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Back to the drawing board on supply for Australian architects and designers

ARCHITECTS across Australia are getting busier as the economy and building sector moves into recovery, a new survey has found.

The survey by the Association of Consulting Architects involved responses from 366 design and architecture practices.

Of the 330 firms that responded to a question about current workload, almost two-thirds (65%) said they were either moderately busy or very busy.

This was almost three times the 22% whose practices were either quiet or very quiet, the survey found.

Meanwhile, more than a quarter of all firms now had more than six months' worth of work on their books. By contrast, only 12% needed more work right now.

Additional comments from responding firms reflect

mostly positive experiences. While some firms talk of 'zero pulse', others talk of 'momentum building' and 'working at 225% capacity'.

One firm described the broader construction market as being in 'complete overdrive'.

Benefits are flowing through into hiring activity and improvements in firms' financial positions. Improving conditions are leading to more hiring, fewer reductions in work hours and fewer redundancies.

All up, more than half (175) of the 329 practices who responded have taken on new staff over the past year. This includes 58 students, 105 graduates, 81 mid-career practitioners, 58 experienced practitioners and 11 people in other roles.

While 73% of practices accessed JobKeeper, only 6% have reduced staff



Architects are busy... but where's the wood?

building materials, especially timber and steel, is an acute and worsening problem with many designs for residential homes languishing on the drawing board.

Indeed, to quote one industry source: "Of the 10 spots of concern, the shortage of

timber takes up 11 of those spots!"

While conditions in commercial and multi-residential building have softened, the number of new dwellings being approved in detached residential construction has been running at record levels. In response, practices have shifted their focus.

Largely speaking, the stronger conditions reflect a broader strengthening in the building market which has been driven by measures such as HomeBuilder and government investment in social housing.

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Builders still want timber: industry responds to unprecedented demand

Technology upgrades, mill expansions will help boost supply in Queensland

RESPONDING to the recent housing construction frenzy in Queensland, the state's timber industry is investing in technology and additional capacity to maximise timber volumes for the market.

Timber Queensland's CEO Mick Stephens says the industry is doing everything possible to increase supply in an overheated housing construction market, with some businesses forecast to double production volumes in the near future.

"Prior to the surge in demand a number of our members were already planning mill upgrades," Mr Stephens said.

"These projects have been brought forward, at the same time as processing record numbers of logs and implementing equitable volume planning to support their partners.

“SOFTWOOD SAWN SALES HIT 3.1M CUB M AT THE END OF FEBRUARY

"Technology upgrades and mill expansions across the state will assist in boosting local supply. Hyne Timber, for example, is currently removing a production bottleneck at its Tuan mill in Maryborough by installing a new continuous drying kiln which will see a significant lift in output. This increase will also help to lift production at Hyne's new glulam factory in Maryborough.



Hyne's new continuous drying kiln will significantly lift production at the company's new glulam factory in Maryborough. Pictured at the glulam plant are Ella Douglass, Andrea Frost, Aimee Burns and Jess Wixon.

"Softwood sawmiller AKD is increasing its production by at least 50% from July 1 when the Caboolture site moves to two shifts. AKD recently executed a long-term log contract in Queensland with HQPlantations for additional logs and is installing the latest technology in continuous kiln drying which will see the Caboolture site increase in capacity again from July 2022."

Mr Stephens said DTM Timber in southeast Queensland and the Simms Group in North Queensland had also invested in finger-jointed timber production lines to improve resource recovery and production of structural building products.

Nationally annual softwood sawn sales hit more than 3.1 million cub m at the end of February and was 10% higher than the previous

year, in response to heightened demand.

"This increase in timber production includes Queensland producers who fortunately have not been affected by the impacts of the recent bushfires in New South Wales," Mr Stephens said.

"The supply issues being experienced by

Cont P 4

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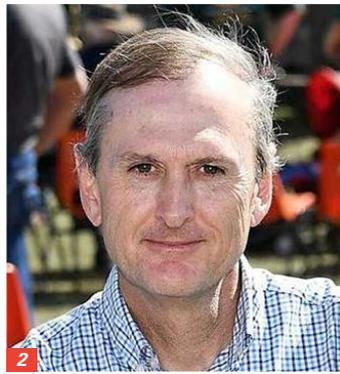
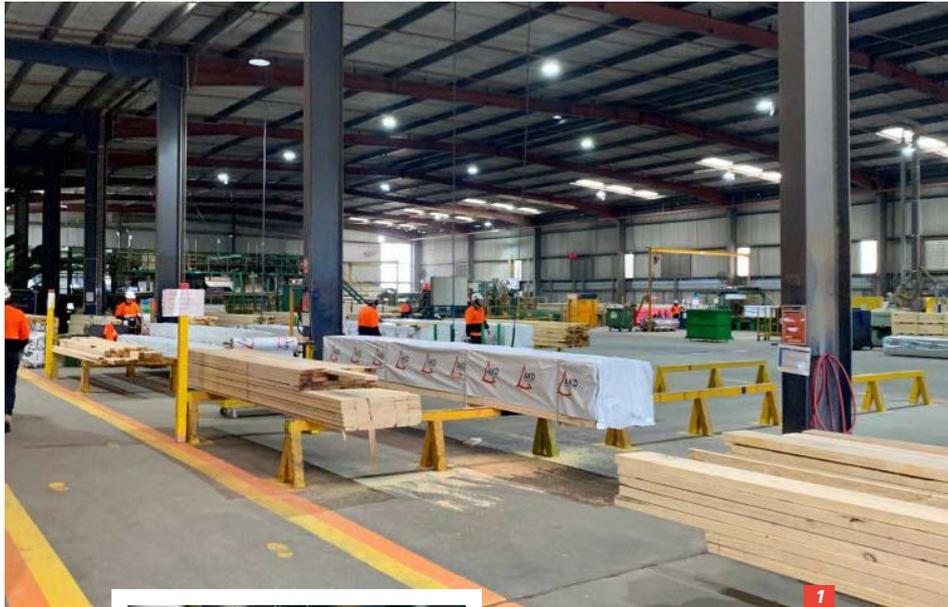


From P 3

builders with many materials and trades has been called a 'perfect storm', in terms of the surge in demand from the Homebuilder program, low interest rates, a rise in interstate migration and Covid supply chain disruptions affecting imports.

"In 2020, the timber industry and allied building and construction bodies welcomed the HomeBuilder program to keep the economy running and avoid a collapse of the sector.

"This helped to support many thousands of jobs in construction, including in local timber manufacturing



1/ AKD Softwood moving to a double shift at its Caboolture site from July.

2/ Mick Stephens... the Queensland timber industry has provided a base security of supply in the face of global trade shocks.

which supports many regional communities.

The issue has been the intense uptake of new approvals within such a short period of time."

Queensland has seen a net inflow of around 30,000 people from interstate in 2020, with housing activity forecast at 25,000 new dwellings in 2020-21 and renovations at a 10-year high.

SCARCITY OF IMPORTS TO CONTINUE

Mr Stephens said that despite the shortages, feedback from builders and consumers is that they still want to work with timber.

"This unprecedented surge in housing activity has shown how critical and important timber really is for the economy, given the prevalence of timber-framed houses and timber cladding and flooring products in our

homes," he said.

"Timber Queensland and other industry leaders have consistently called on governments to support timber industry supply chains and better incentivise new tree plantations so we can keep up with rising population growth and long-term demand.

"In Queensland, the local timber industry would typically supply around 70% of demand, with the balance from imports. Given the high prices paid in overseas markets, and challenges with shipping price increases and shortages of containers, there is an increased scarcity of imports."

Timber merchants and wholesalers have been scrambling to source imports in a tough trading environment, particularly for laminated veneer lumber.

To that end, the local timber industry has provided a base security of supply in the face of global trade shocks," Mr Stephens said.

"The challenges for timber are also visible right now because timber framing is early in the build cycle, so the demand surge has hit this building material first on the back of new housing starts."

Timber Queensland encourages all builders and construction chain partners to work closely with their suppliers and clients to accommodate these pressures, and to minimise their exposure to the impacts of the demand surge.

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The koala warrior is at it again on the big screen

Fallacies on forests ad-nauseam

JIM BOWDEN

COMING to a theatre near you ... the Koala Warrior vs the Wicked Forester.

Popped into a cinema at the weekend with my granddaughter to catch Peter Rabbit 2 the Movie – but not before NRMA's new production of 'Every Home Is Worth Protecting' rolled across the 38 m x 22 m IMAX screen.

You know the one ... it's the story about the "grim future facing one of Australia's most loved wildlife marsupials," a future filled with Terminator-like machines chewing up forests and swallowing koala habitats.

Last month, Forest Industries House in Canberra dashed off a letter to Nick Hawkins, managing director and chief executive of IAG Ltd, Australia's largest insurance company and owner of the NRMA household protection brand. It was countersigned by seven forest industry CEOs.

They sought clarification and amendment of misleading, incorrect, and potentially deceptive information about



Healthy koalas survive in healthy well-managed forests.

timber production in NRMA's advertising campaign.

The thrust of the letter was that scientific evidence shows the biggest causes of koala population decline are loss of habitat from urban expansion, bushfires, car strikes, wild dogs and disease.

The industry letter added: "Science shows that timber harvesting has no impact on koala prevalence. The [NRMA] campaign misleads the community about what is a responsible and strictly regulated industry. Many of our members have contacted

us to express their confusion, dismay and disappointment with the campaign and have indicated a strong desire to change insurers because of it"

A letter from Julie Batch, group executive, direct insurance, NRMA, responded on behalf of Mr Hawkins: "Every Home is Worth Protecting is a long-running

“DESIGNED TO WORK AS AN EMOTIONAL BRAND CAMPAIGN

and successful campaign which draws on the need to protect the homes of our vulnerable national icon, the koala, as a simple metaphor for home insurance.

"It is designed to work as an emotional brand campaign; we are not taking any stance on environmentalism,

deforestation or the impact of any industry on the plight of koalas.

"Your letter was accompanied by examples of materials you found problematic from our campaign landing site (koalahelp.nrma.com.au). These pages were part of a long-form article that was a supporting element of our campaign to provide our customers with the opportunity to read more about the issues facing koalas.

Cont P 6



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From P 5

“The article was commissioned and written by an independent journalist (which we often do for long-form content on our website).”

And, wait for it ... Ms Batch says the journalist’s views do not represent the views of the NRMA brand nor the IAG business.

Then who employed this scribe?

Ms Batch went on: “We acknowledge the concerns raised in your letter and took immediate action to address them, namely, we removed

“ WRAPPING RED RIBBONS AROUND CONDEMNED TREES



Sammy on the trail of nasty foresters.

the three sections of the article that reference logging, that you highlighted, and reposted it. If you check the site again, you will see that the content has changed.”

But not for the better!

The ‘new’ message from NRMA prior to the Peter Rabbit movie, and to an audience of mostly young children, shows koala warrior Sammy and his school friend Ruby spying with field glasses

on a bunch of dodgy and shadowy extras in hard hats and high-viz yellow costumes wrapping red ribbons around ‘condemned’ trees.

After a while, and after despondent Sammy and Ruby tearfully stroke some trees, the perpetrators drive off in a truck, supposedly to tag more trees for a similar fate.

Now let’s start with the tagged trees in question on the NRMA site. Not one

of them would approach anywhere near 40 cm dbh. No real forester would touch them under the code of practice for native forest logging. The stems wouldn’t pass the test. Also, all the skinny and marked trees were in a row, side by side, tagged and supposedly ready for harvesting.

Then on NRMA’s landing site, a Doctor Phillips tells us he has “a number of plans”. The site says the doctor is a seasoned fire fighter and he wants to see green fighting teams specifically tasked with saving areas which have been identified and treated as being rich in biodiversity.

He says we need to identify the populations that have

Cont P 14



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JUNE

16-18: TABMA National Conference – Oaks Cypress Lakes Resort, Hunter Valley, NSW. Celebrating our 80th year, the conference will aim to “honour our past, treasure the present and shape the future” of our industry. Our daytime sessions will concentrate on “shaping the future,” with keynote speaker Claire Madden talking Generation Z. Gala dinner “honouring our past and treasuring the present.” Includes the 2020 Andrew Bone TABMA Member of The Year, TABMA Industry Legends and Trainee and Apprentice Member of The Year awards. For more information or to book visit [https:// tabma.com.au/2021-national\[1\]conference/](https://tabma.com.au/2021-national[1]conference/) or contact Alicia Oelkers at

alicia@tabma.com.au

SEPTEMBER

1: Australian Forest Products Association Gala Dinner and Symposium – Parliament House, Canberra, ACT. For further information see: www.ausfpa.com.au

OCTOBER

11-14: IFA/AFG national conference ‘Your Forests, Our Future’ – Country Club Tasmania, Launceston, TAS, Australia. Open to forest scientists, forestry professionals and forest growers. Call for abstracts and sponsorship opportunities will be released in coming months. Contact Institute of Foresters of Australia. Visit www.forestry.org.au or phone (03) 9695 8940.

NOVEMBER

10-13: AUSTimber 2021 – Gormandale in eastern Victoria between Yarram and Traralgon. Nov. 10: Field trips. Nov. 11: Field trips (site visits by invitation). Welcome dinner. Nov. 12: Show day (9 am - 5 pm). Nov. 13: Show day (9 am - 3 pm). Contact Dionne Olsen on +61 429 202 929 or email austimber2020@afca.asn.au

14-19: 2021 Gottstein Trust Understanding Wood Science Course – Albury, NSW. November 14-15 based in Albury with field trips to northern Victoria. November 16-19: Guest lectures and field trip, then relocate by coach to Canberra for three days including a laboratory day

and guest lectures at ANU, and a formal course dinner celebrating 50th Anniversary of the trust. Detailed information, registration and the draft program: <https://gottsteintrust.org/course/wood-science-courses/>

16-17: Frame Australia Timber Offsite Construction – Crown Promenade Melbourne, VIC. New global ‘hybrid’ format will retain avital face to face element. Choose from a selection of half-day and full-day programs. Virtual delegates can register for just one or more conference sessions.

For further information and registration visit the website www.timberoffsiteconstruction.com



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JUNE

15-16: Carbon Forestry Conference – Rotorua, New Zealand. Changes to legislation in relation to climate change and emissions trading, including carbon farming investment opportunities. For further information see: <https://carbonforestry.events/>

29-1: WoodEX for Africa – Gallagher Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa. Long established as the gateway to Africa's timber trade, WoodEX for Africa 2021 will be the ultimate machinery, tools and supplies gathering in Africa. Held in conjunction with the 2nd Deck & Flooring Expo and co-located with Africa's biggest construction expo, African Construction Expo. For further information see: <https://woodexforafrica.com/>

JULY

2-4: Foire De Libramont 2021 – Libramont Exhibition & Congress, Rue des Aubépines, 50 B-6800 Libramont, Belgium. The Libramont agricultural, forestry and agri-food fair is a huge outdoor exhibition that offers a showcase for the rural world in all its many shapes and forms (machinery, livestock breeding, forestry, the agri-food industry, horticulture, study, and R&D). For further information see: <http://www.libramont-exhibition.com/>

7-11: New Forest Folk Festival – Powells Farm, Salisbury Road, Plaitford, Romsey, UK. For further information see: www.newforestfolkfestival.co.uk

23-26: The International Forest Festival – Feanadock National Forest, Leicestershire, UK. Music, forests, art and ideas. For further information see: <https://timberfestival.org.uk/>

AUGUST

9-12: World Conference on Timber Engineering – Santiago, Chile. Uruguay XXI will host as part of its strategy to promote investments in the forestry and wood sector. This is the first time this event is held in South America and will be hosted by the Chilean capital. The main topics that this conference will cover are sustainable forests for timber production, wood products and connections, wood engineering and architecture, policy, implementation and management, education, promotion and future trends. For further information see: www.uruguayxxi.gub.uy/en/events/article/145/

16-19: 20th Commonwealth Forestry Conference – VIRTUAL EVENT. An informal forum for foresters, and all those with an interest in the forestry sector to exchange knowledge and experience. It is organized by the Standing Committee on Commonwealth Forestry and covers general aspects of forest management and governance and has a focus on the changing priorities of the forestry sector. For further information see: <https://cfc2021.ubc.ca/>

30-31: International Conference on Forest Aesthetics and Site Preparation – Australian Museum Sydney, Australia. World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology. For further

information see: <https://waset.org/forest-aesthetics-and-site-preparation-conference-in-august-2021-in-sydney>

SEPTEMBER

22-24: Natural resources, green technology and sustainable development GREEN2020 – Zagreb, Croatia. Now rescheduled from last year. For further information see: <https://www.sumins.hr/green2020/>

27-1: LIGNA.21 Making more out of wood – Hannover, Germany. For further information see: <https://www.ligna.de/en/>

OCTOBER

17-21: Prowood Ghent – Flanders Expo, Maaltekouter 1, 9051 Ghent, East Flanders, Flanders, Belgium. For further information see: www.tradefairdates.com/Prowood-M9728/Ghent.html

22-24: International Conference on Forest Biodiversity and Sustainability (ICFBS) – Dubrovnik, Croatia. World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology. For further information see: <https://waset.org/forest-biodiversity-and-sustainability-conference-in-october-2022-in-dubrovnik>

26-29: Woodworking Minsk – Sports Complex, Pobeditelej 20/2 Minsk, Belarus. International exhibition of woodworking and furniture production. For further information see: www.tradefairdates.com/Woodworking-M3361/Minsk.html

• Please send events to John Halkett: johnh@timberandforestrynews.com

UK, Sweden warn major timber shortages will continue

THE British Timber Trade Federation has warned of major challenges ahead for timber users in Q3 2021, as the balance between supply and demand continues to tighten

Recent communications from Sweden, which supplies almost half of the structural wood used in the UK, has warned that current stock levels are at their lowest in more than 20 years – despite record levels of production from the Swedish

sawmill industry.

The supply and demand balance for structural wood for Q2 2021 means that almost all wood arriving in the UK has been presold to customers. Despite strict allocations, most buyers are already unable to purchase all the timber they want for their business.

“Q3 will be the most difficult part of the year for timber shortages,” federation trade manager Nick Boulton said.

“We have great respect for



Nick Boulton

our Swedish partners, who have consistently worked throughout the pandemic to meet UK wood needs; as they have done for decades. This means we need to take their statement extremely seriously,” he said.

“The already tight balance between supply and demand is already worsening because there are insufficient heavy good vehicles available to get the wood out of UK ports and into UK customers’ yards.”

As they enter July, sawmills and wood production facilities in Sweden and other European countries start to close for essential summer maintenance, and this will significantly further reduce the available supply of structural wood for the UK.

Prefab giant Katerra shutting down

KATERRA, the modular prefabrication startup and timber innovator that acquired Michael Green Architecture and designer Aeck Sargent in 2018, is reportedly shutting down.

The company plans on letting its thousands of employees go and dropping current construction projects, says a report in New York-based The Architect's Newspaper.

The report says this all comes after Japanese conglomerate SoftBank invested \$200 million in Katerra at the start of 2021, giving it a majority stake

in the company. The move helped stave off bankruptcy as the Covid-19 pandemic hit the construction industry particularly hard – indeed the reason behind Katerra's closure.

Founded in 2015 by Michael Marks, Katerra aimed to bring "the Silicon Valley approach to building", by reducing reliance on skilled labour and automating the building process.

In a 2018 profile, Craig Curtis, one-time chief architect at Katerra, said the company's aim was to show that mass fabrication didn't have to mean a sea of endless copycat towers, but that every building didn't need to stand alone as an architectural prototype, either.

By vertically integrating



Michael Green... taking 100% ownership of Katerra.

every aspect of the supply chain and producing its own materials, then modules it would install on-site, Katerra was aiming to succeed where other modular builders had failed by keeping costs low. That led to the company establishing its own 23,225 sq m mass timber factory in Spokane,

Washington, as well as other facilities.

At the start of 2018, Katerra merged with KEF Infra, an Indian company using automated construction to bring building costs down. More importantly, the move helped Katerra gain a foothold in India and the Middle East.

Michael Green, founder and principal of MGA, said in a statement: "MGA is healthy and busy and Natalie [Telewiak] and I remain in control as directors. We will now assume 100% ownership and are finalising details on that front. We had been preparing for possibilities and just continue on business as usual with our great clients, projects and team"

“ COVID HITS CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

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Aussie-Kiwi ‘replacements’ step up to plant 27m trees in Green Triangle

Hub working hard on new initiatives to grow the regional plantation estate

AN estimated 27 million plantation trees will be replanted across the Green Triangle over the coming months with some opportunities still available for interested individuals to join the work team.

A task normally undertaken by a large contingent of backpackers, this year the industry has relied on a domestic and New Zealand skill-base to fill the 150 positions due to prolonged border shutdowns as a result of the Covid pandemic.

These recruits have included seasonal workers from the fishing and shearing industries, who join the forestry contracting crews in their work off-time. However, a number of contractors are still searching for final recruits advertising on social media channels for last-minute labourers to meet their work targets

The planting, which is spread across the south east of South Australia and south west of Victoria replacing



Tree-planting recruits include seasonal workers from the fishing and shearing industries who have joined forestry contracting crews in their work off-time.

harvested trees, includes 19.6 million radiata seedlings and 7.5 million southern blue gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*).

This vast work effort

“ VAST WORK EFFORT WILL COVER 20,500 HA OF LAND

will cover about 20,500 ha of land, including the replacement of radiata trees lost in the 2020 Kentbruck fire, near Nelson. Green Triangle Forest Industries Hub chair Ian McDonnell said forest growers and contractors were collaborating, strategically planning the season to ensure the limited workforce

was best utilised in the fixed timeframe while managing ongoing changes due to impromptu border shutdowns.

He said some crews historically planted about 100,000 trees a day with individual planters averaging 3000 trees daily.

Cont P 11



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Ian McDonnell... forest growers and contractors collaborating to ensure the limited workforce is best utilised in a fixed time-frame.

From P 10

“This is a very manual and physical job but for those wanting to increase their fitness and earn a good income, working with great people, it can be a rewarding role,” Mr McDonnell said.

“The planting season usually begins in May and can extend through to July; it is all dependent on the seasonal winter rain which is required to ensure the best growth for the new seedlings.”

Mr McDonnell said while the forest sector was not planting any new trees, only resowing what had been harvested and processed, the hub was working hard on new initiatives to grow the estate, understanding how to compete with increasing agricultural land prices and limitations with water access, particularly in South Australia.

The federal government’s Growing a Better Australia Strategy has earmarked the

need to plant an additional 400,000 ha of new plantation nationally over the next decade, the equivalent of one billion new trees, to meet growing domestic wood demand which is anticipated to quadruple by 2050.

This planting is in addition to the 70 million commercial trees already planted nationally each year. About a quarter of this is collectively achieved annually by local forest companies.

“IMPORTANT WE REPLACE EVERY SINGLE TREE HARVESTED

Mr McDonnell said the Green Triangle was Australia’s biggest supplier of softwood product with growing pressure to meet demand for the country’s booming housing sector.

“It is important we continue to replace every single tree harvested and invest in new land development to keep pace with domestic consumption,” he said.

“This is why the hub has invested heavily in understanding tree water use, so we can proactively work with government and other stakeholders to create pathways to plant new trees.”



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NZIA regional awards: ‘live events’ recognise excellence in architecture

Living Building Challenge ... and the important role of timber in projects

FOR the past two months the New Zealand Institute of Architects’ regional awards have been taking place across the organisation’s eight constituent branches.

The huge turnout of members at these celebratory ‘live events’ has been a welcome return to normality, following last year’s mainly online presentations and award pronouncements.

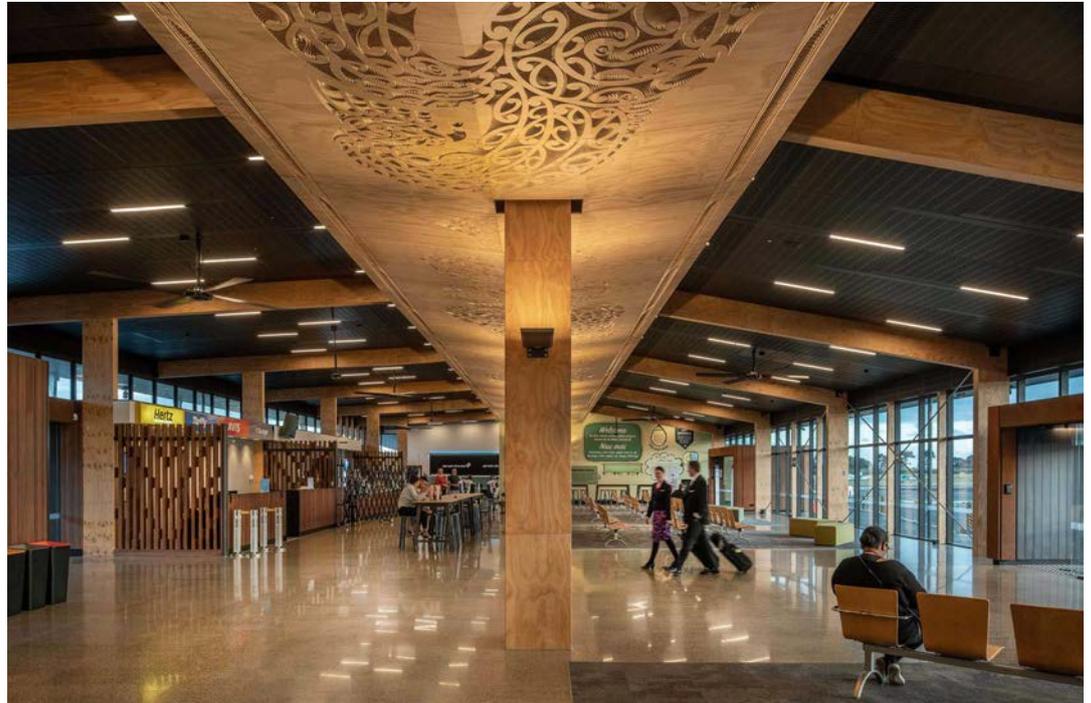
The awards are an acknowledgement of outstanding work in a number of project categories undertaken by architects in NZIA practices. And none more so than Gisborne Airport, by Tennent Brown Architects (in association with Architects 44 Ltd), winner of the public architecture award in the Gisborne & Hawke’s Bay region.

Ewan Brown, a director at Tennent Brown, says the old airport was undersized and at the end of its design life.

“The new airport needed to be more than double in size and become a special place of arrival to Tairāwhiti, Gisborne,” he said.

“Our brief was to create a terminal that reflected the cultural narrative of the mana whenua [the indigenous people who have historic and territorial rights over the land].”

Two pare (lintels), carved from totara by Tiopira Rauna, welcome passengers at the landside and airside entrances. Inside, the spacious concourse features a 42-metre-long, CNC-cut,



Gisborne Airport... the spacious concourse features a CNC-cut, plywood tahuhi (ridge board). Two pare (lintels), carved from totara by Tiopira Rauna, welcome passengers at the landside and airside entrances. Photo: Andy Spain

plywood tahuhi (ridge board), which includes a manaia (mythological creature) designed by renowned artist Sir Derek Lardelli.

Brown says sustainability is at the core of the building, which was designed to be Living Building Challenge (LBC) compliant.

“This system is currently the most difficult sustainability rating tool for buildings,” he said. “With only 115 certified projects worldwide it is highly aspirational, but is also what the world has to very quickly move towards to minimise

“MATERIALS SELECTION WAS ESPECIALLY SIGNIFICANT

From MICHAEL SMITH



IN AUCKLAND

rises in global temperatures.

“LBC has seven areas of action – place, energy, water, equity, beauty, health and happiness, and materials. There is a balance of the technical and the aesthetic ... but the goals are all challenging.”

‘Materials’ selection was especially significant as the architects researched and

avoided so-called ‘red list’ building materials, which contain chemicals harmful to living creatures and the environment.

Brown adds that LBC projects are required to conduct a carbon analysis in the design phase.

“We used BRANZ’s LCAQuick to analyse altering the design from steel DHS roof purlins and one steel portal to timber purlins and portals,” he said. “The difference was a significant saving of 38 tonnes of CO₂e.”

Alongside the LVL trusses, timber was used as often as possible. And rammed earth walls [comprising local greywacke] were also used in place of concrete.



1/ **Long Low Barn (south elevation)... the two long gable forms sit unobtrusively in a 'big sky landscape'.** Photo: Paul McCredie.
 2/ **Long Low Barn (living and dining)... meticulous attention was paid to timber detailing.** Photo: Paul McCredie



From P 9

“While certification might not be pursued, the key features of the building ensure this could be achieved

“MUTUAL LOVE OF JAPANESE TIMBER CONSTRUCTION”

later on,” Brown added.

Another imaginative project that caught the eye was Long Low Barn – a winner in the Southern region’s housing category.

The two long gable forms that sit unobtrusively in a ‘big sky landscape’ are the result of the architect and client’s “mutual love of Japanese timber construction”. Architect

Sharon Jansen says the Japanese influence is expressed in the decorative features of the cedar cladding, the window articulation, and the extensive roofing and fine, wide eaves.

The judging panel noted the meticulous attention paid to every detail – from the interior timbers (larch and birch plywood) to the use of passive strategies.

Jansen describes Long Low Barn as a “near-passive or low-energy house” – achieved by installing Intello wraps with the double-skin timber construction, triple-glazed windows, under-slab/footings insulation, and a photovoltaic system.

We will highlight more regional award winners in next week’s edition.

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Timber Trade Industrial Association



From P 6

survived and work out the size of the areas the koalas are in. Impacts such as logging should be excluded from those areas so koalas have a chance to recover.

He says corridors also need to be identified so different koala populations can be linked to one another.

Further, koalas prefer trees that are inferior and grow on low nutrition soils.

Who is this guy?

The aim of the “heart-breaking” 90-second ad is to “save vulnerable marsupials who are in grave danger of extinction”.

“AIM OF THE MESSAGE IS TO SAVE KOALAS THAT ARE IN DANGER OF EXTINCTION



Some koala support groups are genuinely concerned about illegal land clearing methods.

The star of the ad was from Wildlife HQ on Queensland’s Sunshine Coast. The 18-month koala was paid \$50,000, to be given to charity, for four days of filming that took place in the back paddock of a property in a country town in Queensland.

The advertising agency said part of the ad was shot on a property that had been illegally cleared. If so, the owner may have regretted giving

permission to do so.

A sobering fact in NRMA’s koala campaign message is that Screen Australia says people between the ages of 14 and 24 are most likely to attend the cinema these days.

As for exposure of the campaign, cinema admissions reached a post-lockdown record during school holidays of 4.15 million a week.

How’s that for forest learning?

Postscript:

In his book the Great Koala Scam, award-winning forester Vic Jurskis made the following observation: “Koalas are a rare species in healthy forests. Where they are plentiful, their numbers must inevitably crash, and fires will inevitably explode.”

In 2019, he gave evidence to this effect before a NSW parliamentary inquiry examining koala populations and their habitat, also providing photos of a young male koala in a chronically declining forest south of Eden, where the ‘experts’ said koalas were extinct.

Jurskis explained to the committee that koalas are actually irrupting in that area because the declining trees are constantly turning over soft young foliage that is highly nutritious and palatable to koalas.

He explained that these explosive, three-dimensionally continuous fuels would feed unstoppable firestorms and ember showers when ignited during severe weather. This came to pass on New Year’s Eve and the town of Mallacoota was devastated. After the fires, Jurskis went back to the same spot and photographed exactly the same scene as before the holocaust. He provided ‘before’ and ‘after’ photographs of the same stand of trees.

The committee didn’t publish them in its report, released on June 30, which contained only this reference to his evidence: “His evidence was that grazing, burning and logging keeps forests healthy and thus, increases koala populations”.

Jurskis asserts: “All wildlife populations across all tenures face the same threats to their habitats as a result of the lack of ecological maintenance by frequent mild burning. However, koalas are in no danger because, as I must repeat, they are an irruptive species.”

•Vic Jurskis has a degree in Bachelor of Science (Forestry) from ANU and was awarded the (British) Commonwealth Forestry Book Prize for academic achievement. He worked for NSW Forestry Commission as a labourer in forestry camps before appointment as a professional forester in 1978.

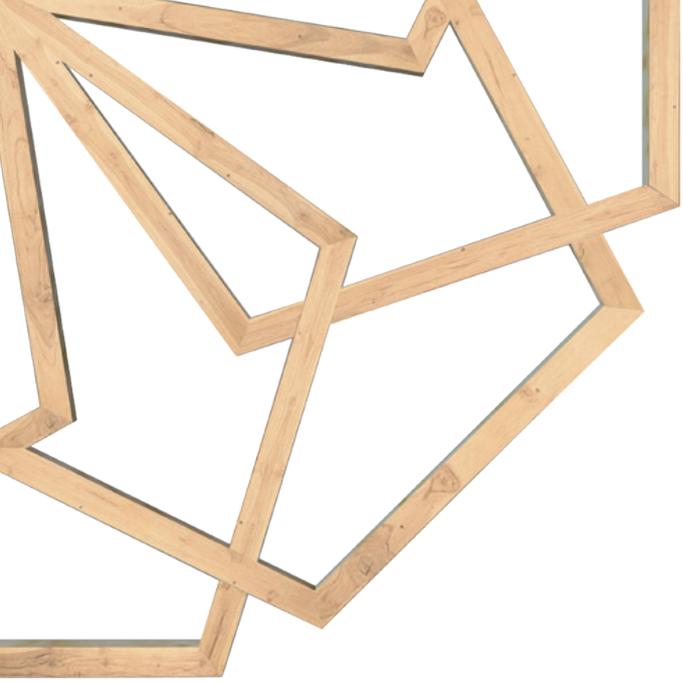
He has worked in all types of native forests and woodlands and was an active member of bushfire brigades, before being transferred to Eden as officer in charge of the Forestry Commission’s regional research centre.

Note: As insurance against naivety, readers can order the book *Great Koala Scam* from Vic Jurskis at vic.jurskis@gmail.com

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Super-heated house demand, but will that mean steel-framed construction?

We seem to be at the cliff's edge as timber supplies dwindle further

DO we have a major tragedy in the making?

Super-heated house construction demand is being driven by cheap money, government employment incentives and the extension of the HomeBuilder scheme.

And if that isn't enough, the recent federal budget has provided yet more help for single-parent families to buy their first home by offering loan guarantees and more scope for people to use their superannuation to put towards their home deposit.

Treasurer Josh Frydenberg also added 10,000 places to the home guarantee scheme so more people can now buy their first home with a deposit as little as 2% with the knowledge that the commonwealth will guarantee the balance.

However, here in the pointy-end of the forest industry we seem to be like lemmings, not walking but running towards the cliff edge

“IF ONLY WE HAD PLANTED A FURTHER HALF MILLION HA OF SOFTWOOD PLANTATIONS



The last log truck carrying salvaged burnt logs from the 2019-20 bushfires arrives at Hyne's Tumbarumba mill.

as the last truck carrying salvaged logs from the 2019-20 bushfires entered Hyne's Tumbarumba sawmill last month.

The unprecedented 15 months of salvage log harvesting has seen more than 1.6 million burnt plantation logs processed at the Hyne sawmill alone.

Chief Jon Kleinschmidt says this salvage operation was an historic event characterised by great collaboration and incredibly hard work. He paid tribute to the outstanding efforts of all involved – growers, log harvesting crews, trucking companies and sawmill staff.

“This has been remarkable and deserves to be celebrated,” he said.

Well-earned pats on the back and cheer all round ... for now. However, yes, we all know that hindsight is a great thing, but if we had established a further half

TRUNK LINES



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million hectares of softwood plantations say 20-plus years ago, we would be in great shape today to supply what appears to be an ever-increasing demand for timber to supply bursting building and construction industries.

But unfortunately, we don't.

So now we have to rely on an ever-increasing supply of imported timber, or heaps more environmentally unfriendly steel-framed houses (from an industry with its own supply

problems) popping up like mushrooms across the country. It's an absolute national disgrace.

I have said this before, but it's worth repeating ... we need imagination, carbon pricing, innovative product development, and we must put a stop to exporting softwood logs.

Forest contractors stand with the domestic sawmilling industry, its employees and the supply chain, but we desperately need much more pizzazz, entrepreneurial flair, policy direction and investment. Otherwise your kids' houses will be a steel-framed houses for sure.

Part of this tragedy is that timber has a big part to play in the climate change solution.

Always interested to hear what you think. Catch up again next month.

Cheryl

The MARKET Leader...



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Komatsu Forest have maintained a very strong market position with their two most popular forwarders being the Komatsu 875 (16 tonne) which really compliments the 895 (20 tonne).

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Forest science achieves sustainability goals

A NEW paper highlights the key role that forests, forest managers and forest science can play in achieving Sustainable Development Goals.

The SDGs were agreed by nations globally in 2015 to tackle the world's most pressing problems, such as hunger, poverty, inequality, climate change and biodiversity loss.

'The Sustainable Development Goals, forests, and the role of Australian Forestry,' published in Australian Forestry, commits to the rational and rigorous examination of all aspects of forests and the evidence-based improvement of forestry in Australia and the rest of the Indo-Pacific region.

Institute of Foresters of Australia and Australian

Forest Growers president Bob Gordon lauded the paper, saying forest scientists have an important role to play in informing and achieving the SDGs.

"Averting catastrophic environmental and hence developmental outcomes will require a concerted and efficient global effort, and high-quality science is essential to achieving this," Mr Gordon said.

"Australia is a world leader in best-practice sustainable forest management and, as such, we can support not only our region, but the entire globe to meet the SDGs," he said.

“WORLD LEADER IN BEST FOREST PRACTICE”



Alastair Sarre... global action needed to achieve most SDGs by 2030.

"Worldwide, 350 million people depend on forests for subsistence and income. Evidenced based active and adaptive forest management can underpin a circular economy while also storing carbon, conserving biodiversity, protecting water supplies and meeting the

cultural needs of societies.

The paper is co-authored by Australian Forestry managing editor Alastair Sarre and chair of the journal's editorial board Stuart Davey. Drawing on several recent global publications, it includes a summary of the contributions of forests to the 17 SDGs and the potential impacts of the SDGs on forests and forest-related livelihoods and economies.

Mr Sarre said most of the SDGs were to be achieved by 2030, which showed the urgency with which the world needed to act.

"And we need to do so, backed by rigorous science," he said. "Forests are vital for our future; we need to know what's happening to them, and we need to use them sustainably."

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There is never shortage of lumber, just an acute shortage of lumber at cheap prices

HIGH lumber prices will eventually reduce demand and increase supply – high prices scare people away, says Russ Taylor president of British Columbia-based Russ Taylor Global.

He is confident the prices for lumber will start to settle

He said a new “base level” price would result over time. Supply and demand will always balance, but we just do not have the trees anymore in North America to allow for more sawmill construction except in the US South, he noted in an interview for Lesprom Network.

North America is witnessing incredible events in timber markets. Prices for lumber in the US have quadrupled to \$1035-\$1100 cub m.

Russ Taylor says this is certainly a ‘perfect storm’.

“In my career, I have watched several price cycles over the last five decades. In 2018 we saw the highest prices ever; they reached \$655 per thousand board feet for

SPF Lumber (FOB BC mill), and we thought that was spectacular,” he said.

“Now we are almost \$1000 higher and I think it will go even higher. It is incredible and so it is a perfect storm.

“Historically we would expect to see prices more in the \$225-\$260 cub m range. We know it is not going to last forever, but it is a sign that the North America supply chain is very fragile.

“When we get shocks on the supply side that are negative and shocks on the demand side that are positive, we get these very wild responses. Because it is a commodity, prices respond accordingly.”

Mr Taylor says the reasons for these high prices were much to do with Covid-19.

“Back in March when the shutdowns all started, everyone, including myself, thought there would be weak demand and prices would crash,” he said.

“Indeed, all the high-cost



Russ Taylor... supply and demand will always balance.

sawmills started curtailing very quickly and with the idea that demand would slow. As people realised they were going to be stuck at home, a lot of them started DIY projects, home improvement projects and pulled all kinds of lumber and panel products off the shelves at the retail stores. And the retail chains started to panic to get more

“ COVID-19 CULPRIT FOR HIGH PRICES

supply quickly.

“So that got the ball rolling.”

The US has been underbuilding homes for 13 years before the pandemic started. The long-term average new residential housing starts are around 1.55 million units a year and has been below that level since 200.

There has been a 13-year period of underbuilding that has created a huge deficit of homes along the way.

“So we always knew that it would eventually balance out,” Mr Taylor said.

“We started to see housing starts bouncing back in the latter part of 2019 and into the first quarter of 2020, so housing starts were already rebounding and then COVID hit and that dramatically increased new home construction.

“It’s similar in Australia, Canada and in Europe – the same scenario that everyone is stuck at home.”

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VR ‘walk’ through the Green Triangle to inspire next generation of foresters

Learning experiences that will soon be shared in high school classrooms

AN initiative of Forest and Wood Products Australia, Forest Learning is continuing to use virtual reality as a tool to help school students of all ages experience the wonder and science of Australia’s forests, without leaving the classroom.

Following the success of the initiative’s inaugural suite of free ForestVR experiences last year, new virtual tours and video experiences will shed light on the science used behind the sustainable management of different forests, the benefits of growing more trees on farms, and some of the exciting careers in the forest and wood products sector.

Since its release, the ForestVR technology has received widespread praise from teachers, by allowing them to take students on virtual excursions to difficult-to-access locations.

The VR experiences, produced by ForestLearning in partnership with Australia’s peak teacher association groups and members of the forest and wood products industry, can be accessed using digital and cardboard VR headsets, iPads, laptops, or smart boards for whole of class activities.

The new suite of ForestVR experiences and virtual tours have already begun filming at various locations around the country, creating immersive learning experiences for use in primary and high school classrooms across Australia.

A total of five new VR experiences will be produced ready for schools to use in



Jack Carter, an environmental forester from Australian Bluegum Plantation, films the new VR school promotion footage using 360-deg. cameras.

2022, including – the primary school virtual experience, ‘Forest Science Explorers’; the high school focused ‘Agroforestry: trees at work on the farm’; and three two-minute career snapshots of forester, environmental forester/ecologist and wood processors, to highlight the diverse work tasks within the forestry field.

The primary school experience ‘Forest Science Explorers’ will take students virtually around Australia to compare four different productive forest types. Filming was completed recently within the wet lowland forests of southern Tasmania with the support of Sustainable Timber Tasmania and will continue in Western Australia, Western Queensland and the eastern New South Wales. The resulting VR experience will allow students to compare the forests and learn some of the science behind their adaptations to the local environment that is used by foresters to manage them sustainably.

will be able to virtually walk through the forestry estate alongside foresters Courtney Pink of Sustainable Forest Management and Jack Carter from Australia Bluegum Plantation to learn more about their working lives and how they care for and manage their forests.

ForestLearning program manager Beth Welden said it was exciting to see the suite of popular and innovative resources expand in this way.

“Ever since ForestVR’s launch, teachers have told us how valuable these immersive activities have been to engage students around contexts of sustainable forestry and wood products,” Beth said.

“These experiences will continue to provide teachers with innovative learning tools that transport students into Australian productive forests, without even having to step outside the classroom.”

The federal government, with funding from the National Forest Industries Plan, in partnership with Forest and Wood Products Australia, have developed these new experiences to be accessible for all schools and the public via the ForestVR app, ForestLearning.edu.au and peak education and careers websites such as myfuture.edu.au.

Visit www.forestlearning.edu.au

FOREST LEARNING



With BETH WELDEN

Forest Learning Program Manager

The high school ‘Agroforestry – trees at work on the farm’ experience will capture applications and benefits of trees on farms, with footage filmed recently in southern Victoria. This vision will be combined with imagery from other agroforestry sites around the country to give students exemplars of how trees can improve farming landscapes.

Two of the three career snapshots were also filmed recently in the Green Triangle region with the support of the Green Triangle Forest Industries Hub. Students

On the cover: Courtney Pink regional manager with Sustainable Forest Management, based at Mount Gambier, takes part in filming new forest VR footage at Glencoe Nursery.

Luxury feel in well-balanced Mazda 6

THOUGH it seems hard to fathom for us here in Australia, Mazda is actually a small player in the global automotive market. The Japanese brand's dominance here – as the second best-selling manufacturer – is very much an anomaly on the world stage.

The company claims that up until at least 2040, liquid fuels will remain the dominant source of power for the automotive industry ... an electric shock for the renewables brigade.

Furthermore, Mitsuo Hitomi says electric vehicles are not really necessary before the elimination of all fossil-fuel or non-renewable electric power plants. He has the ability to know – he's Mazda's executive and senior technical fellow in charge of technical research centre and integrated control system developments

A bold claim by Mr Hitomi, but it's a claim in line with the company's tireless work on the development of its SkyActiv-X technologies for incredible fuel economy.

Secondly, Mazda has made use of what it calls human-centred concepts to better find the ideal state for a human inside a car. This has led to the development



1/ Mazda 6 four-door sports... an expensive feel.



2/ Roomy interior for Mazda 6.

of new seats the company claims better support the pelvis and upper body and help transfer the road load to the pelvis in a natural manner.

The dynamic balance a human has while walking can be transferred through the car into the driver for a more natural feel of motion, Hitomi says.

So it was comforting for my creaking back to slide into the Mazda 6, one of the most attractive sports sedans on the road today and a joy to drive.

It also has a generously roomy interior. Width and leg room in both front and rear seats are very accommodating.

There's plenty of storage options for those odds and sods you might need on a journey – a large glovebox and door bins, a tray for the mobile in front of the gear

lever and a sizeable lidded cubby in the centre console.

At 483 litres, the boot is a good size – big enough to swallow a couple of large suitcases.

Draped in a deep crystal blue with burgundy seats and leather trim, our Mazda 6 had a more expensive feel than either of the best two higher-priced Asian competitors.

With a naturally aspirated 2.5-litre four-cylinder 140kW/252Nm engine, a six-speed automatic and front-wheel drive, the four-door sedan is the Japanese automaker's mass-market model at a recommended delivered price of \$38,298.

Standard fit-out includes black 19 in. alloy wheels,

LED headlights, electric park brake, leather-wrapped steering wheel, dual-zone climate control, head-up display, auto lights and wipers, distance-keeping cruise control, auto-dimming interior and heated exterior mirrors, and push-button start.

Functions also bring AM/FM/DAB+ radio, internet radio integration, support for Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, in-built navigation and a secondary rotary controller on the console for use when the car is in motion. Moving up the range, the 6 has power-adjustable front seats, leather seat trim, front park sensors, Bose premium audio, proximity key entry and LED daytime running lights.

Mazda's official fuel consumption claim is 7 litres/100 km.

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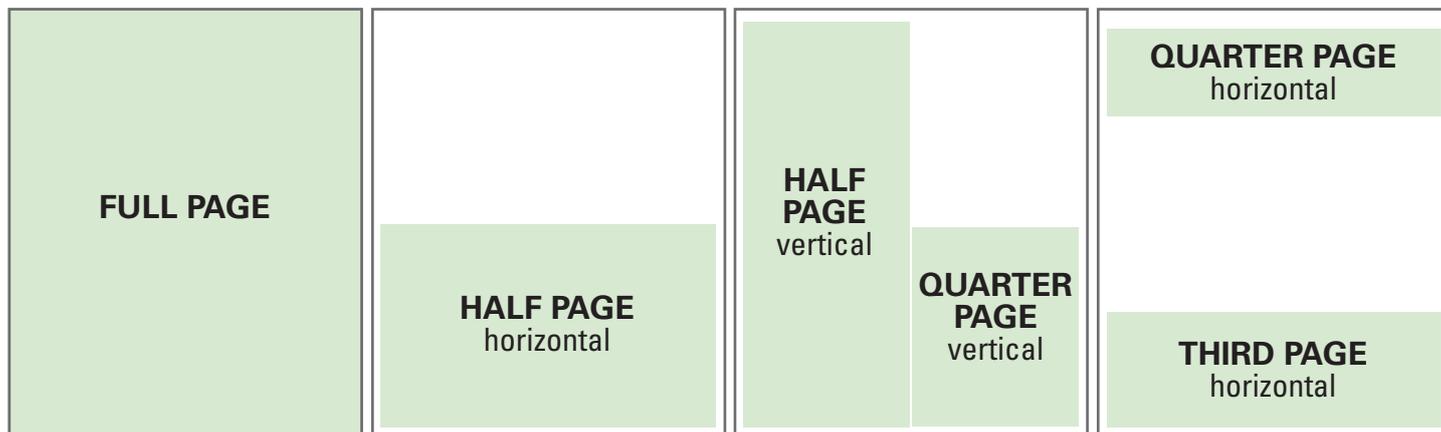
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Horizontal • 63mmH x 190mmW

THIRD PAGE: \$215

Horizontal • 73mmH x 190mmW

PAGE 1 Front cover strip: Contract booking

Horizontal • 30mmH x 190mmW

PAGE 1 Front cover module: Contract booking

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PAGE 2 below story: Contract booking

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