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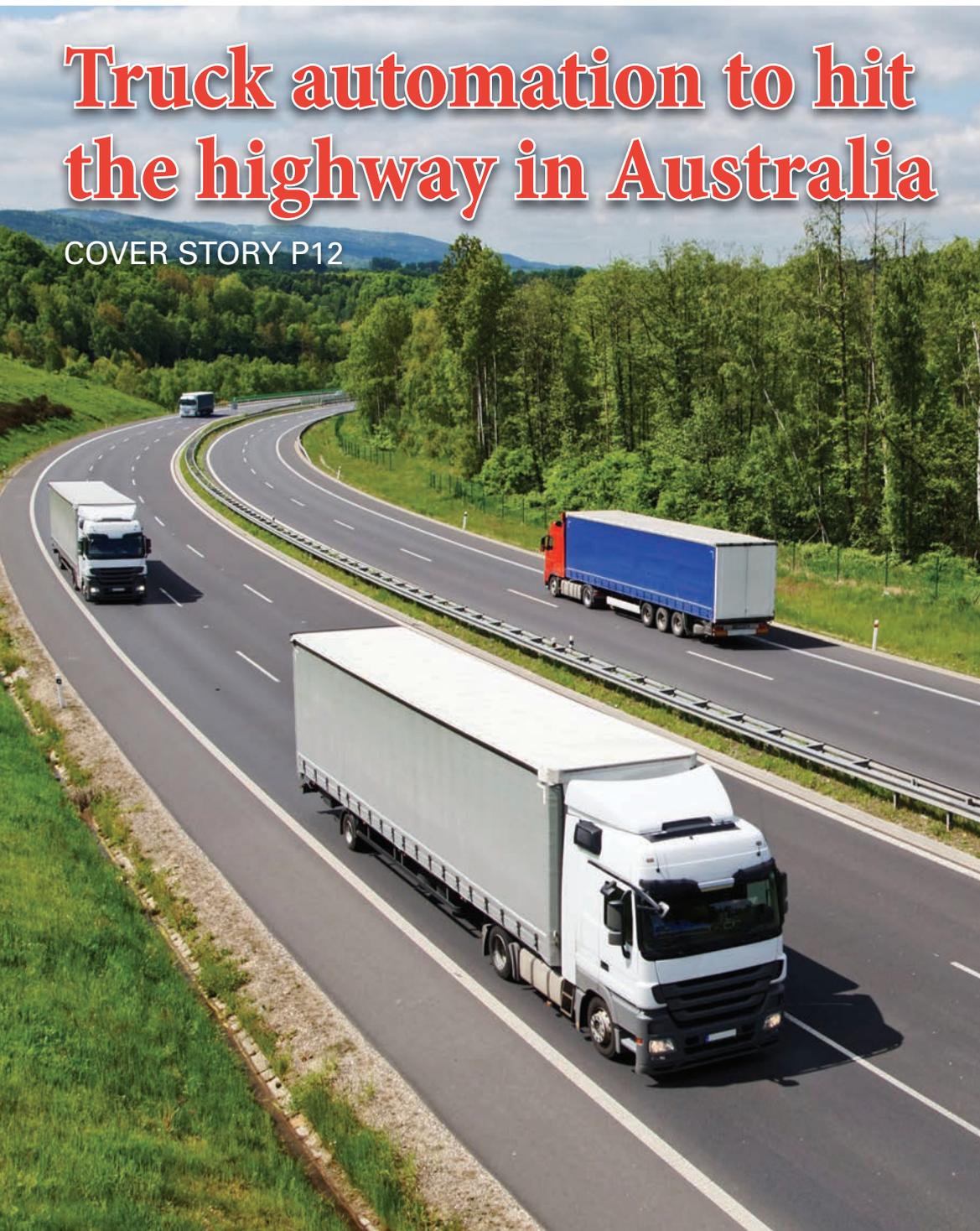
ISSUE 545 | February 7, 2018

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Truck automation to hit the highway in Australia

COVER STORY P12



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Changes to national construction code open opportunities for mid-rise timber

Wider range of options and combinations for builders, developers

CHANGES to the 2019 National Construction Code (Vol. 1) increase the range of buildings up to an effective height of 25 m in which fire-protected timber construction systems can be used.

The new classes add schools, retail premises, hospitals and aged care facilities to the previously approved multi-residential, hospitality accommodation and office buildings.

In 2016, following extensive work and a successful submission by Forest and Wood Products Australia, the industry services company behind the WoodSolutions Program, a deemed-to-satisfy solution was introduced to the NCC permitting, for the first time, construction in fire-protected timber building systems to an effective height of 25 m (typically eight



1/ Big benefits for timber... changes to National Construction Code.

2/ Boris Iskra... new concessions include reductions in fire resistance levels.

storeys) for Class 2, 3 and 5 buildings.

In the 2019 edition, these concessions will be extended to include all classes of buildings, enabling the use of timber building systems in accommodation for the aged,

schools, retail and hospitals. Timber building systems include traditional lightweight timber framing and the newer mass timber options, including CLT, LVL and glulam. FWPA national codes and standards manager Boris Iskra who led the submission process for the 2016 and the current 2019 NCC changes, said that due to the new provisions, builders and developers wanting to use

timber would no longer have to undertake time-consuming and expensive 'performance solutions' to gain building approval, as long as their designs meet the deemed-to-satisfy requirements.

"In effect, it opens the door to a wide range of options and combinations," Mr Iskra said. "For example, designers can now create mixed use mid-rise timber buildings with residential upper levels and lower levels used for office space or retail."

Another change to the code will require all Class 2 and 3 buildings four stories or above in height to be sprinkler protected.

According to Boris Iskra, sprinkler systems will substantially enhance fire safety and the cost of putting sprinklers in will be significantly offset by greater flexibility provided by new concessions for sprinkler protected Class 2 and 3 buildings.

Cont P 3

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Code clears way to expand use of mass timber products in US

MASS timber construction in the US is clearing code obstacles as local governments eye the potential to help their forest products sectors while reducing the environmental impact of tall construction.

The International Code Council (ICC) is clearing the way to expand the use of timber building products such as CLT and allow their use in taller buildings.

The move is viewed as a boon to the budding industry that manufactures CLT, now limited to a small handful of producers in the US and Canada. Implementation of new building codes that incorporate mass timber construction are only a few short years away.

The ICC, which develops

model building codes that are adopted by most US states and communities, in December released the unofficial voting results on proposed code changes it considered in 2018. They included passage of the entire package of 14 proposed code changes for tall mass timber construction, according to the American Wood Council, a trade organisation serving the wood industry.

The proposals create three new types of construction that set fire safety

requirements, allowable heights, areas and number of stories for tall mass timber buildings. The three new types of construction would permit mass timber buildings ranging from nine to 18 storeys tall.

Official results are expected to be announced during the first quarter of 2019, and the new provisions would be included in the 2021 International Building Code, says the American Wood Council.

Currently only one state – Oregon – allows CLT in tall building construction up to 18 storeys, having modified its building code in 2018. Washington has taken similar action, and it will be effective in March this year.

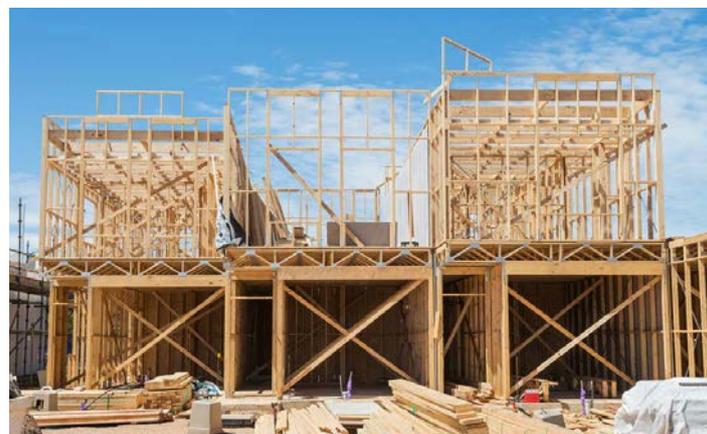
“BOON TO THE BUDDING CLT MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

From P 2

These new concessions include some reductions in fire resistance levels and extended travel distances, which will translate to potentially improving lettable space within buildings.

Mr Iskra provided the example of a building that will now require one fire stairway, whereas it previously might have required two. He pointed out that there are also modifications to hydrant protection that may also deliver cost savings, further offsetting the additional cost of sprinkler protection.

“IMPROVING LETTABLE SPACE WITHIN BUILDINGS



Opening doors... designers can now create mixed use mid-rise timber buildings with residential upper levels and lower levels used for office space or retail.

“If you have a mid-rise project in the pipeline, there’s never been a better time to consider timber and there’s an expert resource to help you explore the most suitable options and realise the many benefits they can deliver,” he said.

The WoodSolutions mid-rise advisory team pilot program now has representation in Brisbane, providing free consultancy services. More information about the team and on designing and building with timber systems, is available at woodsolutions.com.au



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Bloated and burnt 2600 km apart

Grim toll as floods and fires do their worst in two states

AS embers still glow in Tasmania and flood rains continue along Queensland's northeast coast, communities in both regions, 2600 km apart, count the cost of Nature's fickle fury.



Today, February 7, marks the same date in 1967 when Tasmania suffered its greatest historical fire crisis. And also today as ceremonies in Victoria mark 10 years since the Black Saturday bushfires (see Page 19), complex wind conditions still fan blazes in Tasmania's Huon Valley, Central Highlands and West

Coast that ignited weeks ago after multiple lightning strikes.

The fires have claimed 190,000 ha that includes plantation forests and regrowth, with 40 still burning across the state as more than 600 personnel, including 148 from interstate and New Zealand, take advantage of milder conditions to strengthen containment lines.

Sustainable Timber Tasmania



worth of rain saturated the city in a week, causing the spillway gates of the Ross River dam to be fully opened.

CEO Steve Whiteley estimates 40,000 ha of forest marked for harvest has been destroyed.

The worst damage was in the central highlands and south of the Huon Valley where dangerous conditions have forced the suspension of contract harvesting.

The burnt areas include old growth forests from the last century and regrowth regenerated from the 1967 fires. The forest 'mix' was mainly eucalypts along with some eucalypt and pine plantations.

Hundreds of residents

are starting to return to their homes to contemplate swelling skirting boards, mud-filled walls and cladding and soaked floors as they assess the damage and how it might be covered by insurers.

The damage bill is expected to reach into the hundreds of millions of dollars.

At least 2000 homes have been affected by rain or floodwaters as the city faces a massive building and renovation program. Engineers will determine the origin and extent of structural damage and prepare the scope of repairs needed to restore buildings.

The Bureau of Meteorology says the monsoon trough will remain active for days and with it the risk of more flash flooding.

While no lives were lost in the Tasmania fires, two men aged 21 and 23 died tragically in Townsville flood waters.

The floods in Queensland come on the back of fires that swept through central and northern parts of the state in November and early December, which claimed the life of a young man who became trapped under tree at night while clearing a firebreak at Rolleston, a small town in central Queensland.

– JIM BOWDEN



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“ 40,000 HA OF FOREST MARKED FOR HARVEST DESTROYED ”

“We should see enough seed for some regrowth and some trees will re-sprout,” Mr Whiteley said.

Ta Ann Tasmania's rotary veneer mill and the adjoining Neville Smith Forest Industries sawmill at Lonnovale, near Hobart, survived ember and fire edge attacks.

“However, a processing line and boiler have been damaged and we are assessing the cost and alternate production avenues,” Ta Ann general manager Robert Yong said.

Meanwhile, flood rains continues to fall around Townsville after a year's

EWPAAscholarship marked for graduate study of wood durability

THE Engineered Wood Products Association of Australasia is offering a three-year scholarship opportunity for graduate students undertaking their research with the National Centre for Timber Durability and Design Life.

The scholarship will provide graduate students interested in wood product durability research with \$10,000 funding a year to a total value of \$30,000.

The Timber Durability Centre is on the hunt for graduate students, looking to study either an MSc or PhD, to join their research team and focus on timber durability and service life prediction.

EWPAAs CEO Dave Gover said the purpose of the research was to ensure that all timber types received the benefit of service life prediction and durability research, given that different types of timber had different levels of durability and different applications would have varying service life expectancies.

"We are hopeful that the



Dave Gover... EWPAAscholarship aims to attract graduate students to research areas with academic opportunity and industry relevance.

scholarship opportunity will attract driven graduate students to a research area with great academic opportunity and industry relevance," Mr Gover said.

"Given the increased use of engineered wood products in mid-rise construction across Australia, and across the world, durability of these products is an important research focus area."

Mr Gover said there were well established and proven methods to ensure the durability of timber, and

these needed to continue to be developed to take advantage of improvements in wood modification technologies, physical chemistry, and biological modelling.

"The EWPAAs is proud to continue our commitment to fostering research and development in engineered wood products through the provision of this scholarship," he said.

Meanwhile, the Timber Durability Centre, whose primary mission is to

revitalise durability research in Australia, is looking for BSc graduates with backgrounds in biology, forestry, civil engineering and architecture.

The centre is a joint venture between the University of the Sunshine Coast, the University of Queensland and the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

USC is offering qualified full-time graduate research students an annual stipend and free tuition.

EWPAAscholarship recipients will receive the scholarship funding in addition to these benefits.

Opportunities are also available for science, engineering, architecture and forestry professionals seeking further advancement to undertake part time study.

For further information about the EWPAAscholarship, the new graduate program or the Timber Durability Centre, visit www.usc.edu.au/timber-durability or email Professor Jeff Morrell at jmorrell@usc.edu.au

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Gympie closure plays role in CHH exit strategy from Australian market

STAFF at Carter Holt Harvey's particleboard mill at Langton Road, Gympie, 160 km north of Brisbane, were advised yesterday morning that the operation would close on April 12.

Decommissioning of plant and due diligence will continue through to June.

CHH, once Australia's largest timber operators, has pursued an exit strategy over recent years that has seen most of the company's timber operations sold or closed down this side of

the Tasman.

The most recent sales were the CHH Caboolture sawmill on March 9 last year and the Yarram sawmill in Victoria in April, both bought by AKD Softwoods.

The Yarram operation processes about 150,000 cub m of sawlog into a range of timber products primarily for the Victoria outdoor market.

In November last year, AKD purchased the CHH sawmilling business in New South Wales with major assets the Tumut sawmill, Gilmore treatment facility, a 50% interest in the Highland Pine Products (HPP) joint venture in Oberon and a distribution centre in Berkeley Vale.



Graeme Hart... withdrawing timber operations from Australia.

The Tumut sawmill processes about 565,000 cub m while the HPP joint venture processes about 800,000 cub m of sawlog.

This leaves CHH with one manufacturing facility in Australia, the Myrtleford plywood mill in northeast Victoria which is still suffering from a lock-down in April 2017 after workplace agreement negotiations with 200 workers broke down.

"The last of the Mohicans?" remarked one industry observer.

CHH acquired the Gympie particleboard plant from

CSR about 20 years ago manufacturing panels with particleboard flooring about 8% of production.

It is believed no offers were made for the purchase of the plant and efficient production was made difficult by out-dated machinery.

Also, Borg Manufacturing with three sites in New South Wales – Oberon, Charmhaven and Somersby – which acquired the CHH Oberon MDF facility, has world-class manufacturing techniques and has dominated the market in recent years.

Carter Holt Harvey Ltd is a privately-owned New Zealand company controlled by the Rank Group, the corporate vehicle of the country's richest man Graeme Hart.

Based in New Zealand, the company has three main divisions – Woodproducts New Zealand and Woodproducts Australia, and Carters, a New Zealand chain of trade-focused building supply stores.

– JIM BOWDEN

“MYRTLEFORD LAST OF THE MOHICANS?”

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Building approvals lowest in 5 years

BUILDING approval data released this week shows that the slowdown in building activity accelerated at the end of 2018.

ABS data shows 13,995 homes (seasonally adjusted) were approved for construction in December 2018.

"This represents a 23.7% decline in approvals for the three months to December

2018 compared to the same time frame in 2017," HIA principal economist Tim Reardon said.

"This was led by a 40.1% fall in approvals for apartments for the quarter. Houses fell by just 7.8%, which brings approvals back to 2013 levels."

Mr Reardon says the boom in apartment approvals is now over.

FEBRUARY 2019

14: Timber Preservers Association of Australia meetings – Melbourne, Australia. Technical committee will meet 10-30 am-12.15 pm with the TPAA council meeting 3 pm to 5.30 pm. Contact Jack Norton, TPAA secretary, on +61 (0)418 989 398 or email jak.norton@gmail.com. Skype: jak.norton1

18-22: Gottstein Forest Science Course – Australian National University Canberra, Australia. Visit www.gottstein.org.au

27: Launch of Queensland Parliamentary Friends of Forest & Timber Network – Brisbane, Australia. 6.30-8 pm. Open to all of industry – a landmark event demonstrating to MPs the strength and diversity of the entire industry supply chain. Lock it in! Industry associations will send out invitations to their members. Anyone interested should email admin@timberqueensland.com.au for more detailed information.

MARCH

1: Top of the South Forestry Awards – Nelson and Marlborough, New Zealand. Inaugural awards in fourteen categories to be awarded across individual and companies, with the ultimate award being the Skilled Professional of the Year. The awards will culminate to

an evening of celebration, presentations and dinner in Nelson on Friday, June 14 at the Trafalgar Event Centre. For further information see: www.totsforestry.co.na or call Prue Younger, Event Manager +64 (21) 2765484

5-6: ABARES Outlook 2019 Conference – Canberra, Australia. Outlook 2019 is focused on the outlook for Australia's agriculture sector and will connect leading national and international speakers with highly motivated and information-seeking delegates at 14 sessions across two days and provide a rich menu of insights, ideas and information relevant to Australian rural sector. Speakers include the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources David Littleproud (opening address) on March 5; Ross Hampton, CEO, Australian Forest Products Association (the ultimate renewable and social licence) on March 5; and Senator Richard Colbeck, Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources (ministerial address) on March 6.

7: AFPA board meeting and members' dinner – Canberra, Australia. 6pm. Guest speaker Linda Sewell, CEO of Onefortyone Plantations. Dinner ticket inquires to AFPA on (02) 6285 3833 or email

enquiries@ausfpa.com.au

8: AFPA members' forum and chamber meetings – Canberra, Australia.

8: Forest Industry Advisory Council (AFIC) meeting – Canberra, Australia

17: Women in Forest Industries workshop – Canberra, Australia. More information and registration inquiries to Natalie Heazlewood. Email: natalie.heazlewood@ausfpa.com.au

26-29: AUSPACK Packaging and Processing Week – Melbourne, Australia.

APRIL

1-2: National Sustainability Conference – Brisbane, Australia

4: Built Evolution Conference – Perth, Australia. 'Taking timber to new heights' – Timber Insight. For additional information contact Greg Meachem Tel: 08 9791 4599; Mob: 0498 121 262, or email: greg@timberinsight.com.au

JUNE

16-21: 2019 DANA Ecuador Forestry and Agri-/Aqua-business Investment Tour – Ecuador. This event will introduce potential investors to the forestry and agri- and aqua- business; as well as the commercial, financial, political, and economical aspects of investments

in Ecuador. Included will be field visits to operating forests, manufacturing, and processing of wood products, and selected agri- and aqua- export oriented operations. For further information and to register see: <https://danaevents.co.nz/2019ecuador/>

17-18: Frame Australia – Crown Promenade Melbourne, Australia. A dedicated conference and exhibition will allow delegates to fully understand the exciting developments in the Timber Offsite Construction space. The conference will feature prominent local and global experts, with topics exclusively devoted to timber and mass wood building construction. It will be the only event that will enable delegates to appreciate the world-wide transformation that is taking place and how building costs are being lowered. At the Frame Australia exhibition, booth sizes will be larger at no extra cost, with booths two to three times the previous floor area without any change in pricing from 2018. Visit www.frameaustralia.com

19: AFPA board meeting and members' dinner – Canberra. 6pm.

20: AFPA members' forum and chamber meetings – Canberra, Australia.



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JANUARY 2019

24: Mapping the Course: Timberland, Forest Products Processing, and Fiber Issues for 2019 – Vancouver, Washington, USA. The conference and optional workshop will provide an in-depth analysis on forest products market challenges, opportunities, and threats for 2019 in the North American West Coast timberland region. For further information see: <https://westernforestry.org/upcoming-conferences/mapping-the-course-timberland-forest-products-processing-and-fiber-issues-for-2019>

MARCH

19-21: International Mass Timber Conference – Portland, Oregon. The largest gathering of cross-laminated timber and other mass timber experts in the world, with a special focus on manufacturing and mid-to high-rise construction. Over 1,200 experts from 22 countries attended in 2018. The conference will explore the supply chain for cross-laminated timber (CLT), nail-laminated timber, glulam beams and panels,

mass plywood panels, dowel-laminated timber, and laminated veneer lumber; and the opportunities and obstacles for mass timber in global manufacturing and construction. See: www.masstimberconference.com/

APRIL

10-12: Focus on Forestry 2019 – Mpumalanga, South Africa. For further information see: www.cmo.co.za

MAY

7-9: RISI's Sixth Annual Forest Investment Conference – London, UK. A key two day conference that will take an in-depth look at timberland investments around the globe and how these opportunities will unfold in the near future. For further information see: www.risi.com/invest

8-11: World Conference on forests for Public Health – Athens, Greece. For further information see: www.fph2019.org

20-23: A Century of National Forest Inventories: Informing Past, Present and Future Decisions – Oslo, Norway. For further information see: www.nibio.pameldingssystem.no/nfi100years

[no/nfi100years](http://www.nfi100years.no/nfi100years)

JUNE

16-21: 2019 DANA Ecuador Forestry and Agri-/Aqua-business Investment Tour – Ecuador. This event will introduce potential investors to the forestry and agri- and aqua- business; as well as the commercial, financial, political, and economical aspects of investments in Ecuador. Included will be field visits to operating forests, manufacturing, and processing of wood products, and selected agri- and aqua- export oriented operations. For further information and to register see: <https://danaevents.co.nz/2019ecuador/>

JULY

8-18: IUFRO Small-scale Forestry Conference – Lake Superior in Duluth, Minnesota, USA. Presentations and field sessions will explore a mix of family-owned, tribal, industrial, and public ownerships with a focus on small-scale forest management. For further information see: <http://iufrossf.umn.edu/>

SEPTEMBER

16-17: ICATEA 2019: 21st International Conference on Advanced Timber Engineering and Applications – Zurich, Switzerland. The conference aims to bring together leading academic scientists, researchers and research scholars to exchange and share their experiences and research results on all aspects of advanced timber engineering and applications. For further information see: <https://waset.org/conference/2019/09/zurich/ICATEA>

SEPT/OCT

29 SEPT-25 OCT: XXV IUFRO World Congress – Curitiba, Brazil. For further information see: www.iufro2019.com

NOVEMBER

19-21: Malaysian Wood Expo 2019 – Putra World Trade Centre, Kuala Lumpur. Email: info@malaysianwoodexpo.com.my or visit www.malaysianwoodexpo.com.my

• Please send any events listings to John Halkett via email: johnh@timberandforestrynews.com



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Certification mission to NZ ahead of historic trans-Tasman standard

RESPONSIBLE Wood is set to cross the Tasman as impetus builds towards a historic joint Australian and New Zealand standard for sustainable forest management.

Meeting with New Zealand government officials, the New Zealand Green Building Council and a range of PEFC-accredited sustainable forest management and chain-of-custody scheme holders, Responsible Wood will tour the North Island; visiting



Responsible Wood's Simon Dorries and Jason Ross... outreach mission to New Zealand.

Wellington, Napier, Gisborne and Auckland from February 18.

According to Jason Ross, marketing and communications officer, the visit is all part of Responsible Wood's outreach to improve

recognition of PEFC forest certification within the New Zealand market.

"As it stands, up to 500,000 ha of forest area is now covered by the New Zealand Standard for Sustainable Forest Management, with

more than 30 NZ businesses now scheme holders under the New Zealand Chain of Custody Standard for Forest Products," Mr Ross said.

"This marks an impressive milestone for PEFC in New Zealand."

Mr Ross said in the two short years since the establishment of the New Zealand PEFC forest certification, the New Zealand standard for sustainable forest management now covered more than 27% of all planted forest available for production.

"This standard for sustainable forest management has become

Cont P 10

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From P 9

an important benchmark for sustainable forestry," he said.

"Responsible Wood is working with stakeholders to improve chain-of-custody registrations and build on New Zealand forestry currently under certification.

"We have had interest from foresters looking to develop group forest management schemes all through New Zealand."

PEFC and Responsible Wood, the Australian endorsed PEFC forest certification scheme, now has a growing footprint in the Australian and New Zealand market; with the push towards a Joint Australia-New Zealand standard certification

an invaluable tool to verify the origins of timber and paper at the source and in the forest.

CEO Simon Dorries said Responsible Wood and PEFC certification remained critical for the timber export market, none more so than in South Korea, one of New Zealand's largest timber export markets.

Speaking about the proposed trans-Tasman standard, Mr Dorries says he has been impressed by the response of stakeholders to the call for nominations to participate in the standard review committee.

"Responsible Wood has fielded considerable interest from stakeholders both in Australia and New Zealand; the interest from New

Zealand stakeholders in particular has been greatly encouraging," he said.

"New Zealand and Australia are two of the world's closest trading partners and this is reflected in the number of Australian and New Zealand forest growers certified under both PEFC-endorsed certification schemes."

"Under the proposed joint standard, forest growers will be able to operate using the same standard in both markets."

Responsible Wood is

“CERTIFICATION CRITICAL FOR TIMBER EXPORT MARKETS

supporting ambitious talk with action. It will attend the New Zealand Wood Processors and Manufacturers Conference in Christchurch in April attracting timber industry stakeholders and wood processors from across the country.

"The conference is an important step in building recognition and understanding of PEFC certification among businesses involved in the supply chain of timber based products," Simon Dorries said.

He said in terms of investment, growing the pool of Australian and New Zealand businesses certified under the chain-of-custody standard was a 'must'.

New koala tracking project under way in NSW

A NEW koala tracking project is under way in the north-east forests of NSW, with a koala recently released back into a state forest near Port Macquarie.

NSW Department of Primary Industries principal research scientist Dr Brad Law said the koala released was captured in November and found to be infected with the bacterial disease chlamydia and was the

second koala to be released as part of the project.

The DPI Forest Science research is partnered with the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital and Forestry Corporation.

The findings of the research will be considered by the Natural Resources Commission which is independently commissioning and



overseeing other research projects investigating how koalas respond to regeneration harvesting on state forests as part of the NSW Koala Strategy.

"This is an important project and will provide a better picture for us on the movements of koalas, particularly for the north coast forests of our state," Dr Law said.



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Advances in truck automation to drive new log haulage regulation

US, Japan technology reduces human error and potentially saves lives

THE forest industry has a responsibility to ensure that log haulage is conducted in a safe and efficient manner under the national Heavy Vehicle National Law.

The Australian Forest Contractors Association project to develop a forestry log haulage registered code of practice is directed at improving and supporting safety outcomes and driver best practice in log haulage transport.

Given the importance of safety in the forest industry, including risks related to log



transportation, it is important for industry to consider and agree on national best practice approach for log haulage.

Currently, there is an international focus on truck

1/ International focus on truck automation... substantial effort is being applied to driving systems to improve road safety and driver fatigue.

2/ Stacey Gardiner, general manager, Australian Forest Contractors Association... improved collaboration between all stakeholders will achieve the greatest impact to ensure the industry is safe, creates new employment opportunities and growth into the future.



its global push to put highly automated trucks on the road within a decade. Most of these jobs will be located at the new Daimler Trucks Automated Truck Research & Development Centre at Daimler Trucks North America headquarters in Portland, Oregon.

Daimler Trucks North America pioneered automated driving with the introduction of the Freightliner Inspiration Truck, which was the first automated truck licensed to operate on U.S. public highways. This new, proprietary system marks a key milestone in Freightliner's pursuit of industry-leading overall safety, driver experience, and fuel efficiency. The system can accelerate, decelerate, and steer independently.

Automated systems components include:

- Adaptive cruise control to improve safety, efficiency, and driver comfort by automatically decelerating and accelerating to maintain a safe following distance.

automation and safety. In the US substantial effort is being applied to driving systems automation to improve road safety, driver fatigue and improve fuel efficiency.

According to US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 94% of truck crashes are attributable to human error. Automating acceleration, deceleration, and steering reduces the chance for human error, mitigates collisions, and can potentially save lives. These technologies can also enhance driver experience by making the truck-driving task easier, thereby improving driver comfort and well-being.

Daimler Trucks has announced an investment in truck automation of over half a billion dollars and an addition of more than 200 new jobs in

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Cont P 13

From P 12

- Active lane assist when adaptive cruise control that support the driver by using micro-steering movements to keep centered in its detected lane.

- Active brake assist camera and radar technology detects moving pedestrians and cyclists in front of the truck and can deploy full braking. It can also detect and mitigate a collision with full braking on moving and stationary vehicles and objects.

- Side guard assist detects objects, including pedestrians and cyclists, in the passenger-side blind spot for the truck and a full-length trailer.

UD Trucks is currently participating in the Japanese government's 'highway platooning project', and will continuously improve the accuracy and safety of automation technologies including vehicle-to-vehicle communications and lane keeping assistance.

As part of the Volvo Group, UD Trucks has access to a wealth of testing data that it uses to improve automation and connectivity technology to suit the needs of each customer. UD Trucks aims to partner with companies across the logistics industry and beyond to build knowledge and refine its technology through a strategy of "building knowledge while testing."

UD Trucks' automation technology Fuji – named for the Japanese god of wind – is one of the two pillars of the UD Trucks' Innovation Roadmap Vision 2030, announced in April 2018. The roadmap lays out solutions for global issues facing the logistics industry, such as the need to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, the growing scale of e-commerce, and driver shortages.

Connectivity is the enabler



Highway truck automation trials in Japan... improving the accuracy and safety of vehicle-to-vehicle communications.

of innovation technologies such as automation, electromobility and smart logistics. In Japan, UD Trucks has provided connectivity technology since 2006.

UD Trucks has around 50,000 vehicles connected in Japan and some international markets, and is targeting 150,000 by 2025.

Data is collected from each vehicle to help improve customer uptime, fleet operation, quality and innovation. As part of the Volvo Group, UD Trucks can leverage a wealth of knowledge from different use cases around the world.

“ DATA COLLECTED FROM 800,000 CONNECTED VEHICLES

Data is collected from around 800,000 connected vehicles to improve automation and connectivity technology and make logistics smarter.

UD Trucks will continue demonstrations of autonomous driving and electric drive prototypes, aiming to complete field tests and customer trials ahead of Tokyo Motor Show in October with a view toward daily operation by 2020 and commercialisation

of fully-electric trucks and autonomous trucks by 2030.

Clearly, Australia has opportunities to take advantage of truck automation advances in the US, Japan and elsewhere.

The Australian Forest Contractors Association project to develop a Forestry Log Haulage Registered Code of Practice should, along with

other truck transport sectors, pay very close attention to automation research and development, and its operational implementation.

On the cover: UD Trucks has around 50,000 vehicles connected in Japan and some international markets, and is targeting 150,000 by 2025. Data is collected from each vehicle to help improve safety, fleet operation and driver systems.

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Curtain raises on LIGNA 2019 in Hannover

JOURNALISTS from all over the world attended the curtain-raiser of LIGNA 2019 at the preview press conference in Hannover, Germany, this week.

Whether it's about digitisation, automation, IoT platforms or collaborative systems, LIGNA is where innovations are shown for the first time, and on an unrivalled scale to be displayed across 130,000 sq m of exhibition space.

Exhibitors from more than 50 countries are booked into LIGNA from May 27 to 31 to showcase state-of-the-art processing solutions, applications and concepts for the entire forestry and wood industry.

The presence of all the world's leading technology providers will make Hannover



1/ Outside action... demonstration sites are back for LIGNA 2019.
2/ Dr Andreas Gruchow... No other fair compares in terms of international appeal.

the global hotspot for the wood-based industries during those five days.

"No other fair compares in terms of international appeal," asserts Dr Andreas Gruchow, managing board member at Deutsche Messe.

Visitors can expect to see innovations across all display categories, from forestry technology, furniture and window manufacturing, through to tooling systems and surface technology. They will also see live

demonstrations of fully functional furniture production plants, learn about IoT platforms for industry 4.0 plants and the latest R&D projects, and participate at networking events throughout the show

LIGNA 2019 has three focus themes – Integrated Woodworking; Customised Solutions; Smart Surface Technology; and Access to Resources and Technology.

The latter is also the keynote theme of the associated wood industry summit.

The outdoor demonstration site premiered successfully in 2017 and is back again for LIGNA 2019. It is a dedicated area where the latest forestry machines and technology developments are shown in action.

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Registrations open for JW Gottstein forest science course – don't miss it!

THE JW Gottstein Trust's 2019 forest science 'crash course' from February 18 to 22 at the ANU Fenner School still has room for bookings – "but people need to move fast," says Helen Murray, manager of the educational trust.

"We have some room left and the next chance for a forest science course won't be until 2021," she said.

"If anyone is thinking about it, we really encourage them to take advantage of the opportunity now," said Helen, who is principal of Kurrumbene Projects & Advocacy, which manages the Gottstein Trust secretariat.

She said the trust was very appreciative of the support of experts in their fields who willingly gave their time to come and talk about the myriad of interesting aspects of forest science and also economic and market insights.

"The influence of new technology and what that means for managing forests

“INSPECTOR OF BOMBALA HARVEST SITE



John Simon



Suzette Weeding



Rob de Fégely



Ross Hampton

will also be apparent," Helen said.

"The participants can look forward to covering a wide canvas of topics in the course. Many experts will be presenting including Professor Peter Kanowski and Associate Professor Cris Bracks from the ANU Fenner School, Rob de Fégely, co-chair, Forest Industries Advisory Council, Ross Hampton, CEO, Australian Forest Products Association, Simon Dorries, CEO, Responsible Wood, Dr Angus Carnegie from NSW DPI, FSC Australia, and Gottstein trustee Suzette Weeding, a senior executive with Sustainable Timber Tasmania."

A one-day field trip to Bombala in the southeast NSW Monaro region features a site inspection over the



GOTTSTEIN TRUST

Dongwha Timbers softwood mill which opened in 2013, and touring out with the regional NSW Forest Corporation team to inspect a working forest harvest site.

It promises to be a happy evening at the final night course dinner. Gottstein trustees John Simon (chair) and Suzette Weeding will join the group along with some Gottstein fellowship alumni and a newly-minted fellow who soon embarks on his overseas study tour.

"This is a chance to hear

first-hand about the impact that the Fellowships have in building professional knowledge and the positive impacts carried into our wonderful, renewable industry," Helen said.

Unless booked out sooner, bookings can be made online until February 14 at

www.forestry.org.au/events

Email inquiries to gottsteinsecretary@gmail.com or phone Jocelyn Carpenter on 0407 006101.

Follow links at www.gottsteintrust.org

The Gottstein Trust thanks the Institute of Foresters of Australia for access to its event booking site during the management transition and the ANU Fenner School of Environmental & Society for hosting the course venue.

Funding Round 2:
Submission deadline extended due to current fires

Growing the future of Tasmanian forestry

\$2 million research funding investment to boost sustainability, jobs and economic benefits in partnership with industry

With the support of the Australian and Tasmanian governments, the Launceston Centre of the National Institute for Forest Products Innovation has up to \$2 million available for research grants to grow the future of forestry. Individual research grants will range from \$50,000-\$500,000 and will be for periods of up to three years in duration.

Tasmania funding proposals close on the extended date of Friday 15 March 2019 and should be lodged via email to funding.tas@nifpi.org.au For further information, including a proposal template and briefing document, see www.nifpi.org.au

About us The Launceston Centre of the National Institute for Forest Products Innovation is a joint venture between the Australian Government, the Tasmanian Government and the forest and wood products industry with the goal of growing forestry into the future.



Australian Government



NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR FOREST PRODUCTS INNOVATION LAUNCESTON

Are we treading water or drowning?

Mixed bag of economic data for industry to consider

IN ancient days the Greeks consulted the Oracle of Delphi for advice on the future.

These days technology has enabled us to harness the wisdom of crowds but I am not sure we are any the wiser other than knowing what's trending on YouTube.

In my view, the key to thinking about the future still remains the use of good data and the application of common sense.

As 2019 gets under way, there has been a lot of media discussion about the outlook for the economy. Much of this has been influenced by the significant drop in house prices which 12 months ago were forecast for a soft landing but have experienced steep declines. For instance, Sydney down 9.5% from its peak in July 2017 and Melbourne down 5.8% from its peak in November 2017 with further falls of 5%+ forecast.

ABC news online December 17 last year commented: "As the slump moves into its second year with little or no prospect of rebound, the downturn in capital city property markets threatens to drag down the rest of the economy. And

“DATA MIXED BUT ON BALANCE THERE ARE A NUMBER OF POSITIVES

ECONOMIC DATA

Measure	Current	Forecast ¹	Direction		
GDP	2.7%	2.6%	↓		
Unemployment	5.0%	5.1%		↑	
Interest Rates	1.5%	1.5%			⇒
Wages Growth	2.3%	2.3%			⇒
CPI	1.8%	2.0%			
Dwelling Approvals Total	214,760	YoY ² Change -3.9%	↓		
Dwelling Approvals Detached Houses	119,905	YoY Change 1.4%		↑	
Housing Finance Total	\$22.9 Billion	YoY Change -14.5%	↓		
Housing Finance Owner Occupiers	\$13.4 Billion	YoY Change -9.6%	↓		
Housing Finance Investors	\$9.5 Billion	YoY Change -20.6%	↓		
Building Activity Housing Starts	29,335	QoQ ³ Change -4.5%	↓		
Building Activity Housing Under Construction	68,284	QoQ Change -3.8%	↓		
Building Activity Pipeline ⁴ Houses	\$15.4 Billion	QoQ Change 0.1%		↑	
Building Activity Houses Commenced	\$9.11 Billion	QoQ Change -0.3%	↓		
Building Activity A&A ⁵ Commenced	\$2.14 Billion	QoQ Change -2.6%	↓		
Softwood Timber Sales	3.057 Million m ³	YoY Change -1.68%	↓		
Softwood Sawntimber Imports	917,914m ³	YoY Change 58%		↑	

1. Forecast data sourced from The Conversation 29 January, 2019 survey of 19 academic economists.
2. YoY is year on year comparison
3. QoQ is quarter on quarter comparison.
4. Pipeline defined as work not yet done, work not yet commenced.
5. A&A ABS survey data based on projects greater than \$10,000 value

for the timber industry.

While dwelling approvals are down this has mainly been in the multi-residential area with detached homes rising slightly. Housing finance growth is down significantly (the tightening of credit is impacting prices) which is hitting investors but to a lesser extent owner occupiers.

Housing starts have eased but there is still a big pipeline of work on the books. This has seen a moderation in demand for local softwood sawn timber combined with a big surge in imports.

So the immediate challenge here is more related to inventory management, assuming the

FOCUS ON FORESTS



With JIM HOUGHTON

with a mixed outlook for the global economy, doubts are surfacing about where Australia is going to find the fuel to extend its near-record run of 27 years of unbroken economic growth."

But what such reports



Impacting prices... housing finance growth is down significantly and a tightening of credit is hitting investors.

overlook is that house price declines in the past have been associated with rising interest rates, unemployment and the economy in recession.

Right now we have none of those factors in play. So what does the data tell us? (See graph).

So not surprisingly the data is mixed but on balance there are still a number of positives

underlying demand for new housing remains reasonable.

The data suggests the boom is over with economic growth easing but not collapsing.

Yes, there are some storm clouds on the horizon and plenty of challenges ahead but even the Oracle of Delphi could tell us that.

UK timber industry faces £bn Brexit bill

THE UK timber industry faces a potential “billion pound Brexit bill” if Britain leaves the EU Customs Union, warns the Timber Trade Federation.

“Some 90% of timber used in construction is imported from Europe, which British timber supplies are insufficient to replace,” the federation’s managing director David Hopkins said.

“Under the proposed Taxation Bill, once the UK leaves the EU and its VAT area, VAT on EU imports will have to be paid up-front,” he said. “This will cause considerable problems for the small and medium size businesses that make up the majority of our sector.”

The federation has launched an infographic for

legislators, parliamentarians and the public, explaining what it calls ‘The Timber Tax Bombshell’.

Additional problems highlighted, not just for the timber sector but for construction supply chains in general, include potential delays, and greater costs for storing timber at ports and in administering customs checks and documentation.

“Builders’ merchants, and their builder customers, responsible for fulfilling government housing targets, rely on ‘just-in-time’ deliveries of timber to premises and sites,” Mr Hopkins said.

“Currently timber entering the UK from the EU clears ports immediately with no need for customs checks.”



David Hopkins... imports paid up-front

Mr Hopkins said more than 60% of the timber used in the UK came from Europe.

The Timber Trade Federation is asking government to ensure timber imports are able to clear customers in the same manner as present, with no delays or up-front costs likely to penalise SMEs, or

to impact Britain’s housing supply chains.

The timber sector currently employs around 200,000 people across the UK in manufacturing, distribution and construction.

Every parliamentary constituency benefits from jobs stemming from or connected to the timber industry.

Timber prices in the construction supply chain to small builders have already risen by 8% in the last 12 months, according to the Federation of Master Builders. The TTF reports this is due mainly to the currency depreciation since the Brexit vote, and competitive global markets for construction timber pressurising supplies into the UK.

Forest Science Course

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2019-gottstein-forest-science-short-course

For more information about the course and discounts, contact Helen Murray
gottsteinsecretary@gmail.com



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Life of a Leaf a call for reflections 10 years after Black Saturday fires

ANNA BAKER

THE Life of a Leaf is an open call to community to submit individual reflections on Black Saturday at its 10th anniversary.

The project theme is the leaf, a universal metaphor for so much connected with life and loss. Outcomes will include an exhibition of submissions, catalogue and social media storytelling.

Submissions will be sought from across Murrindindi Shire, with a collaborative exhibition of works to be held at Marysville Information and Regional Artspace in Marysville from March 1 to April 11.

Life of a Leaf is an outreach to communities to use the simple, humble leaf to reflect on life and living and then to articulate the loss and learnings of the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires as an individual response.

In Life of a Leaf, leaves are used as a metaphor, a motif of so much that is connected with life and its seasons – our own ageing, the impermanence of life, the cycles, the circles, the beginnings and endings.



Leaves are the supreme symbol of nature ... of renewal, regeneration, of budding, blossoming hope, and of new life, rebirth.

Leaves are at once robust and fragile, like life itself. They are easily found, a universal feature of the natural world from our first to our last days. Each leaf has its own shape, colour and size, much like the fingerprints unique to each of us. To contemplate a leaf is to meditate on the complexities of life, the big and small views of it.

“WE TURN OVER
A NEW LEAF TO
HAVE A CHANCE
TO START AGAIN

Life of a Leaf looks at the universal nature of the themes of life, death and rebirth as a community expression. The aims of the project are to improve

community connectedness, social wellbeing and collaboration and to build, promote and strengthen a sense of community identity.

Leaves are instruments of photosynthesis and transpiration for a plant. Photosynthesis (from the Greek, meaning 'light' and 'putting together') is a process used to convert light into energy to fuel life and living. So it is a transformative energy and Life of a Leaf is intended as a project that transmutes energy from dark to light, from negative to positive.

We turn over a new leaf to have a chance to start again.

For further information about the Marysville exhibition, contact Anna Baker on 0468 359 880

TODAY, February 7, marks the start of a series of bushfires that burnt across Victoria 10 years ago – the Black Saturday bushfires. The fires occurred during extreme bushfire-weather conditions and resulted in Australia's highest ever loss of life from a bushfire. There were 180 fatalities. The fires commenced on a day when several localities across the state, including Melbourne, recorded their highest temperatures since records began in 1859. On February 6 – the day before the fires started – the Premier John Brumby issued a warning about the extreme weather conditions expected on February 7. More than 450,000 ha were burnt and 3500 buildings, including more than 2000 houses were destroyed. The RSPCA estimated that up to one million wild and domesticated animals died in the disaster.

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