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‘We’re here for the long haul’, but a national building stimulus is critical

Governments must move now to fast-track projects in the pipeline

AUSTRALIA’S timber product suppliers say “we’re here for the long haul” during the COVID-19 pandemic, but industry leaders along with the nation’s builders are calling on federal and state governments to take steps now to stimulate an ongoing pipeline of projects.

The Australian Forest Products Association says a stimulus recovery package for the housing construction sector would counter the massive reduction in new house starts.

CEO Ross Hampton says Australia’s softwood timber processing industry supplies most of the renewable timber products for new houses and a substantial portion of



Housing... stimulus measures cannot wait.

multi-unit and commercial construction.

A survey of AFPA members has laid bare the massive impact COVID-19 will have on new house starts and forward orders. AFPA estimates the decline in sawn timber demand for sawmills will be more than 50% over the next six months.

“The housing construction sector is the engine room for growth and jobs in Australia’s economy, so a large recovery stimulus package focused

on increasing new housing demand immediately will positively impact jobs, businesses and communities right across the nation and support broad supply chains,” Mr Hampton said.

“Potential measures should include increasing new homeowners’ grants and other stimulus (for any new home built); bringing forward government-funded construction projects such as affordable housing commencements; and tax and

land price support.

“The package should also include streamlining regulation to make the new house construction process simpler and reduce the time between approvals and construction to optimise the new house construction project pipeline.”

In a message to members, Timber Queensland CEO Mick Stephens said there was no doubt COVID-19 and related restrictions and economic ramifications were negatively impacting and would continue to impact on the timber industry for some time.

Timber Queensland is working with state ministers, policy makers and regulators to ensure the building and construction industry remains open along with the timber industry supply chain as

Cont P 3

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From P 2

essential sectors of the economy.

"We are acutely aware that earlier predictions for an improvement in housing activity into 2020 have now changed as a consequence of the virus, with tightening finance, forecast falls in GDP and a decline in net population growth," Mr Stephens said.

"Forecasters such as the HIA are already predicting a national housing downturn in the order of at least 15% in 2019-20 through to 2020-21, with the impacts highly dependent upon the duration and extent of the shock.

"Other market intelligence suggests even higher shorter to medium-term falls in demand, particularly if action is not taken now by governments to arrest the expected decline as the pipeline of committed projects dries up."

Mr Stephens said on the upside, the crisis has put into focus the importance of economic diversification and supply chain resilience, with the shortcomings of an over-reliance on overseas suppliers and sources for many products becoming abundantly clear.

"Many governments are recognising the economic importance of strategic domestic assets and manufacturing infrastructure, and this will be an opportunity to reframe the debate around promoting domestic supply chains and further value adding," he said.

"This reminds me of the historic softwood forestry

TIMBER A PROUD AND RESILIENT INDUSTRY



Ross Hampton



Mick Stephens



Denita Wawn

agreements (i.e. concessional loans from the commonwealth to the states) from the 1970s onwards, which laid the foundation for government investment in the softwood plantation resource we have today.

"An underlying rationale for this large public investment was 'self-sufficiency' in wood supply and promoting regional development and timber production.

"Fortunately, we are a proud and resilient industry in Queensland, employing some 25,000 direct and indirect workers across the state, with an annual turnover in excess of \$3 billion. The timber industry has a strong value chain footprint, with wood processing and timber manufacturing accounting for around 85% of the 10,000 direct timber industry jobs.

"Only this week, Queensland was recognised as a global Advanced Manufacturing Hub by the World Economic Forum. The timber industry can play a stronger role in the state's manufacturing future, with the timber industry the third most valuable rural industry at the first point of processing after beef and sugar processing."

Master Builders Australia wants to fast-track government building projects as well as an increase to the commonwealth-funded First Home Loan Deposit Scheme.

The industry body conducted a survey that found nearly three-quarters of

respondents had lost 40% of their business because of the pandemic.

Chief executive Denita Wawn said the viability of some 400,000 businesses and 1.2 million workers was on the line.

"The situation is dangerous," she said.

"If urgent action is not taken our industry's role in the economic recovery will be severely blunted. Projects that began before the outbreak were providing some relief but new orders have fallen off a cliff."

Mrs Wawn said the government should expand eligibility for the home loan scheme to include anyone wanting to purchase new homes. State and territory governments should also accelerate the construction of social, defence and transport infrastructure projects.

"Our message to governments, is that we understand the enormity of the challenge they face but that these stimulus measures cannot wait," Ms Wawn said.

Meanwhile, on a brighter note, DIY shoppers have emptied Bunnings shelves of home improvement items during the coronavirus shutdown.

The hardware giant, which will stay open on "government advice," says as the reality of staying at home sunk in, customers poured in, snapping up products to get in some renovating and restoring.

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HQP land parcels sale makes way for a fresh SE Qld forest agreement

"THE current sale of land parcels from HQPlantations reflects a consequence from the Palaszczuk government's announcement in November last year to refresh the South-East Queensland Forest Agreement," Timber Queensland CEO Mick Stephens said.

Stage 1 of a disposal of HQP's hardwood plantations will be auctioned in Kingaroy today (Thursday) by Ray White. The sale of "multi-income properties" offers vacant possession for "timber, grazing or a return to cultivation and hardwood plantations undersown with improved pastures".

Timber Queensland cautiously welcomed



Private native forestry field trip during the 2018 Doing Timber Business in Queensland state conference. Photo: Timber Queensland

the announcement as an important first step toward recognising the need for resource security and the long-term future of the southeast Queensland native hardwood industry.

"In particular, the government acknowledged that the hardwood plantation program under the agreement was unsuccessful, and would not provide an alternative resource as intended, to support the transition to a plantation-based hardwood industry," Mr Stephens said.

"Accordingly, it was decided to draw that program to a close and hence HQPlantations is divesting some of those hardwood parcels it purchased from the state government in 2010 by way of a commercial sale process."

Mr Stephens said it was generally understood that a combination of issues led to the poor performance of the plantations.

"At the time planting commenced, large-scale native hardwood plantations were untested in Queensland," he said. "Planting locations were challenging to find as available land was typically of marginal soil quality and in areas of increasing climate variability. More suitable land was either already in use for agriculture or was too expensive to buy."

In terms of building future resource security for the hardwood industry, the government has announced the establishment of a timber advisory panel for making plans with industry for the future, which includes a two-year study into wood supply options from both crown forest land and private native forests.

"An important priority as part of this work will be to accelerate private native forestry management incentives and extension activities, to develop a more financially secure and long-term private timber resource," Mr Stephens said.

“ FINDING PLANTING LOCATIONS WAS A CHALLENGE

"A recent study, part funded by Forest and Wood Products Australia, has identified a sizeable private native forest resource in southern Queensland and northern New South Wales that with further management improvements could lift productivity and deliver an important source of timber supply.

"It will also be imperative to ensure that the relevant private native forestry regulatory code operating in Queensland remains a practical and cost-effective tool for landowners to implement good forest management."

HQP sustainably manages 330,000 ha of forests in Queensland, including softwood and hardwood plantations.

– JIM BOWDEN



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Industry allies call on National Cabinet to consider a six-step stimulus package

A GROUP of Australia's leading construction industry representative organisations is calling on the National Cabinet, representing state and federal governments, to consider the immediate implementation of a six-step stimulus plan to drive reinvigoration of the housing sector and secure regional employment through the construction supply chains.

The group, including the Frame and Truss Manufacturers Association, TABMA, the Timber Trade Industry Association and Timber Merchants Australia (MGATMA) represents timber processors, manufacturers and merchants throughout Australia.

TABMA CEO David Little said Australian governments had used construction and housing stimulus programs successfully for over a century to generate economic activity, jobs and residential accommodation during difficult times.

"The beauty of this approach is that it supports industries that can work



Rent-to-buy stimulus program... housing industry incentive.

through the current socio-economic restrictions and has a deep impact on supply chains, from plantation timber growers through to builders, with massive benefits for regional Australia," Mr Little said.

The proposed six-step program includes:

- Extending the first home-owners program to ensure confidence for first-home

“ PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR PRIVATE INVESTMENT ”

buyers, targeted at new construction.

- Allow the re-opening of display homes, under tight social isolation measures, to allow construction companies to keep selling.
- Remove or reduce stamp duty and/or land tax, particularly for new construction.
- Accelerate social housing construction programs, particularly in regional areas, with a focus on engaging small and medium-sized firms for construction.
- Provide incentives for private investment in the

construction of housing to support the NDIS, also freeing up health care facilities.

- Consider a rent-to-buy stimulus program, where the government owns the land and leases it to home builders with the option to buy.

TMA national membership manager Ann Sanfey said this was a potentially "huge" program.

"We are currently preparing detailed briefing material for each of the six policy recommendations," Ms Sanfey said. "It's important to note that we are not looking to reinvent the wheel here, we are asking governments to expand on existing policy mechanisms."

Brian Beecroft, CEO of TTIA, added: "What our organisations are suggesting works because it is far deeper reaching than just the immediate future of one small sector – if successful this simple six step plan can provide far reaching benefits

Cont P 6



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\$140m NSW bushfire recovery plan puts strong focus on forest industries

THE Australian Forest Products Association has welcomed this week's announcement by the NSW government that it will establish a \$140 million Bushfire Industry Recovery Package and ensuring a strong focus on the state's forest product industries damaged by the catastrophic fires.

Speaking on Sydney Radio 2GB, Deputy Premier and Minister responsible for Disaster Recovery John Barilaro said: "This will help the timber industries, the mills and haulage companies, to invest so they can actually get access to that burnt timber.

"A significant announcement, a \$140 million package supports jobs in agriculture, horticulture

“HELPING INDUSTRY TO INVEST



1/ Aftermath... Bathurst MP Paul Toole with NSW Disaster Recovery coordinator Euan Ferguson discuss the continuing bushfire clean up.
2/ John Barilaro... package will help timber industries, mills and haulage companies to gain access to burnt timber.

and timber so we can make sure there's a future for those sectors."

AFPA CEO Ross Hampton says the NSW government has provided a clear sign that primary industry and regional NSW is a priority, and our renewable forest product industries are an important part of that.

"The bushfires have had a devastating impact on all sectors of our industry, from forest growers to harvest contractors to hardwood and softwood timber processing and manufacturing," he said.

"In areas like the Tumut-Tumbarumba region, the



softwood timber industry is the major economic driver. The fires, combined with the current COVID-19 crisis, are causing a major slowdown in sales of timber for construction, which is affecting those regional communities. This package could be the shot in the arm that's needed to help

recover."
 Mr Hampton said the package would also support the hardwood timber industry

along the coast affected by the bushfires, which is also struggling. The forest products industries are mostly based in regional NSW, and when they are affected negatively, the communities who directly rely on them for jobs feel the pain as well. This package may be aimed at industry, but its relief will flow on to everyone.

"We will urgently engage with the NSW government on how the funding will be distributed, and I look forward to seeing the recovery package implemented quickly," Mr Hampton said.

From P 5

through timber supply chains, as well as taking pressure of the stretched health system and addressing some clear community welfare needs in relation to social and disability housing."

The plan comes on the back of recent analysis by the Housing Industry Association which shows the housing construction sector is facing



Kersten Gentle David Little Brian Beecroft Ann Sanfey

an unprecedented decline, with peak forestry body, the Australian Forest products Association, also calling for an urgent recovery package.

FTMA CEO Kersten Gentle said the payment supplements were a great start. "However, we need to build the economy by

getting people back at work; we need housing and we have opportunities to generate improved outcomes for regional and at-risk Australians.

"This plan for a comprehensive construction industry stimulus ticks all the boxes to support economic recovery as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic," Ms Gentle said.

JUNE

11: Innovation in Action Conference – Wellington, NZ. Virtual conference online. Register interest at www.colabprefabnz.com

SEPTEMBER

1-3: DANA New Zealand Forest Industry Status and Outlook Conference and field trip – Emerald Hotel, Gisborne, New Zealand. For further information see: www.danaevents.co.nz/2020gisborne/ or contact Julie Bell admin@dana.co.nz

5: 2020 Queensland Timber Industry Awards Dinner – Brisbane, QLD, Australia.

OCTOBER

21st Australian Timber Design Awards – Sydney, NSW, Australia (date and venue to be advised). Entries close June 1. Voting for the People’s Choice Award is open from August to September.

Visit the new awards website for information and registration instructions. www.timberdesignawards.com.au

23: 2020 TABMA National Awards Dinner – Sydney, NSW, Australia.

30: Green Triangle Timber Industry Awards POSTPONED – Barn Palais, Mount Gambier, SA, Australia. Nominations open 1 June 2020 and close

14 August 2020. For more information visit: www.gttia.com/

MARCH 2021

17-19: Doing Timber Business in Queensland – Hotel Marriott and Howard Smith Wharves, Brisbane, QLD, Australia. State conference, workshops, innovation tour and gala dinner organised by Timber Queensland. Visit www.doingtimberbusinessinql.com

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MAY

13-14: Quebec Forest Industry Council 2018 Convention – Quebec City, Canada. Covering the interests of softwood and hardwood sawing, peeling, pulp, paper, cardboard and panels and manufacturers of engineered wood products. For additional information visit www.cifq.qc.ca

19-20: FastMarkets – RISI-DANA 7th annual Forest Investment Conference – POSTPONED. Visit www.risiinfo.com/events/ for update.

SEPTEMBER

27-30: Council on Forest Engineering Annual Meeting – POSTPONED. Visit www.cofe.org for update.

OCTOBER

21-23: Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) Annual Conference – Vancouver, BC, Canada. The 2020 SFI Annual Conference will be focused on how

forests can make a difference when it comes to so many of the most important sustainability challenges faced in the forest sector and communities. For additional information see: sficonference.org

NOVEMBER

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

DECEMBER

7-9: 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 December 7 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

JANUARY 2021

11-14 : 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/

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



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Prefab industry set to help with quick rebuild after summer bushfire damage

Understanding of factory-built houses is clearly growing in Australia

PREFABRICATED homes manufactured in a factory and assembled and built much faster onsite than conventional homes could be the option for thousands of people seeking to rebuild after the summer bushfires.

Craig Chatman, director of Melbourne prefab company ARKit Design Studio and Workshop, says it's still too early for most people to be thinking about rebuilding but he is expecting calls over the next 12 months once sites have been cleaned up and cleared for contaminants.

Mr Chatman says prefab has a key role to play in rebuilding

KEEPING COSTS DOWN AND QUALITY UP



Prefabricated timber wall, floor and roof systems... for those who can quickly access insurance payments, houses can be built and delivered in 12-20 weeks. Photo: Carbonite

efforts post-bushfires as it "keeps costs down and quality up." There's also the advantage of avoiding the 'chaos' of traditional construction methods on a sensitive bushfire site.

It can also be cheaper, depending on how bespoke customers want to go. Reporting in architecture,

design and engineering e-newsletter Sourceable, Mr Chatman says modular construction can be below market rates if customers opt for something off-the-shelf, but the greater the customisation, the more customers can expect to pay.

The company has signed up to Architects Assist, an

initiative of the Australian Institute of Architects, if they want to offer pro bono design services to people affected by the fires.

The company is offering a catalogue of standardised designs as part of its bushfire recovery program and hopes to offer a completely free design and documentation solution for people affected by bushfires once it gets its consultants and other subcontractors on board.

According to sustainable prefabricated home provider Ecoliving, understanding of the prefab sector is clearly growing and marketing director Esme Beaumont says there has been a growing number of inquiries from bushfire-affected people interested

Cont P 9

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From P 8

to rebuild, particularly from those who've lost homes in remote areas that construction workers will struggle to access.

Victorian-based offsite construction company Archiblox has also signed up to Architects Assist. The company has had calls from customers, in particular from Mallacoota and Gippsland in Victoria, and the southern coast of NSW.

Spokeswoman Christine McCorkell says she expects a further influx of interest as local tradespeople are stretched to their limits.

For those who can quickly access insurance payments, houses can be built and delivered in 12-20 weeks, she says.

The ability of prefab suppliers to pump out quality homes at volume is also an advantage.

"So, for communities that have been completely devastated, prefabricated production of homes and buildings could see these towns get back on their feet much faster than your standard on-site build," Ms McCorkell said.

"Also clients are showing more concern about bushfire-resistant design."



Craig Chatman... advantages in avoiding the 'chaos' of traditional construction.

The company, along with the other offsite construction providers, is capable of building a home that passes the highest Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) rating.

ARKit's Craig Chatman says the market is waking up to the benefits of prefab, including its sustainability perks as an ultra-low waste, quality-assured construction method that produces energy-efficient buildings thanks to an airtight envelope.

Sustainable materials, such as carbon-storing timber, are common in prefab buildings, he says.

“WAKING UP TO BENEFITS OF PREFAB BUILDINGS”



Christine McCorkell..... prefab suppliers have the ability to pump out quality homes at volume.

The BAL system, introduced after the 2009 Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission, gives properties in bushfire prone areas a rating from 'low' to 'flame zone', determining design and construction requirements.

Meanwhile, backpackers will be able to help rebuild efforts after the bushfires under federal government changes



Esme Beaumont... growing number of inquiries to re-build after bushfires.

to visa rules.

The changes mean backpackers living and working in bushfire zones can stay with the same employer for a year instead of six months.

Construction work in disaster zones will count as work under the new rules designed to support farmers and regional businesses.

Responsible Wood's new PEFC website

RESPONSIBLE Wood has launched a new 'PEFC Australia' website promoting PEFC forest certification in Australia.

Marketing and communications officer Jason Ross said the new website drew on the global reach of

PEFC as the world's largest forest certification scheme and highlighted the important role of Responsible Wood as the PEFC governing body in Australia,

PEFC celebrated its 20th anniversary last year.

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Club's \$9800 gift to children's hospice

DONATIONS to children's charities have dropped considerably as needy fund-raising events are postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A supporter of these charities since its formation in 1963 – with donations of cash and building materials since then totalling close to \$1 million – timber industry service institution Brisbane Hoo-Hoo Club 218 has again stepped up to the cause.

The club, which recently went into recess, has donated more than \$9800, the bulk of its remaining funds for charity, to Hummingbird House, Queensland's only children's hospice.

The facility in Brisbane provides short stays, family support services, creative therapies and care at the end of life for children with life-limiting conditions and their families.

"Hummingbird House is a place where kids can be

“A PLACE WHERE KIDS CAN BE KIDS”



1/ Safe distancing in place... Andrea Coe, acting CEO at Hummingbird House, with the \$9800 Hoo-Hoo cheque presented on behalf of members by Jim Bowden, Club 218 life member, and Don Towerton, Thora Wholesale Timbers and former club secretary and treasurer.



2/ Precious moment... Anna du Preez and her husband with twin babies Archie and Henry.

kids, families can reconnect, and precious memories can be created," said acting CEO Andrea Coe who was presented with the Hoo-Hoo cheque this week.

Club 218 directors learnt of some special cases when they visited the centre, like the story of baby Archie.

Mum Jenna du Preez recalls the day her boys

But Archie was born with a chronic lung disease.

"Even with such a devastating diagnosis, Archie was determined to follow his own path," his mother said.

"Archie defied the odds at every turn," Jenna said. "He survived the first weekend, first few weeks and then our first Christmas together as a family of four. We were lucky enough to be able to spend five and a half months getting to know our little superhero before he lost the battle.

"You know the outcome is never going to be in your favour. To have a dedicated, caring and thoughtful team helping you through what would be the most difficult time in your life was just wonderful."

Brisbane Hoo-Hoo Club, like many other social and service clubs, has seen membership and club events gradually decline over the past 12 months. However, the club hopes to "come out of mothballs" sometime in the future.

In these unprecedented times, the club's motto has significant relevance: "Health, Happiness and Long Life."



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Gottstein Trust welcomes new trustee

THE Gottstein board of trustees has announced the appointment of Cara Pearson as a trustee of the J.W. Gottstein Memorial Trust Fund.

Ms Pearson joins the six existing trustees – Nils Gunnensen, Brian Farmer, Suzette Weeding, James Malone, Carlie Porteous and John Simon.

“Cara has a long history with the South Australian timber industry and it’s very pleasing to have a person who is based at the Green Triangle join the trust,” the chair of the Gottstein board of trustees John Simon said.

Cara Pearson has worked with OneFortyOne for several years in Mt Gambier and before that with Forestry SA. She is a member of the Australian leadership team for OneFortyOne’s diverse

operations. Her current position is manager, contracts and legal support, and she has a law degree.

OneFortyOne was formed in 2012 following the acquisition of a 105-year lease of 80,000 ha of plantation assets from the South Australian government.

Gottstein Trust administrator Helen Murray said the COVID19 pandemic had impacted the trust in a range of ways.

First came the postponement of its popular ‘Understanding Wood Science’ course, now re-scheduled from June this year to March 2021. The program and details can be found following the links at www.gottsteintrust.org.

Helen Murray said that



New Gottstein trustee... Cara Pearson of OneFortyOne.

the three outstanding candidates who received Gottstein fellowships this year – Laurence Ritchie, Evan Dunstone and Marcus Strang – were unable to leave Australia for their respective international study tours.

“The management team is liaising with these fellows with a view to resuming their tours in 2021,” she said.

“We are hopeful about travel restrictions being lifted by then - but of course it’s out of all our hands.”

The Gottstein trust is approaching 50 years of operations and trustees are very mindful of continuing the legacy of J.W. Gottstein to provide opportunity for the further development of people’s skills and knowledge, for the benefit of the industry.

The late Bill Gottstein was a forest products research scientist working for CSIRO. He was held in such high esteem by the industry that an educational fund was created to perpetuate his name. The Gottstein Trust Fund has since assisted in the funding of more than 110 fellows, among them some of the most prominent executives in the industry today.

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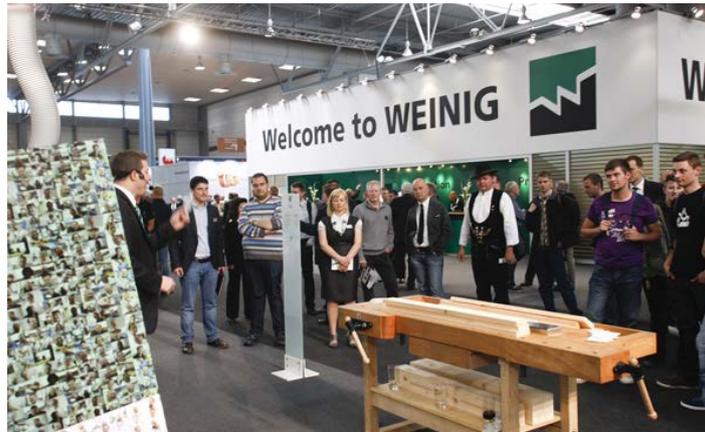
2021 shapes as blockbuster for events

THE popular Green Triangle Timber Industry Awards are the latest events casualty of COVID-19.

“While we recognise the disappointment of the many individuals that support the forestry industry in the Green Triangle, the decision was not made lightly,” chairman Adrian Flowers said.

“We are committed to ensuring the awards take place in 2021, which once again will recognise the individuals and companies in the Green Triangle for their dedication to best practise, continuous improvement and excellence in their respective roles and businesses.

“The awards seek to benefit the region’s timber industry through uniting industry players to support the attraction of skilled employees



LIGNA 2021... world's largest fair for forestry and wood industries.

and encouraging them to continuously lift the standard of the skill base of the timber workforce.”

Visit www.gttia.com or email info@gttia.com

Among industry events postponed or transferring to 2021 post-COVID-19 are: the massive AUSTimber machinery exhibition in

Victoria’s Latrobe Valley; the AWISA wood machinery exhibition in Sydney; FRAME Australia in Melbourne; Timber Queensland’s Doing Timber Business in Queensland conference in Brisbane; Australasian Packaging Conference in Melbourne and the Trucking Australia 2020 conference in Cairns.

The AFPA members’ dinner and awards night in Canberra will now be held in 2021, which will mark the 10th anniversary of AFPA.

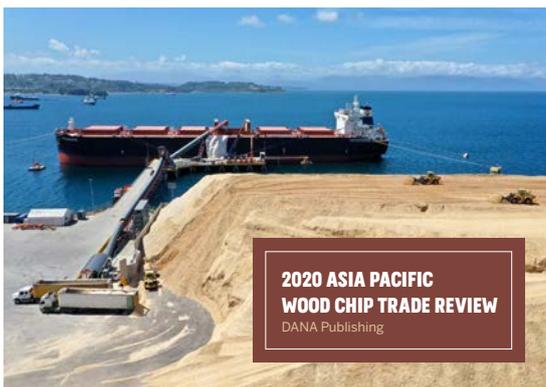
The Gottstein Understanding Wood Science course will be moved to March next year (see Page 11). The program and details are linked at www.gottsteintrust.org.

The Queensland Timber Pioneers luncheon and presentations will move to August next year, and Hoo-Hoo International has postponed its Jurisdiction 4 convention and 50th year celebrations in Malaysia.

Next year will also have to fit in LIGNA 2021, the world’s largest fair for the forestry and wood industries, to be held in Hannover, Germany, from May 5 to 14.

2020 ASIA PACIFIC WOODCHIP TRADE REVIEW

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Sustainability, cost advantage key drivers for domestic wood supply

Structural engineer big believer in zero carbon building for NZ

MICHAEL SMITH

ANDY Van Houtte (CPEng), structural manager at CGW consulting engineers in Nelson, describes himself as a “big believer in a zero carbon building policy for New Zealand”.

He says that obviously gives timber a clear competitive advantage, although he doesn't necessarily rule out other materials that may be more suited to certain applications.

Under the auspices of the Wood Processors and Manufacturers Association, Mr Van Houtte has been managing the ongoing development of 16 timber design guides. They fulfil the need for standardised, quality information to help the construction sector design and approve timber structures using the many engineered timber solutions now available.

The nine topics covered to date include design for fire safety, the consenting process for timber buildings, explaining the varied properties of timber species, and designing for prefabrication.

Just released is ‘Costing Timber Buildings’, which talks of going beyond the lowest price mentality in determining when it is appropriate to quantify the sustainability benefits, health and safety and program efficiencies in the use of engineered timber solutions. According to Mr Van Houtte, the metrics outlined in this latest guide break new ground for developers and quantity surveyors ... and will be added to in future editions.



1

He says New Zealand has a lot of intellectual property involving timber design ... “and the WPMA is keen to provide a one-stop shop for developers, architects, engineers and the wider industry, in the form of freely available peer-reviewed information.

“That way, we can deliver a clear framework for everyone to understand the relative advantages of different aspects of timber construction, and how to maximise a project's structural integrity and cost effectiveness while still complying with NZ standards and the building code.”

Mr Van Houtte is encouraged by the increasing uptake of engineered timber in the commercial sector and the knowledge base now available to create standardised

“GOING BEYOND THE LOWEST PRICE MENTALITY”



3



2

1/ **Concision House... digital manufacturing mindset from the beginning.** Photo: Concision Panelised Technology

2/ **Offsite prefabrication of Concision House ... understanding the efficiencies of each wood product.**

Photo: Concision Panelised Technology

3/ **Andy Van Houtte... no shortage of manufacturers willing to adapt and supply.** Photo: WPMA

solutions. “We are seeing a number of trends emerge

as the sector embraces different methods: all-timber buildings, hybrid approaches, and combining engineered timber products with digital fabrication technologies.”

He acknowledges that a large number of buildings are designed and built in a bespoke manner ... “which makes it tough for manufacturers to gear up and offer economies of scale.

“But if we, as designers, can create a market for engineered timber, there is no shortage of manufacturers willing to adapt and supply. We just need to give more attention to design for manufacture and assembly ... which is covered in the Designing for Prefabrication guide.”

As a judge for the recent NZ Wood-Resene Timber Design Awards, Mr Van Houtte noted an increase in prefabricated

and panelised designs, both in mass timber and cassette form – as well as some post and beam formats giving strong consideration to design and manufacturing assembly processes.

“Concision House, the winner of the Engineered Wood Products Innovation category, showed a comprehensive understanding of the efficiencies of each wood product and a digital manufacturing mindset from the beginning of the process,” he said. “It's the understanding of engineered wood products and how to apply them in digital fabrication that results in such a high quality build.”

He says buying locally will be an inevitable by-product of the COVID-19 lockdown, but added: “I don't think it will be a primary driver of a domestic increase in wood construction projects. The key drivers will be sustainability and the cost effectiveness of timber solutions.”

Story of human faces in the forest and one man's lasting love of trees

PEFC roams the globe to film the positive outcomes of certification

THE governing body in Australia for PEFC International – Responsible Wood – is scanning the world for positive stories about forests.

Meet José Daniel Cáceres, a forester for 40 years in Chile who has never lost his love for trees.

This is a new instalment in the PEFC video series Humans of the Forests which tells fascinating stories of people around the globe who are in touch with forests and timber in their daily lives.

In the second instalment of the series José Daniel's talks about his early years in forestry:

"Back then, we used oxen and horses for logging. Working in the forest was dangerous," he remembers, thinking back to his first years in the job.

"That was 15 years ago when everything started to become more modern. Today, we have safety equipment, better camps and better transportation."

José says: "I like the forest because it's so peaceful.

“FOREST HAVE GIVEN ME A FAMILY AND AN EDUCATION FOR OUR CHILDREN



Meeting humans who are passionate about forests... the PEFC globe-trotting video team shares the passion of real people dedicated to real forests.

When I'm in the forest, I listen to the wind and the birds, and I feel free.

The forest has given José a lot of experience, knowledge and a steady job.

"The forest has given me my salary to support my family and to educate my children," he says. "Thanks to the forest I have my house and my home. I'm very happy with the forest."

By harvesting trees for a living in a sustainable way, José Daniel works toward the UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth.

The rights of forest workers like José Daniel are at the heart of PEFC certification, which not only ensures that forest-based material comes from a sustainable source, but also protects the rights of workers along the entire

production process.

All PEFC's national standards include the commitment to equal treatment of workers and must be compliant with all fundamental conventions for worker rights of the International Labour Organisation.

The Chile Green Building Council signed three collaborative agreements that promote sustainability in the construction sector. One of them is with CerforChile, a national member of PEFC.

The aim of this agreement is to promote the use of PEFC-certified wood in construction projects and to stimulate the demand of these products in the national market. It will also play an important role in expanding the knowledge and recognition of PEFC certification among sawmills and wood retail companies.

The forests in Chile cover 15,647,900 ha, which represents 20.8% of the land area. Forest plantations extend over 2,118,800 ha. From this total, 1,387,000 ha are radiata pine (75.6%); 308,800 ha are eucalyptus species (16.8%), and the balance other species.

Over the past four decades or so the government has either directly or indirectly supported plantation development in the

country by means of a range of incentives to encourage plantation establishment and value-added wood processing.

Radiata pine is central to Chile's forest-based industries generating 85% of the production value, and annually harvesting more than 18 million cub m of logs creating a net value of primary production equivalent to \$2400 million. Of this amount, 63% is exported in a range of products including sawm timber, plywood, engineered products and furniture.

Eucalypts plantations are utilised mainly for pulp and paper production.

To hear the full stories, head to YouTube and meet the Humans of the Forests

On the cover: Chilean forest veteran José Daniel Cáceres has never lost his love for the forests.

Research paper shows prescribed burns do save lives, property and biodiversity

A NEW research paper released ahead of the Bushfires Royal Commission argues prescribed burning can save lives, property and biodiversity.

The research has been strongly welcomed by the Institute of Foresters Australia and Australian Forest Growers (IFA/AFG).

Morgan et al.'s Prescribed Burning in South-eastern Australia: History and Future Directions concludes that: "As the climate in south-eastern Australia becomes warmer and drier, it is more urgent than ever that appropriate strategies are in place, with a strong emphasis on prescribed burning, for the year-round management of fire-prone forests on public and private lands."

Such strategies could create a mosaic forest estate ranging from recently burnt to long unburnt, thereby providing the greatest chance of maintaining biodiversity while simultaneously reducing risks to lives and property and the costs of emergency and disaster relief, the research paper says.

IFA/AFG president Bob



1/ Appropriate strategies... research puts strong emphasis on prescribed burning for the year-round management of forests on public and private lands.

2/ Bob Gordon... burning as a bushfire mitigation tool is more important than ever.



Gordon said prescribed burning as a bushfire mitigation tool was more important than ever if Australia was to avoid a repeat of the catastrophic bushfires experienced across much of the nation last summer.

"The IFA/AFG has long advocated for the merits of prescribed burning and will continue to do so in order to protect the lives and properties of Australians and the future of our forests," Mr Gordon said.

"Fire as a land management tool has been used since

ancient times in Australia, and it remains a key tool in the face of climate change.

"As the nation continues to experience warmer and drier conditions the potential for out-of-control bushfires will only increase if the land and forest fuel levels are not proactively managed.

"While nothing will stop intense bushfires, reduced fuel levels enable fire-fighters to control more fires faster and reduce the amount burned."

Mr Gordon said remarks which suggest prescribed

fuel reduction burning was not an effective or necessary forest management tool were dangerous and short-sighted.

"It may not be the perfect solution, but when used in

conjunction with other bushfire mitigation measures it greatly assists the broader land management process," he said.

"From experience, even

when bushfires are burning under extreme conditions, reduced fuel levels provide a substantial benefit in reducing fire severity sufficiently to lessen impacts to wildlife, soil and water values in comparison to the impacts of the same fire burning through heavy fuel loads."

The IFA/AFG has urged the Bushfire Royal Commission to consider the findings of the research paper as it looks into how to better prepare the nation to avoid a repeat of last summer's tragic circumstances.

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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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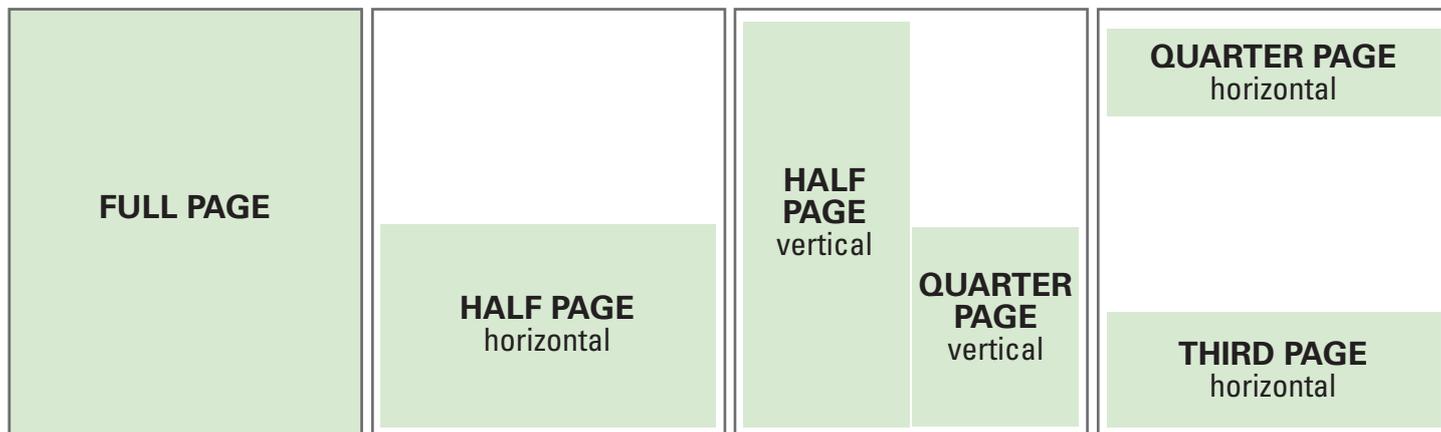
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