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# Littleproud returns to agriculture – and forestry – in Cabinet reshuffle

QUEENSLAND Nationals MP David Littleproud returns as Minister for Agriculture in a cabinet reshuffle announced by Prime Minister Scott Morrison today.

The portfolio includes forestry and Tasmanian senator Jonathon Duniham remains as assistant minister.

Mr Littleproud takes the Nationals deputy leadership, as expected, from Bridget McKenzie, who last year became Australia's first female agriculture minister. The Victorian senator bowed out of Cabinet, taking responsibility for breaching ministerial standards in a former role as sports minister.

Nationals leader and Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack will retain the infrastructure and transport portfolio and has elevated some of the allies who helped him fend off a challenge from former leader Barnaby Joyce this week.

NSW Nationals MP Mark Coulton remains Minister for Regional Services with responsibility for health. In



David Littleproud... returning as Minister for Agriculture.

a promotion from the ranks of the assistant ministers, NSW Nationals MP Andrew Gee rises to a full ministry with responsibility for regional education and decentralisation as well as being assistant minister for trade and investment.

David Littleproud, 43, gives up his water portfolio to return to agriculture. He had held water, drought and emergency management portfolios since last year's May election, having held agriculture before that. He will retain his drought and emergency management

portfolios.

Based on the Darling Downs, Mr Littleproud has been closely connected to agriculture in southern Queensland for 20 years as an agribusiness banker with the National Australia Bank and more recently Suncorp.

He is the son of long-serving Queensland Member of Parliament and former state Education and Environment Minister Brian

Littleproud.

David Littleproud left his banking career in 2016 after winning National party pre-selection for the large western Queensland seat of Maranoa, stretching from Warwick on the Darling Downs to the state's far western border, winning the position created by the retirement of Bruce Scott.

The Australian Forest Products Association has paid tribute to Bridget McKenzie, recognising her contribution of forestry and passion for the industry.

"In her relatively short time leading the agriculture portfolio Senator McKenzie demonstrated enormous passion and understanding for our renewable forest industries," AFPA CEO Ross Hampton said.

"This did not pass unnoticed by the 80,000 people who directly work in our native and plantation-based sectors; from those who plant, harvest and replant to those processing

“INDUSTRY PRAISE FOR BRIDGET

Cont P 3



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# Industry wants answers on Premier's 'u-turn' on hardwoods sector closure

VICTORIA'S hardwood timber industry is demanding Premier Daniel Andrews immediately clarify comments last week in which he appeared to flag changes to his decision to close the state's hardwood timber industry.

On ABC radio Premier Andrews said Victorian government "may well have to revise" its plan to shut down the industry from 2030 as a result of the recent fires in East Gippsland.

Peak industry bodies the Australian Forest Products Association, the Victorian Association of Forest Industries and the Australian Forest Contractors Association said it was disrespectful to forestry workers for the Premier to speculate about fast-tracking his decision to close a vital regional industry while firefighting continues.

AFCA general manager Stacey Gardiner said: "There has been no information released to industry on the assessment of how much timber slated for mills has burnt, and how much is usable. Previous post-fire harvesting operations have resulted in significant volumes



**Daniel Andrews... conflicting messages on future of state's hardwood industry.**

of timber for processing which has minimised the resource impact of fires."

Ms Gardiner said the Premier should not pre-empt these assessments and create more uncertainty for regional communities while forestry workers were still tirelessly fighting fires and removing dangerous, burnt trees in east Gippsland so roads can re-open."

VAFI CEO Tim Johnston said Andrews should engage with industry and ensure that the burnt timber is not wasted.

"Large numbers of trees have been felled along roads and firebreaks to control

these fires for access, fuel and safety reasons and it is vital that the government works with industry and local communities in utilising this timber," Mr Johnston said.

"Now more than ever, the

government needs to provide clarity and certainty to the industry."

AFPA CEO Ross Hampton said if the Premier was serious about supporting timber workers and regional communities, then he should ensure this timber was not wasted."

He said the Premier failed to consult with industry, workers and communities before announcing he was closing the industry.

"He should not make the same mistake again. As the fires have shown, forestry workers play a critical firefighting role – without them, a key firefighting resource in Victoria will be lost forever," Mr Hampton said.

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From P 2

the timber and paper products downstream."

Ross Hampton said Minister Littleproud had a great a great knowledge of the issues affecting agribusiness and regional communities across Australia including renewable forest industries.

"In 2018, he launched the government's national forest

industries plan, pledging a range of measures to deliver over the next 10 years, including establishing one billion new production trees to provide the vital timber resource we need to secure our forest industry jobs into the future," Mr Hampton said.

"We are confident the minister will hit the ground running, using his previous experience in the portfolio.

# Farmers, vignerons also casualties of bushfires as rural fence posts run short

## Greater access to wood fibre could treble production for processors

JIM BOWDEN

FARMERS and vignerons in South Australia, NSW and Victoria are facing a long and expensive re-fencing task as agriculture land continues to suffer from the summer bushfires.

Those who rely on timber posts could face a long wait for supply as some processors already had a 12-month waiting list before the fires destroyed rural fences.

A Mount Gambier timber processor has estimated rural areas will need 35 million posts. He says post production could be trebled if the sector could access



**Fire and smoke damage... Australian vineyards suffer big losses. Producers don't just face the direct impact of the blazes but also smoke damage, or so-called 'smoke taint'. Bushfire smoke can permeate the skin of the grapes as they ripen, giving wine an unpleasant smoky taste.**

Australia as the respective governing bodies have not published or released any data.

The urgent need to rebuild fences has sent out a challenge to Green Triangle forest growers. Fencing contractors have suggested to local processors that each hectare of agricultural land will require 62 posts for refencing. This equates to 50 million posts, or in excess of 1 million cub m of raw material to be harvested from the forests.

If the agricultural sector only sought to use treated pine posts, the demand would be around 1.8 million posts with a small-end diameter of 100 to 125 mm.

Graphs extracted from the Australian pine log price index published by KPMG clearly illustrates the decline in the availability of preservation logs given that export of products suitable to meet the preservation processing industry began around 2013-2014

Since that time processors have been forced to compete with the export market at the expense of meeting demand from the domestic agricultural sector.

Meanwhile, agriculture might like to consider Papua New Guinea as a source of timber poles for fencing on agricultural land and in vineyards.

PNG production is at capacity from hoop pine plantations, the product is treated, good supplies are available and the welcome mat has been laid out.

enough wood fibre.

Agri Investor has published the results of a survey that has determined the area of agricultural land burned by the November and December fires was 820,395 ha in NSW, Victoria and South Australia as at January 15.

Detailed maps provided by Digital Agricultural Services, which allow automated valuations of farmland in Australia, show this area was located within fire boundaries and represented 14% of the total land area that had burned.

NSW has seen the most extensive damage with 558,878 ha of agricultural land affected. Victoria follows with 161,717 ha, then South Australia with 98,966 ha,

The final figures are likely to be higher with some time left to run on the current fire season. The figures also do not include statistics from Queensland and Western



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# FWPA provides valuable resources for building in bushfire-prone areas

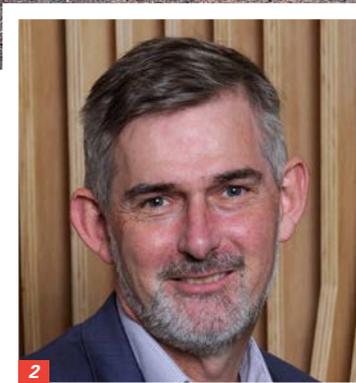
## Workshop programs to roll out over the coming months

RESPONDING to recent tragic fires, Forest and Wood Products Australia has updated its free resources to help re-build resilient homes in bushfire-prone areas.

A program of workshops and further informational resources will be rolled out over the coming months in fire-affected communities.

Managing director Ric Sinclair said FWPA fully supported the current Australian standard (AS 3959-2009) and its structured approach to increasing bushfire attack levels (BALs) that gave flexibility to designers and homeowners in accordance to the appropriate fire risk.

“There is often some confusion about what can and what can’t be built in bushfire prone areas and the answer lies in determining the appropriate BAL,” Mr Sinclair



said.

To assist designers and homeowners, FWPA has updated and released its online BAL calculator that can be accessed at the WoodSolutions website. The free design tool allows users to easily and quickly calculate the BAL for a particular site based on the details they input.

**1/ Resilient homes... the structured approach to bushfire risk.**

**2/ Ric Sinclair... answer lies in determining the appropriate bushfire attack levels.**

Also available is the updated Design Guide 4: Building with Timber in Bushfire prone areas, developed to assist architects, designers, builders and owners to understand what construction requirement is required for traditional building methods using timber for each BAL.

It is important to note timber framing and internal timber joinery can be used in all BAL categories and while external exposed timber becomes more restricted as the BAL increases.

Ric Sinclair said the loss of lives and homes had been heartbreaking but communities were looking to rebuild and needed up-to-date information to support rebuild efforts and to know that timber construction was a viable option.

FWPA will also be hosting workshops for the community, local councils and building design professionals. As part of the workshops, informational collateral will be provided that can be taken away and considered by attendees.

Other FWPA activities will focus on collecting information from the current fires to help support timber usage if there are any proposals to change the current standard.

“FWPA is an evidence-based organisation but there are some groups who seek to remove timber from building construction in bushfire prone areas without regard to evidence or an assessment of the costs and benefits,” Mr Sinclair said.



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# NZ forest owners fear China virus may shut off access to their best log market

FOREST owners in New Zealand fear the China coronavirus outbreak may shut off access to their biggest market and are bracing for supply chain problems.

Some forest owners are already reducing their harvesting rate. Regrettably this will have an immediate effect on harvesting crew employment.

The New Zealand Forest Owners Association says that because of the extended Lunar New Year public holiday it is difficult to know what is going to happen when sawmills in China restart.

President Peter Weir says he understands that log ships continue to be unloaded. “But we need to wait to determine what the off-take volume of logs might be after the traditional New Year break,” he said.

“There is industry concern that if the virus were to infect more people in coastal towns and cities then access to Chinese ports could be restricted with little warning.”

**“ACCESS TO PORTS COULD BE RESTRICTED WITH LITTLE WARNING”**

China is by far the largest and most important market for New Zealand’s export logs and by value New Zealand earns half its export income from China.

The coronavirus outbreak comes on top of new supplies of softwood into China, due to the salvage of insect and windstorm damaged spruce forests in central and eastern



- 1/ **China by far biggest customer for NZ producers**
- 2/ **Peter Weir... harvesting workforce concerns.**
- 3/ **Prue Younger... a very complex situation.**

Europe. Warmer winters and longer summers have led to very high rates of spruce beetle infestation with large areas of forests being clear-felled and salvage logs railed and shipped to China.

In the coming year, exports of bushfire damaged pine logs from Australia also have the potential to increase the softwood supply to China.

Peter Weir says, “We know from our embassy in Beijing that the Chinese central government authorities are doing an excellent job of both trying to protect people from the spread of coronavirus and at the same time ensuring economic activity is sustained. But nobody knows how long and widespread the coronavirus outbreak will be and what effect that will have on any medium-term trade.”

Mr Weir said there was concern about the effect on the harvesting workforce in many regions of New Zealand which depended on log exports.

Forest owner capacity and

and around port cities in China – are not impacted by the virus.”

Peter Weir says the industry leadership is closely working with MPI and Te Uru



circumstances vary hugely. Those owners who supply domestic sawmills will be largely unaffected, but the domestic market can only take less than half the current annual harvest and not all log grades.

Mr Weir said stockpiling logs was not a good option; the logs deteriorate, especially at this time of the year, and unrestrained supply from here was a market threat.

“It’s possible the disruption will turn out to be brief, as it was in mid-2019,” he said.

“It is entirely possible that the Chinese timber processing and construction industry will return to normal and the inventory stored at ports will diminish over the next few months as it normally does.

“In the meantime, we hope that our valued sawmilling industry customers – often small family businesses in

Rākau, supported by the New Zealand embassy in Beijing on the rapidly evolving situation.

Forest Industry Contractors Association CEO Prue Younger is confirming that contractors being told to halt felling trees has come as a complete surprise.

“The industry is reeling a bit as you would expect,” Ms Younger said.

“Although market prices were on their way down again, the coronavirus impact has made this a very complex situation. It’s important that we’ll be working with forest owners daily and ascertain the extent of this fallout and how long our crews might expect to be out of work.

“There are risks for everyone in this scenario and like all primary industries the ripples may be extensive.”

**MARCH 2020**

**15-19: Asia Pacific Woodchip and Biomass Conference and Field Trip – Radisson Flagstaff Gardens Hotel, Melbourne, Vic, Australia.**

Optional Pre Conference Field Trip March 15-17 to Green Triangle. Conference 18-19 with enhanced programme to include Australia specific talks including the impact of recent bushfires on the future of the woodchip and biomass exports from Australia. Visit website [www.danaevents.co.nz/2020melbourne](http://www.danaevents.co.nz/2020melbourne) or contact Julie Bell [admin@dana.co.nz](mailto:admin@dana.co.nz)

**APRIL 2020**

**7-8: MobileTECH Ag 2020 – Rotorua, NZ.**

International keynote Dr Mike Briers, CEO, Australian-based Food Agility. MobileTECH Ag will be a great forum to understand how new technologies powered by data and AI are being adopted by

agribusinesses. Contact Ken Wilson, program manager on +61 4 5226 2337 or email [ken.wilson@innovatek.co.nz](mailto:ken.wilson@innovatek.co.nz) Visit [www.mobiletech.events](http://www.mobiletech.events)

**JUNE 2020**

**15-16: Timber & Technology. The Zero Carbon Future. Timber Offsite Construction 2020 Conference & Exhibition – Crown Promenade, Melbourne, Vic. Australia.**

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**21-26: 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](http://www.gottsteintrust.org) Inquires [gottsteinsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:gottsteinsecretary@gmail.com)

**JULY 2020**

**23-24: Doing Timber Business in Queensland: Regional Opportunity. – Brisbane, Queensland.**

Third biennial event is Queensland's forest and timber industry's leading 2020 networking opportunity comprising one day conference, gala dinner, workshops and site tours. Full website and program will be released shortly contact [admin@timberqueensland.com.au](mailto:admin@timberqueensland.com.au)

**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](mailto:admin@dana.co.nz)

**NOVEMBER 2020**

**4-7: AusTimber 2020 – HVP plantation site, Traralgon, Gippsland region, Vic. Australia.**

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**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**

**1-3: 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](http://www.fba-events.com) or contact [karolina@forest-analytics.com](mailto: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](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/)

**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](mailto:admin@dana.co.nz)

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

# Jared's opulent timber study desk the popular choice

THOUSANDS and thousands of people have now viewed the 95 entries in Australian Wood Review's Student Awards 2019 and thousands have also cast their vote.

The winner of Popular Choice, determined by Facebook likes/reactions, is Jared Horsfield, a Year 12 student at Kotra High School, a co-educational facility at Adamstown Heights, Newcastle. Jared was chosen for his 'Opulent Study Desk', created under the tutelage of teacher Anthony Ryan.

Jared's entry, which received a hefty 490 votes, won for a "thorough planning and testing allowing for the highest quality of construction and displaying bountiful methods of joinery while engaging both elegant aesthetics and practical function"



**Jared Horsfield with his opulent study desk... a high quality statement for timber furniture.**

The study desk displays pristine hand cut dovetails alongside angled mortise and tenon joints, steam-bent, laminated legs and numerous housing joints.

"I am incredibly delighted with the final outcome and thrilled with the new skills and techniques that I was able to demonstrate during the process," Jared said.

"The difficulties in designing and constructing the desk were incomparable to the joy of the hard work that paid off to produce a high quality, statement piece of furniture."

Dimensions of the study desk are 1400L x 600W x 820H. Species of timber included recycled Australian hardwoods (top face), karri hardwood (sides, drawers, bottom of carcass), and spotted gum (legs and base).

# AFPA report makes case for mechanical forest fuel reduction

A NEW report by the Australian Forest Products Association makes a strong case for mechanical fuel reduction to complement prescribed burns in a national bushfire strategy.

AFPA CEO Mr Ross Hampton said it was clear business-as-usual was not an option, and that a new approach to reducing fuel loads in forests was needed to mitigate against catastrophic fires.

With state governments already failing to meet modest prescribed burn targets, Mr Hampton said it was time to adopt the internationally proven effectiveness of mechanical fuel reduction to complement burns to better fire-proof regional towns and assets.

The report is a comprehensive analysis of research and data from respected sources including CSIRO that shows mechanical fuel reduction is part of the solution to achieve the necessary fuel reduction targets to protect regional communities from catastrophic bushfires.

Using the latest data from the federal Department of Environment and Energy, the report overlays almost 30 years of records for prescribed burns and bushfires to show a clear trend of reduced burns and increasing bushfires. Meanwhile, research has shown that as fuel load in the forest is doubled,



**Ross Hampton... the evidence is in – bushfire risk can be significantly reduced.**

the rate of fire spread is doubled and fire intensity is quadrupled.

“The evidence is in – bushfire risk in Australia can be significantly reduced through a far more aggressive approach of targeted reduction of understory and dense forest regrowth around towns and strategically important assets,” Mr Hampton said.

“This summer’s catastrophic fires have shown that we cannot rely on prescribed burns alone to reduce the fuel loads in our forests, particularly around towns where they can cause smoke pollution or worse, get out of control.”

Mr Hampton said a national royal commission into the recent bushfires must include a focus on how Australia can move to a whole-of-landscape approach to bushfire mitigation and examine how mechanical fuel reduction can complement hazard reduction burns in a national bushfire strategy.

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# Future designers bring Tasmanian timber to life in bespoke furniture

STUDENTS at Sydney's acclaimed Northern Beaches Secondary College enjoyed the unique opportunity to use premium Tasmanian timber to create bespoke furniture as a part of their HSC Major project.

Year 12 students at the Freshwater Senior Campus enrolled in a specialised 'Industrial Technology Timber' course working with Tasmanian blackwood.

As part of the process, students learned various forms of technical woodworking skills, creating sketches and digital images and a full-scale prototype to grasp their concept and refine the making process.

Teacher and acknowledged furniture designer-maker Benjamin Percy said students learned about the properties of timber and selecting and justifying the most appropriate material for the project.

Students were encouraged to explore designs, styles and designers to draw inspiration for their projects. Putting their woodworking knowledge



and skills to work, students created various pieces of furniture including chairs, cabinets, entertainment units, a desk and a guitar.

Students presented their projects at an exhibition-style ceremony attended by representatives of timber supplier Britton Timbers. The company and the college's Freshwater Campus have a long association; Britton Timbers supplies students with Tasmanian blackwood, Tasmanian oak and other species.

Britton Timbers director Shawn Britton presented students Katya Caterina with the 'Most Creative Design' Award for her Blackwood pod chair and Ali Turner



for 'Best Overall Design and Craftsmanship' for her blackwood, Tasmanian oak and sassafras cabinet.

"The level of precision and care that went into these projects was truly impressive," Benjamin Percy said.

"Using blackwood as the main material for

their projects was a great experience for the students as they got to see how well it could be shaped, bent and finished."

Shawn Britton said he was pleased to be a part of contributing to the development the next generation of designers.

"Giving the Freshwater Campus students the opportunity to use and experience Tasmanian hardwoods was a real pleasure," he said.

**On the cover: Year 12 students at Sydney's Northern Beaches Secondary College Ali Turner and Katya Caterina with their awards for best overall design and craftsmanship and most creative design.**



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# Bushfire probe to focus on fuel reduction

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.

Scott Morrison said a royal commission would look at climate change impacts but most importantly the role that fuel load build up is playing as bushfires grow in 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.

- 1/ **Mechanical fuel reduction to complement controlled burns.**
- 2/ **Mark Binskin... to lead royal commission.**

"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."

AFFPA 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.

Scott Morrison has proposed former Defence Chief Mark Binskin lead the royal commission, and reiterated that using mechanical fuel reduction in all forest areas must be investigated as part of its proceedings.

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# From Russia with love ... promise of structural timbers for Aussie builders

IN the wake of the devastating bushfires, among the many questions to answer are ... where will Australia get its future timber needs?

While it is vitally important that the domestic timber industry bounce back, and strengthen as quickly as possible, further imported timber supplies are likely to be needed.

However, finding further supplies of structural softwood timber that complies with the Australian Building Code, and other statutory requirements, is likely to prove demanding.

Russia is firming up as a realistic option, notwithstanding challenges around supply certainty and with meeting Australia's stringent compliance requirements.

But there is promising news from the Russian front with True Blue Timber in Sydney's west having already addressed and solved key issues associated with a steady, certified, compliant supply of structural softwoods from northern Russia.

True Blue Timber is able to offer a comprehensive range of red Baltic pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) structural timber products, both treated and untreated, in association with its affiliated companies in Finland and Russia.

Managing director Ryan Yari said that to ensure absolutely



1/ Ryan Yari and production manager Will Truscott ... supplying a comprehensive range of red Baltic pine structural timber products into the Australian market.

2/ Ryan Yari checks out the company's machine grading line producing MGP10 red Baltic pine.



the best structural softwood available True Blue Timber imported red Baltic block stacked and FSC certified.

"We then grade the timber through our own machine grading line that is supported by independent testing," Mr Yari said.

"We are also able to treat to H2 using our in-house pressure treatment facility."

In addition to its international network, True Blue Timber distributes

and codes specifications, as well as other statutory obligations," Mr Yari said.

Looking to the probable future demand for structural softwood timber in Australia, the connections and supply arrangements established by True Blue Timber

throughout Australia via associated sales offices and warehouses.

"Our product range has been developed to meet the needs of our client's high expectations of quality and strict building standards

**“ STATUTORY CODES LIKELY TO PROVE DEMANDING**

with Russian sawmills and supply chains likely to be a key component in delivering certified, compliant, structural softwood timber for Australia's building and construction industries.

A medium sized European softwood, Red Baltic pine (or Scots pine) is also a popular choice of timber for cabinetry.

Visit [www.truebluetimber.com.au](http://www.truebluetimber.com.au)

## Storm-damaged logs flood markets, lower prices in central Europe

A PLENTIFUL supply of logs coupled with declining demand moved sawlog prices downward in most major markets around the world in

the third quarter 2019.

Wood Resource Quarterly says the biggest price reduction came in central Europe where storm-damaged

logs flooded the market.

In Germany, sawlogs prices fell 16% q-o-q to a level not seen in 17 years.

In Austria and the Czech Republic log prices plummeted 14% and 18% respectively over the past year to reach their lowest prices since 2003.

# Woodn't want to miss it: FWPA resources provide load of benefits

## Multiple newsletters and podcasts with the latest industry updates

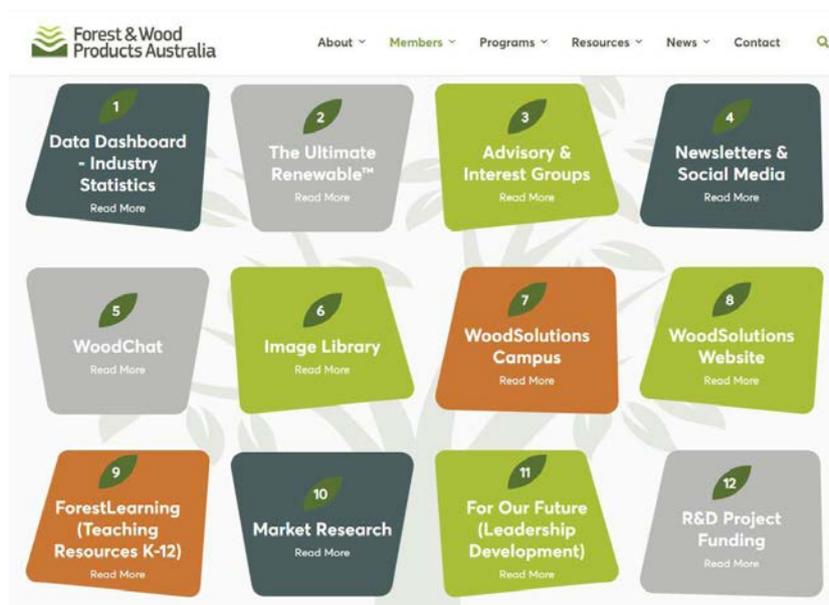
MEMBERS of Forest and Wood Products Australia have access to a wealth of benefits, from receiving engaging news and information, to participating in training opportunities and accessing resources to help spread the word on the benefits of forestry and wood products.

I am excited to share that we have recently added a new page on our website <https://www.fwpa.com.au/members/benefits.html> providing details on all these benefits in the one place.

For example, we produce multiple newsletters and podcasts with the latest industry updates and innovations. Members can also access the Data Dashboard to stay abreast of market trends and attitudes, to create a competitive advantage.

If you are looking to take the next step in your career

**“IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY, PROFITABILITY ACROSS THE SUPPLY CHAIN**



and become an industry leader, the For Our Future collaborative leadership program offers training and networking. Upskilling is also possible through the WoodSolutions' online courses, sharing advances in design, construction and supply chain logistics. Meanwhile, joining our advisory and interest groups is a way to gain front-line access to industry decision makers.

FWPA continuously looks at research initiatives we can support that will help improve productivity, profitability and safety across the supply chain. We provide voluntary matched funding for



appropriate R&D projects.

Along with informative resources and project funding, members can also benefit from promotional materials that advocate the

benefits of forestry and wood products to the public. The Ultimate Renewable™ is a newly-created brand that provides a universal, positive communications message for the sector to share. A wide range of free downloadable content is available, including logos and videos, for use in marketing collateral. An online store has also recently been created where members can purchase merchandise at cost-price.

In addition, members wishing to promote their business or products can leverage the WoodSolutions website which receives more than 3000 daily visitors, making it one of the world's largest sites for timber information.

The industry is also invited to collaborate with schools to help educate the next generation on forestry's role in environmental sustainability through the ForestLearning Program.

Be sure to check out our website to find out more information on these – and more – valuable benefits.



**An industry services company working to grow the forest and wood products market**  
Visit us at [fwpa.com.au](http://fwpa.com.au)

# City of the future's \$100m CLT project

CONTRACTOR Multiplex has topped out the largest mass timber construction project of its kind in British Columbia – the La Trobe University's \$100 million student accommodation project at its Bundoora campus in the Canadian province's capital Victoria.

Continuing the trend towards timber construction, 4500 cub m of CLT and glulam will be used to deliver a mix of one, four, five and six-bed apartments supported by study areas, student kitchens and large communal spaces.

Designed by Jackson Clements Burrows, the development comprises two six-storey arc-shaped buildings surrounding a central courtyard, purposefully shaped to



*Environmental benefits... the mass timber student accommodation at La Trobe University.*

respect the existing campus eucalypt trees.

Multiplex regional managing director Graham Cottam said the company, which has been busy within the higher education construction realm, was proud of its involvement in the project.

Innovative construction

techniques include the use of pod bathrooms and prefabricated concrete, making the construction on campus as quickly as possible.

La Trobe University project director Kimberley Wilkinson said the two apartment buildings had been designed with sustainability at the

forefront.

"With La Trobe already having a six-star Green Star Communities rating, creating a modern and innovative building that showcased La Trobe's continued commitment to sustainable building design and construction was essential."

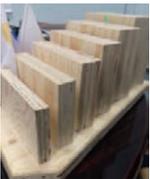
Part of the University's \$5 billion multi-precinct City of the Future plan, the project is scheduled for completion in July, with students beginning their studies in the second semester of 2020 able to move into the new accommodation.

La Trobe's vice-chancellor Professor John Dewar said the project would greatly enhance the 'living experience' of students.

**(The Urban Developer)**



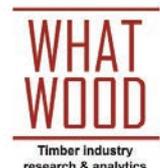
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# A great week of learning: JW Gottstein wood science course to be held in June

## Opportunity to attend gala industry dinner in Canberra

NATURE has intervened and the JW Gottstein educational trust wood science course has been postponed until June.

Originally scheduled for February 16-21, the 'Understanding Wood Science' course will now take place from June 21 to 26, commencing with registration and a field trip briefing at Albury on wood processing site visits and finishing in Canberra with a lecture series at the ANU Fenner School.

University House at ANU had to shut down for repairs throughout February following a damaging hail storm.

This is the base for course participants and speakers over the Canberra leg of the week-long course. The weather event was one of 89 hailstorms that saw buildings at ANU take the brunt of the storm in the same week a bushfire near Canberra airport forced a cancellation of flights.

The structure of the course remains the same – only the dates change. The updated course program is available at [www.gottsteintrust.org](http://www.gottsteintrust.org)

"An extended two-day field trip program features for the



**John Simon... course a great opportunity for learning.**



**Dave Gover... joining the Gottstein wood science program.**



**Dr Matthew Brookhouse... key presenter at lecture series.**



**Dr Jugo Ilic... acknowledged for support of Gottstein Trust.**

first time," Gottstein Trust chair John Simon said.

"It includes visits to a CLT plant, a frame and truss manufacturer, an MDF panel producer and a hardwood sawmill, which is a great opportunity for participants to see some leading operations.

"Also, the trust is delighted that Dave Gover, CEO of the Engineered Wood Products Association of Australasia, is accompanying the group throughout the field trip. Dave is very knowledgeable and is generously donating his time to support the course."

The new timing also creates extra opportunity for course participants to attend the gala industry dinner at Parliament House, Canberra,

on Wednesday, June 24.

The dinner will follow one of the core days of the course – the anatomy and biological characteristics of wood. This will be presented by Dr Matthew Brookhouse at ANU's Fenner School of Environment and Society, which continues to support the trust, providing the venue and assistance with the program.

After years of involvement with the Understanding Wood Science course, this

**“EXTENDED TWO-DAY FIELD TRIP PROGRAM**

year marks the retirement of Dr Jugo Ilic from course presentations. Dr Ilic worked as a wood scientist at CSIRO for 36 years. As part of his research activities, he authored the CSIRO Atlas of Hardwoods and curated the Australian Wood Collection.

"The trust particularly thanks and acknowledges Dr Ilic's dedicated involvement over many years," John Simon said.

The Gottstein course promises to be a great week of learning in June. The course is held just once every two years and is an opportunity not to miss – and there's room for more registrations. Contact Helen Murray on 0419 991 424 or register online at [www.gottsteintrust.org](http://www.gottsteintrust.org)

## John Deere takes on drones – and they're getting bigger

AUTONOMOUS drone-based transportation group Volocopter has revealed its first partner for a new VoloDrone industrial and commercial electric vertical take-off and landing craft – John Deere.

The agricultural and forestry heavy equipment company

is working with Volocopter on a VoloDrone-based aerial crop-dusting and land observation system.

VoloDrone has 18 rotors and a fully electric power system that can



provide up to 30 minutes of flight time for the aircraft, and carry up to 200 kg. It's

designed to operate fully autonomously along a set path, or be piloted remotely for manual control if needed.

John Deere is equipping the VoloDrone with a sprayer and tank array mounted to its cargo connection points, which will be able to dispense pesticides and liquid fertiliser.



# 2020 DANA - GINGKO

## ASIA PACIFIC FOREST INVESTMENT, WOODCHIP & BIOMASS TRADE CONFERENCE AND FIELD TRIP

Impacts of virus  
on China imports  
of woodchips &  
wood in 2020



With Aust  
bushfire  
impact  
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- Major woodchipping complex of South West Fibre at Myamyn
- N.F. McDonnell & Sons softwood sawmill at Mount Gambier
- Softwood and hardwood plantations, harvesting & hardwood in-field chipping
- New AKD Sawmill at Colac

### 2 DAY ASIA PACIFIC: FOREST INVESTMENT, PULP WOOD CHIP & BIOMASS TRADE TRENDS CONFERENCE *Wednesday March 18 and Thursday*

*March 19 at Radisson Flagstaff Gardens Hotel in Melbourne*

**With additional presentations on:**

- The impact of Australian bushfires on wood production and export trade in 2020
- The impact of coronavirus on China woodchip and wood imports in 2020

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for field trip.  
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FOR WEBSITE [CLICK HERE](#) OR CONTACT JULIE BELL [admin@dana.co.nz](mailto:admin@dana.co.nz)

# Light, nimble timber for high-rise mobility

URBAN innovator Sidewalk Labs, based in New York, is combining forward-thinking urban design and cutting-edge technology to radically improve urban life.

The design team has proposed a comprehensive plan for a neighbourhood on Toronto's waterfront that achieves new standards of sustainability, affordability, mobility, and economic opportunity.

The plan is based on the fact that timber is nimble and light compared to other structural building materials, and that gives it many advantages, such as making it easy to work within a factory.

"But these same properties also create new challenges for timber's use in designing taller buildings," the team says.



*New challenges... timber improving urban life.*

"When engineers design a building, they must create a structure that can resist different types of forces, including vertical forces such as gravity and lateral forces like wind. The lighter the building, the more susceptible it usually is to lateral forces.

To gain insight into the performance of 35-storey

mass timber proto-model, PMX, the team modelled how it would compare to a traditional concrete building of the same size.

PMX was about 2.5 times lighter than its concrete counterpart, and when they began doing wind analysis they discovered that PMX was reacting more like a building of 40 or 50 storeys.

"That's one of the reasons why many of the tall timber buildings completed to date are actually hybrids, reinforced at their cores by concrete walls or steel bracing," they said.

Toronto city chiefs will now begin formal study of Sidewalk's plans, before a final approval of the project in March.

Since 2017, Sidewalk has been drawing up plans to develop the Toronto neighbourhood "from the internet up," including self-driving cars, moving sidewalks, and underground delivery robots.

Their approach calls for "ubiquitous sensing" throughout the smart city, collecting data on everything from rubbish disposal to park benches.

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# Black Thursday: what does history tell us about some of our worst bushfires?

IN preparing for extreme conditions now and in the future, it's important to look at history to understand how bad things can get.

Australia's most extensive bushfires, known as the 'Black Thursday' bushfires, where on February 6, 1851, with Co2 levels at 285 ppm. The temperature hit an incredible 47.2 deg. In Melbourne and a quarter of Victoria, 5 million ha, was burnt out.

That's 10 times more than from the current bushfires in NSW. Twelve lives and more than one million sheep and thousands of cattle were lost. We can assume there was no heavy density housing in the bush then.

Thomas McCombie, a journalist, historian and politician in colonial Victoria, recorded the scene in Melbourne on that day:

"For two months preceding, the country had been under the desiccating winds, which appeared to be highly charged with electricity. The herbage was parched up, and everything that the eye could rest upon was dry, dusty, and disagreeable.

"The 6th of February



**Men from the Second AIF volunteer force about to fight bushfires in 1940.**

dawned much as very hot days generally do; the roseate tints of the horizon were rather brighter and more lurid than usual – the glassed glare over the sky more vividly perceptible.

"The north wind set strongly in early in the morning, and by 11 o'clock in the fore-noon it had increased to almost a hurricane.

"In the streets of Melbourne the heat was intense, and the atmosphere densely oppressive. Clouds of smoke and dust hung over the city.

"Had any portion of

Melbourne ignited, the whole of the city would have been reduced to ashes."

Catastrophic bushfires hit Victoria again in 1898 (Co2 levels 295 ppm). Known as 'Red Tuesday', the fires burned 260,000 ha in south Gippsland. Twelve lives were lost and more than 2000 buildings destroyed.

In 1939 (Co2 levels 311

**“TEMPERATURES HIT INCREDIBLE 47.2 DEG. IN MELBOURNE**

ppm), January 13 became known as 'Black Friday'. The fires in Victoria burned 1.5 to 2 million ha, killed 71 people and destroyed more than 650 buildings.

In 1969 (324 ppm), 280 fires broke out on January 8; 12 reached major proportions and burned 250,000 ha. More than 20 people died, including 17 motorists at Lara, trapped on the then highway between Geelong and Melbourne. The fires also destroyed 230 houses, 21 other buildings and more than 12,000 stock.

In 1977 (333 ppm), widespread fires occurred across the western district of Victoria. They killed four people and burned about 103,000 ha. More than 198,500 stock, 116 houses and 340 other buildings were also lost.

In 1983 (342 ppm), February 16 became known as 'Ash Wednesday'. More than 100 fires burned across 210,000 ha killing 47 people. More than 27,000 stock and 2,000 houses were lost.

That's just Victoria.

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## HEAD OFFICE

Timber & Forestry e-news  
PO Box 69, Potts Point, NSW 1335,  
Australia  
Phone | +61 (0) 417 421 187

## PUBLISHERS

John Halkett | +61 (0) 417 421 187  
johnh@timberandforestryenews.com  
Dennis Neilson | +64 (0) 7 349 2764  
dennisn@timberandforestryenews.com

## MANAGING EDITOR

Jim Bowden | +61 (0) 401 312 087

## ADVERTISING

John Halkett | +61 (0) 417 421 187  
johnh@timberandforestryenews.com  
advertising@timberandforestryenews.com

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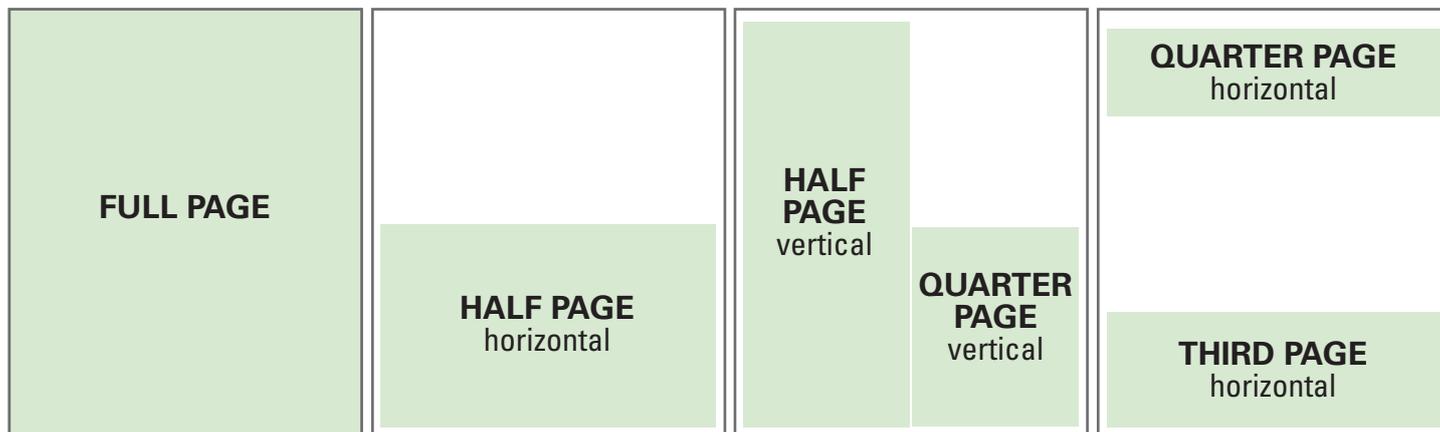
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