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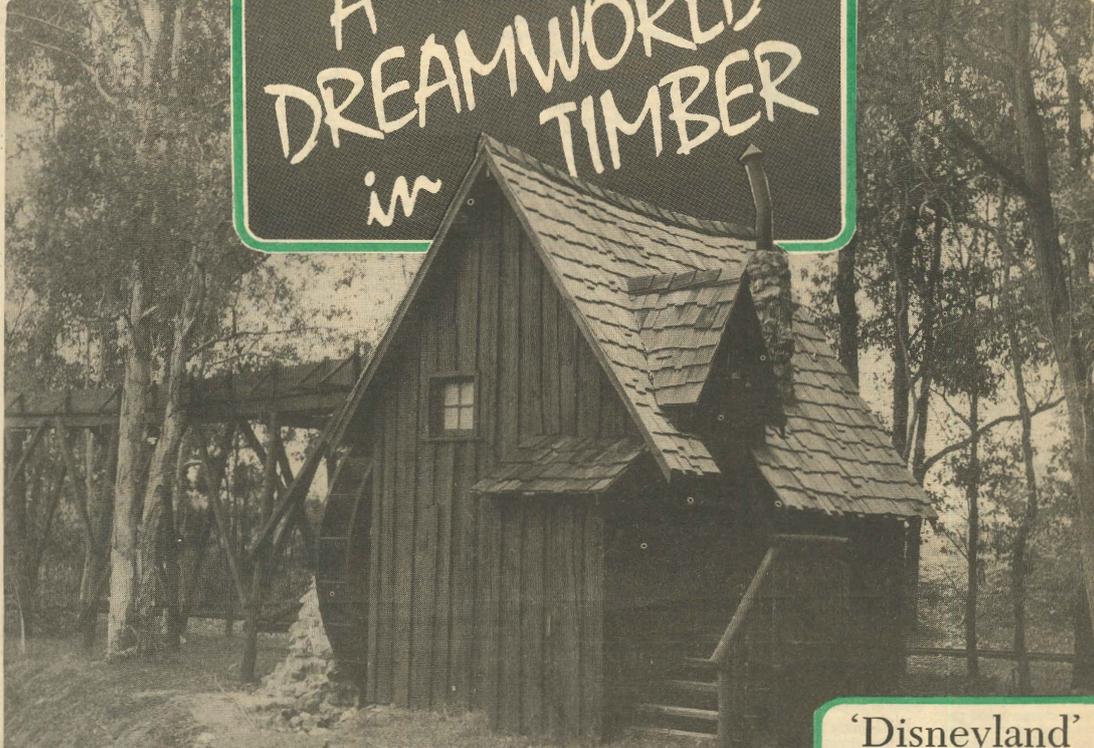
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# timber & FORESTRY *e*news

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A  
DREAMWORLD  
in  
TIMBER



## 'Disneyland' among trees

By JIM BOWDEN

MORE than \$1 million worth of timber has been used in the first stage of a \$30 million Disneyland-styled entertainment centre taking shape at Coomera, 23 km from Surfers Paradise.

The complex, to be known as Dreamworld, has been a 12-year ambition for millionaire Australian businessman Mr Peter Longhurst.

Mr Longhurst of the Pace Mower empire has preserved large areas of fauna and flora on 85 ha off the Pacific Highway for the project, the biggest of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere.

Stage one, involving canals, waterfalls and magnificently structured timber buildings and costing \$13 million, will open to the public on December 15.

Dreamworld is now a reality for Mr Longhurst who geared for the project in 1969 after visiting practically every entertainment centre in the US.

It is a joint venture with Mr Ken Lord who operates a chain of furniture retail outlets in New South Wales. Mr Lord began developing the Coomera site seven years ago.

Huge stocks of Oregon, western red cedar, pine and hardwoods have been used in first-stage construction and log-wall landscaping.

Most of the timber has been supplied by Burleigh Timbers, Miami, Pinewood Products, Oxenford and Tilling Timber, Springfield.

— Pictures by DARCEY CROFT



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# \$775m first Australian investment gives AXA 24,000 ha slice of Green Triangle plantations

GLOBAL asset manager AXA IM has acquired 24,000 ha of woodland in the Green Triangle region in a \$775 million deal, the company's first investment in Australia.

The transaction of the pine plantations straddling Victoria and South Australia by the investment house is one of the largest investments in the Australian forestry market by value in over a decade.

The deal was orchestrated through AXA IM Alts, the alternative investment asset manager that has roughly \$260 billion under its management.

AXA IM Alts' current worldwide forestry portfolio will be considerably expanded by the transaction, which includes almost 60,000 ha in France, Ireland, and Finland.

The estate is one of the largest in the Green Triangle forestry region, which spans southeast South Australia and southwest Victoria. It encompasses about 22,000 ha of productive and sustainably managed property, including a mixed-age portfolio of radiata pine forests that serve as one of Australia's



**Isabelle Scemama... new investment in sustainably managed forestry a further step in our decarbonisation strategy.**

primary sawlog suppliers and a key component of the country's biggest domestic processing region.

It also agreed to acquire the associated forestry management business from

investments funds advised by Global Forest Partners.

The acquisition of the Green Triangle Forest Products estate is being made on behalf of clients by the AXA IM Alts Real Assets team.

In 1999, GFP-advised funds made their first investment in the GTFP estate, and in 2008, they acquired full control.

The forest's considerable carbon sequestration qualities match with AXA IM's broader approach to responsible investing and goal to find opportunities that "combat climate change, preserve biodiversity and provide sustainable returns for its clients."

GTFP presently has a

carbon stock of nearly 8,000,000 tCO<sub>2</sub> stored in the forest biomass, a figure that AXA IM believes may be substantially enhanced over time by adjusting the planting and harvesting timetables.

AXA IM said the transaction gave it the potential to assist initiatives to decrease embodied carbon in Australia's building and

housing sectors, thanks to the low-carbon qualities of the softwood timber cultivated on the estate.

Currently, 70% of GTFP's harvest is converted into high-value structural wood for the building sector.

AXA IM Alts global chief Isabelle Scemama said the acquisitions brought its global portfolio of forestry assets to more than 80,000 ha.

"This new investment in sustainably managed forestry is also a further step in our decarbonisation strategy and a way to accelerate our transition to a net zero environment," she said.

**(The Market Herald)**



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# Land will be the biggest constraint on Aussie building activity over the next couple of years

## Impacting industry when the economy needs construction to help pull it forward

THE median price of land in Australia has shot up by 12.6% – the strongest annual increase since 2006 – indicating supply is not keeping up with demand.

In Greater Sydney alone, the median price of residential land increased by 32.2% over the year to September 2021, updated HIA-CoreLogic residential land figures show.

The report provides updates on sales activity in 51 housing markets across Australia, including the six state capital cities.

HIA economist Angela Lillicrap said the median price of land in the combined greater capital cities increased by 14.7% over the year to September 2021 compared to an increase of 8.6% in the combined regional areas.

“This suggests that the shortage of residential land is more severe in the capital cities,” Ms Lillicrap said.

“Land will be the biggest constraint on building activity over the next couple of years,” she said.

“The current shortage of land will impact the industry at a time when the broader economy needs construction to help pull it forward.”

CoreLogic’s head of research Tim Lawless says considering the record level of detached house approvals at the peak of HomeBuilder together with the constraints involved with bringing newly subdivided land online quickly, the surge in land prices over the quarter is



- 1/ *The surge in land prices over the quarter is hardly a surprise.*
- 2 *Angela Lillicrap... shortage of residential land is more severe in the capital cities.*

fifth consecutive monthly increase in new home sales, a full nine months since the end of HomeBuilder.

“This is the highest level of new home sales since 2011, excluding the three largest spikes associated with HomeBuilder,” HIA economist Thomas Devitt said.

“Sales in the final quarter of 2021 were also 25.5% higher than the previous quarter.”

He said underlying demand for housing remained exceptionally strong as the pandemic continued to push households toward lower density living.

“It appears that the more

Cont P 7

“hardly a surprise.”

“What is more counter intuitive is the trend towards fewer land sales through 2021, a pattern that is evident across each of the state capitals despite strong demand,” Mr Lawless said.

“Softer volumes are more a reflection of short supply rather than a lack of demand, which helps to explain the sharp rise in land values at a time when the volume of land sales is reducing.”

**“SURGE IN LAND PRICES HARDLY A SURPRISE”**

Meanwhile, a HIA monthly survey of the largest volume home builders in the five largest states reports that December marked the

## The united voice for Australia's forest industries



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# Solutions for large-scale timber components at 2-day workshops in Brisbane, Launceston

REGISTRATIONS are open for the Centre for Future Timber Structures 2022 Australian Timber Design Workshops in Launceston and Brisbane on April 20 and 21, re-scheduled from early February.

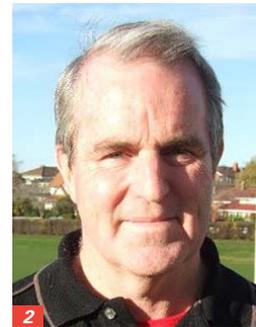
“The two-day intensive event has been created for building design professionals interested in timber-rich construction to develop skills, confidence and networks in a unique, hands-on environment,” said Professor Keith Crews,



director, Centre for Future Timber Structures at the University of Queensland.

Facilitated by director of the Centre for Sustainable Architecture with Wood, Professor Gregory Nolan,

the workshops combine self-paced online learning, presentations with key industry speakers, and learning-by-making workshop sessions.



1/ Prof. Keith Crews  
2/ Prof. Gregory Nolan

Timber is now accepted as a key component in low-carbon solutions for multi-storey building projects. The workshops are designed as a unique professional development and networking opportunity for architects, engineers, builders and others interested in efficient timber

construction to develop their skills and knowledge of using timber in architectural and structural design; factors influencing the design of timber in buildings; and efficient timber detailing and specification.

Registration and cost: Early bird discount (ends February 28): \$900. Standard: \$1100 (single day) \$650, student price: \$250.

For more information about the workshops contact Prof Keith Crews email: [k.crews@uq.edu.au](mailto:k.crews@uq.edu.au)

“PRESENTATIONS BY KEY INDUSTRY SPEAKERS IN A HANDS-ON ENVIRONMENT

The University of Tasmania and The University of Queensland are collaborating to deliver the course with concurrent workshops running in Tasmania at the School of Architecture and Design facilities at Newnham, Launceston, and the University of Queensland facilities at St Lucia Campus in Brisbane

“Participants will design solutions with large-scale, industry provided timber components, assemble them in our workshop and test items to failure,” Prof. Crews said.



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# Massive \$50m US thinning program across western states will make for healthier forests

‘Good fires’ will require a paradigm shift by federal, state, tribal and private landholders

THE Biden administration has earmarked \$50 million to combat catastrophic wildfires in western US in an aggressive forest thinning program across western states.

Forestry officials will more than double the use of controlled fires and logging to reduce trees and other vegetation in high-risk areas.

The projects will begin this year, and the plan will focus on regions where out-of-control blazes have wiped out neighbourhoods and sometimes entire communities – including California’s Sierra Nevada mountains, the east side of the Rocky Mountains in Colorado, and portions of Arizona, Oregon, and Washington state.

“You’re going to have forest fires ... the question is how catastrophic do those fires have to be,” says Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack.

“The time to act is now if we want to ultimately over time change the trajectory of these fires.”



**Low impact machines used in thinning programs is one of the most important operations for well-managed forests in the US.**

Mr Vilsack said a combination of tree thinning and prescribed fires would clear undergrowth and make the forests healthier in the long run while reducing the threat to public safety.

Forests thinned near Lake Tahoe and its tourism gateway community of South Lake Tahoe were credited with slowing the advance of the massive Caldor Fire last summer that destroyed almost 800 homes and prompted evacuations of tens of thousands of residents and tourists.

Specific projects of the thinning plan weren’t immediately released, and it’s not clear who would pay for the full scope of work envisioned across almost 208,000 sq km, most of which is controlled by states, tribes, or is privately owned.

Reaching that goal would require an estimated \$20 billion over 10 years for work on national forests and \$30 billion for work on other federal, state, tribal, and private lands.

Tom Vilsack acknowledged that the new effort will also

require a “paradigm shift” within the US Forest Service, from an agency devoted to stamping out fires, into one that uses what some native Americans call “good fire” on forests and rangeland to prevent even larger blazes.

Forest Service planning documents indicate the work will focus on ‘hotspots’ that make up only 10% of the fire-prone areas across the US, but account for 80% of risk to communities because of their population densities and locations.

A recently passed federal infrastructure bill put a down payment on the initiative – about \$3 billion over five years that Mr. Vilsack says will get work going quickly.

Mr. Vilsack joined Forest Service chief Randy Moore to announce the plan during an event in Phoenix where he defended its scope as realistic.

“We know from a scientific standpoint precisely where this action has to take place in

*Cont P.9*



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# Timber helped build a dream at Dreamworld for tourist park entrepreneur John Longhurst

Tilling, Pinewood Products and Burleigh Timbers supplied products for many buildings

JIM BOWDEN

BRIAN was the definitive odd-jobs man. When the odds were against you he was your man. Odds on he could fix it ... although some of his jobs may have been considered odd.

Those jobs over the years included power boat and ski jump star at Ski Land on the Gold Coast, a creation of tourism giant Keith Williams who developed some of the best known attractions in Queensland, including Sea World, Hamilton Island and Port Hinchinbrook.

It was here also that Brian's performance as Beppo the Clown made him a children's TV show favourite.

The next I heard he was entertaining tourists as trainer on an alligator farm in North Queensland. Then he was an advertising salesman in Sydney before launching Brisbane's first 'backyard organic farm' in Spring Hill.

But between these jobs – and there were many more to follow – he was work foreman during the development phase of Dreamworld, an 85-ha theme park rising among the trees beside the Pacific Motorway at Coomera, 23 km from Surfers Paradise.

Brian, a nomadic brother-in-law, called me one day in 1979. "Jim you've got to be here and see what John Longhurst is going to do with timber. I arrived. "Wow. And

“THAT'S HIM ... ON THE BULLDOZER



**John Longhurst... his Dreamworld won him many awards.**



**The Rocky Hollow log ride at Dreamworld in the 1980s.**

where's this Mr Longurst?"

"That's him on the bulldozer," he said pointing to a man who was excavating a gully and cultivating his dream. "Yes we're going to use a lot of wood here," he said, pointing in different directions. The rest, as they say, is history.

In 1968, Longhurst took his children to Sydney Zoo and believed he could develop something better. In 1973, after reading a newspaper article describing Disneyland

as a "real Dream World", he registered the name Dreamworld as a trade mark.

I returned to Dreamworld six years later for the official opening by then Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen. The timber Brian mentioned, which had seen carefully stored under cover in a shed for later use, was now a prolific fixture across many buildings on the site – in office blocks, cafes, tourist shops, facades and in the many tourist thrill rides, including the 'Captain Sturt Paddlewheeler' on the

'Murrissipi River' – where Longhurst had spent 12 hours a day, every day for two-and-a-half years to excavate and develop the attraction – Gum Tree Gully and the Rocky Hollow Log Ride.

More than \$13 million worth of timber was used in the first stage of the \$30 million Disneyland-styled complex, part of a 12-year ambition for the millionaire Sydney businessman who sold motor mowers, and who was inspired after visiting practically every entertainment centre in the US.

Huge stocks of Oregon, western red cedar, pine, hardwoods and log-wall landscaping were provided by Tilling Timber at Springwood, Burleigh Timbers at Miami and Pinewood Products at Oxenford.

John Longhurst sold Dreamworld for \$180 million in 1989 and sold his remaining shares in the Logan Hyperdome to Queensland Investment Corporation for \$350 million in 2013.

In 2012, he was inducted into the Gold Coast Business Awards Hall of Fame to add to a long list of tourism awards.

This amazing entrepreneur, who built a dream with his bare hands, died on January 14, aged 89.

I've lost track of odd-jobs man Brian over the years. I hope he is still around ... looking for an odd job or two.

Cover: Issue of *Timberman* in October 1981 featuring Dreamworld as a 'Disneyland' among the trees.

**FEBRUARY**

**23: ATIF Board Meeting – Melbourne, VIC.**  
Contact John Halkett at john.halkett@bigpond.com

**MARCH**

**EVENT POSTPONED**  
**11: Green Triangle Timber Industry Awards – The Barn, Mount Gambier, SA.**  
Visit [www.gttia.com](http://www.gttia.com) or email [info@gttia.com](mailto:info@gttia.com)

**29-30: International Conference on Forest Resources Accounting and Economics – Australia World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology, Sydney, NSW.** For further information see; <https://waset.org/forest-resources-accounting-and-economics-conference-in-january-2022-in-sydney>

**APRIL**

**3-8: Gottstein Trust Understanding Wood Science Course – Sunday evening, April 3, 2022, in Albury, NSW, for the field**

**trip component, ending on Friday, April 8, in Canberra.** The course is fully booked and a wait list is operating on a first-in-first-served basis. Delivered in partnership with the ANU, the course timing prior to next Easter matches up with the semester break. The course program can be downloaded at [www.gottsteintrust.org](http://www.gottsteintrust.org)

**20-21: Centre for Future Timber Structures 2022 Australian Timber Design Workshops in Launceston, Tasmania and Brisbane, QLD.** Created for building design professionals interested in timber construction to develop skills, confidence and networks in a unique, hands-on environment. Registration and cost: Early bird discount (ends February 28): \$900. Standard: \$1100 (single day \$650, student price: \$250). For further information Professor Keith Crews email: [k.crews@uq.edu.au](mailto:k.crews@uq.edu.au) Event re-scheduled from early February.

**MAY**

**10-12: Environmental Forestry – Rotorua, New Zealand.** Forest Industry Engineering Association. Improving environmental performance across the forest industry. For further information see: [www.environmentalforestry.events](http://www.environmentalforestry.events)

**18-19: DesignBUILD – Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre, Melbourne, VIC.** Event will bring together Australia’s architecture, building, construction and design communities. For further information see: [designbuildexpo.com.au](http://designbuildexpo.com.au)

**23-24: International Forest Business Conference – Sheraton Sopot Hotel, Poland.** A two-day conference on megatrends that shape responsible forest and wood industry investments for climate action. The conference aims to bring together leading forest management organizations (TIMOs), investors interested in forest

assets and carbon offsets (e.g., public and corporate pension funds, wealth managers and private banks, sovereign wealth funds, foundations and endowments) and sustainable wood industry representatives in order to exchange and share experiences and ideas about challenges and opportunities for forest sector as a natural climate solution. The main theme of the conference is New Forest Business Frontiers. Register at [www.fba-events.com](http://www.fba-events.com) or contact [karolina@forest-analytics.com](mailto:karolina@forest-analytics.com)

**JUNE**

**21-22: Frame Australia Timber Offsite Construction – Crown Promenade Melbourne, VIC.** New global ‘hybrid’ format. 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](http://www.timberoffsiteconstruction.com)

From P 3

time people spend under lockdown and working from home, the higher is the demand for detached housing and renovations activity,” he said.

“These factors are driving

a ‘super cycle’ of housing demand across Australia.”

Mr Devitt said the constraint on home building was not demand but the availability of land, labour and materials. The shortage of labour and materials had led to construction timeframes

increasing significantly.

As a result, the volume of approved-but-not-yet-commenced work was at its highest level in over a decade.

On a quarterly basis, sales in Queensland increased in the three months to

December 2021 to be 49% higher than the previous quarter. This was followed by Victoria (+36.8%), NSW (+30.2%), and South Australia (+11.2%). Western Australia saw the only quarterly decline, down by 8.8%.

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# Carlie on the front line for the tough talks

## AFCA chief connects with members in regional Victoria

IF there is one thing we have learnt this past two years is that the best conversations are had in person.

With only six weeks into the role as new general manager of the Australian Forest Contractors Association, Carlie Porteous has commenced 'operation handshake' visiting members in regional Victoria.

On the road daily, Ms Porteous met with AFCA members in the Gippsland region from the Central Highlands to Orbost.

East Gippsland forestry operations have been subjected to 'lawfare' for many years due to regulatory loopholes. The impact to these businesses and others in the state are now being compounded by the illogical Labor government decision to end native forestry.

"This decision is quite unfathomable," Carlie Porteous said.

"Our native hardwood species are naturally regenerating. Like farming, forestry is renewable and the future success is dependent on responsible practices," she said.

"Many of these intergenerational businesses are harvesting coupes that their fathers and grandfathers before them had sustainably harvested."

With extensive forestry experience, primarily in softwood, Ms Porteous scheduled the in-depth tour to further her understanding of the highly specialised and asset-intensive native forest operations.

"It was an opportunity to really see first-hand the scale



Face to face... AFCA members and forest industry leaders get down to business.



Where it all begins ... Carlie Porteous catches up with Cory Kennedy of Kennedy Trailers, based at Bairnsdale.

of these businesses plus the care and attention of each operator when grading to ensure each log finds its best value outcome," Ms Porteous remarked.

On the minds of many Australians as several state governments try to bring down the native forest industry is where will replacement products be sourced as the public cries out for more hardwood products such as floors,

windows, doors and decks as demand continues to rise.

"If we are not responsibly sourcing the product from our own backyard where is it going to come from?" asks Ms Porteous.

**“THANKFULLY WE HAVE MANY STAUNCH AND PROUD SUPPORTERS**

"Thankfully, we have many staunch and proud supporters in the government, people like Melina Bath, Member for the Eastern Victoria Region. Ms Bath understands the socio-economic contribution of the industry to regional Victoria and to Australia's sovereign capability, in addition to forestry's contribution to carbon targets."

One of the challenges faced by many AFCA members and forestry businesses during the pandemic is the ability to meet collectively with industry colleagues and openly discuss the issues.

"Connecting with our members to understand their needs is a priority for me," says Ms Porteous. "It may be an old saying, but it's never been truer in these

Cont P 9

From P 8

challenging times ... we are stronger together."

A dinner in Traralgon provided several of Gippsland's native forest businesses an opportunity to provide AFCA with direction on how to best represent their needs moving forward. The members and their families made it clear they had invested strongly in the industry – with hard cash,



**Carlie Porteous shares lunch and industry matters at Traralgon with Melina Bath, MP, East Gippsland Region.**

**“GET ON BOARD!  
WE’RE ALL IN  
THIS TOGETHER**

hard work and hard-won business success backed by a strong commitment to their communities, just as generations before them

had done.

AFCA member Ricky Leeson of Leasons Logging said it right: “We need all of the industry to get on

board. We cannot do this alone ... we are all in this together, especially when poor government decisions will have a flow on affect for all of us.”

Ms Porteous will continue to visit AFCA members during these troubled and critical times, especially ahead of the Victorian elections in November.

Next on the agenda for Carlie at the start of February are visits to regional Queensland and the NSW regions affected by the 2019-2020 bushfires, such as Tumut, Tumberumba and Bombala.

From P 5

many of these forests in order to protect communities, in order to protect people,” he said.

And there’s no signs of a let-up in conditions that keep the risk of wildfires

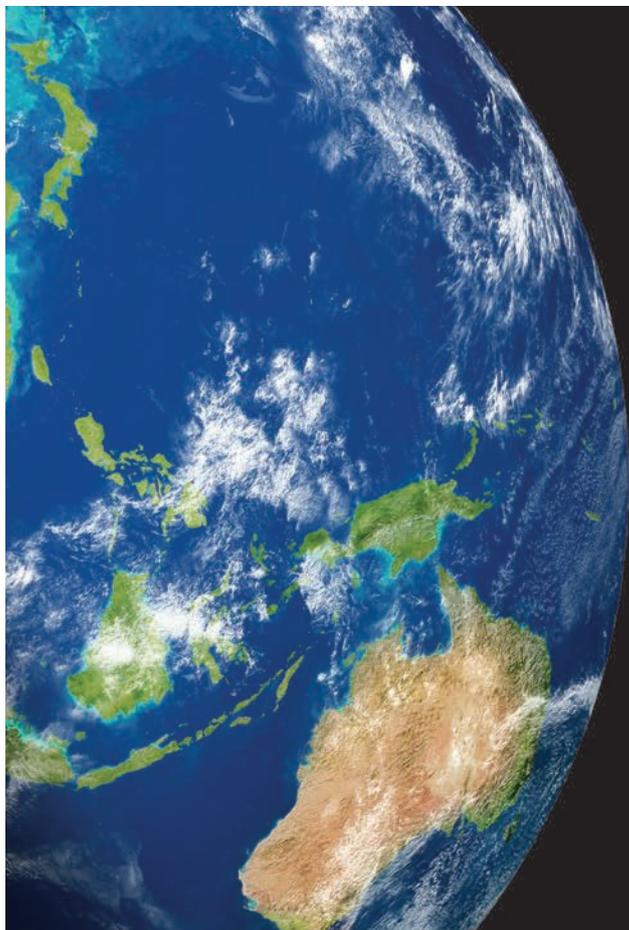
extremely high. A long-term ‘megadrought’ is gripping the region and scientists forecast temperatures will keep rising as more climate-changing carbon emissions are pumped into the atmosphere.

Forests thinned near Lake Tahoe and its tourism



**Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack...we know from a scientific standpoint precisely where this action has to take place.**

gateway community of South Lake Tahoe were credited with slowing the advance of the massive Caldor Fire last summer that destroyed almost 800 homes and prompted evacuations of tens of thousands of residents and tourists.



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# Well-stocked yards and new log loader prepare Sweetman's Hunter Valley mill for a better year

DESPITE improvements in productivity and trading since acquiring the Millfield sawmill in the NSW Hunter Valley in the third quarter of 2021, the last few weeks of the year proved to be particularly demanding for Sweetman Renewable Timbers with a Covid shut-down, extended wet weather and related log supply shortages.

General manager Campbell McInnes says that early signs in 2022 look encouraging with the purchase of a much-needed new four-wheel utility loader and the log yard well stocked.

"This year the Sweetman Renewable Timbers sawmill and timber processing facility is looking forward to continuing to support our existing and new customers," he said.

"Efforts will be focused on further improving sawmill productivity, securing additional log supplies from



**Early encouraging signs in 2022 for Sweetman Renewable Timbers with the purchase of a new four-wheel utility loader, a well-stocked log yard and expanded trading opportunities.**

certified private property sources, and broadening the product range."

With the closure of the Wyong North sawmill on the Central Coast in December, Sweetman Renewable Timbers is now the only hardwood sawmill and wood processing facility between Sydney and Newcastle.

Mr McInnes said the Millfield sawmill was ready and remains willing to supply previous customers of the Wyong North sawmill.

"In addition to the acquisition of a new utility loader to start off the year, we will be paying attention

to strengthening log supplies and continuing to support sustainable forest management practices," he said.

"We look to expanding our product range and to supporting our wholesale, industrial, building, manufacturing and retail customers."

Mr McInnes said the company was pleased to be able to offer a wide selection

**“ FOCUS ON IMPROVING SAWMILL PRODUCTION**

of hardwood products to the timber supply chain, builders and retail customers. Products include domestic and rural fencing; structural timber; boards for decking and flooring; landscaping products; manufactured posts, pegs and components; specialist and custom-cut products' and mining-related timber products.

Sweetman Renewable Timbers aims to improve the commercial performance of the forest and timber industry in NSW, and is working towards additional economic development and employment opportunities as the Hunter Valley transitions its economy beyond a substantial reliance on thermal coal mining businesses.

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## Forico appoints asset specialist as new chief executive officer

ASSET management specialist Evangelista (Ange) Albertini has been appointed new CEO of Forico, Tasmania's largest private forest and land asset manager.

Mr Albertini will spend an initial transition period with outgoing CEO Bryan Hayes, who has led Forico since the company's inception more than seven years ago.

Mr Albertini brings an

outstanding operational, technical and asset management skillset to the position, having delivered exceptional results in a series of key management and strategic roles over 19 years with Hydro Tasmania.

"Ange will bring a new perspective from outside of industry as well as a wealth of knowledge and experience," Forico board chair and managing director of parent



**Ange Albertini... bringing asset management skills to Forico.**

company New Forests Mark Rogers said.

"He is particularly skilled in asset management, renewable and sustainable

resources, strategy and leadership, and importantly, he shares Forico's commitment to meeting the highest social and environmental standards."

The Forico board considered Mr Albertini's commitment to future focused industry aligned him strongly with Forico's position as a leader in sustainable forestry in the green economy, with natural capital as a critical economic asset.

# TPAA has fielded many inquiries on wood treatment ... so it's all happening in 2022!

WHAT are we up to? This month I thought (hoped) you might be interested in what's been happening at TPAA over the last few months.

While it is not a huge job, there has been a constant stream of inquiries, even over the Christmas break. Some of these include the safety of wood preserved with synthetic pyrethroids; corrosion of triple grips used for decks; protection of jetty timbers; ACQ treatment and its effectiveness; preserved wood in roof trusses; the quality of imported preserved wood, ACQ plants in Australia; H2F plants in NSW; and disposal of used CCA solution.

In December, we installed a field trial designed to evaluate the effectiveness of various end treatments on freshly-cut laminated veneer lumber (LVL). At the moment, the Australian and New Zealand preservation standard AS/NZS 1604.1, requires a warning label for some preserved products advising that if a protective envelope is broken by such actions as cutting, drilling or machining, a suitable remedial treatment to repair the envelope shall be applied to cut surfaces.

There are a number of remedial treatments on the market, but efficacy data for these treatments is limited and none is specified in the standard.

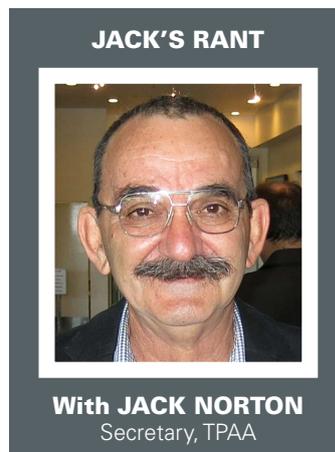


***Trials will evaluate the effectiveness of seven different remedial treatments.***  
Photo: DAF

The TPAA technical committee and board approved that a trial be implemented to evaluate the effectiveness of seven different remedial treatments.

Test material was supplied by Tilling Timber and Wesbeam and remedial treatments for the trial were supplied by Koppers Performance Chemicals, Arxada (Lonza at the time) and purchased off the shelf from Bunnings.

H3 treat for the LVL test material was carried out by Wesbeam on its own product and Dindas Australia did the preservation of Tilling's LVL. The Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (QDAF) provided use of its exposure site located in



## JACK'S RANT

**With JACK NORTON**  
Secretary, TPAA

Nambour, Queensland.

A total of 160 test pieces were exposed on December 2, and the plan is to inspect all exposed pieces every year. Unfortunately this kind of test takes years to complete and, hopefully, I will be around to report on the results.

Newly-branded preservation plants were added to the TPAA web site as well as amendments made to information on existing sites. At the start of November there were 278 listed brands for Australian preservation plants and 213 listed brands from outside the country.

The TPAA membership terms and conditions were added to the TPAA web site.

We issued a joint explanatory note on the new version (2021) of the preservation standard with the Engineered Wood Products Association of Australasia.

I represented TPAA at a wood waste seminar hosted by the Durability Centre.

TPAA is contributing to a National Institute for Forest Products Innovation project concerned with preservative-treated plantation timber fencing and sleeper markets in bushfire prone areas.

I am involved with the project management group and have provided responses to the project development process and the project's first report. This is an important project that will provide data on the performance of preserved wood in bushfires.

Until next time.

• **Jack Norton is national secretary of the Timber Preservers Association of Australia**

# Challenge for engineers: create a device that will trap carbon dioxide and harvest sunlight

RESTING up over the Christmas break I read an interesting book – the *Wisdom of Trees* by Max Adams (Head of Zeus Ltd, London, 2014).

Among other things, Max is a teacher of woodland and tree histories. He also manages an area of woodland in County Durham, England. While the book has very much an England bias, it explores the amazing biology of trees and humanity's relationship with wood and forest across the centuries.

Given the recent focus of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, and in the context of climate change abatement, I thought it worthwhile to repeat a section of the book from the chapter titled 'What trees do'.

"I have heard that clever engineers are trying to construct from ultra-modern materials a device that will trap carbon dioxide, harvest sunlight and not pollute the planet. (Good luck!). In case these engineers want some idea of how to go about it, here is a specification for



1/ **A tree... it solves all the problems of climate change**  
 2/ **Max Adams... his book explores the amazing biology of trees and humanity's relationship with wood and forest across the centuries.**

such a device. The task is to construct a manufactory in which sunlight, and air, are harvested and sugars produced and refined. Production must be sustained indefinitely. The machine should be able to replicate itself"

Here are the necessary

(You already see the problem – points 1 and 2 are mutually improbable).

- Combine with other machines to replicate over a wide area for best survival chances (tricky, if the machine can't move).
- Find a way of a bridging that gap between the sky (point 1) and the ground (point 2). Subsidiary tasks consequent on 1-4 include storing energy because of the variable supply of sunlight and the time it might take you to process the raw materials; and protecting the mechanism from mechanical failure and attack.
- Have a Plan B in case it all goes horribly wrong.
- Enable the machine to seek help from a third party (or parties).

That is all there is to it. Solve these few key engineering problems and you have ... a tree.

Certainly, I thought it was very worth repeating Max Adam's words here. Hope you agree. A read of his book is worthwhile too ... when you find the time.

If federal and state politicians are looking for workable answers to tackling climate change, they should see planting a lot more trees as an achievable part of the solution.

## TALKING TREES



With **JOHN HALKETT**

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competences, according to Max Adams:

- Erect solar panels as high as possible to ensure a good supplier of sunlight (the power source).
- But also draw water and minerals from as large a volume of soil as possible.

**“A TREE IS A WORKABLE ANSWER TO CLIMATE CHANGE”**



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# A POWERFUL LEGACY A BOLD VISION



# Beam 15 answers call by construction sector hungry for quick supply of building materials

## Pressure on industry to ramp up production in face of unprecedented timber shortages

WITH Australia's demand for structural pine framing and engineered wood products at an all-time high, pressure has been on the timber industry to ramp up production to make products more available to the market.

But what happens when the log resources required isn't available to produce the glulam beams the market is crying out for?

This is exactly what happened to Hyne Timber's glue laminated timber (GLT) products.

"We were in the same place as many other Australian timber businesses in 2021," says Stefan Gerber, engineering and sales manager GLT at Hyne Timber.

"Increasing production capacity with a new manufacturing plant was our original response to supply more glulam to the market, but we ran into issues stemming from the changing nature of our log resources," he said.

As a natural resource, wood fibre is subject to the forces of nature and despite improvements to genetics and silvicultural treatment, the high-grade feedstock recovered from the sawmilling operations for GL17 beams has been steadily declining for the past 18-months or more.

While feedstock was on the decline, market demand was growing to unprecedented levels in response to the hugely successful HomeBuilder stimulus.

And with southern pines



The Hyne's R&D team tests Beam 15 samples for delamination.

taking a minimum of 28 years to mature before harvesting, waiting for new feedstock was not an option. Neither was undersupplying a market hungry for a high-grade product.

Over the course of 2020-21, Hyne Timber's answer was to develop Beam 15, a high-performance product engineered to handle long spans and critical loads. It is an entirely new grade of GLT that's more readily available for a record-breaking market.

"Beam 15 means we have increased availability, which is obviously important in a market with very high demand," says Stefan Gerber.

"It's a high-performing product at a slightly lower

**“WAITING FOR NEW FEEDSTOCK WAS NOT AN OPTION**

MOE – the stiffness which governs most designs. The same sized beams can be used in many applications, yet we have much more feedstock fibre available so that we can better supply our customers."

Langs Building Supplies design hub operations manager Ashley Henkel echoes the same sentiment. "The introduction of GL15 beams has increased availability and reduced lead times for our customers, allowing them to keep to their building schedule."

Made using high-strength, custom graded laminates, each individual laminate undergoes thorough testing before bonding. This means that Hyne's new Beam 15 not only looks identical, but it also performs closely to GL17 and can be used in almost all applications where GL17 is specified.

"The good news is Beam

15 performs very, very closely to a GL17," Stefan Gerber says. "So in a high percentage of cases, it will do the same job. We received a lot of feedback on this from the design community. The difference is so minimal, yet it makes a huge difference in the availability of the timber we can use."

Director and principal engineer

at Optimum Structures Enda Lyons agrees stating that "with the new GL15 grade beam we are confident that what we are specifying is actually available for the builder to buy. Even better because this new beam can be used in most applications where we traditionally specified a GL17 beam."

"To achieve a GL17 grade beam, we've always custom graded our laminates, as simply gluing standard MGP15 grade boards won't achieve the properties required," Mr Gerber said. "And we're doing the same thing with Beam 15."

As Australia's largest GLT manufacturer, Hyne have built a 500 sq m in-house R&D facility containing state-of-the-art equipment.

Being a propriety product, it was necessary for Hyne

Cont P 15

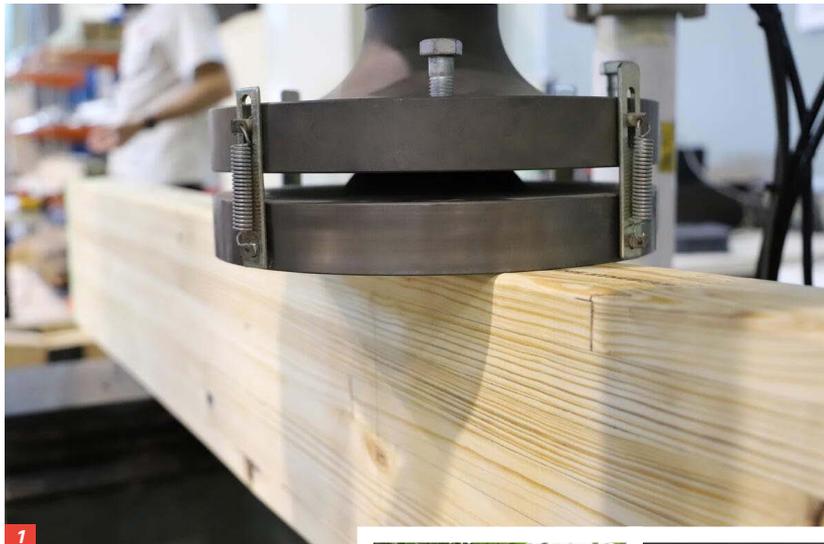
From P 14

Timber to place Beam 15 through a myriad of tests to ensure consistency in performance and compliance with the building code.

The engineering team worked to create a recipe for a product that could reliably meet the needs and strength rating of a Beam 15. The in-house testing facility allows them to determine the effectiveness of each beam – from the glue bond strength to the treatment efficacy levels, through to the strategic use of laminates in each beam.

During the creation of what would become Beam 15, they tested each possible combination for delamination, finger joint strength, stiffness, and shear strength. Through these tests they

“CREATING A RELIABLE METHOD FOR CONSISTENT HIGH QUALITY



**1/ EWPAAs tests on Hyned's Beam 15 confirmed strength properties.**

**2/ Stefan Gerber... the good news is Beam 15 performs very, very closely to a GL17.**

**3/ Enda Lyons ... this new beam can be used in most applications where we traditionally specified a GL17 beam.**

were able to create a reliable method for consistent high-quality.

Once the team was confident in the repeatability of the beam properties, it was then assessed by an independent third-party accredited program completed by the Engineered Wood Products Association of Australasia (EWPAAs) with the assistance of Griffith University.

Twenty-one unique sample types and a staggering 312 individual beam samples



were tested by the EWPAAs team. Through vigorous testing and assessment, EWPAAs verified that Hyne Timber's Beam 15 complied with the National Construction Code and met the Australian standards in manufacturing and design – AS1328.1 and AS1720.1.

A full product technical statement is now available on its website, with Hyne Timber also offering their design software, Hyne Design, free to customers looking for

engineering solutions.

With the building industry demanding product and ongoing material shortages affecting build times, Beam 15's presence in the market could not come soon enough. But it was by no means an easy feat to accomplish.

From conception through to launch, Hyne Timber invested significant resources to make Beam 15 a reality.

"It's stretched everyone," says Stefan Gerber. "With the launch plan for Beam

15, we're in a good place, but it's taken time. We can't jump manufacturing capacity from one day to the next. We've had to build the new GLT manufacturing facility, we've moved into a large-scale warehouse at the Port of Brisbane to service southeast

Queensland in a timely manner and tweak our NSW supply out of Newcastle and our Victorian distributors."

With the supply challenges for building materials continuing in 2022 and the need for engineered wood products yet to reach its peak, Hyne Timber has endeavoured to safeguard customers' GLT supply requirements, without compromising on their renowned product quality.

## Green Triangle Timber Industry Awards 'paused' ... for now

THE Green Triangle Timber Industry Awards organising committee has made the difficult decision to hit the pause button on the gala dinner and awards event scheduled to be held at Mt Gambier on March 22.

In doing so the committee is sensitive to current Covid-19 activity restrictions in place in South Australia

and, more importantly, the health and safety of prospective event attendees and the local timber industry more broadly.

The committee formed the view that a postponement was the most appropriate and responsible



action to take at this stage. However, event manager Gaylene Newton has advised that the committee is very

much looking forward to "hitting play" again and delivering an evening where the industry can safely come together and celebrate.

A rescheduled event date is yet to be determined, and will be influenced by advice from SA Health. Further information will be provided as soon as possible. Stay tuned!

# Lignum vitae's hardness has a place in history

JUST a footnote to John Halkett's wonderful feature on the amazing Lignum vitae timber that might interest the readers and is another illustration of its place in history (Timber&Forestry e-news December 9, 2021).

Many readers will have read the book 'Longitude' by Dava Sobel that chronicles the story of John Harrison who won the Longitude Prize in the 1700s and created almost single handedly the design of a reliable marine chronometer that was used right up to the creation of quartz clocks in the 1970s.

Of interest to readers will be John Harrison's use of Lignum vitae in his early clocks and indeed for his early attempts for a marine chronometer. As you point out, the wood was used because of its strength and the self-lubricating ability of the timber. John Harrison



1/ *The Two Day Marine Chronometer from HMS Beagle, the survey ship that took Charles Darwin on his voyage of the Galapagos Islands in the 1800s.*



2/ *Lignum vitae (Latin for wood of life) is hard and durable and is also the most dense with an average dried density of 1260 kg/m<sup>3</sup>. It will easily sink in water. On the Janka scale of hardness, which measures hardness of woods, lignum vitae ranks the highest of all trade woods.*

understood how to mortice the teeth into his gear wheels to orientate the grain for maximum strength.

The accuracy of the wood mechanisms Harrison made was unprecedented. Over a period of decades, Harrison's clocks were instrumental in

solving the longitude problem. Advances made then in maritime navigation relate to technology used in today's satnav systems.

Some of these clocks are still in use today.

Of further interest to Australian readers is that

a copy of the prize-winning chronometer (actually an oversized pocket watch) was used on the second and third of Captain Cook's voyages of exploration and one of these was also used by Matthew Flinders on his voyages around Australia.

I can thoroughly recommend a visit to the Royal Observatory at

Greenwich and the nearby maritime museum where the famous marine chronometers can be seen as well as Cook's "faithful friends" the chronometers that accompanied his journeys.

– NICK LIVANES, business development manager, Koppers.

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# Forico supports PhD graduates in Tasmania

FOREST graduates Michelle Balasso and Vilius Gendvilas obtained their PhD degrees from the University of Tasmania in December after being supported by Forico and other partners in their studies at the ARC Training Centre for Forest Value.

The centre is an initiative funded through the Australian Research Council to provide evidence-based solutions for industry in the forest and wood products sector.

"It's important to build research capability for the forest industry and we are delighted that Dr Balasso and Dr Gendvilas have successfully completed their studies, working closely with us on projects of direct relevance in the sector," Dr Andrew Jacobs, chief technology officer at Forico, said.

Dr Balasso's thesis examined the assessment of wood quality in standing trees, and segregation of harvested wood for different end-products use to extract the maximum value from the hardwood resource. Using non-destructive testing techniques which employed



**PhD students Vilius Gendvilas and Michelle Balasso discuss field work near Mole in north-west Tasmania with a Country Hour reporter (right).**

acoustic wave velocity, she developed a practical segregation and sorting tool for use at all stages of the supply chain, and proposed methods to reliably sort and grade timber boards.

She also studied the modification of timber boards using thermo and hydro-mechanical treatments, densifying them to increase the structural properties for potential use in the timber industry, for high-quality applications.

Dr Gendvilas investigated various aspects of silviculture of the planted Eucalyptus nitens resource, particularly

the causes and effects of tree dominance, and the effects of thinning on the properties of trees that remain standing. He will now continue his studies for the sector as a Research Fellow at the University of the Sunshine Coast's Forest Research Institute. Dr Balasso has accepted a role as forest project officer with Forico and divides her time between the company's headquarters in Launceston, its plantation forests in the

**“STUDY BUILDS ON RESEARCH CAPABILITIES**

north and northwest, and her home office in Hobart. "My project spanned the supply chain, from the forest down to timber products for construction," Dr Balasso said.

"I tried to connect the parts of the productive chain across very different stakeholders, because a lot of knowledge is stuck in silos. Forest growers know a lot about the forests and their resource, but they don't necessarily understand what the log processors want from their logs.

"Similarly, log processors don't necessarily understand what designers or architects require, or what products the planted resource could potentially deliver."

"These were unique PhD scholarships," said Dr Andrew Jacobs, chief technology officer at Forico.

Dr Jacobs, who supervised both graduates, said the students had spent time at Forico working with foresters on issues of relevance to Forico and the wider industry.

"They have conducted highly relevant research which will positively impact our business," he said.



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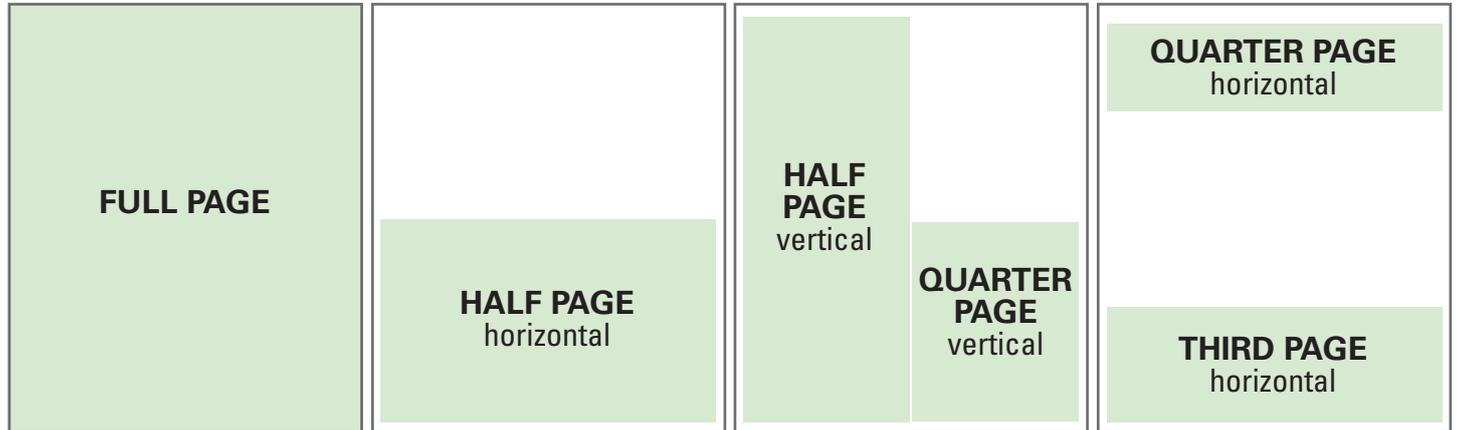
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