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## Labor decision will reap a grim harvest

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# Forests sacrificial lamb in Labor's dark ploy to win green city voters

## Andrews government 'logs out' on science, sense and sustainability

JIM BOWDEN

THE Andrews Labor government is pointing a loaded gun at the heart of Victoria's forestry industry.

Its determination to close native timber harvesting in the state by 2030, after more than a century of renewable growth (see story, P 15), is a dumb decision condemned by regional communities, contractors, forest scientists, producer groups, politicians, unions and social workers.

Here is a sustainable resource with just four trees in every 10,000 harvested from state forests each year,

**“ I FEEL NUMB, I DON'T THINK I CAN FIGHT ANOTHER BATTLE**



**Alistair Hull (left) with sawmill hand Gary Gregor... the real shame is that the bush will no longer be managed.**

less than 0.04% of the total forested area.

And forest operations are certified to the Responsible Wood standard, which is third-party endorsed and internationally recognised by PEFC, the world's largest forest certification scheme. This process audits forest managers against nine criteria

set out in the standard and must meet in excess of 100 requirements.

Peak industry bodies VAFI, AFPA and AFCA have written to the Premier Daniel Andrews seeking an urgent meeting to discuss the devastating implications and seek a reversal of the decision.

AFPA CEO Ross Hampton says the Labor government decision must answer key questions such as how will a massive new national park covering vast areas of the state be maintained and defended from pests and bushfires without the forestry workforce. And how the hundreds of millions of dollars in annual economic activity and thousands of jobs forest industries generate in regional Victoria will be replaced.

The decision is hard to fathom, given that a 'timber release plan' has been ready for signing since before the November 2018 state election. Also, the government had another long-term process under way – the RFA modernisation project – which

Cont P 3



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From P 2

was meant to be assessing the future management of Victoria's native forest timber production.

Stopping an industry dead in its tracks while formulating a strategy for its future is unprecedented and guaranteed to create an employment and social crisis for regions and rural communities – and people like Alistair and Roslyn Hull at Talbot Timbers.

The Hull family came to the heart of central Victoria's box and ironbark forest in the 1850s and progressed from cutting firewood through fencing products to leaf harvesting eucalyptus oil, before turning their attention in the late 1980s to producing high value-added timber products.

"I feel numb. I don't think I can fight another battle," said Alistair Hull, 59. "We just don't know what to



**Daniel Andrews... closing native timber harvesting in Victoria after more than a century of sustainable growth.**

think of it all. I was reflecting today on my 33 years in the industry, a third of it filled with uncertainty.

"My anguish though is that I will be letting my industry die. I have always hoped that one of my children would take on the mill but they are not fools. They have seen how cruel this industry is because of short-sighted politicians and sometimes deceitful bureaucrats.

"Better add lying politicians as well. My kids don't want to be involved. They have seen the stress that their parents have suffered. It's not for them and I can't blame them.

"The real shame is that the bush will no longer be managed. As we all know it must be, for its survival and for the survival of the people living around it.

"We will just take one step at a time and see what comes. It's a real shame because we had some great ideas to help make our business more protected from this bullshit but now I don't think I can pursue them anymore.

"Dad helped me build this business to what is today and I'm glad he passed away before this stupid decision was made."

Stacey Gardiner, general manager, Australian Forest Contractors Association, says forestry contracting businesses and their employees have been working for over two years with

uncertainty around their future and the toll this has taken on their mental health is evident

"Many forest contractors are generational family-run businesses that have a significant capital investment that can't directly transition to the plantation sector. To suggest they can transition is disingenuous. As a starting point, the specialised equipment, which can be up to a \$1 million investment per piece, is different and cannot merely be transitioned for use in plantation harvesting.

"A plantation estate hasn't

even been established and won't be by the time our forestry contracting members are meant to transition.

What does the Government expect forestry contracting businesses to do, wait around until the plantation estate is ready to be harvested?"

To quote Mark Poynter, a fellow of the IFA in Victoria and a professional forester with more than 40 years' experience in government and private industry: "In the absence of any explanation, it can only be assumed that the Andrews government is happy to effectively cripple the livelihoods of several thousand rural Victorians to appease trendy, ideological opposition to forestry that has been shaped by decades of misinformation."

He says the government's actions are at odds with the Premier's claim that 'the

Cont P 4

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From P 3

government's position is not to be playing politics with these industries, these jobs and these communities'.

Mr Poynter says the closure of Victoria's native forest timber industry will have far-reaching consequences beyond the devastating loss of rural jobs.

The industry's experienced bush workforce and their equipment have, for generations, been integral to managing the threat to Victorian forests posed by severe bushfires.

Stacey Gardiner says forest contractors have not hesitated to support firefighting efforts and have done this for decades.

"Last year, they spent more than 60 working days using 20 pieces of forestry equipment, much of it specialised, to construct fire breaks, control lines and defending bush



**Ross Hampton...**  
*Labor government must answer key questions on national park management.*



**Stacey Gardiner...**  
*Contractors have worked for more than two years with uncertainty over their future.*



**Tim Johnston...**  
*Dark days for industry but we will fight on.*



**Mark Poynter...**  
*Far-reaching consequences beyond the devastating loss of rural jobs.*

fires," she said.

"The services to support firefighting will disappear along with our skilled forestry contracting employees who have spent a lifetime working and committed to managing Victoria's sustainable native forests."

Many in the sector are bitter about the connection drawn between the forest closure decision and the "critically endangered" Leadbeater's possum.

Previous research showed the possum had a range of more than 4000 sq km. New findings demonstrate the species can be found even beyond this already extensive range. Peer-reviewed research has confirmed sightings of previously unknown possum colonies outside what is considered their 'core range' and in different forest types, including old-growth forests and recently burnt areas.

Dr Tim Morrissey, a member of the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council, says new evidence shows that Leadbeater's possum can inhabit a wider range of forest types, and recolonise burnt areas, more rapidly than was previously thought.

"New colonies were detected at six independent sites nearly 1.5 km outside of their currently described core range and up to 14.2 km from the previous nearest observation," Dr Morrissey said.

Place confident of winning the next state election in November 2022, based principally on promises given to city electorates on new infrastructure such as the the \$542.4 million upgrade of congested level crossings in Melbourne.

Worthy projects that will be praised by Melburnians but they overshadow any knowledge they might have on understanding the plights and needs of regional and rural Victorians.

Past Labor leaders who ignored the science and closed native forests come to mind – former NSW senator Graham Richardson (north Queensland), Peter Beattie and Anna Bligh, both Queensland premiers (western hardwoods), Bob Carr and Neville Wran, former NSW premier, and his 1982 Terania Creek 'peace plan' that closed the industry and converted 900,000 ha to national parks, or about one-third of productive state forests, in northern NSW.

The Victorian Association of Forest Industries will hold its annual industry dinner this Friday, a night it says will "honour and celebrate the wonderful contributions our men and women provide to our dynamic industry"

A night of celebration ... or castigation?

"We'll just fight on," said VAFI CEO Tim Johnston.



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**NEW POSSUM COLONIES DETECED AT SIX SITES**

Since 2014 the total number of identified colonies each containing up to 12 possums, has increased from 153 to 688.

Meanwhile, a smug premier sits at his native hardwood desk in Treasury

# CFMEU: Victorian government plan ‘kick in the guts’ for timber workers

THE Victorian government’s plan to end native forestry is a “kick in the guts” to timber workers and the communities which rely on the industry, says Australia’s biggest trade union.

The Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union with more than 100,000 members across Australia, says while no one denies the industry faces challenges, the government’s response was deeply flawed, completely inadequate, and far from being a viable or fair transition plan.

“This is not the way to respond to an industry facing challenges,” CFMEU national secretary Michael O’Connor said.

**“HALF-BAKED RAG-TAG AND MISHMASH OF TALKING POINTS”**



**Brett Robin, a fifth-generation logger from Gippsland ...state government’s plan will result in tens of thousands of jobs lost.** Photo: ABC

“This announcement isn’t a viable plan for the future, it’s an embarrassing, motley, half-baked, rag-tagged, mishmash of talking points,” he said.

“It is a stupid, heartless decision that is out of character for a government that had built a reputation of supporting blue-collar jobs and regional communities.

“The government’s ham-fisted handling of this issue has sent a chill down the spine of not only timber workers, but every blue-collar worker in

the state.”

Mr O’Connor said it was extraordinary that the forestry policy was announced on the same day a review into Labor’s federal election campaign was released, which warned that the party had alienated blue collar workers.

“Rather than take for granted the votes of workers and ignoring the swings against Labor in blue collar electorates not just at the federal election but at the 2018 Victorian election the

Andrews government should concede they’ve got this one completely wrong,” Mr O’Connor said.

“It’s not just timber and forestry workers, but manufacturing, resources, power generation and mining workers and communities across Australia who will now, justifiably, be even more sceptical of Labor when they promise to deliver a ‘just transition’ as this fiasco speaks louder than their promises.”

Mr O’Connor said an examination of the announcement revealed that the Victorian government’s rhetoric about providing security, protecting jobs and industry, getting the balance right, and making hard but necessary decisions simply didn’t stack up.

“No one in the timber industry supports this hopeless and embarrassing plan,” Mr O’Connor said.

*Cont P 6*



Image courtesy of the \_shoot\_ project, the 2018 Responsible Wood Photo Competition Winner

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From P 5

“The union will fight to ensure that workers, their families and their communities are not left on the scrap heap because of this deeply flawed announcement.

“This debacle also flies in the face of the understanding that our union has had with the Andrews government since prior to its election in 2014.”

Mr O'Connor said meetings

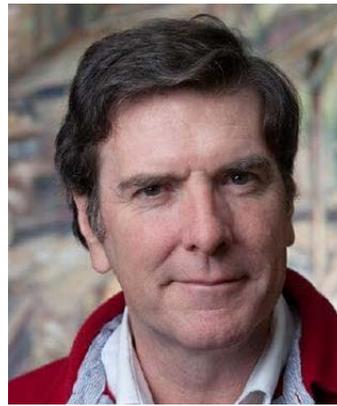
**“HARDWOOD SAW MILLING SECTOR NOT GIVEN A FIGHTING CHANCE**

with workers would determine exactly what the fightback looked like, but the union’s manufacturing division will be reviewing its relationship with the Labor Party in Victoria as a result of the announcement.

The union believes the government plan is deeply deficient in a number of ways, including that it:

- Does not give the hardwood sawmilling sector a fighting chance to adapt and adjust, with mill closures and job losses certain to occur either straight away, in 2024, or in 2030.

- Risks the viability of Australian Paper and the thousands of jobs that rely



**Michael O'Connor... plan contains a completely inadequate and insufficient worker and community support package.**

on it, with little room to manoeuvre if there is another big bush fire or there are problems in establishing or growing the 50,000 ha of

plantation needed to transition the company to plantation wood.

- Contains a completely inadequate and insufficient worker and community support package.
- Gives environment groups everything they want, upfront, with no strings attached, yet contains no strategy to prevent environment groups from continuing to withhold certification, engage in logging coup protests, or run market campaigns against Victorian timber and paper.
- Has no mechanisms to ensure new plantation jobs will be good, secure, union jobs.

## Bookings open Friday for Gottstein course

BOOKINGS for the popular Understanding Wood Science course, run by the JW Gottstein Memorial Trust, open this Friday, November 15.

The ‘crash course’ has run for many years and provides knowledge about the how harvested timber moves along the value chain

undergoing conversion into wood products.

To register go to [www.gottsteintrust.org](http://www.gottsteintrust.org) and follow the links to the online registration form. Substantial discounts are provided to both patron and supporting sponsor donors; interested parties are encouraged to talk with Helen Murray on 0419 991 424.

“It will be a week of rich learning experiences,” Helen said.

Participants will assemble in Albury on the NSW-Victoria border on Sunday evening February 16 ahead of a day and half in the region for an extended field trip.

Site visits are locked in with prominent timber processing facilities at Benalla, Wangaratta and Wodonga. These cover many aspects of wood products including hardwood green and dry sawmilling, truss manufacture, medium density fibreboard, mouldings and door components and cross laminated timber.

Helen confirmed that Dave

Gover, CEO of the Engineered Wood Products Association of Australasia, will accompany the group and also deliver a presentation about wood composites.

Additional networking opportunities will open for course participants to mingle with regional timber industry people over a meal in Albury and also at a special course dinner in Canberra. Once the field trips are complete, the group will travel by coach to Canberra for the second leg of the course.

The Canberra lecture series is being held at the ANU’s Fenner School of Environment and Society. It has partnered with the Gottstein Trust since 2018 to provide both researcher expertise and the venue. The course will conclude on Friday, February 21.

This course runs only every two years and benefits not only new industry folk but also anyone seeking to further their knowledge.

Register online at [www.gottsteintrust.org](http://www.gottsteintrust.org).



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**NOVEMBER**

**15: Victorian Association of Forest Industries annual industry dinner – Melbourne Cricket Ground, Melbourne, Vic, Australia.** Tickets available at [www.vafi.org.au](http://www.vafi.org.au)

**19: Timber Queensland seminar: Glulam Timber: Long, Strong & Reliable.** – Ballroom, Victoria Park Golf Club, Herston Road, Herston, Brisbane, Qld, Australia. 2.30-5.30 pm (includes afternoon tea and cocktail function). Engineering, architecture and certification experts present practical advice on using glulam to deliver cost effective and structurally sound projects. 'Must-attend' event for developers and building and design professionals. Cost: free for TQ members and technical subscribers; non-members \$60. Register at: [www.timberqueensland.com.au/events](http://www.timberqueensland.com.au/events)

**27-28: Hyne Timber and Xlam CLT and mill tour – Tumbarumba sawmill and**

*plantation pine forestry operation.* Conducted by Timber Development Association. Tour limited to approved building design professionals: architects, developers, engineers, certifiers, cost planners. Commences in Sydney. Coach from Albury visits Xlam's Wodonga CLT plant. Travel to Tumbarumba for overnight stay and dinner at Courabyra Wines. Morning visit to pine forestry operation then continue to Tumbarumba sawmill. Tour cost includes return flights Albury-Sydney accommodation on Monday night, breakfast, two lunches, dinner and luxury bus travel. Reduced rate where accommodation is not required. CPD certificates of attendance available for all professionals. Contact Mariela at TDA on 0420 232 253 or email [info@tdansw.asn.au](mailto:info@tdansw.asn.au)

**DECEMBER**

**9-10: Integrated Timber Design Workshop – University of Queensland, Brisbane, Qld, Australia.** The

ARC Future Timber Hub at UQ has announced its second timber design continuing professional development course. The workshop, open to practicing engineers, architects and other building design professionals, will focus on integrated design of timber buildings, fire safety, durability and building physics. The course will be led by internationally recognised engineer Professor Jose Torero, University College London, with contributions from timber durability expert Geoff Stringer and building physics expert Samantha Anderson, and presentations by members of the Centre for Future Timber Constructions and the ARC Future Timber Hub. Greater awareness of the potential benefits of engineered timber as a structural material for the design of multi-storey buildings is increasingly leading to client interest in a 'timber building option'. However, the technical education and professional experience of designers

typically focuses on concrete and steel, providing little or no grounding in either the fundamental principles of timber design or its practical application to a contemporary building context. Integrated design ensures that all design aspects are considered simultaneously at all design and construction stages. Failure to apply an integrated design approach can lead to delays, rework and redesign, and even failure of a project. This course will present state-of-the-art knowledge on fire safety engineering including façade detailing, design for durability and how this is reflected in maintenance, and why air-tightness is as equally important in Queensland as it is in Tasmania. Contact Kelly Rischmiller, ARC Future Timber Hub, Centre for Future Timber Structures. Phone 61 7 344 31360 or email [k.rischmiller@uq.edu.au](mailto:k.rischmiller@uq.edu.au) Visit [www.futuretimberhub.org](http://www.futuretimberhub.org) and [www.civil.uq.edu.au/timber](http://www.civil.uq.edu.au/timber)



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**NOVEMBER**

**11-15: PEFC Forest Certification Week 2019** – Würzburg, Germany. For further information see: [www.pefc.org/events-training/pefc-forest-certification-week-2019](http://www.pefc.org/events-training/pefc-forest-certification-week-2019)

**18-30: CLEM2019, IV Latin American Conference on Timber Structure** – Montevideo, Uruguay, LATU, Latitud, the Architecture faculty of Universidad ORT Uruguay, and the Engineering faculty of UDELAR. For further information about the event see: [www.clem2019.uy/](http://www.clem2019.uy/) or contact Stephany Arrejuría De Giuda: [sarrejuría@latitud.org.uy](mailto:sarrejuría@latitud.org.uy)

**19-21: Malaysian Wood Expo 2019** – Putra World Trade Centre, Kuala Lumpur. Email: [info@malaysianwoodexpo.com.my](mailto:info@malaysianwoodexpo.com.my) or visit [www.malaysianwoodexpo.com.my](http://www.malaysianwoodexpo.com.my)

**20: Exploring pathways to verified sustainable tropical timber Conference** – Berlin, Germany. The 2019 European Sustainable Tropical Timber Coalition (STTC) Conference centred around the two themes of tropical timber promotion and verified sustainable forest management. Visit [www.europeansttc.com/20-november-2019-conference-exploring-pathways-to-verified-sustainable-tropical-timber/](http://www.europeansttc.com/20-november-2019-conference-exploring-pathways-to-verified-sustainable-tropical-timber/)

**DECEMBER**

**3-4: Climate change and new challenges in the production of high quality and well adapted forest reproductive material** – Jastrebarsko, Croatia. A European Forestry Institute event in collaboration with the Croatian Forest Research Institute (CFRI) celebrates the 60th anniversary of organised forest seed science in Croatia. The conference will provide a valuable contribution to the multidisciplinary look at seed science and connection of wide circle of scientists from the field of biotechnical sciences. For additional information see: [www.efi.int/events/climate-change-and-new-challenges-production-high-quality-and-well-adapted-forest](http://www.efi.int/events/climate-change-and-new-challenges-production-high-quality-and-well-adapted-forest)

**16-17: Forest Landscape Restoration and the Bonn Challenge in Eastern and South-East Europe** – Belgrade, Serbia. Informing on the Bonn Challenge (launched in 2011 and extended by the 2014 New York Declaration on Forests, a global effort to bring 150 million ha of deforested and degraded land into restoration by 2020 and 350 million ha by 2030), and to gather input for a study on forest landscape restoration. For further information see: [www.unece.org/](http://www.unece.org/)

**MARCH 2020**

**16-17: Asia Pacific Woodchip and Biomass Trade** – Radisson Blu Shanghai New World Hotel, China. Optional field trips: March 18-19 to Yangtze Basin region; March 19-22 (including travel) to Suifenhe on the Russia-China border in Heilongjiang province. Visit [www.danaevents.co.nz/2020china](http://www.danaevents.co.nz/2020china) or contact Julie Bell [admin@dana.co.nz](mailto:admin@dana.co.nz)

**APRIL 2020**

**3-5: FORESTlive, Forestry trade fair** – Offenburg, Germany. Leading fair covering forestry technology, wood energy and biomass for decision makers in the forestry and agriculture, construction and municipal economy, timber crafts and energy industry. For further information contact: +49 (0)781 922604 or [www.messeoffenburg.de](http://www.messeoffenburg.de)

**MAY 2020**

**19-20: FastMarkets – RISI-DANA 7th annual Forest Investment Conference** – Convene Conference Centre, New York City. Register at [www.events.risiinfo.com/investment-conference/](http://www.events.risiinfo.com/investment-conference/) or contact [conferences@risi.com](mailto:conferences@risi.com)

**26-27: Inaugural DANA Russia Forest Industry Sector Conference and field trip** – Hilton Helsinki Strand Hotel in Helsinki, Finland..

DANA joins with respected Russian information company Whatwood. Post-conference visits to harvesting and wood processing equipment manufacturers who sell to Russia (and in fact to the rest of the world); and to mills using some of this equipment. Visit [www.danaevents.co.nz/2020russia](http://www.danaevents.co.nz/2020russia) or contact Julie Bell [admin@dana.co.nz](mailto:admin@dana.co.nz)

**JUNE 2020**

**1-5: DANA Europe Spruce Damage Seminar and Tour** – Hamburg, Germany. One-day seminar in Hamburg on the impact of spruce forest damage on Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Poland, Sweden, Italy. Website and full details available soon. Register interest with Dennis Neilson [dana@dana.co.nz](mailto:dana@dana.co.nz)

**AUGUST 2020**

**24-27 : World Conference on Timber Engineering (WCTE Santiago 2020)** – Santiago, Chile. Topics include Sustainable Forests for timber production; wood products, connections: timber engineering' timber architecture; building and environmental impacts; policies, education and future trends. For further information see: [www.wcte2020.com/](http://www.wcte2020.com/)

• Please send any events listings to John Halkett via email: [johnh@timberandforestrynews.com](mailto:johnh@timberandforestrynews.com)

## Hundegger appoints regional manager in New Zealand

HUNDEGGER Australasia has announced the appointment of Benedikt (Ben) Buerschgens as regional manager – New Zealand.

The appointment is in line with expansion of Hundegger machinery in Australia and New Zealand over the past 18 months, including the frame and truss segment, prefabrication, glulam and other mass timber applications.

General manager of Hundegger Australia Sam Rowe said the market in New Zealand continued to grow in

importance.

“So, it has only been a matter of time and finding the right person to fulfil this critical role,” Mr Rowe said. “With Ben, we believe we have an excellent fit and are confident he will add further value to our new and existing customers in this significant market.”

Mr Buerschgens has extensive experience with German timber processing machines and other European manufacturers in both Germany and New Zealand through his previous roles.

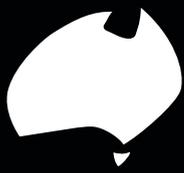


**Multi-skilled... Ben Buerschgens newly-appointed regional manager, based in Auckland.**

“His background in multi-axis CNC machines, location in the Auckland area and

enjoyment of all things timber and travel, makes Ben an ideal choice for Hundegger in New Zealand,” Mr Rowe said.

“He will work closely with the local service team, as well as their colleagues in Germany. His role will involve installation, servicing, training and troubleshooting with existing Hundegger machinery. He will also provide a local pre-sales contact, in exploring opportunities for the growing demand for new Hundegger machines in the region.



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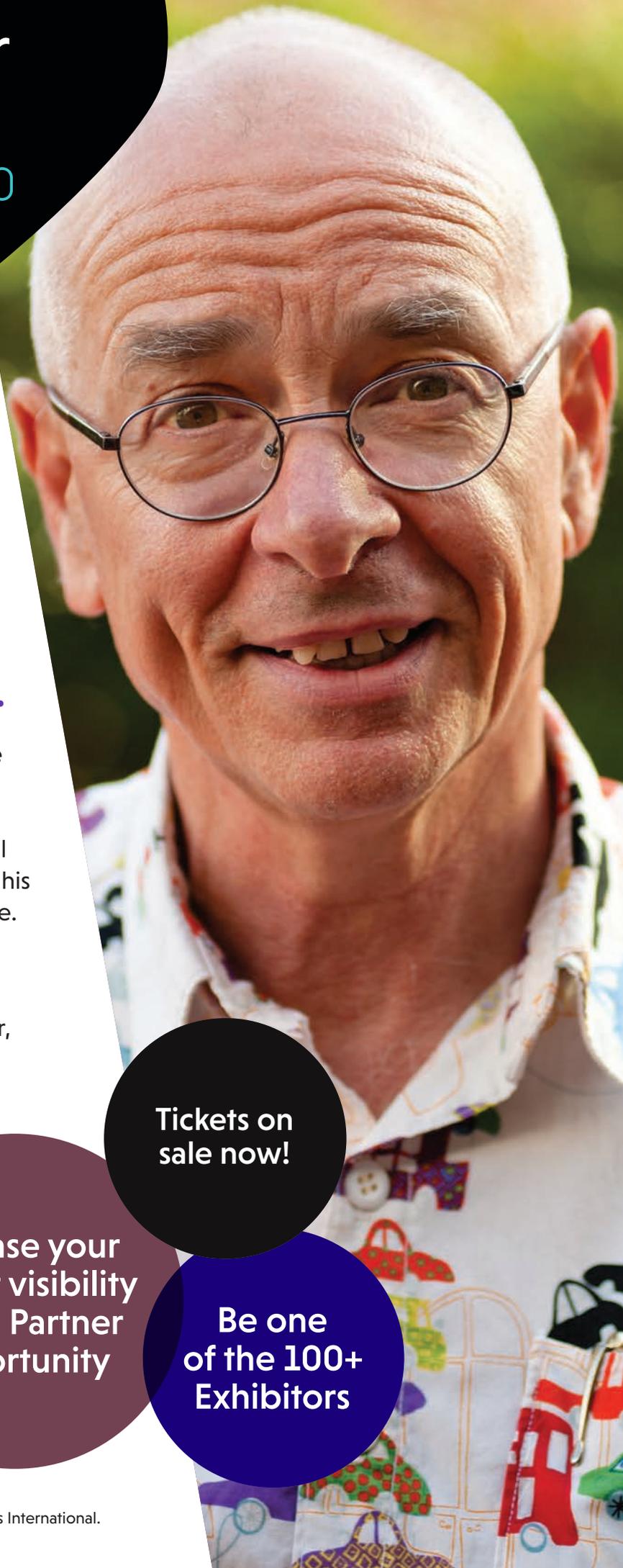
Tickets on sale now for Field Trips, the Welcome Dinner and Show days.

### Contact Us

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# Facing serious headwinds: But don't write off Japan forest sector too soon

## Several recent policies and events may yet revitalise the industry

DENNIS NEILSON

THE 'consensus' of observers of the Japanese forestry sector is that it is facing very serious headwinds.

With its population starting to decline, its current forestry workers rapidly becoming geriatrics, and with traditionally 'closed' immigration, many observers have written off Japan as ever being a major softwood log producer, and certainly not a log or sawn timber exporter.

Japan's forests account for two-thirds of its land area or 25 million ha. Around 10 million ha of this is softwood plantations – cedar (Sugi) and cypress (Hinoki).

More than half of these

**“FOREST WORKERS RAPIDLY BECOMING GERIATRICS**



**Revitalised... new Sugi sawlog processing facility close to the \$A400 million port expansion at Miyasaki the island of Kyushu.**

are over 50 years old, fully ready/over-ready for harvest. Japan's more than 66% forest cover compares with Australia at 17% and New Zealand at 29%.

The total annual plantation softwood harvest is less than 25 million cu m, – compared with the softwood harvest for Australia of 17.5 million cub m with 1 million ha of softwood

plantations, and New Zealand at 33 million cub m with 1.6 million ha.

So, is the Japanese domestic forestry sector snookered in future?

Well, maybe not.

Several policies and events may yet revitalise the sector. Just some of these include:

- A new 'forest tax' of 1000 yen per year (\$A13

per taxpayer payable by all around 60 million taxpayers) to revitalise Japan's forest and wood processing industry to be implemented in 2024, but with government funded subsidies starting in 2019. Already huge harvesting and log transport subsidies are in place.

- Until now the forest industry was unable to import immigrants to work. But that is changing fast, with pilot schemes already in operation and new immigration laws imminent. Already sawmills are importing Vietnamese workers.

The largest pre-cut house framing company in Japan (50,000 frames a year or one every hour) is replacing Japanese workers and designers with Vietnamese workers and designers (of 300 employees, 100 are now Vietnamese); and robots -

Cont P 11



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From P 10

from none two years ago to 30 in late 2019, with each robot replacing four workers.

More and more Chinese managers seem to be taking over the top jobs in Japan. For instance, a Chinese lady was the boss of the above pre-cut factory, and Chinese ladies are in senior positions in two huge Japanese shipping companies. Unlike many Japanese, Chinese tend not to be satisfied with the 'status quo'.

Some new sawmills are targeting sawn timber exports (unheard of a few years ago). One company, owned by Chugoku Mokuzai,



**Ready for processing... Sugi logs at the new Chugoku Mokuzai sawmill near Miyasaki.**

has recently built its third sawmill and is already using 650,000 cub m of all domestic sugi logs a year and is expanding. This adds to its existing two huge sawmills using 1-1.2 million cub m of all imported logs per year respectively.

Even sawmills losing money may be profitable because of massive 'feed-in tariffs' subsidies paid for using biomass residues for power generation.

Japanese forest owners are starting to embrace New

Zealand-designed initiatives to replace manual chainsaw-using tree fellers with steep country harvesting machines.

- No capital is required to build any solid wood processing plant. Japanese government banks lend 80% of the cost, at an interest rate "close to zero," with private banks funding the 20% balance at interest rates of "less than 1%."

- The government is funding new and expanded log and processed wood export ports – one a new

\$A400 million expansion near Miyazaki on the island of Kyushu, Japan's largest log export port. The government supports both domestic processing and log exports equally, and officially supports the forest industry as vital to Japan's economy and wellbeing.

The jury is still out as to whether all the new initiative will indeed revitalise the Japanese forestry sector.

But one thing is clear ... the current harvest of less than 25 million cub m a year could be increased to a gross harvest of perhaps 60 million cub m. But more realistically to 35-40 million cub m, even after deducting land too steep or remote to harvest.

- *DANA director Dennis Neilson has recently returned from Japan after leading a forest industry tour on Kyushu and Honshu islands.*

**“ CHINESE MANAGERS TAKING OVER TOP JOBS IN JAPAN**

MANUFACTURED BY TARANAKIPINE

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# Outback resort captures aesthetic symbolism of certified hardwoods

## Timber was architect's 'eco-friendly, self-sustainable' choice

NESTLED in rugged terrain, Mount Mulligan Lodge is located on a remote 28,000-ha cattle property and is only accessible by a 35-minute helicopter ride or a three-hour 4WD journey along unsealed roads from Cairns.

Every room offers views to the spectacular backdrop of Mount Mulligan and the picturesque eucalyptus-framed weir just beyond the lodge. This dramatic outback landscape can be enjoyed from open timber decks with outdoor baths for the ultimate luxury Australian outback experience.

Complementing this stunning natural setting is a palette of woolshed-worthy materials which draw from a distinctly Australian design aesthetic. The corrugated iron roofing reflects the nearby water tanks and the interiors are furnished with luxurious linen, sisal rugs, bronze and marble bathroom fittings and leather furnishings.

But it is timber that is truly the star of this outback show.

Guest rooms are lined in spotted gum cladding and flooring and the lodge's primary structure is constructed from large iron bark sections, salvaged from Sydney's Pyrmont wharf, complete with rusted bolts and notches that spell out the story of its previous maritime life. The resort's Sunset Bar has a main bar and shelving also constructed from the reclaimed wharf timber. The bar area is imbued with a sense of drama through an exterior and interior clad in Woodform's Sculptform

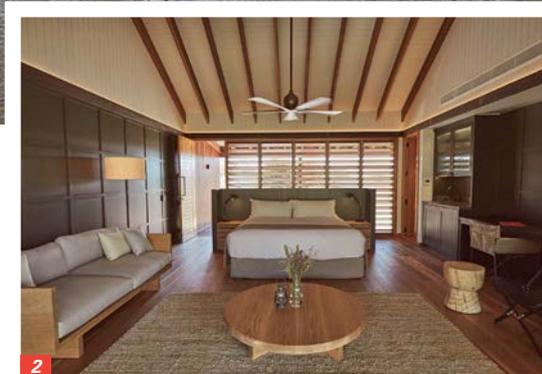


burnt and charred ash – a beautiful matt-black, burnt and charred timber product.

Glue laminated timber roof rafters provide large overhanging eaves which deliver welcome shading to the generous areas of timber decking. Design features such as timber louvres and door frames are a further nod to the traditional homesteads of central Queensland but with a 21st century update.

The extensive use of timber at Mount Mulligan Lodge was also not only a choice governed by the desire to achieve an aesthetic sympathetic to its surroundings, but a hope to deliver, in the words of architect David Dubois of Dubois Building Design and Interior Architecture: "An eco-friendly, self-sustainable resort."

He continues: "The use of Australian-sourced and certified timber was important



from an authenticity and environmentally sustainable approach." It was this approach that saw Dubois take out the recent Australian Timber Design Award for the use of Australian Certified Timber, sponsored by Responsible Wood.

It also garnered the Recycled Timber Award, sponsored by Kennedy's Timber.

"Where possible, it was important to showcase Australian timber species, particularly Queensland spotted gum," said Mr Dubois who estimates around 75% of the timber used in the project was certified by Responsible Wood, the governing body in Australia for PEFC.

The remoteness of this location presented challenges which became opportunities for employing

**1/ Timber star of this outback show... Mount Mulligan and its picturesque eucalyptus-framed weir.**

**2/ Comfort inside the lodge... a luxurious and charming take on pastoral living.**

Photos: Dubois Building Design and Interior Architecture

other sustainability initiatives beyond the use of sustainable timber. With no grid connected services or telephone, the building's design employs energy efficiency and passive environmental design techniques to maximise comfort given the region's extreme seasonal temperatures, humidity and very low rainfall.

The lodge is 100% solar and battery-powered, harvests rainwater and treats and utilises its own waste for use in a kitchen garden. The three gourmet meals a day are offered to guests using, where possible, fruits and vegetables from the resort's own drought-tolerant gardens and meat from the surrounding cattle station.

It may well be worth getting lost in the outback to find this architectural gem.

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# Green Shades march creates confusion on true scope of forest expansion in NZ

From DENNIS NEILSON

TODAY'S planned 50 Shades of Green march on parliament in Wellington deliberately creates confusion about the true nature and recent scope of forestry expansion.

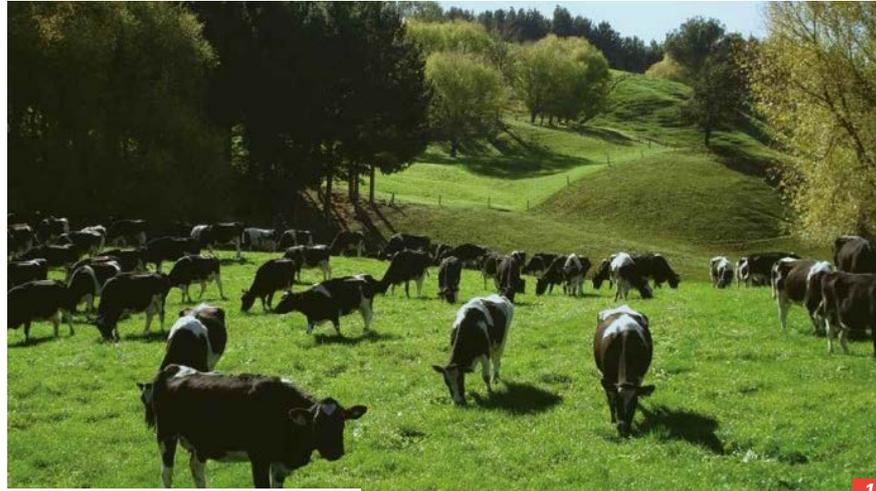
Farm Forestry Association president Hamish Levack says 50 Shades of Green demands on the government to restrict forest planting would not be supported by many farmers he knows.

"There's at least 10,000 owners of farm woodlots in New Zealand," he said. "If they want to retire some more of their farms to earn some more income by expanding their woodlots then that should be their right. If they want to plant out the whole farm that should be their right as well, and shouldn't be stopped by some misinformed fringes of the farming community."

Mr Levack cites a recent Beef + Lamb Commission report on the Wairoa district, which concluded that a typical sheep and beef farm was unable to complete with forestry returns over a 60-year period.

Mr Levack says the 50 Shades of Green petition

demands the government prevent farmers planting trees to offset carbon emissions sounds to like climate change denial.



1/ **Trees on farms... producers can earn more income by expanding their woodlots.**

2/ **John Bishara... further regulatory imposition restricting land use is not welcome by perpetual owners. .**

3/ **Peter Weir... landholders need the options to meet market demands and environmental standards.**

"Farmers who contribute towards reducing New Zealand's net greenhouse gas emissions should be congratulated and not banned," Mr Levack said.

"I also can't understand what they have against the government's billion trees program either. It's a fund available only to farmers and only for part of a farm. I would think they would be in favour of this.

"Timber product exports are worth 10 times the total value of the wool industry for New Zealand. Our ratio of further-processed product exports is two and a half

standards at the same time.

"For forestry that means we are pulling back from planting the most erosion risk terrain, and concentrating on farmland which has been economically marginal for livestock for a long time, but

is less expensive to harvest trees on."

Mr Weir says there is no doubt that the rate of planting forests on poorer quality farmland is increasing. But he says most of the planting is driven by higher returns from forests than by hill country farming and the planting is being done by New Zealand land owners and not overseas investors.

"Anyone can go to the Overseas Investment Office website and see the approvals for actual purchases of New Zealand farmland for planting," he said. "The total over the past year is a mere 8600 ha. So, claims that the rules for overseas investment in farms for forest planting are 'totally out of control' are quite misleading."

Mr Weir added: "That 8600 ha represents only one-thousandth of the total land in sheep and beef farming for New Zealand. It's hardly a takeover as some of the news media are trying to pretend."

**“BEEF, SHEEP UNABLE TO COMPETE WITH TREE RETURNS**

# Remembering Victoria's timber pioneers

WHEN industrial sawmilling began in Australia it was able to draw on expertise and techniques from Britain and North America.

Initially hand and pitsaws came from England as supplies for colonies. One of the more notable British settlers to enter sawmilling was the Scotsman James Wright, who arrived in 1853 in Melbourne and founded a company which became the largest and most up-to-date mill in Victoria at the turn of the century.

Victoria met its timber needs during the first two decades of settlement in at least three ways – settlers could cut timber for buildings using axe and wedges; trees were used for posts and beams or split for slabs and pailings; bark was stripped

for walling and roofing.

Timber was also sawn by hand using a pit saw. There are many references to pit saw operations but no records of numbers or total

production were kept. Two men could produce 1500 super feet of timber in a week by this method.

When gold was discovered in Victoria there was a substantial increase in demand. The commercial and private buildings constructed to serve the mining community created more demand for the resource. Vast quantities of



timber were consumed by the gold mines. For example in 1870, 767,000 tonnes of firewood, 23,500 tonnes of sawn timber and countless pieces of split timber were taken from the Wombat forests to supply Ballarat and the surrounding goldmining areas.

In 1899 when the gold towns had progressed from canvas to wood and railway development had reached

its zenith, 500,000 tonnes of firewood, 1.5 million prop and cap pieces, 5 million feet of sawn timber and 3 million laths, slabs and sleepers were cut from all Victoria's forests.

Fast forward and by the mid-1930s mountain ash provided 80% of Victoria's timber.

A State Forests Department was established in 1907 and the Forests Act 1919 constituted the Forests Commission Victoria, and gradually, forest areas were identified and dedicated as reserved forest.

The management and protection of state forests progressively improved to the world class system it boasts today.

**(Victorian Association of Forest Industries)**

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# Forests affected by million-hectare blaze

FIRE damage to state forests in NSW and Queensland was difficult to determine as Timber&Forestry enews went online today.

An update on the extent of fires in forestry estates will be given next issue.

Eastern states have more than a million hectares ablaze and it could be months before bushfires are under control.

NSW has declared a state of emergency and Emergency Services Minister David Elliott said residents were facing what "could be the most dangerous bushfire week this nation has ever seen."

Fires in the state's northeast have claimed three lives, destroyed more than 150 homes and razed more



**Very close... fire destroys a building at Hurford's Casino site.**

than 1 million ha of forest and farmland since last Friday.

Australian military personnel are supporting 1500 firefighters who were battling 60 blazes across the state.

Premier Gladys Berejiklian said the last time a state of emergency was declared in NSW was in 2013, when there were extensive fires in the Blue Mountains.

Catastrophic fire danger was declared for Sydney and the Hunter Valley region to the north on Tuesday with severe and extreme danger across vast tracts of the

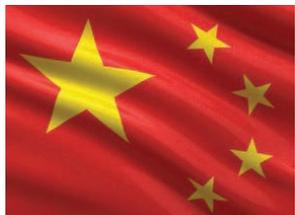
rest of the state.

The weeklong declaration of a state of emergency gives the Rural Fire Service sweeping powers to control resources and direct other government agencies.

In Queensland, concern is growing over unpredictable winds worsening fires this week, with much hotter temperatures predicted for the Sydney area.

A scare at the Hurford family's sawmill in southern Casino on Tuesday destroyed a vacant building on the site. Fire and Rescue NSW and Rural Fire Service crews extinguished the blaze, preventing the spread of fire to the sawmill and timber storage facility. Four teenage boys have been questioned and will be dealt with under the Young Offenders Act.

**“ ARSON SCARE AT HURFORD SAWMILL**



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# Mobile app accurately measures trees

NOW everyone can measure trees with their mobile phone, and with high accuracy ... and it's the same technology that's used in Pokemon Go, says Swedish innovator Johan Ekenstedt.

Previously forest owners and workers used an inclinometer and a measuring tape or a Laser meter in order to measure the height of a tree. Now, Arboreal has released an app 'Arboreal - Height of tree' that makes the work simpler and faster... and all because of technology called Augmented Reality (AR).

NSW landscape architect and horticulturist Peter Hay is one of a handful of Australians to have already tried the new device and he has given it the thumbs up.

"I am currently studying Arboriculture and chose the



**Arboreal App...  
Measurement  
intuitive and  
accurate.**

App on the recommendation from a colleague. I have been using it to determine tree height as well as size of canopy to calculate the live crown ratio of trees.

"It's incredibly easy to use and time efficient. I chose it as an alternative to spending \$350 on an electronic clinometer," said Peter.

"The Arboreal App prompts are friendly and easy to follow; the measurements are intuitive and accurate.

"I intend to practice as a consulting arborist and see that Arboreal would be the perfect tool for tree height and canopy height measurements. I can highly recommend this App.

"We are the first in the world to bring AR-technology to the forest. We know the need and forest owners and workers now have a tool to collect and sort the forest in a digital way," said Johan.

The application was

made in cooperation with Sweden's largest forest owner Sveaskog. The company sees great opportunities to get better data with the application.

"Better data gives better forecasts and better opportunities to sell what we have in our forests and give our customers the product they need," said Fredrik Klang, senior vice-president forestry at Sveaskog.

"I have compared the measurements from the app to the results from an expensive Laser meter and I got very similar results," said Peder Israelsson, a forester at Sveaskog.

The app is available at several languages in App Store. Arboreal plans to release an Android version this summer.

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# ABS figures paint bright homes outlook

THE rejuvenation in the housing market has continued following the three interest rate cuts this year with lending for the purchase of a home rising 7.4% for the September quarter.

ABS released the Lending to Households and Businesses data for September this week. The publication presents statistics on housing finance commitments including for the purchase or construction of new dwellings.

Housing Industry Association economist Angela Lillicrap says the pick-up in home lending shows that the market reached the bottom of this cycle in April during the federal election campaign.

"Despite the improvement, lending remains 4.3% lower than at the same time in 2018," she said.



**Opening doors... first-home buyers remain important market segment.**

"Lending to households building and purchasing new homes expanded by 1.9% in the September quarter while lending for established dwellings climbed by a huge 9.2% for the quarter."

Ms Lillicrap said first home buyers continued to be an important segment of the market, accounting for just under one-third of all owner-occupier loans. The number of

first home buyers increased by 7.1% for the September quarter and are 4.8% higher than the same quarter last year.

Stimulus measures, including interest rate cuts, tax cuts and the easing of APRA's lending restrictions are having a positive impact on the housing market. The governments First Home Loan Deposit Scheme will



**Angela Lillicrap... housing market stabilising at relatively strong levels.**

also assist eligible first home buyers enter the market from January.

"This result is consistent with other leading indicators that show that the decline in new home sales activity that has been evident for more than a year, has started to ease," Ms Lillicrap said.

"There are encouraging signs that the market is stabilising at relatively strong levels."

## Cousin Jim's

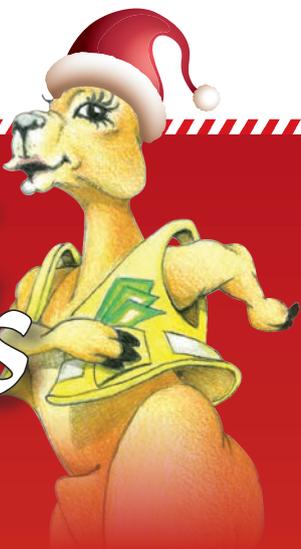
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# Suppliers, customers celebrate opening of Onetrak's southern Tasmania branch

HEAVY forestry and construction machinery dealer Onetrak has opened a new southern Tasmanian branch at Bridgewater, near Hobart.

The state-of-the-art build with paint room, wash bay and crane provides a larger workshop increasing the capacity of the service team significantly.

The new and bigger premises also allow for more machine stock and a larger parts warehouse with increased parts inventory.

The official opening in October was celebrated by suppliers, customers, industry representatives and local businesses together with the Onetrak team. Coincidentally, the 500th Tigercat machine was delivered to Kevin Morgan Group in Tasmania. Kevin Morgan was the first customer to purchase a Tigercat in Australia.

**“INCREASING THE CAPACITY OF THE SERVICE TEAM”**



1 State-of-the-art... the new Onetrak branch in Bridgewater, near Hobart.

2 Ken MacDonald Tigercat CEO and Kevin Morgan from Kevin Morgan Group.

3 Jaime and David Hazell at the Onetrak branch opening.

Tigercat's founder and CEO Ken MacDonald, based in Canada, made the big trip to attend the ceremony. Striker directors Craig and Nicole Pedley also attended.

The new location offers a site for demonstrating machines providing customers the opportunity to get in the driver's seat of some of the latest models.

Onetrak is the national distributor for Tigercat,



Striker, Hidromek, Fuchs and Dressta along with Hyundai in Tasmania.

"Onetrak started in Brighton and our first branch and southern Tasmanian location has remained at the same premises since it all began in 2006," Onetrak's founder and managing director David Hazell said.



to elevate our support to existing and future customers and provide better sales and after-sales support," he said.

"We have also invested in a low hour rental fleet which makes Onetrak Rental available in Tasmania, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia."

"The move to a bigger site has been in the pipeline for some time and it is fantastic to see the project finalised," he said.

"The new workshop positions us

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