State Conference

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# Up goes largest timber office in the US

THE largest timber office building in the US will anchor mixed-use development in Newark, New Jersey.

Riverfront Square, a proposed 4.8 ha building development will include a 46,450 sq m timber office building.

According to Michael Green Architecture, the building's architect, and New York-based real estate development and investment firm Lotus Equity Group, the new structure would be the largest timber office building in the country when it completes construction.

Timber-built buildings are

more environmentally friendly than buildings constructed with traditional materials. Manufactured steel and concrete, which are typically secondary materials with a timber building, account for an estimated 10% of greenhouse gas emissions worldwide.

"The vision we share with Michael Green is to design the most environmentally sustainable office tower that enhances the health of tenants and the surrounding communities through efficient planning and green design," says Ben Korman, CEO and founder of Lotus Equity Group.

Riverfront Square is



**Michael Green... Timber-built buildings are more environmentally friendly**

expected to provide up to 2000 residential units, large and small-scale retail, cultural and public open space, a hotel, 185,800 sq m of office space, and parking spaces

in the heart of downtown Newark.

The 4.8 ha site is adjacent to the waterfront and NJ Transit's Broad Street Station, which can deliver riders to Midtown Manhattan in 18 minutes.

"We understand the dynamics and the history of Newark, and after analysing the market came to the conclusion that the central business district was in need of significant housing," Mr Korman said.

He believes that Newark – which is among the 20 cities vying for Amazon's second headquarters – is poised for growth.

From P 6

and Dr Joe Gattas delivered eye-opening presentations about the latest research and development at UQ and internationally.

Dr Maluk gave a summary of recent fire research at UQ and how this was addressing many of the challenges highlighted by Prof. Torero.

Dr Gattas detailed the latest research from around Europe and North America; providing an insight into the global state-of-the-



**1/ Engineers from Lendlease DesignMake travelled from Sydney to participate in the new UQ professional development course.**

**2/ Prof. Richard Harris**  
**3/ Prof. Jose Torero**

art and the trend towards increasingly sophisticated digital fabrication approaches to timber manufacture and design.

The Centre for Future Timber Structures is a partnership between UQ's school of civil engineering, the Queensland State Government Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Arup, Hyne Timber and Lendlease.

For more information visit [www.eait.uq.edu.au/cpd](http://www.eait.uq.edu.au/cpd)

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# NFF president's address 'first' for industry

## Reflects the closeness of the forestry industry to the farm community

SENATOR Anne Ruston and National Farmers Federation president Fiona Simpson are on the same bill for the first AFPA members' dinner this year to be held in Canberra next month.

Senator Ruston, Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, with responsibility for forestry, will give an timely update on the progress of the national forest industries plan, which was announced by the Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull before 500 industry leaders at the AFPA dinner in Canberra in September last year.

The plan is designed to support the growth and sustainability of the timber industry over the coming decades.

AFPA CEO Ross Hampton

**“WE ALL SHARE THE SAME LANDSCAPE”**

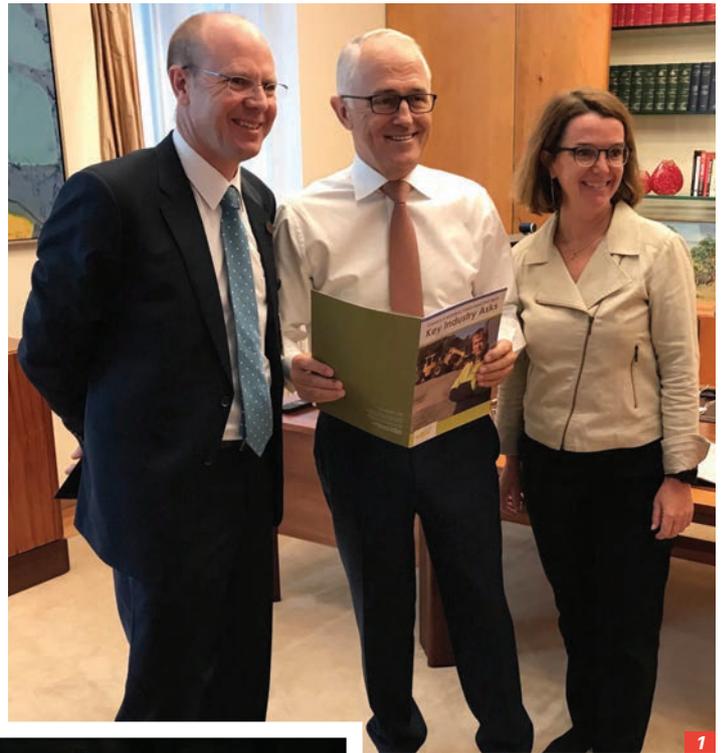
said he was excited that the NFF president is addressing the dinner.

“This is a big ‘first’, the only time a NFF president has attended an industry event,” he said.

“It reflects the closeness of the forestry industry to the farming community – the growth of agroforestry in terms of all of us utilising our future resource.”

“We know that not only do we share the same landscape but there is enormous good in planting more trees on farms and what this can do to enhance the primary purpose of farmers.

“We look forward to working with Fiona and her members in this next phase of our industry's development.”



**1/ On the same page... AFPA CEO Ross Hampton, with Assistant Minister Anne Ruston, presents the Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull with AFPA's 'key asks' for the national forest industries plan. 2/ Harmony.. NFF president Fiona Simpson to address Canberra dinner.**

The AFA members' dinner on Wednesday, March 7, from 6 pm to 10 pm, will be at the Manuka Oval (Bradman Room), Griffith, Canberra.

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# Major shift in engineered wood systems focus of 20th Frame event

**THE Timber Offsite Construction** conference this year will be bigger than ever, according to Frame Australia's director Kevin Ezard, with the event celebrating its 20th year.

Kevin says building markets in Australia are buoyant due to continually expanding population, which is creating growth within urban areas for mid-rise and high-rise multi-residential buildings.

"A major shift is the consolidating demand for pre-fabricated offsite timber and engineered wood systems in mid-rise timber frame projects up to five storeys, and high-rise up to 10 storeys, with builders achieving faster build times and lower costs," he said.

The conference program will reflect these strengthening market trends with renowned international and local expert speakers on the key themes of 'Building Design, Technology, Manufacturing and Construction'.

Sessions will cover design development of both multi-residential and commercial buildings for low-carbon, energy-efficient outcomes; BIM and 3D design digital platforms; plant automation and robotics in prefabrication; examples of timber and engineered wood construction systems; and current timber building projects around Australia.

Panel sessions will include in-depth case studies of mid-rise residential developments utilising timber frame panelised walls and cassette floors, plus high-rise



*Full attention... delegates at the Frame 2017 conference at the Park Hyatt Melbourne, venue again for this year's event.*

apartments and commercial buildings using CLT, glulam and LVL in engineered wood systems.

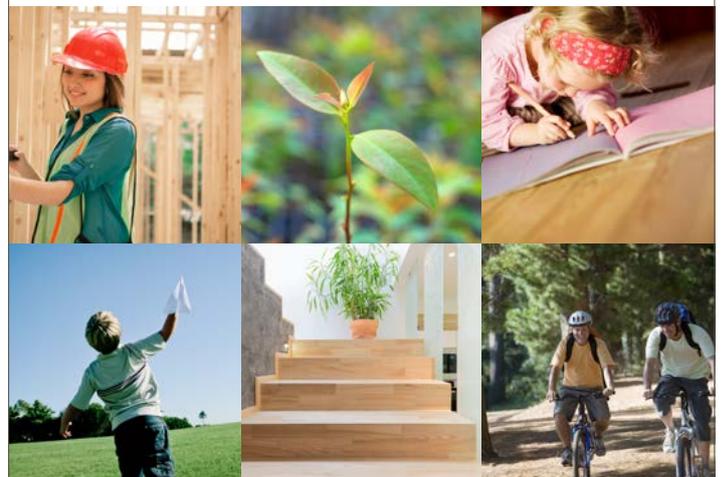
Delegate tours will visit residential and commercial timber building construction sites, prefabrication and panelised manufacturing plants, and recently completed building projects that are outstanding examples of architectural and engineering design in timber structures.

Kevin added: "Display booths in the conference exhibition area provide suppliers with an exceptional opportunity to access market sectors that have high interest in timber building construction products and services that are projected to be a major growth market in the next decade."

'Timber Offsite Construction' will be held on Monday and Tuesday June 18-19 at Park Hyatt Melbourne.

Full event details and costs can be found at the frame website: [www.frameaustralia.com](http://www.frameaustralia.com)

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# Rise will surprise in growth of commercial timber and prefab

THE timber and prefab sector is set to kick goals again this year if a raft of ambitious projects gets the go ahead, among them one of the biggest commercial timber buildings in the world by volume.

Adam Strong, group managing director of Australian prefab timber powerhouse Strongbuild, is expecting a year of continued growth in 2018, with little if any negativity from the market slowdown already apparent towards the end of last year.

He said the company had a “good pipeline of work,” and industry-wide he doesn’t see the sector slowing down anytime soon.

“What we do is choose the right project to add value to,” he said. “A lot of people are coming to us.

“We’ve got a strong line of clients. They’re quality clients, like [retirement operator] Aveo, Mulpha, Frasers, Stockland and [Anglican Church retirement operator] ARV.”

In fact, the construction slowdown, which forecasts say could be about 20% by volume, might well be of benefit to the sector, releasing trade skills and taking off some of the pressure from the recent boom. Besides, timber and prefab is a niche sector and it’s only just starting to properly take off.

Developers and builders are starting to grasp the ease and benefit of these solutions, Strong says. None more so than the education sector in NSW where former planning minister and now minister for education Rob Stokes late last year announced a



**Adam Strong... developers and builders are starting to grasp the ease and benefit of these solutions**

\$4 billion program to replace demountable classrooms with prefab timber structures.

Breakthroughs in the sector include stair and lift shaft now built in cross laminated timber, or CLT, and closed panel walls, or panellisation, meaning pretty much the entire wall including fitted windows and doors can be pre-made at the factory and sent out as a flat-pack.

**“AMBITIOUS PROJECTS THIS YEAR LIKELY TO TIP OVER SCEPTICS**

“We’re making all those in our factory and they’re going to site as closed panel walls,” Strong says. “I feel this solution is the sweet spot for apartments up to six floors.”

Savings can be up to 5%, which is big dollars on a project of, say, \$45 million. Plus, there is the potential to shave up to four months off construction time.

Strong says ambitious projects slated for Sydney this year will likely tip over remaining sceptics.

building is designed to take another six floors of concrete structure on top, it will probably take 10 in timber.”

Industry wide, growth will continue this year, he says, but it will be more moderate. “I don’t think there are too many rocky builders. Everyone is expecting a little bit of a downturn but education and commercial are starting to pick up, particularly in NSW and Sydney, and the economy is very strong.”

Strong adds: “It might come off 20% in terms of construction volumes – that’s what we’re looking at – but it could be a good thing for the markets: we’ll get some trades back.”

(The Fifth Estate).

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# Delegates will be wide awake on fatigue at trucking sessions

FOLLOWING a deadly summer on the roads, transport administrators, industry insiders and truckies have been under pressure to come up with ideas to make the roads safer.

While the number of fatal incidents involving trucks has actually fallen over the past decade, the spike in New South Wales has everyone concerned.

The head of Toll Group, Australia's largest transport company, says there needs to be an urgent harmonisation of the laws administering heavy vehicles.

Managing director Michael Byrne points to inconsistencies in different states with speed limits, fatigue laws and blood alcohol levels. He thinks the law in some states allows drivers to spend far too long behind the wheel.

Fatigue at the wheel will dominate sessions at Trucking Australia 2018 to be held at the National Convention Centre, Canberra, from April 18 to 20.

**“FATIGUE LAWS ARE TOO COMPLICATED”**

“The fatigue laws in the eastern states and South Australia are too complicated,” says Australian Trucking Association CEO Ben Maguire

“It’s time to find an innovative, voluntary solution that helps drivers manage their own fatigue. At Trucking Australia, you’ll decide the way forward.”



In partnership with Teletrac Navman and the Canberra Innovation Network, the ATA will bring teams of Australia’s smartest coders and fatigue scientists to the event. They will compete in a fatigue hackathon – FatigueHACK – to come up with the best solutions.

“This could lead to the most important changes to fatigue policy since paper-based work diaries were introduced,” Mr Maguire said.

“The event will drive the industry’s future, with sessions on how we can use technology to hack driver fatigue, our industry’s future leaders and improving mental health.”

Trucking Australia 2018 will also feature workshops on how to use a master code of practice developed by the ATA.

“These workshops are a

what the size of your business,” Mr Maguire said.

Registered delegates who attend both workshops will receive a certificate signed by the ATA to confirm their attendance.

Full delegate

registration is \$595 (inc GST). Other registration and social packages, including for business sessions only, are available.

Registrations are now open at [www.truckingaustralia.com.au](http://www.truckingaustralia.com.au)

1/ **Driving the industry’s future... Trucking Australia 2018 in Canberra.**

2/ **Ben Maguire... you’ll decide the way forward.**

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# Thorry Gunnensen, AM, was great helmsman for an industry he loved

## ‘He leaves a strong legacy. One of the true legends’

JIM BOWDEN

EITHER at the helm of his beloved Tilting at Windmills or Australia’s largest independently-owned distributor of wood-based panel products, Thorry Gunnensen tackled the oceans and the industry with equal amounts of gusto, passion, determination and dedication.

Widely-respected and much-loved, Thorold H. Gunnensen, AM, died last Sunday in Melbourne, aged 77.

He retired last year as executive chairman of Melbourne-based Gunnensen, a multi-faceted business with bases in Sydney, Newcastle, Brisbane, Townsville, Cairns, Adelaide, Perth and, since 2003, Auckland, NZ.

Mr Gunnensen was the great, great grandson of Captain Gunner Gunnensen, who sailed from Norway to Australia in the 1870s aboard the Helga with a cargo of Baltic pine – the springboard for the establishment of one of the nation’s most successful timber product wholesaling enterprises.

The Gunnensens – Thorry and Peter (who died six years ago), were legendary in the timber industry and both world-class yachtsmen, equally respected for their navigation skills in many classic races.

Thorry, a member of the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia, raced his yacht extensively in Australia,



**NAFI held its first AGM in October 1987. Among industry leaders appointed to guide the committee were, top row from left, Thorry Gunnensen, John Duncan, Warren Hyne, Kevin White and Warren Hewertson. Bottom row, from left, Dennis Mutton, Dick Darnoc (inaugural president) and Peter South.** (Picture supplied by Doug Howick)

Europe and New Zealand.

Competing in a Brisbane to Solomon Islands race 1900 km up into the Coral Sea in 2012, Thorry remarked to a television crew: “Winning is great of course, but I’m just as happy to be at the finish and I never pull out of the race.”

“WINNING IS GREAT BUT I’M JUST AS HAPPY TO BE THERE AT THE FINISH”

A remark well applied to Mr Gunnensen’s approach to life in the timber industry.

He believed the industry was an evolving entity and said Gunnensen changed its portfolio in post-war years to reflect public demand for different products and services.

Marbut in 1964, paving the way for direct involvement in milling, parquet flooring, moulding and door manufacture. Subsequently, the company acquired Presswell Panels in 1978 and Hi Dap in 1982, further diversifying its manufacturing works.

The 1980s, according to Thorry, was “the takeover decade”, felt most acutely at Gunnensen when CSR took over Softwood Holdings in 1987, following a failed bid by ACI. All other manufacturing

The company merged with

Cont P 16

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facilities were sold during this era as the company rationalised its production activities and reinforced its distribution network.

These days the company continues to serve as a distributor for many of the manufacturing businesses that were sold in the 1980s.

Thorry said a decision by Gunnensen to focus on distribution had been vindicated into the 21st Century.

“We had always been strong in distribution and now have an extremely focused national business, including an office in New Zealand,” he said. “The company’s merger with Timbermark in 2001 enhanced the product offering available to clients.”

Thorry said at the time: “I think the main point to make about our culture today is that we recognise that every state has its own unique character. Therefore, we try to give as much autonomy as possible to the managers of each region, and this is a major point of difference between us and other companies, including many manufacturing companies that carry out their own distribution.”

Thorry Gunnensen, who held a B.Com and Master of



**Thorry Gunnensen... true industry legend.**

Science in Social Science, enjoyed many key positions within the industry, among them chairman and founding director of the National Association of Forest Industries (NAFI), formed in 1986 (forerunner to AFPA), and chairman of the Forest and Wood Products and Research Development Council (forerunner to FWPA) from 2000 to 2006.

The Gunnensen brothers were passionate trustees of the JW Gottstein Memorial Trust. Peter was a long-standing chairman and Thorry was one of the first

Gottstein fellows more than 30 years ago. His son Nils is current chairman of the trust, carrying on the family tradition.

Among many awards, including an Order of Australia, Thorry Gunnensen cherished the Harry A. Merlo Award presented to him in 2007.

The prestigious award honours individuals who have shown extraordinary commitment to forest stewardship for the purposes of producing resources for building materials.

This award was presented to Thorry by the World Forestry Centre based in Portland, Oregon, USA, of which he was a former chairman.

In a tribute, Ric Sinclair,

managing director of Forest and Wood Products Australia, said Thorry was one of the industry’s true legends.

“He leaves a very strong legacy. He covered all sections of the industry – hardwood and softwood sawmilling, timber distribution and importing.

“It was a pleasure to work with Thorry at NAFI in the early 90s when he looked after the economics and resources sector. He provided a strong mentoring role for me.”

Thorry Gunnensen is survived by his wife Joanne, children Sarah, Jenny, Nils, Lissa and Sverre and 12 grandchildren.

The funeral service will held at 11 am next Monday at St Peter’s Eastern Hill Anglican Church, 15 Gisborne Street, Melbourne.

\*\*\*\*\*

Twilight and evening bell, and after that the dark! And may there be no sadness of farewell, when I embark.

– From *Crossing the Bar* by Alfred Lord Tennyson.

“THORRY CHERISHED FWC HARRY A. MERLO AWARD

On the cover... Thorry Gunnensen in full command aboard his beloved *Tilting at Windmills*. The world-class yachtsman competed in many classic races and skipped his yacht to second place in a Sydney to Hobart event against more than 100 vessels. (Richard Bennett Photography).

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# Stars are aligned: a dream run for USA woodchip exporter Roseburg

## Asked for and received a 26pc price increase from Japan

DENNIS NEILSON

EVERY 25 years or so, all the stars align to produce a dream run for woodchip exports.

This year it is the turn for the huge American softwood chip exporter Roseburg Forest Products.

This company finds itself with an extremely tight chip supply to offer Japanese customers, so, not surprisingly, it has asked for and received a massive price increase for the first quarter of 2018 – \$US 36.50 per bone dry unit [measurement for softwood chip sales], which is a whopping 26% increase.

And this in a market where any annual increase agreed to over 5% is almost unheard of.

At one meeting in Japan, Neilson's my host stated that this is the year of the "chip shock" – a term Neilson had not heard in Japan since the early 1990s.

At publication time, I had not heard of any Australian softwood chip exporters'



**Dennis Neilson... just returned from Singapore and Tokyo where he updated his database on the China and Japanese woodchip trade.**

settlements with their Japanese customers. However, it might be a confident call to predict that the price is unlikely to go down.

After several years of rapidly increasing (mostly hardwood) woodchip exports to China, shipments in 2017 were actually flat. However, because of really tight hardwood chip supplies in the Pacific Rim, and an expected increase in China shipments later in 2018 to feed new pulp mills,



**Next five years shaping up for even tighter hardwood chip supplies in the Pacific Rim.**

prices have also increased considerably in 2018.

Major woodchip exporter Indonesia is now finding it is seriously short of domestic wood fibre to feed a number of giant pulp mills. These include the giant APRIL pulp mill at Kerinchi in Sumatra

**“INDONESIA SERIOUSLY SHORT OF DOMESTIC WOOD FIBRE**

which has the world largest capacity of over 3 million tonnes of pulp a year, needing over 13 million green tonnes a year of wood fibre to feed the mill's capacity.

APRIL advises it plans to build Indonesia's first woodchip import port at Futong this year.

As with everything in Indonesia linked to the industry, it is likely to be huge. This port may well become a new opportunity

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for Australian eucalypts chip exporters, but details have yet to be released.

Japanese demand for biomass wood fibre imports, especially wood pellets could explode from 2020. Demand could be several million tonnes a year. This could create opportunities for

Australian suppliers, although strict Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification requirements may be a challenge – for both suppliers and buyers.

All in all, 2018 should be a good year for woodchip exporters, with the next five years shaping up for even tighter hardwood chip

“ALL IN ALL, 2018 WILL BE GOOD YEAR FOR WOODCHIP EXPORTERS

supplies in the Pacific Rim.

• Co-publisher of T&F enews  
Dennis Neilson had been making this trip every year for the past 25

years in preparation for co-writing the major annual RISI Boston-published International Pulpwood Trade Review

He canvassed major trends at 20 meetings with pulp and paper companies, trading houses and shipping companies.

The 2018 edition of the trade review will be published in March. Contact Dennis Neilson at [dana@dana.co.nz](mailto:dana@dana.co.nz)

## FSC global chief to address forums Down Under

FSC global director Kim Carstensen will address a series of public forums in Australia and New Zealand next month.

FSC Australia and FSC New Zealand are hosting the forums in Auckland on March 19 and in Melbourne on March 22.

The forums will bring stakeholders from across the social, environmental and economic sectors, both

new and experienced, to share discussions on local challenges and opportunities. They will also bring together businesses and organisations from a range of industries across the supply chain.

The focus is to share global insights and learn how to increase demand for FSC certified products.

The Melbourne forum at the Library at the Dock, Docklands, will run from 1-6

pm and will consist of two sessions, one on forestry and certification the second on brand awareness, followed by networking drinks.

“We want to bring together local experts, stakeholders, and members to discuss the opportunities and challenges that exist for FSC in Australia,” CEO Sara Gipton said.

“The forum provides a great chance to hear

from, and build stronger relationships with the diverse groups that make up the FSC network.”

Based in Bonn, Germany, Kim Carstensen said The FSC global strategic plan called for FSC to reach 20% market share in the global forest-based trade by 2020.

More than 10,000 FSC chain of custody certificates were in the Asia Pacific, the second largest in the world.



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# Understanding and measuring sustainability continues to evolve

## We have a great story to tell and must get the facts out there

YOU can't see the forest for the trees. How often do you hear that said?

Ironically, it is rarely used in the context of our industry but rather as a home truth about keeping your eye on the big picture and not getting overwhelmed by the detail.

At times this can be a challenge. For instance, we work in a great industry. We use a renewable resource which is a natural store of carbon. We produce value-added products and employ people in regional Australia in high quality jobs.

Some 'big picture' data from the recently-published Green Triangle Region Socio Economic Impacts of the Forest Industry (Schirmer, J et al, University of Canberra, FWPA, November 2017) is included in the tables on right.

The report comments in detail on the nature of the employment. There are more full-time jobs; 89% compared to 67% for the region. There are more higher-paying jobs with full-time workers - % of workers earning > \$1299 per week 51% compared to 36% for the region

However, in our industry we can lose sight of these positives due to the complexity of the underlying operations.

While we talk about the 'forest industry' this actually represents activity across many sectors covering primary production and primary processing. Ours

### FOCUS ON FORESTS



By JIM HOUGHTON

certification including the Australian Forest Certification Scheme (AFSC) and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

Recent data from these organisations indicates that 24.04 million ha is certified under AFCS and 1.2 million ha is covered by FSC, including some areas covered by both.

as forests in a similar way to the System of National Accounts which produces our GDP data and values physical activity in the economy.

We will hear more about this in 2018 as a number of projects are progressed including a demonstration project for forestry in the Green Triangle region.

### MEASURES OF ECONOMIC IMPACT

\$ million	Direct	Indirect	Total
Total Value of Output	\$1,170.3	\$738.2	\$1,908.5
Value of Expenditure	\$999.8	\$546.8	\$1,546.6
Industry Contribution to Gross Regional Product	\$382.9m	\$345.7	\$728.6

### MEASURES OF SOCIAL IMPACT

	Direct	Indirect	Total
Employment	2,344		
Production-induced		1,632	
Consumption-induced		1,271	
			5,247

is a diverse industry with different challenges and opportunities but a common thread across all sectors is sustainability.

This is why I think the work which has been progressing for many years on sustainability demonstrated through forest certification is so important. Forest certification provides a tangible means of verifying that forest operations are well managed and ensure that the forests will continue to be available for many generations to come.

In Australia, we have several pathways for forest

These are big numbers but it doesn't mean the work stops there. Understanding and measuring sustainability continues to evolve.

**“A DIVERSE INDUSTRY WITH DIFFERENT CHALLENGES**

In recent years the UN has launched the System of Environmental and Economic Accounting (SEEA). This is a framework to enable the valuation of the environmental flows from our natural assets such

The data generated from quantifying and valuing these environmental flows will assist the certification processes and expand our industries' understanding of sustainability. In time this work may lead to the development of new markets for environmental services.

The wrap is in the era of fake news. We have a great story to tell and we need to continue to get the facts out there.

• *Jim Houghton is statistics and economics manager at Forest and Wood Products Australia.*

# Triangular timber roof shelters ruins of Sweden's oldest church

SWEDISH architect AIX Arkitekter has completed an exhibition hall and shelter to protect the site of a ninth-century church in the village of Varnhem in southwest Sweden.

The Stockholm-based studio set a structure with a triangular timber roof on top of excavated ruins within the grounds of Varnhem Abbey.

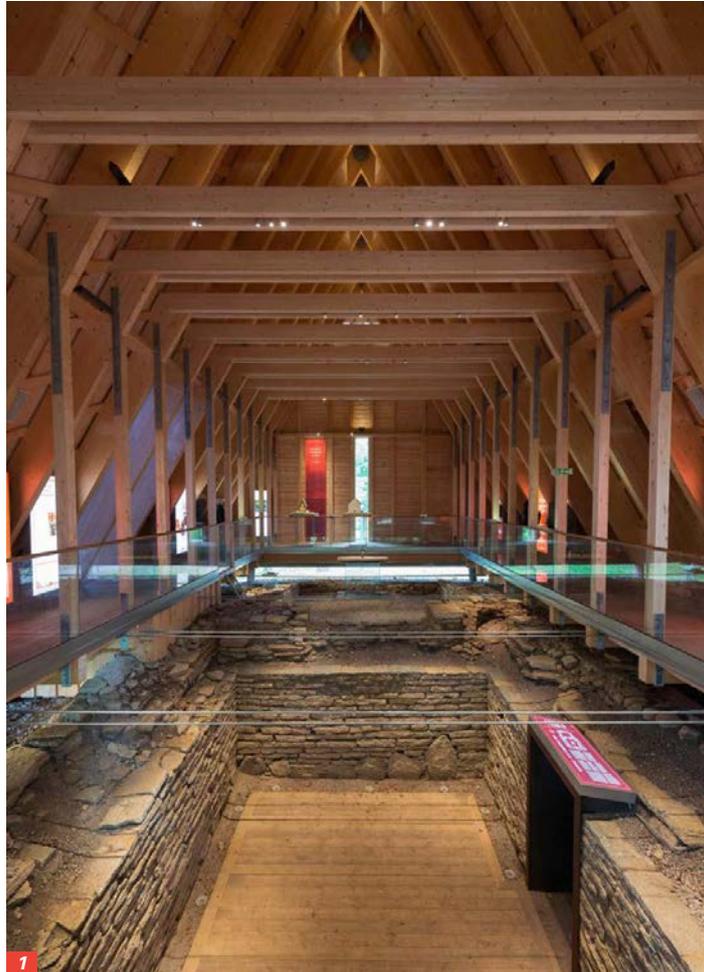
Excavations at the site in 2005 uncovered the remains of the farm church, which is believed to be Sweden's oldest discovered Christian church and possibly the country's oldest building.

The project is named Kata Farm, after the woman who owned the land on which the church was built. Kata's tomb, dating from the mid-1000s, is one of the attractions at the new museum, which aims to create a simple shelter for the ruins.

"In order to make the old church accessible for visits, the foundations with its burial sites is protected from weather and wind," said the architects.

"With a structure that works like a roof, the foundation is protected, but also creates a space for exhibiting and explaining the stories about the place and its history," they said.

The building itself



1

combined to form trusses in the shape of an equilateral triangle.

These wooden trusses rest on horizontal sill plates, which in turn sit on rows of concrete pillars that raise the structure above the ground.

Externally the roof is covered in planks of tar-treated pine wood that also extend across the triangular gable ends and give the building a homogenous appearance.

Inside the museum, the exposed trusses and roof appear to complete with the volume marked out by the excavated walls below.

Walkways around the perimeter of the building are lined with glass balustrades that provide uninterrupted views of the excavations.

**BURIAL SITE IS PROTECTED FROM WEATHER AND WIND**



2

1/ Church building comprises a series of glue-laminated timber beams combined to form trusses in the shape of an equilateral triangle.

2/ This ninth-century church is believed to be Sweden's oldest discovered Christian church.

Glass panels set into the floor of the walkway allows visitors to look straight down onto specific parts of the ancient church, including Kata's tomb.

The decked floor of the excavated building is accessible from outside through an opening in the limestone wall, while a wooden staircase ascends to a terrace outside the main entrance.

On the opposite side of the building, the steeply pitched roof is interrupted by a volume containing a glazed lift that provides an alternative entrance to the main steps.

comprises a series of glue-

laminated timber beams

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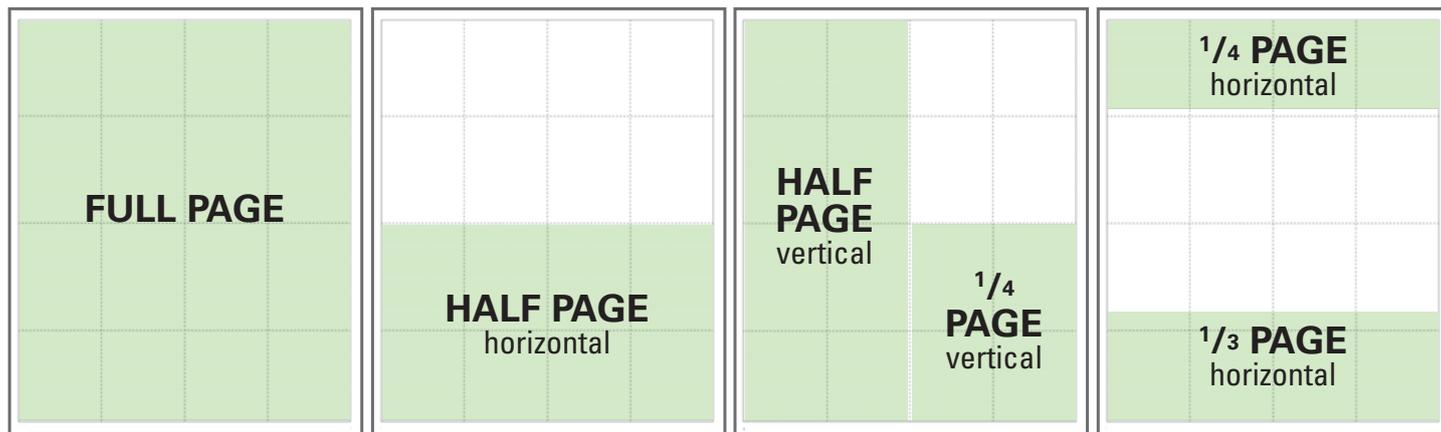
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### PAGE 1 Front cover module: Contract booking

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## TERMS

New clients invoiced on booking. Existing clients 14 days.

## WHO TO CONTACT

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