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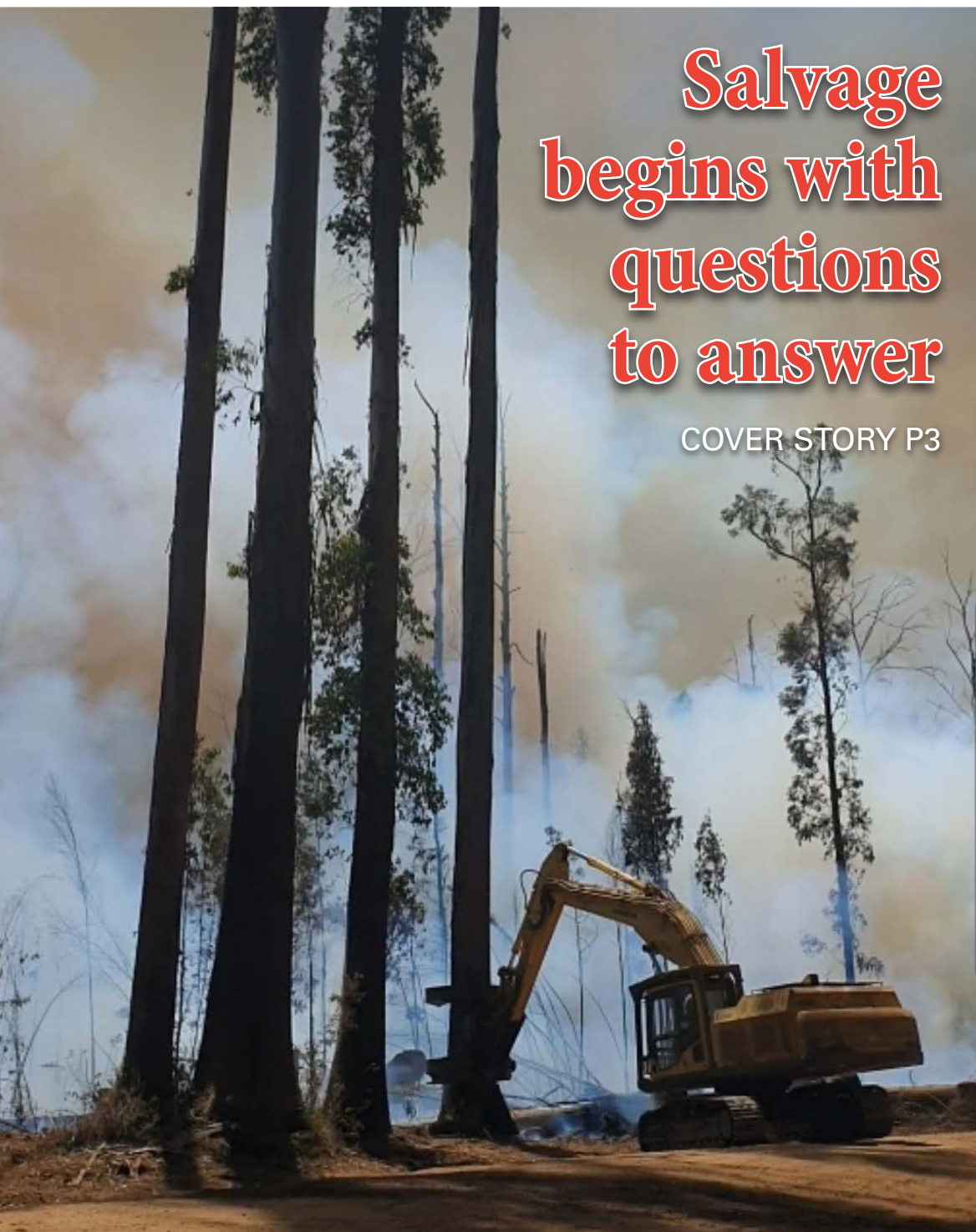


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ISSUE 592 | January 23, 2020

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Salvage begins with questions to answer

COVER STORY P3

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Timber imports are only part of the solution for wood products shortage

Finding compliant structural softwoods a real challenge

WHILE recognising that various proposed inquiries will hopefully lead to improved fire proofing of forests and plantations after devastating bushfires, the bottom line must be a continuation and strengthening of both domestic softwood and hardwood industries, says Australian Timber Importers Federation general manager John Halkett.

"This will be essential to maintain supplies of timber products to building and construction industries across the country," Mr Halkett said.

But he stressed: "There are not substantial volumes of readily accessible timber just sitting around overseas that can easily be made available to the Australian market.

"Any further supplies of structural softwoods will most likely need to be obtained from northern hemisphere suppliers."

Mr Halkett said the development of even a



Imports challenge... John Halkett checks out possible additional structural softwood supplies for Australia during a visit to the Teal-Jones Group operations in Vancouver Canada.

modest supply of MGP 10 lodgepole pine from Canada in 2019 had and remained challenging, because of the need to produce to Australian specifications and to comply with complex statutory and biosecurity requirements.

"Finding further supplies of structural softwoods that comply with the requirements of the Australian Building Code, and other statutory requirements, are likely to prove exceedingly challenging," he said.

"At this stage, Canada, Germany and Russia may be the best bets for additional supplies that can

meet Australia's stringent compliance requirements."

The situation in relation to hardwoods is also challenging, with past pressure on forest resources in Indonesia and Malaysia possibly limiting the capacity of these countries to expand on current supply levels.

Mr Halkett said ATIF would be exploring options to expand timber import possibilities. However, it was apparent that global

market trends indicated that traditional northern hemisphere markets continued to strengthen.

"If you add China into the mix, expanding softwood timber exports to Australia is likely to be a demanding exercise," he said. "Plus, hardwood suppliers from southeast Asia are likely to find it difficult to expand their current levels of supply.

"However, the domestic timber industry is resolute on quick recovery from the bushfires and businesses are already bouncing back with widespread salvage operations under way."

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Industry fights back, salvage starts as many question the how and why

Will a Royal Commission adopt recommendations of the past?

SERIOUS questions and harsh criticism levelled at Australia's fire management practices loom large through the lingering smoke of the summer bushfires, which, thank the heavens, are diminishing in some regions with the help of summer rains.

An industry advocate estimates that since Christmas more than 15 million cub m of forest resource was burnt across three states; an estimated 8.4 million ha of the continent went up in flames.

Pyro cumulonimbus clouds allowed smoke to reach 16 km in altitude and travel thousands of kilometres. NASA reports that the smoke has travelled halfway around the world and is expected to make a full global circuit.

The fires have pumped more than 400 million tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

The economic damage from the fires is likely to exceed the record \$4.4 billion set by 2009's Black Saturday.

So what now? How about a royal commission? A waste of valuable time and money? Yes, say experienced foresters and bushfire scientists who have seen such forums dither into just a 'talkfest' with few resolutions put into practice.

Out of Victoria's tragedy in



2009, officials were told by a royal commission to lift the rate of off-season hazard reduction burning ... but just one-third of the burn target was met.

The commission with a budget of \$40 million ran for 18 months. The cost did not include the very considerable time and resources committed by various government agencies, companies and individuals who prepared and presented evidence to the commission.

Dr Kevin Tolhurst, an Associate Professor in fire ecology and management in the department of forest and ecosystem science at the University of Melbourne, says some of the recommendations of the Stretton Royal Commission after the Black Friday fires of 1939 have not been fully implemented and many of the recommendations of the subsequent 56 inquiries have not been fully implemented either.

Dr Tolhurst, who has been a member of the Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre, says this raises serious questions about whether another royal commission will offer anything new or compelling.

The actions needed to combat the fire threat are clear and precisely those that have been known for a long time – preventing ignition, reducing fuel loads, creating



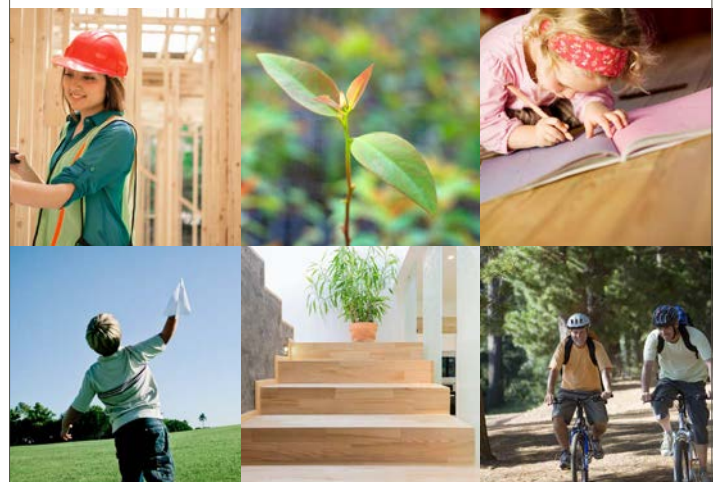
Strategy talks on site... Hyne Timber operations manager James Hyne (left) and CEO Jon Kleinschmidt meet with the fire and rescue strike team at the Tumarumba mill.

fire breaks, planning safe distances between bushland and houses, and adequate firefighting infrastructure and coordination.

It's all there, vividly clear, in those overlooked royal commission findings.

Cont P 4

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**“PM MUST
UNDERTAKE
NEW NATIONAL
APPROACH**

From P 3

The map is written.

Proper debate is needed now, more than ever.

The Prime Minister should demand a new national approach to fuel load reduction and make it an urgent standing item on COAG.

Meanwhile, across south-eastern Australia, salvage operations are in full swing and burnt 'killer' trees are being removed – an operation freely undertaken by volunteer harvesting contractors.

Companies like AKD at Tumut and Hyne at Tumbarumba have re-started operations and are pumping out wood supplies – again another example of industry resilience.

Both companies have worked through the disaster putting their people before profits, providing full wages



Pitching in...
Army Reserve engineers work alongside local contractors to clear bushfire-damaged trees. More than 1000 army reservists were mobilised to help regular troops working on the bushfire recovery effort across NSW, Victoria and South Australia.

during the emergency while employees fought fires and protected their houses and their mills.

About 230 people are directly employed at the Tumbarumba mill on the western edge of the Snowy Mountains, part of a circular economy worth \$2 billion a year to the south west slopes region and supporting almost 5000 jobs.

Hyne Timber CEO Jon Kleinschmidt and operations

manager James Hyne from head office in Maryborough met with fire and rescue strike teams to understand the reassuring fire prevention measures and readiness they had in place.

RFS volunteers from Hyne Kim Ferguson and Alan French met with many Rural Fire Service volunteers and emergency services, many of whom are Hyne team members.

"Today, the town is busy rebuilding and Hyne remains focused on supporting the community through the long-term operations at the mill," Mr Kleinschmidt said.

"Once small volumes of existing log yard stocks have been processed, we will be prioritising the processing of salvaged burnt log. Once we remove the burnt bark, the structural grade timber will be the same quality our customers value."

Mr Kleinschmidt welcomed preliminary meetings with NSW Deputy Premier John Barilaro, who has also been appointed the state's Minister for Disaster Recovery.

"I look forward to continued dialogue and support from all levels of government to secure ongoing log supply and longer distance freight support, among other challenges for the industry moving forward.

"As with support for individuals and wildlife,

government support for the industry and associated economy will be critical as part of the ongoing recovery efforts."

AKD Softwoods is incredibly grateful for the efforts of those who battled bushfires in southern NSW, many of them still at the front.

Timber products at both the Tumut and Gilmore sites continue to be dispatched to customers in Victoria and NSW, drawn from healthy finished goods stock levels.

CEO Shane Vicary is confident supplies will be maintained to all customers from existing stockpiles and available production capacity at AKD's other sawmills.

"The impact on the plantation estate in NSW and Victoria will obviously be significant and in time the flow-on effect on sawmills in the region will become clear," he said.

"However, existing stock levels and available production capacity should provide comfort to customers and the industry that supply can be maintained despite the short-term interruption."

• **PM flags hazard reduction focus, P 11, 12**

On the cover: Victorian forest contractor Malcolm Beveridge harvests burnt trees in the Yalmy area of East Gippsland. Malcolm is managing director of Beveridge's Logging. He has been in the timber industry for 35 years.







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Gottstein wood science course top-notch learning opportunity

THE JW Gottstein Memorial Trust has acknowledged the impact and ongoing strain that the bushfire disaster has wrought upon so many people in the forest industry.

Understanding the difficulties and hardships experienced by many, the trust nonetheless has decided to proceed with the wood science course in February as planned.

With a packed program, industry leaders shouldn't miss the opportunity to give team members an 'understanding' of wood science – a course that only happens every two years.

The course from February 16 to 21 in Albury and Canberra is ideal for team members at all levels, especially those new to the industry. Participants will learn about the biological characteristics of wood and how these must be understood and dealt with through the milling and manufacturing processes.

Another factor is how forest or plantation environmental sustainability carries through the value chain as harvested



Participants enjoy the JW Gottstein wood science course in Canberra in 2018.

logs undergo conversion into wood products.

Typically, the course invites participants from a wide range of roles – finance, administration, operations, procurement, management, planning and policy and those working as company directors. It has relevance also to companies that provide services to the industry.

The program has a terrific new feature with an extended field trip over two days. Up front, participants will get real world insights from site inspections of leading timber processing operations. They will go on to enjoy a packed guest speaker series.

The course starts in Albury,

NSW, with extended wood processing site visits moving on to Canberra for the lecture series at ANU Fenner School. A formal course dinner and other networking events are included.

A new element of the Gottstein courses is the fully sponsored place to an ANU student funded by the Steve Stevenson Memorial Trust. This new partnership with the trust is intended to be offered on a rotating basis to different universities each year. The inaugural Steve Stevenson award was presented to Madeline Shelton who, after working in the industry, is now studying for a Master's degree in forestry at ANU.

Midway has shown great

support in sponsoring a place for a recent ANU Master's degree graduate and the Institute of Foresters of Australia, Australian Forest Growers and the Future Foresters Initiative are offering two sponsored places in the course to assist students and early-career professionals and researchers.

The Gottstein Trust appreciates a partnership with the ANU Fenner School which provides the venue for the Canberra leg of the course and assists with program delivery.

This educational trust is funded by annual donations from industry, earnings on investments and from the course. Substantial course discounts are provided to both patron and supporting sponsor donors.

Interested parties wishing to donate and access discounts are encouraged to talk with Helen Murray on 0419 991 424. Inquiries can also be directed to the Gottstein secretariat management team at gottsteinsecretary@gmail.com or register online at www.gottsteintrust.org



Image courtesy of the _shoot_ project, the 2018 Responsible Wood Photo Competition Winner

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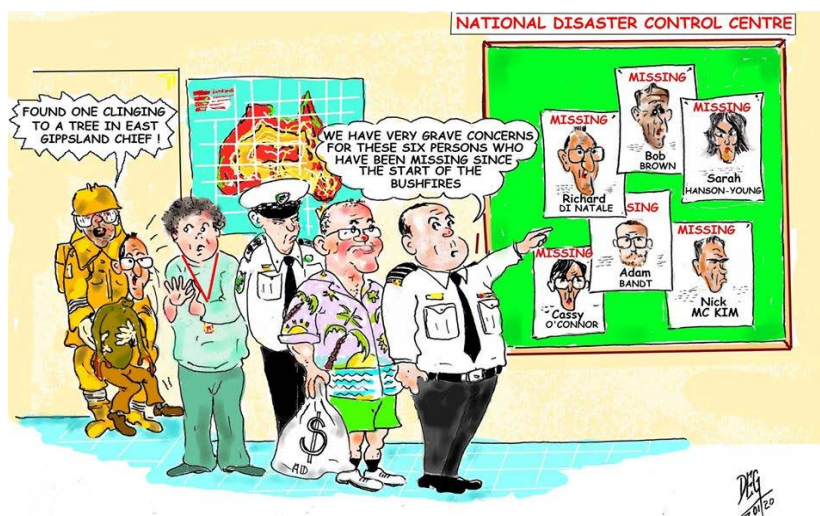


Academics: thinning can reduce fire risk

LEADING forest and ecosystem scientists from the University of Melbourne have backed the scientific merit of forest thinning to reduce the risk and severity of bushfires in Australia, refuting the strident activist voices demanding Australia make no change to its fuel reduction strategies in the wake of this catastrophic bushfire season.

Writing in *The Conversation* this week, the university's academics led by the head of forest ecosystem science Professor Rod Keenan say research has shown forest thinning in a vital additional tool we can use to make our communities safer:

"We found mechanical thinning plus burning in silver top ash reduces fire fuel hazard, with major reductions in dead trees,



stumps and understory," Prof. Keenan said.

"We compared thinned and unthinned alpine ash forests using computer modelling, simulating severe to extreme weather conditions; we found modelled fire intensity decreased by 30% and the rate of fire spread and spot

fires moving ahead of the main fire decreased by 20% with thinning."

Australian Forest Products Association CEO Ross Hampton said: "It beggars belief that some activists and activist academics are determinedly proclaiming that not only do we not change

the way we do things but we go even faster down the failed road we have been on."

Prof. Keenan and his colleagues also rightly point out that thinning to make areas more fire resistant is simply another tool to use with cool burns and is in line with the way our indigenous first Australians used to manage the forests.

"Looking ahead, thinning combined with Indigenous cultural burning may even be a way to restore Australian forests to more open park-like conditions observed at the time of arrival of Europeans," he said.

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FEBRUARY 2020

16-21: Gottstein Understanding Wood Science Course – Albury & Canberra, Australia. New extended wood processing site visits based out of Albury, followed by lecture series at Canberra at the ANU Fenner School. Formal course dinner and other networking events. Book early at www.gottsteintrust.org Inquires gottsteinsecretary@gmail.com

APRIL 2020

7-8: MobileTECH Ag 2020 – Rotorua, NZ. International keynote Dr Mike Briers, CEO, Australian-based Food Agility. "We are on the cusp of the 4th agricultural revolution and unlike those that came before, this digital revolution will bring producers and consumers closer together," says Dr Briers. "The real question, however, is who will be the builders and who will be the bystanders?" Jamie Azzopardi, the Oceania head of IBM's The Weather Company, will also deliver an important

keynote. The company is one of the world's largest weather forecasters and has made significant advancements through IBM's Watson Machine learning platform. IBM has just launched a new weather modelling service that uses supercomputing and big data to provide global forecasts down to an area as little as 3 km. The system issues 12 trillion pieces of weather data every day and process forecasts every hour. Russell Craig, national technology officer, Microsoft NZ will return for the 2020 event. While artificial intelligence (AI) can be an overused buzzword, there is no argument that this will be a game-changer for the primary sector. MobileTECH Ag will be a great forum to understand how new technologies powered by data and AI are being adopted by agribusinesses. Cloud-based AI is the driving force behind Microsoft's FarmBeats initiative, which has already seen action within New Zealand's agricultural community. The system

captures large amounts of data from feeds throughout the farm and uses AI and machine learning to translate that data into real insights for the growers. Contact Ken Wilson, program manager on +61 4 5226 2337 or email ken.wilson@innovatek.co.nz Visit www.mobiletech.events

JUNE 2020

15-16: Timber & Technology. The Zero Carbon Future. Timber Offsite Construction 2020 Conference & Exhibition – Crown Promenade, Melbourne, Vic. Australia. The only national event exclusively devoted to design, manufacture and construction of offsite timber and mass wood buildings. The theme reflects the emerging marriage of timber and technology, and the need for future net zero carbon buildings with timber contributing through carbon storage benefits. Program sessions will include world leading experts with award-winning architects, international

and local engineers, major building companies, and prominent suppliers to offsite construction markets. Exhibition offers suppliers opportunity to access expanding construction markets with a booth display. Contact Kevin Ezard on 0419 538 638 or email kevin@timberoffsiteconstruction.com New website: www.timberoffsiteconstruction.com

NOVEMBER 2020

4-7: AusTimber 2020 – HVP plantation site, Traralgon, Gippsland region, Vic. Australia. Event and dinner ticket sales now live – and limited. Welcome dinner with guest speaker Dr Karl Kruselnicki AM, Australian science communicator. Make sure you commemorate the event with some AUSTimber merchandise. Contact Dionne Olsen on +61 429 202 929 or email austimber2020@afca.asn.au Follow AUSTimber on www.austimber.org.au



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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 or contact Julie Bell 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

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/ or contact 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 or contact Julie Bell admin@dana.co.nz

JUNE 2020**1-3: International Forest Business Conference and Tour – Sopot, Poland.**

A two-day conference on megatrends that shape forest and wood industry sectors. The event will highlight the transformation of forest-related businesses towards a low-carbon bioeconomy, discuss tensions between sustainability and cost competitiveness, and call attention to new green innovations. Field trip on June 3 to IKEA and Egger mills. The event will welcome institutional investors from across the globe to discuss investment opportunities in timber to diversify their portfolios and achieve healthy returns. Register at www.fba-events.com or contact karolina@forest-analytics.com

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

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/

SEPTEMBER 2020**1-3: DANA New Zealand Forest Industry Status and Outlook Conference and field trip – Emerald Hotel, Gisborne, New Zealand.**

For further information see: <https://danaevents.co.nz/2020gisborne/> or contact Julie Bell admin@dana.co.nz

NOVEMBER 2020

1-5: 3rd DANA African Forest Industry Investment Conference and field trip – Durban, South Africa. Planning under way. Two day optional field trip (November 19-20). Register interest with Julie Bell admin@dana.co.nz

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

Bushfires: putting people before profits – an open letter

I FEEL compelled to write to you both – Jon Kleinschmidt and Shane Vicary – to congratulate you on a job well done by the teams at AKD Tumut and Hyne Tumbarumba who I understand have started their operations and are now back to full production.

I was extremely pleased to receive photos showing one of the first loads of logs arriving, the debarking process happening and the AKD team going through their 'safe-start up'; morning meeting before commencing work for the year.

This is so reassuring for our industry to see as people have been concerned about

what happens next.

There are plenty of negative stories emerging from the bushfire crisis, but at the same time there are plenty of positive ones ... stories of endurance, resilience, team work and community spirit. And the story of how AKD and Hyne have worked throughout this disaster putting their people before profits, is in my eyes, one of those amazingly positive stories. To support your employees by providing full wages during the emergency while employees fought fires, protected their houses and their mills is beyond what anyone would have expected.

Unfortunately, I understand



that some of your employees lost their houses, and some of the surrounding farmlands, bushland and plantations have also been damaged. However, as we know and as we have seen before, these communities and local businesses will bounce back strongly.

FTMA Australia has postponed its technical forum which was due to be held on February 24. I will talk to your marketing and local managers to coordinate a road trip for FTMA members to visit the Tumbarumba and Tumut mills and tour some salvage operations when the timing is right.

– KERSTEN GENTLE, executive officer, Frame and Truss Manufacturers Association of Australia.

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AUSTimber 2020

04–07 November

Important announcement

We have rescheduled... to November

The response and recovery efforts to the bushfire crisis are significant and many people from our timber industry have been directly affected or are working tirelessly to support impacted communities across Australia.

The decision to reschedule the show was the best way to support our timber industry and communities to continue the bushfire response, recovery and salvage efforts.

If you have already purchased tickets

All tickets will be honoured for November, the program remains unchanged. Remember to update any accommodation bookings.

Thank you

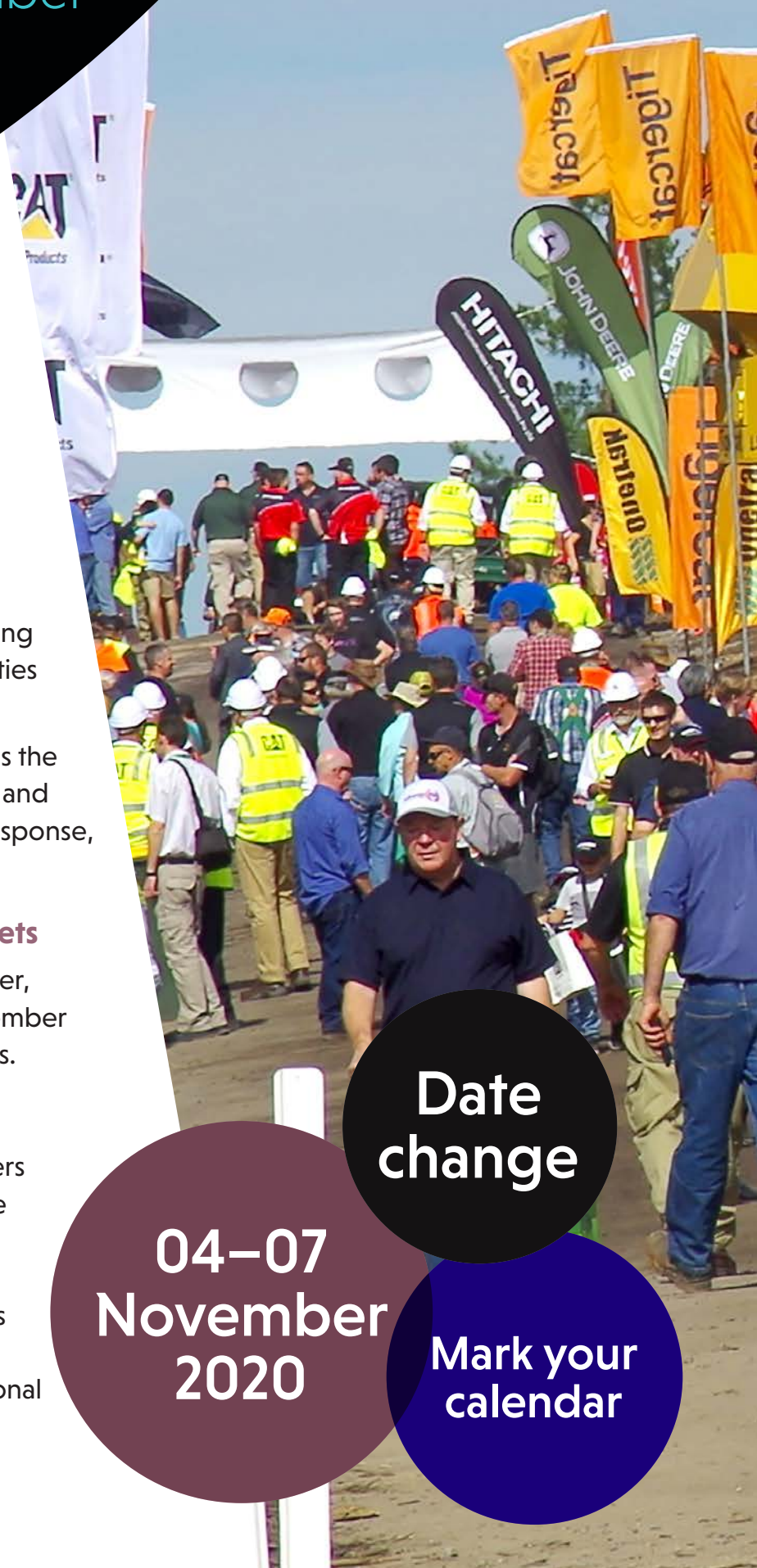
To our supporters, exhibitors and partners for their positive and proactive response to the decision to reschedule the show. It is their commitment to the success of the show that means our communities will still have the opportunity to benefit from over 10,000 national and international attendees visiting Gippsland.

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04–07
November
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Date
change

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calendar



Keith Jennings, 78, was a dedicated Queensland forester and fine sportsman

DEDICATED and respected forester Keith Jennings, a former national president of the Institute of Foresters of Australia, died in Brisbane on Sunday, aged 78.

Mr Jennings retired in December 2001 after nearly 32 years of professional service within the Department of Forestry (later the Department of Primary Industries Forestry), the Department of Natural Resources and, more recently, the Environmental Protection Agency-Parks and Wildlife Service.

He enjoyed a rewarding career in Queensland Forestry following graduation from UQ in 1965 and two years at ANU Forestry School at Yarralumla. His work in the field included plantation inventory and he served in Rockhampton and Brisbane until moving to the US to study at Yale University

from 1968 to 1970 where he attained his USA Master's degree.

After working in various positions within Queensland Forestry (resources, economics, land use, extension and executive officer to the Conservator of Forests), he became principal policy officer, forestry and wildlife management, within the Parks and Wildlife Service in head office in Brisbane.

Mr Jennings was extremely active in the Institute of Foresters of Australia holding office in various categories for many years. He was national president 1983-85 and national secretary 1985-87. He was also secretary of the Queensland division, council secretary and committee chairman.

He was elected a fellow of the institute in 1980 and remained a committee member for more than 25 years. He served on the national conference team and organised an Alaskan and West Coast USA forestry trip with the Society of American Foresters and the Canadian



Keith Jennings... dedicated to forestry and sport.

Institute of Forestry in 1994.

A lover of sport, he was an A grade cricketer and represented rugby union as No. 8 with ACT and Queensland.

A 'war baby', Mr Jennings was born in Dalby on the Darling Downs on December 7, 1941 (day of the Pearl Harbour attack). His father Stanley Jennings was chief of the Queensland Forestry's timber utilisation branch and a contender for Conservator of Forests until he succumbed to cancer at the early age of 52. He was also chairman of the IFA Queensland division (1954-1956 and 1958-59) and

national president (1958-59).

Close friend Dr Gary Bacon, a former IFA national president and CEO of Forestry Queensland, reminisced: "Affectionately known as the Silver Fox, Keith long held a love of sport, particularly cricket and rugby. A deft inswinger or outswinger of the ball, tour organiser, whistle blower (only on the field of battle), Grange connoisseur, corporate punter, silver star driver, and fairway bushranger, Keith has long been a colleague and friend to a large number of forestry folk who shared his passion for the forests of Queensland and all who worked therein."

Keith Jennings is survived by his wife Margaret and son Michael, an exceptional teacher of mathematics at the University of Queensland where he is completing his PhD, and two grandchildren Benjamin, 9, and Louisa, 7.

A funeral service for Mr Jennings will be held at St John's Cathedral, Ann Street, Brisbane, at 2 pm on January 29.

– JIM BOWDEN

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PM flags focus on hazard reduction at proposed bushfires Royal Commission

THE Australian Forest Products Association has backed the Prime Minister's proposal for national fuel reduction standards across all land tenures to be considered in a Royal Commission into the recent bushfires.

Speaking on Sky, Scott Morrison said a Royal Commission would look at climate change impacts but most importantly also the role that fuel load build up is playing as bushfires grow in



Scott Morrison... build-up of forest fuels contributes to intensity and frequency of bushfires.

“HAZARD REDUCTION AS IMPORTANT AS EMISSIONS REDUCTION

intensity and frequency.

“Hazard reduction is as important as emissions reduction and many would argue, I think, even more so because it has an even more direct impact on the safety of

a person going into a bushfire season,” the PM said.

“We report all the time on what our emissions reductions are but across the country there is not a national system of reporting

to track how hazard reduction is progressing... it is a very reasonable expectation people have that there are national standards, that there is transparency around how this is being achieved.”

AFPA CEO Ross Hampton said the Royal Commission should examine how mechanical fuel reduction could complement controlled burns to reduce fuel loads across the landscape on all land tenures, as occurs in other bushfire-prone countries.

“There is near universal support for fuel load reduction after these tragic fires,” he said. “But everyone also understands that winter burn

Cont P 10

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Machines like this John Deere tractor are used to reduce fuel loads in North American forests.

From P 9

offs are dramatically dropping in area due to a narrower window of good weather.

“The missing tool in Australia is using machines to also do some of this work, especially in areas around our bush villages, towns and key assets such as mobile phone towers and sub stations.”

Mr Hampton said while timber-producing native forests and forestry plantations were actively managed to mitigate against catastrophic bushfires through evidence-based programs of mechanical fuel reduction, thinning, access roads, and controlled burns, the remaining 93% of Australia’s 132 million-hectare forest estate was not managed in the same way to address the build-up of fuel loads.

“Nationally, over three

decades, the average annual area treated for fuel reduction has fallen by more than 30%, whilst the area burnt in bushfires has tripled,” he said.

“State governments are failing to meet hazard reduction burn targets. Clearly, the status quo is not good enough.

“MACHINES
THE MISSING
TOOL IN
REDUCING
FUEL LOADS

“While the forestry industry is doing its part in the small area of forest we look after, the management of the rest of the forest estate – held in a mix of land tenures including national parks and private farmland – is putting communities and lives at risk.”


Mass timber building workshop

WITH the increased use of CLT and LVL for commercial and mid-rise buildings, there has been growing demand for structural design information.

The engineering requires designers to look beyond Australian standards, as they have not kept pace with the technology.

To address this, and in parallel with the recently

released WoodSolutions Guide #50 Mid-Rise Timber Building Structural Engineering, a series of five two-day detailed workshops on the structural design of mass timber for commercial and mid-rise buildings will be held. The first workshop will be in Adelaide February 25 and 26. Bookings at the Timber Development Association on 0420 232 253



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Grants for businesses hurt by bushfires

SMALL businesses hit by Australia's bushfires will have access to new grants, interest-free loans and financial counselling under a multimillion-dollar support package from the federal government.

The comprehensive package will make it easier for those who have suffered direct fire damage, or have been indirectly economically impacted following the bushfires, to get back on their feet.

This package deals with the challenges we know small businesses in these areas are facing, and will continue to face.

"Our immediate priorities for small businesses include grant funding, concessional loans, tax relief, a dedicated and single contact point



Big loss... an estimated 75,000 tonnes of woodchips were lost in the Eden mill blaze, along with 4000 tonnes of hardwood logs, conveyors and a workshop filled with spare parts and tools. Despite the loss, operations are expected to resume this week.

to help them access the support that is available, and financial counselling services that are targeted to help small and family business owners deal with the emotional and financial challenges they face," the Prime Minister Scott Morrison said.

"To build on the disaster recovery grants put in place by state governments, the federal government will provide top-up grants to eligible small businesses and non-profit organisations under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangement," he said.

The program is uncapped; businesses and organisations that have sustained damage as a result of the fires can access up to \$50,000 in grant funding (tax free).

To provide maximum flexibility, loans of up to \$500,000 will be offered to businesses that have suffered significant asset loss or a significant loss of revenue. The loan would be for up to 10 years and used for the purposes of restoring or replacing damaged assets and for working capital.

The loans will be available with a repayment holiday of up to two years, with no interest accruing during this period. The subsequent interest rate would be set at 50% of the 10-year government bond rate, currently around 0.6%.

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Recognised for CLT evaluation research

A QUEENSLAND government timber engineer has been recognised at the Australian Young Researchers Conference for research that will save timber manufacturers time, money and resources.

Minister for Agricultural Industry Development Mark Furner said Adam Faircloth, a timber engineer with the DAF forestry research team at the Salisbury research facility in Brisbane, won the prize for best presentation for his research into a non-destructive evaluation system for mass timber panels.

"The manufacture of CLT products for full-scale applications has increased over the past decade and has placed pressure on manufacturers assessing the quality of these products,"

Mr Furner said.

"At the moment these panels are assessed using static or destructive methods and while they provide accurate results, they are costly, time-consuming and destructive.

"Mr Faircloth's work means timber panels don't have to be destroyed to be assessed and will allow manufacturers to rapidly assess the stiffness and shear properties to determine uses for the product."

Mr Faircloth said his research was part of a program of work from the DAF forest products innovation team that would help manufacturers of mass timber panels save time, money and resources.

"Non-destructive grading techniques were commonly



Adam Faircloth...CLT research helping to save time, money and resources.

used in the manufacturing process for solid and engineered timber products," he said.

"There is a need for a similar process for CLT products; the damping characteristics of CLT are important to quantify for use in construction

applications for floors and walls to improve acoustic and vibration characteristics."

Mr Faircloth will now go on to represent Australia at the 22nd Young Researchers Conference, an international event held in London in March.

He is currently completing his Doctor of Philosophy at Griffith University.

The Young Researchers' Conference series aims to develop awareness among young engineers of the importance and potential of research in advancing structural engineering.

The 'Development of a Non-Destructive Evaluation Method for Mass Timber Panels' project is funded through the ARC Future Timber Hub.

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‘The sound, most hellish of all, of a fire where it should not be’

We need a radical rethink on land management practices

*“AND better the rattle of rifles near, or the thunder on deck at sea,
Than the sound — most hellish of all to hear — of a fire where it should not be.”*

Like most I am traumatised, horrified and completely stunned by the extent and ferocity of the bush fires up and down eastern NSW and Victoria over recent months.

Editor Jimbo last week quoted from a Henry Lawson poem. So not to be outdone, I am sure that when Henry wrote his poem *The Bush Fire* in 1905 about “Flash Jim, Boozing Bill and Constable Dunn rescuing Swearing Pat, with his grey beard singed, and his language of lurid hue, and his tough old wife, and his half-baked kids”, I very much doubt that he could have conceived of the extent and savagery of recent fires.

You know the stats as well as I do — hundreds and hundreds of homes destroyed, perhaps more than 30 killed. Countless billions of dollars of productive rural assets, livestock, forests and infrastructure incinerated.

The impact on human welfare and economic capacity is simply too large to measure.

I am also bloody angry.

“THE IMPACT ON HUMAN WELFARE AND ECONOMIC CAPACITY IS TOO LARGE TO MEASURE



Fire storm ... all of us stunned by the extent and ferocity of the bush fires up and down eastern NSW and Victoria.

I am certain that on top of the human, economic and biodiversity loss is the cost to the country of the brave firefighting effort that must be well into the multiple billions since fires started last September. Yet a lack of cost-effective preventative measures, including a meaningful hazard reduction effort, coupled with parochially motivated forest and nature conservation management are an absolute disgrace.

Meaningful fire preventative effort in NSW and Victoria has been derailed by politics, the influence of misguided interest groups and bureaucratic red tape and obstruction.

Certainly, NSW desperately needs a competent land management agency with supreme responsibility for fire risk mitigation, pest and weed management based on aboriginal forest and land management practices that stood this continent in good stead for tens of thousands of years before white guys

biodiversity (“apply again in a couple of years’ time”). The forests are devastated and silent, not even a stick insect survived the fire storm feeding on the dry conditions and unacceptably high fuel loads.

If we accept ‘climate change’ as a reality and challenge, we need forest and land management agencies based on aboriginal land management expertise that is capable of cutting through the bureaucracy and ignoring arbitrary European land tenure boundaries and get serious about hazard reduction burning. In doing so we will save the country endless billions in human misery, economic loss and firefighting costs.

Many scientists, including bushfire expert Ross Bradstock, are asserting that in NSW alone, just to keep pace with the increasing bushfire threat, needs funding for hazard reduction burning to increase at least five-fold just to hold the threat to lives and property at current levels.

So, NSW needs to spend at least \$500 million a year on well planned and effective fuel reduction burning. Such an investment would pay real dividends in reduced property damage, economic loss, expensive firefighting effort and more importantly lives.

The situation on the ground is now so serious we need to radically rethink forest and land management policies and practices. Do you agree?

Cheryl

TRUNK LINES



With CHERYL FORREST

who thought they were smarter than the black fellas came along to produce the horror show we have seen unfold across Australia over recent months.

Terminating the National Parks and Wildlife Service that has been absolutely delinquent in its bush fire mitigation responsibilities, and influenced by a no-burn green ideology, would be a good start.

As I have, go and take a look in areas where requests to carry out hazard reduction burning were denied because of the potential impact on

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ForestWorks: skills standard changes meet requirements for jobs in industry

The basis for on-the-job training, assessment and re-assessment



1

1/ Tailoring skill sets to targeted jobs... benefits from the proposed new nationally-recognised qualifications.

2/ New skill standards... for jobs that require the reading and interpreting of forest operations.



2

If you work in or around our forests, don't miss out on your chance to tell us whether changes to skills standards will meet your workplace requirements.

Skills standards are developed with your help. Once they are agreed, they provide the basis for on-the-job training, assessment and re-assessment.

If you are a wood chipping operator, you are invited to comment on changes which separate the standards for using an integrated or split flail and wood chipper with crane and a split flail and wood chipper fed by an excavator with log grapple.

Changes are also proposed to skills standards for forestry truck drivers to reflect the skills requirements in the

Draft Log Haulage Code of Practice.

In addition, new skill standards are put forward for harvesting machine operators who are involved in winch assisted harvesting and in forestry site preparation on steep slopes.

New skill standards are also proposed for jobs that require the reading and interpreting of digital maps and forest operations plans. Further, new standards are proposed for using mobile or handheld devices to manage forestry field data.

If you work as chainsaw operator, the changes being made to skills standards relate primarily to the aborigiculture sector, but are worth a look. There are also minor changes being made to the standards for cable logging operators. Comment is also invited on wording improvements to skill standards for environmental care in forestry operations.

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By **GEORGIANA DAIAN**
Head of skills standards
development, ForestWorks

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The draft Certificate III in Timber Building Products Supply has been developed for people who work in warehousing, logistics and customer sales roles in timber wholesaling and hardware and timber supply businesses.

The draft Certificate IV in Timber Building Products Supply has been developed for those who work in purchasing and sales account management roles in timber wholesaling and hardware and timber supply businesses. It provides the opportunity to specialise in purchasing and sales account management.

For more detail visit www.skillsimpact.com.au/timber-building-solutions/training-package-projects/timber-merchandising-project/ or contact the project manager Georgiana Daian on (03) 9321 3500 or email gdaian@forestworks.com.au.

The consultation period closes on February 28.

“STANDARDS HELPED WITH INPUT FROM INDUSTRY”

AFPA talks not wasted on landfill option

THE impacts of the waste export ban and how the industry can help keep Australia's waste paper out of landfill was discussed at a meeting of the AFPA and the Assistant Minister for Waste Reduction and Environmental Management Trevor Evans this week.

AFPA CEO Ross Hampton said the announced ban posed a significant challenge for all of the Australian waste and recycling sector. However, Australia's pulp and paper industry was well placed to assist.

"While the ban may be an understandable response to a growing waste problem, the move needs to be matched by an upsurge in investment in domestic sorting and remanufacturing to utilise Australia's own waste paper

feedstock," Mr Hampton said.

"Without it, Australia's landfills will fill up with contaminated paper."

The AFPA has welcomed the government's \$100 million Australian Recycling Investment Fund to support the manufacturing of lower emissions and energy-efficient recycled content products and other related policy announcements, however more can be done.

"With the right policy settings such as investment facilitation in new sorting technology, emission avoidance credits, and government support for recycling manufacture, domestic recovery and recycling of paper and paperboard will grow, along with all of the local jobs and economic benefits that a



Trevor Evans... working with industry on waste export ban.

larger industry will provide," Mr Hampton said.

"Industry leaders presented the minister with a proposal for government supported \$10 million National Biofutures Industry Development Fund and \$10 million National Biofutures Commercialisation Fund to underpin early stage

commercialisation of leading-edge bio-based technologies.

"This initiative will help drive the development of high value uses for domestic waste paper."

Mr Hampton said there were many waste materials that were currently not able to be recycled and were disposed of in landfill.

"About 20 million tonnes of garbage each year makes its way to landfill, which represents about 40% of total waste generation in Australia," he said.

AFPA is calling on the government to support proven, low emission waste to energy technologies, which should be recognised as a crucial part of the waste management infrastructure required to support the proposed export ban.

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Truckers push bushfire assistance plan

THE disaster recovery allowance, concessional loans, and extension of the instant asset write off have been highlighted in a bushfire recovery plan put forward to the federal government by the Australian Trucking Association.

Developed by the ATA general council and presented to the Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack in a teleconference, the plan sets out the immediate, medium, and long-term assistance needed by trucking businesses affected by the bushfire crisis.

"More than 20 industry representatives participated in the development of the proposal, highlighting the industry's level of concern about the bushfires," ATA

chair Geoff Crouch said.

"The impact these fires have had on trucking businesses and their employees is unprecedented," he said. "Some have lost their homes, workplaces or equipment. Others have been dealing with prolonged time away from their families, suffering financial loss and personal hardship as a result of road closures and lengthy delays.

"First and foremost, we have recommended the Disaster Recovery Allowance be made available as a wage subsidy to employers who can demonstrate loss or hardship as a result of the bushfires and that the allowance or any wage subsidy be extended from 13 to 26 weeks.



Geoff Crouch... impact of bushfires on trucking businesses is unprecedented.

"We also believe that the Western Australian shires of Dundas and Coolgardie should be disaster declared, so owner drivers held up by the closure of the Eyre and Coolgardie-Esperance highways can access the assistance."

In terms of concessional

loans, the ATA has recommended that small business owners who get concessional loans under the government's assistance package be able to select monthly, quarterly, half-yearly or yearly repayment terms once their initial repayment and interest holiday comes to an end, maximising the flexibility of loan repayments for these businesses.

The proposal also recommends the extension of the instant asset write off to enable businesses to secure cash flow advantages.

"We believe the government should increase the asset write off to \$50,000 for one year only, with the higher write off to come to an end on July 1, 2021," Mr Crouch said.

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Ash Wednesday salvage operations in SA were biggest ever attempted

More than 1,250,000 cub m of logs stored in Lake Bonney

JIM BOWDEN

AS widespread salvage operations in burnt forests get under way, we are reminded of the mammoth log storage operation undertaken by the Woods and Forests Department after the Ash Wednesday bushfires in 1983.

The Ash Wednesday event was a series of bushfires that occurred in south-eastern Australia on February 6 that year. Within 12 hours, more than 180 fires fanned by winds of up to 110 km/h caused widespread destruction across both South Australia and Victoria.

Years of severe drought and extreme weather combined to create one of Australia's worst fire days in a century. The fires became the deadliest and most costly in Australian history until the Black Saturday fires in 2009.

In Victoria, 47 people died. There were 28 deaths in South Australia. This included 14 CFA and three CFS volunteers who died across both states that day.

The most disastrous factor in the Ash Wednesday fires occurred just before nightfall when a fierce and dry wind change swept across South Australia and Victoria. This abruptly changed the direction and dramatically increased



Water sprays... irrigation methods like this extended the life of salvaged logs after the Ash Wednesday fires.

the intensity of the fires. The long corridors of flame that had been driven all day by the strong northerly were suddenly hit by gale force south-westerly winds and became enormous fire fronts, many kilometres wide, with wind reportedly moving faster than 110 km/h.

“RECOVERY STARTED WITH SAWING OF WATER-STORED LOGS

The near-cyclonic strength of the wind change created an unstoppable firestorm that produced tornado-like fire whirls and fireballs of

eucalyptus gas measuring over 3 m across

Mounted in the wake of the fires, the salvage operation was unique in the world – nothing on this scale had ever been attempted.

Within days of the fires, Woods and Forests began working around the clock to harvest the pick of the fire-killed trees which, in the main, were in the 50-year-plus age class. By Christmas the job was almost complete with more than

1,250,000 cub m salvaged.

Practically all of this was prime quality sawlog up to 1 m in diameter, the largest part being in 12.3 m lengths.

Sawmills in the region converted 800,000 cub m between March and December while another 900,000 cub m was put under water sprays.

After falling of the fire-killed trees was completed the next phase of the recovery program started with the sawing of water-stored logs. This superb material composed the major part of Woods and Forests log furnish for the next several years.

Logs stored on a landing or dry land log yard are subject to end checking and blue stain, so water storage or log irrigation is vital.

To get an idea of the vastness of the salvage operation, the storage area in Lake Bonney alone covered an area, which roughly, would fill the Brisbane River from Victoria Bridge to the Story Bridge – twice over – while it would fill Sydney's Darling Harbour and completely cover the entire area of Melbourne's Albert Park.

Seven major fires do their worst

By JIM BOWDEN

THE Victorian sawmilling industry has swung into a massive timber salvage operation in the wake of some of the worst fires in history that have devastated more than 270,000 ha of state forests.

Fire damage has been estimated at \$60 million to growing stock – virtually all native hardwood and unimpaired.

A total of 700 fires were recorded in Victoria this season of which seven major fires accounted for about 90 per cent of the forest area damaged or destroyed.

Mr Gerry Griffin of the Victorian Forestry Commission praised the magnificent efforts of industry which has pledged different areas shifting crews to assist in salvage operations in fire-ravaged areas.

"The cooperation by many sawmills has been nothing short of overwhelming," he said.

The period from February 16 to 21 was the blackest for fire outbreaks and involved a total commitment of fire fighting resources on all fronts.

Fire fighting involved 1200 men from the Forestry Commission, 2200 from the Country Fire Authority, about 600 defence force personnel and another 200 from other sources.

The Forestry Commission put into action 75 tankers plus about 250 four-wheel drive vehicles converted to tankers with 300 tankers operating.

Jack Hill's Macedon softwood mill was destroyed by fire and the entire log stocks of the Black Forest Sawmilling Co hardwood mill in the same area were lost.

The Macedon softwood plantations have started immediate salvage.

"We will have to make some adjustments to these two mills as it won't be

\$160 million forest loss in two states

BUSHFIRES in Victoria and South Australia have dealt a devastating blow to thousands of hectares of hardwood and softwood forests in both states with timber losses estimated at more than \$120 million.

Massive timber salvage operations are under way as the forest industry comes to grips with a disaster that has left about 300,000 ha of forest estate and plantations damaged or destroyed.

• In Victoria seven major fires were responsible for the burning of about 90 per cent of 270,000 ha lost in state forests – virtually all native hardwood.

• In South Australia fires swept through 20,000 ha of softwoods, mostly Woods and Forest plantations in the south-east and Adelaide Hills regions, hitting big areas of prime multi-thinned mature wood.

The disaster left 69 people dead in the two states with more than 2000 homes destroyed in Victoria 43 people lost their lives and in South Australia 26 died.

Fires also hit almost 2000 farms killing more than 350,000 sheep and 17,000 cattle. More than 257,000 ha of pastures has been lost.

In South Australia, the Adelaide Hills

bore the brunt of the fire's fury. Twelve died there with 13 more killed in the southeast of the state.

Timber industry associations, individuals and the Hoo-Hoo clubs throughout unaffected states have rallied with support immediately setting up relief funds mounting to many thousands of dollars.

Disaster appeals in Victoria and South Australia so far have raised almost \$15 million for fire victims. Meanwhile, insurance losses caused by the fires could reach \$200 million, according to the Insurance Council of Australia.

Meanwhile Queensland's Administrative

Services Minister, Mr Hewitt, has asked the Rural Fires Board to reassess its readiness to fight major bushfires. The review has the support of State Cabinet.

Mr Hewitt said the board saw the need to set up the supply of fire fighting equipment to the state's 1500 bushfire brigades which were growing at the rate of about 100 new brigades a year.

The need for more fire fighting vehicles, fire stations and rural fire inspectors would be looked at closely.

Mr Hewitt said attention also would be given to the board's public awareness program to alert Queenslanders to the dangers of bushfires.

Clippings from the March 1983 edition of Australian Timberman.

When the world's (wood) chips are down

WOOD raw-material costs for the world's pulp manufacturers have fallen the past year with the biggest decreases for woodchips and pulp logs occurring in Europe, reports the Wood Resources International.

Softwood pulp log prices fell in the key markets of Europe in the fall of 2019. This price decline contributed to a two-year low of the softwood fibre price index in the third quarter last year. And with the hardwood fibre price movements mixed the past year, the hardwood fibre price index changed little.

Wood raw-material costs were down for pulp manufacturers in most regions around the world in the 3Q/19 as compared to both the previous quarter and the 3Q/18. Prices for

softwood pulp logs and woodchips were down between 1-15% q-o-q, depending on region, with the biggest price reductions occurring in Germany, France, Sweden and the US Northwest. The only region with higher prices in the 3Q/19 was western Canada, where pulp log prices increased by 10% q-o-q.

The softwood fibre price index fell by 2.2% q-o-q to \$89.26/odmt in the 3Q/19, the lowest level in two years, and slightly below its five-year average.

In Germany, softwood pulp log prices have experienced a



dramatic decline the past year because of an oversupply of low-grade logs from harvests of insect and storm damaged forests.

The average price for contracted logs was at the lowest point since the WRQ started tracking prices in 1988. Some spot prices were as low as \$10-\$15 cub m in regions where landowners were desperate to move damaged trees.

With the sharp decline in softwood pulp logs prices

in Germany, the country currently has some of the world lowest pulp log prices.

The hardwood fibre price index has been stable at around \$90/odmt the past year. In the 3Q/19, the HFPI fell slightly from the previous quarter but was about 1% higher than in the 3Q/18.

There were very small price changes q-o-q for hardwood fibre in the 15 regions tracked by the WRQ.

With uncertainty surrounding when market pulp prices will rebound, how fast the imbalance in fibre demand and supply in Europe will be corrected, and when the trade negotiations between the US and China will be settled, forecasting of wood fibre prices will remain challenging in 2020.



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Ticking time bomb – we knew it would happen and it will surely happen again!

AUSTRALIA is known for its bushfires, cyclones, droughts and flooding rains so what has changed this time?

I believe we now have a new breed of people in this country that needs to blame somebody for every natural event that occurs and they have infiltrated our communities with their ideology.

The majority in this country are the 'quiet Australians'. Those who have seen it all before and know it will happen again.

Our voice wasn't being heard. We knew that the fuel load was too high, we knew that policy had changed on allowing fuel reduction burns and we knew that protesting by minority groups was influencing decision making.

Just back in June last year I raised these issues in a Regional Forests Agreement meeting in Corryong with representatives from DELWP and federal, state and local governments about the fuel load in national parks, the blackberries and noxious weeds in state forests and parks, the lack of maintenance of fire tracks,



the lack of water storages in these areas and told them we had a ticking time bomb right under our noses.

Climate Change didn't light the fires in NSW and Victoria. Lightning and arsonists did. The fuel load was there and it was tinder dry from the drought.

But now the swamp is rising and along with social and mainstream media they are driving a tsunami of hate, of blame, of rebellion like we've never seen before.

Everything that goes wrong has to be someone else's fault!

They cry climate change but then board an aeroplane for overseas.

I might be old fashioned,

but the Australia I knew as a kid was far better. We didn't care if it was a drought, we knew every day was one closer to rain.

I joined in the battle of the February 1969 bushfires in 45 deg. heat as a 15-year-old. I bent all the linkage arms on the tractor ploughing fire breaks, experienced the extreme heat of the fire, the lack of oxygen in my lungs, and was too scared to sleep inside the house at 2 am.

“THE FUEL LOAD WAS THERE AND IT WAS TINDER DRY FROM THE DROUGHT”

I saw the devastating loss of property and the burying of dead stock.

We didn't have P2 masks; we were told every five minutes what the air quality was. Wet a handkerchief and put it across our nose and mouth, tie it in a knot at the back and get on with it.

Then the chaos came a few weeks later when torrential rains caused massive erosion and polluted our water, and three months later we had cows dying of bloat because the grass was so prolific.

This will all happen again.

This is the country we know and live in. No politician or climate change policy will change it.

Humans caused this atrocity by their ignorance of nature and recorded history, which could be used to prevent this occurring again at such a horrific level.

Sorry about the rant but I'm not happy with the world right now.

GRAEME WALKER, Walker's sawmill, Corryong, Vic.

[The sawmill 120 km east of Albury-Wodonga employs 22 staff and families and is the mainstay of the little town].

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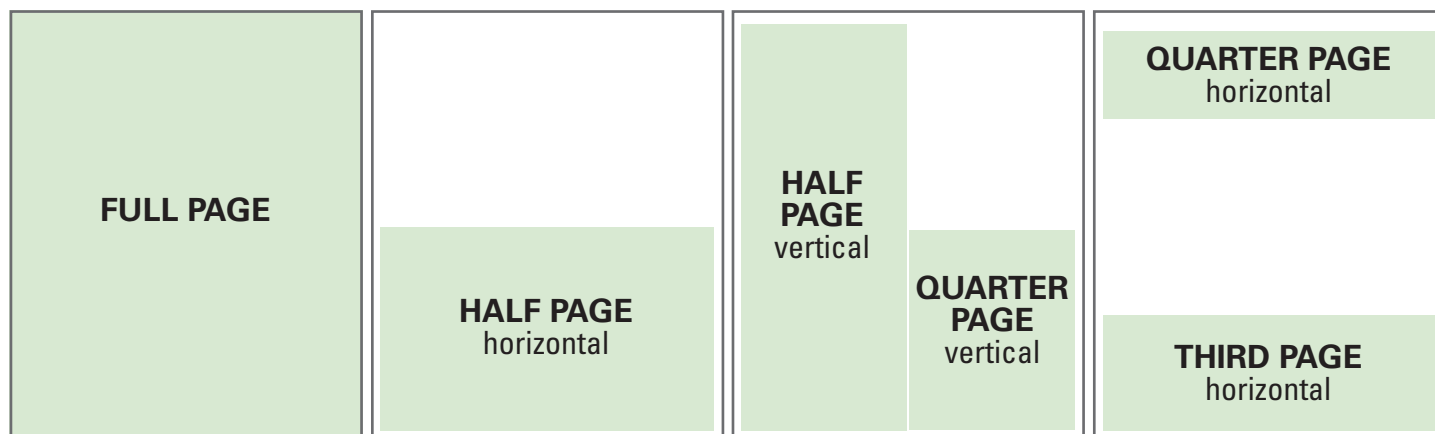
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FULL PAGE: \$485

297mmH x 210mmW

HALF PAGE: \$290

Vertical • 254mmH x 93mmW

Horizontal • 125mmH x 190mmW

QUARTER PAGE: \$180

Vertical • 125mmH x 93mmW

Horizontal • 63mmH x 190mmW

THIRD PAGE: \$215

Horizontal • 73mmH x 190mmW

PAGE 1 Front cover strip: Contract booking

Horizontal • 30mmH x 190mmW

PAGE 1 Front cover module: Contract booking

Horizontal • 45mmH x 49.5mmW

PAGE 2 below story: Contract booking

Horizontal • 73mmH x 190mmW

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

JOB ADS: ONLINE BOOKINGS ONLY

BUY & SELL ADS: ONLINE BOOKINGS ONLY

744pxH x 720pxW

BANNER ADVERTISING

• FEATURE PACKAGE: INCLUDES

PAGE 3 strip below story / top email strip / top website banner strip

Horizontal strip • 30mmH x 190mmW

Email strip • 395pxH x 1500pxW

Top website banner strip • 120pxH x 1000pxW

• STANDARD PACKAGE: INCLUDES

PAGE 8 module / email module / website module on advertising page

Module • 45mmH x 44.5mmW

Email module • 336pxH x 336pxW

Website module • 260pxH x 260pxW

TERM DISCOUNTS

12 WEEKS: 7.5%

24 WEEKS: 10%

48 WEEKS: 15%

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DEADLINES

Display ads: Book by 9am Tuesday prior to publication

Supplied artwork: Wednesday 12 noon prior to publication. Supply quality jpg or pdf to our specifications. NO crop marks or bleed required.

WHO TO CONTACT

Media releases: Jim Bowden e: cancon@bigpond.net.au | **Display ad bookings:** e: advertising@timberandforestryenews.com

Accounts: e: johnh@timberandforestryenews.com | **Subscribe:** www.timberandforestryenews.com

Classified advertising: JOB ADS ARE COMPLETELY ONLINE.

Go to www.timberandforestryenews.com/post-a-job/ to place a job vacancy. Book by 12noon Wednesday prior to publication. Job ads are for individual positions. If more than one position is to be advertised, separate ads will need to be created and advertised accordingly.

BUY & SELL ADS ARE COMPLETELY ONLINE. Go to www.timberandforestryenews.com/product/buy-sell-advertisement/ to place an ad. Book by 5.00pm Tuesday prior to publication.

TERMS

New clients invoiced on booking. Existing clients 14 days.