

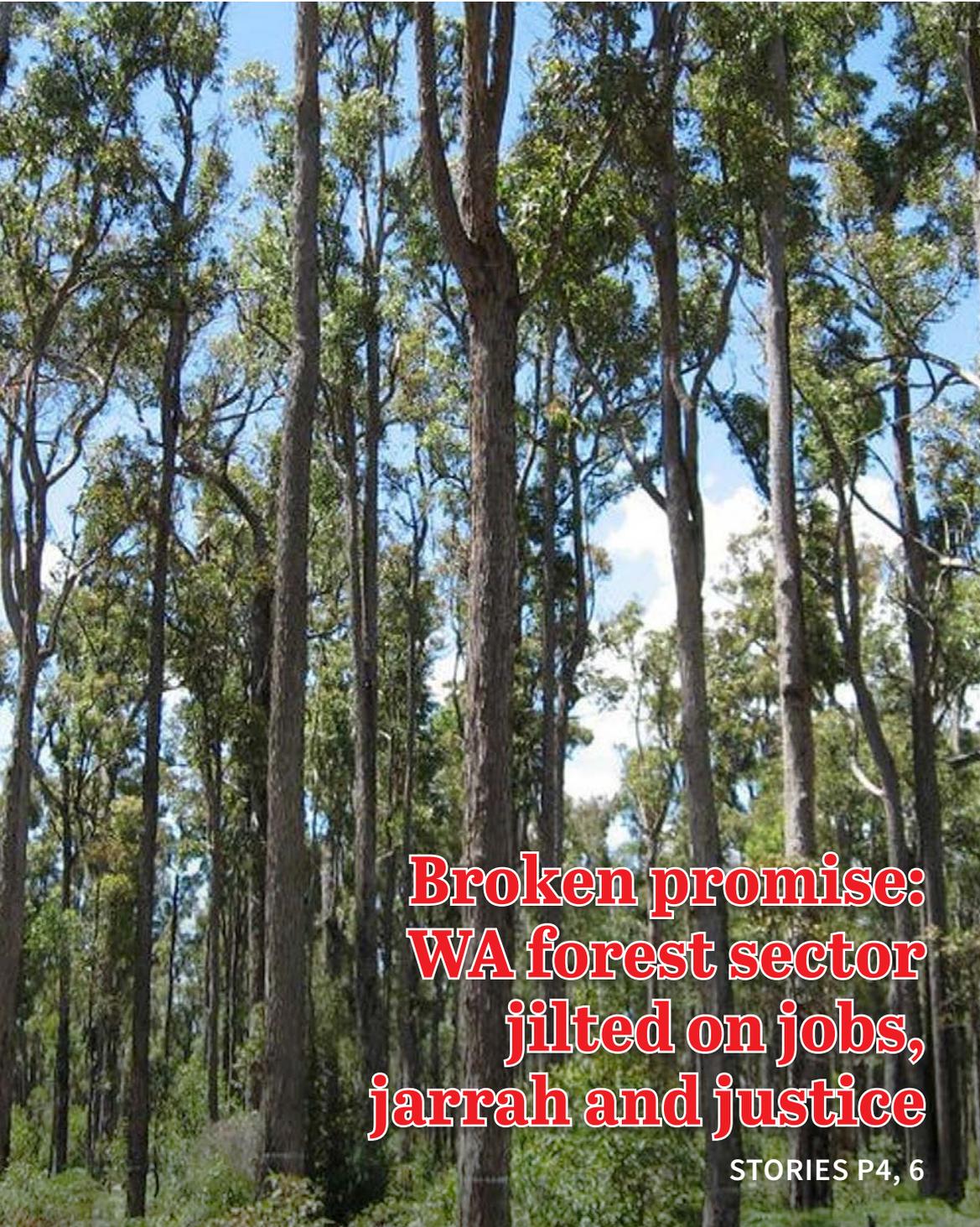
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Broken promise: WA forest sector jilted on jobs, jarrah and justice

STORIES P4, 6

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Norske Skog battles to keep Tassie mill running as high paper costs put publishers on survival deadline

PAPER shortages fuelled by soaring electricity prices and shipping costs could put some Australian newspapers and magazines out of commission as publishers grapple with the rising cost of newsprint.

One of the world's biggest paper suppliers, Norwegian-owned Norske Skog, is in the middle renegotiating contracts with newspaper and magazine publishers as it battles to keep its only Australian paper mill running and profitable.

However, its proposed price increases, which industry sources say are between 30% and 40%, could prove fatal to some mastheads or lead to a reduction in the size or number of newspapers distributed in the lead-up to the federal election.

Tony Kendall, managing director of regional publishing company Australian Community Media (owner of The Canberra Times and Newcastle Herald, as well as hundreds of regional publications), said the price hike, scheduled for July, posed the worst crisis for



Proposed price increases between 30% and 40% could prove fatal to some mastheads.

local publishers since World War 2.

"[The full price increase] will push some of our publications into negative profitability," Mr Kendall said. "I think there'll be widespread closures. I don't know how independent publishers will cope."

Norske Skog is the main provider of paper to the local publishing industry. It runs a mill in Tasmania and until recently operated a mill in New Zealand. The Tasmanian mill – known as Boyer – produced Australia's first newsprint in 1941 and remains one of the state's

major employers. But industry sources, familiar with the position of Norske Skog, said it had lost money in Australia for more than a decade and was told by its parent company that it can only support local publishers if it is profitable to do so.

The company told publishers last year it planned to increase the price of newsprint by about 30% and

the cost of glossy paper – used for real-estate pullouts and suburban titles – by between 35% and 45%. The decision was related to electricity prices, high cost of freight shipping and reduced newsprint demand rather than an attempt to generate large profits.

Australian Community Media, the country's largest regional news publisher, is leading a Country Press Australia campaign for an immediate cash injection to compensate for an increase in the cost of printing newspapers of up to 80%.

The CPA has also called for ongoing support in the form of tax incentives and rebates for newspaper advertisers and a mandated minimum amount spent by government on advertising in regional newspapers.

Underlying market conditions including Covid, the war in Ukraine, rising power prices in Europe and global shipping issues have impacted prices more than anticipated.

(With extracts from The Sydney Morning Herald).

“NEWSPAPERS PUSHED INTO NEGATIVE PROFITABILITY



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Government's postponement of a proposed 35pc tariff on Russian imports relief for EWP traders

Increasing shortage of European structural softwoods has sideline impact on timber supply chains

IN a 'holding pattern' for engineered wood importers, the federal government's proposed additional tariff of 35% on Russian imports from April 25 has been postponed to October 25.

This has followed active engagement between the Australia Border Force and importers and industry bodies.

"This issue has resulted in numerous and polarised representations," Australian Timber Importers Federation general manager John Halkett said.

"To make it crystal clear, ATIF condemns in the strongest possible terms Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the atrocities committed by the Russian military," he said.

"We continue to be supportive of the government's economic and financial sanctions against Russia and Belarus."

However, ATIF has advocated that shipments of Russian timber products paid for and shipped in good faith prior to the 'conflict timber' resolution on March 4 should not be subject to a retrospective additional 35% import tariff.

The Australia Border Force has now made a ruling supporting this position. Subsequent correspondence between ATIF and ABF has confirmed that companies importing timber products from Russia that have consignments presently in-transit and expected to be landed at an Australia



A shortage of LVL and other softwood structural timbers, not only from Russia but from Europe, are likely to result in a significant reduction in the capacity of Australia's timber supply chain.

port between April 25 and October 25 will not have to pay the additional 35% tariff.

ABF has pointed out that importers will need evidence that the goods were in-transit, and comply with other conditions set out in the Australian Customs Notice 2022/21.

"ATIF members have been advised to ensure documentation confirming that timber product shipments originated from Russia and have been in transit is available for inspection by Australian port authorities and officials," Mr Halkett said.

The federation has been in discussions with officials from various federal government departments about timber product supply constraint realities that have

arisen as a result of the invasion of Ukraine.

In particular, softwood

structural timber import shortages, not only from Russia but from Europe more broadly, are likely to result in a significant reduction in the capacity of the Australian timber supply chain to import sufficient quantities of both engineered wood products and solid wood softwood structural products for the foreseeable future.

In correspondence to ATIF chairman Nils Koren, the Minister for Trade and Investment Dan Tehan acknowledged the impact on supply chains brought on by current situation across

Cont P 5

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A broken promise by WA government: praise for \$75m Parkside investment – now you can shut it!

MORE than 50 jobs have been lost after last week's closure of the historic Greenbushes mill in the south west of Western Australia, a more than \$75 million investment by Queensland's Parkside Timber.

State Shadow Minister for Forestry Steven Martin said the closure was a shock to the local Greenbushes community and evidence of the government's failure to properly understand the implications of its plan to close the native hardwood industry.

"This closure is a direct result of the decision to end native forestry and the government is leaving the



1 hard-working families of Greenbushes, who have served the mill for its 128 years, to pay the price," Mr Martin said.

"Greenbushes



- 1/ Shock closure... Parkside's Greenbushes mill in southwest WA.
- 2/ Adele Farina... closure came as blow to industry.
- 3/ Steven Martin... minister should be ashamed

two years ago by Dave Kelly. However, he has not acknowledged whether his government's policy was to blame for the mill's closure.

"Whether it's a decision directly resulting from our decision to end native logging in 2024, we're not in a position to say that," Mr Kelly told the ABC. .

WA Forest Industries Federation CEO Adele Farina said the closure came as a blow to industry and the Greenbushes community, particularly

given the state government's commitment to "business as usual" for industry until 2024.

Parkside purchased the dry and green mill from Brickworks in October 2019 processing karri and marri and was actively encouraged and praised by the state government for its significant investment, which now totals more than \$75 million.

Initially, Mr Kelly said Parkside's investment was seen by the McGowan government as a step forward in maintaining a strong forestry industry that supports WA jobs ... "while still protecting the environmental values of our beautiful native forests"

"Minister Kelly has broken his promise and instead shut the native forestry industry down," Steve Martin said.

Meanwhile, the online

offered a window into the future for many small communities across the state's south west and without serious policy revisions, the future is very uncertain."

Parkside purchased the Greenbushes green and dry mill in 2019 with the active praise and encouragement of the state government.

“LABOR DESTROYING A SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRY

"Labor is destroying a sustainable industry that has supported small communities in Western Australia for well over a century," Mr Martin said. "Dave Kelly, the Minister for Forestry Minister, should be ashamed of his actions."

Parkside was encouraged to invest in the sector just

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Cont P 5

From P 3

Europe. The Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources has noted the disruption to existing supply chains and intends to explore options for diversifying supply chains while acknowledging that it is critical to sustain building and construction businesses reliant on such imports.

“The minister also noted

“TASK FORCE WOULD ASSESS IMPACT ON TIMBER SUPPLY



Dan Tehan



Nils Koren



John Halkett

that it is essential strong contingency plans are developed to mitigate the impacts of the now-evident disruptions to existing supply chains and associated arrangements,” John Halkett said.

In discussions with officials, it has been proposed that a

joint taskforce comprising representatives from federal industry, trade, foreign affairs and supply chain resilience portfolios, together with relevant timber industry bodies, be established.

“Such a taskforce could assess impacts on timber products supply chains,

analyse import data and explore options to assist in mitigating prospective reductions in supply,” Mr Halkett said.

While it is a relief this additional tariff has been delayed, it unfortunately is not stopping the ever-increasing shortages of EWPs in the building and construction sectors due to the high demand for the product and increasing costs to ship the goods into Australia.

Russia is a key supplier of EWP and pine framing to world markets, but it is likely supply chains will be disrupted in the coming months.

US short of thousands of firefighters as summer approaches

THE US Forest Service is short thousands of wildland firefighters as it enters what is expected to be another challenging fire season amid a historic drought in the West.

The agency has publicly said it has 90% of the staff it needs, or 10,200 firefighters. But deputy chief Jaelith Hall-Rivera said that figure was the sum of the firefighters the agency had “either on

board or have made offers to.”

But as of the end of April, a \$600 million pay raise approved by Congress to help recruitment and retention

efforts has been stuck for months in a bureaucratic morass. The raises were for 50% of firefighters’ salaries or \$20,000, whichever is less. Firefighters have yet to see a cent of it.

From P 4

portal allowing impacted workers to access compensation packages is still not open and Ms Farina has urged state government action on this.

FIFWA has been in discussions with the government to allow workers to access resources through the Native Forestry Transition Group as soon as possible.

Parkside’s Nannup and Manjimup facilities will

continue to operate. Nannup was acquired in January 2020 from Nannup Timber Processing. Significant investment has been under way to make it just a green mill processing jarrah products.

The Manjimup site has been rebuilt as a specialist processing centre with \$12 million invested since January last year using world’s best technology.

• **Poor scientific advice, P 6.**



Kieran Gosden, Forestry SA. Winner of Richard Stanton Award 2021

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The 2022 Richard Stanton award nominations are now open. Entries close September 2, 2022.

Responsible Wood 
RW/1-10-1

WA minister is receiving poor scientific advice: foresters refute claim timber yields are declining

FORESTRY Australia's Western Australian branch has refuted claims made by Minister for Forests Dave Kelly who suggested timber yields in WA's forests are declining, that the state's forests are no longer productive, and that the decision by the government to end native forest harvesting is based on "science".

Branch chair Brad Barr said there was no available evidence to support the government's claims that timber yields were declining and that state forests were no longer productive.

Forestry Australia wrote to the minister in March seeking evidence of this science. No answer has been forthcoming.

"It is the statutory responsibility of the Conservation Commission to provide advice to the Minister for the Environment about the level of sustained yield that could be provided by WA's magnificent multiple-use state forests," Mr Barr said.

"To the best of our knowledge, the commission



1/ Dave Kelly... no response to Forestry Australia request..



2/ Brad Barr... measurements have not shown that tree growth has stopped.

provided no correspondence to government to the effect that a conclusion could be drawn that 'the science tells us that the industry is no longer sustainable'.

"Forestry is a scientific discipline, informed by careful study of forest ecosystems. Critical to that is measurement of trees, to determine the rate of growth. Long-term measurement plots have not shown that tree growth has stopped, despite the clear reduction in rainfall since the 1970s."

Mr Barr said scientific research published in the journal *Climate Dynamics*

concluded that the recent decline in rainfall in south-west Western Australia since 2000 was not unusual in its magnitude or duration compared to rainfall variability over the past seven centuries.

"We've been lured into an invalid comparison period – the 20th Century was actually the wettest in seven centuries," Mr Barr said. "The resilient forests have survived and thrived in much drier conditions in the past."

Forestry Australia notes that the 2014-2023 Forest Management Plan document, and its various independent reviews (most recently in

2019), have all reiterated that the potential effects of climate change on the growth rate of jarrah and karri trees have been applied when projecting future yields.

The FMP settings for future tree growth was 'high climate change severity assumed' ... "and even then, a further 10% was deducted from calculated sustainable yields, just to be on the safe side," Mr Barr said.

"Actual measurements of tree growth conducted since have shown these predictions to be overly pessimistic, with actual tree growth much higher in reality.

"The minister may point to reduced sawlog yields and difficulty in meeting contract volumes as evidence. In reality, government intercessions that cancelled planned harvests of high yield areas at short notice, overestimation of Covid impacts on forest product demand (predicted to subdue demand, but massive commonwealth stimulus in fact exploded demand), under

Cont P 7

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MAY

21: Queensland Timber Industry Awards – Rydges Southbank, Brisbane, QLD. Contact Alicia Oelkers 0418 449 031. www.tabma.com.au

JUNE

3: WFTN Qld strategic planning workshop – Hugh Hamilton Room, Construction Training Centre, Salisbury, QLD and via Zoom. 8-11 am. Setting priorities and agenda for progressing meaningful change for women in the forest and timber industries. Contact sarah@timberqueensland.com.au

10: Third time lucky! GTTIA Awards – Mount Gambier, SA. The GTTIA committee confirms the awards gala event will be held on June 10 at The Barn, Mount Gambier SA. Tickets on sale April 25 and for purchase online. Email: info@gttia.com

14: AFPA-Timber Queensland dinner – Rydges Southbank, Brisbane, QLD. Starts 6 pm. First national forest industries event in the new federal parliamentary term. Tickets at <https://events.humanitix.com/afpa-quarterly-meetings-june-2022-including-the-afpa-and-timber-queensland-forest-industries-dinner>

16: Timber Queensland R&D field day – Brisbane, QLD. 8 am-2 pm. Showcase of current R&D from Queensland's three major research centres and their partners. Visit www.timberqueensland.com.au/events

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

JULY

10-15: 65th The Society of Wood Science and Technology annual meeting – Salt/Peppers Mantra complex, Kingscliffe, NSW. SWST activities include publishing wood and fibre science and accrediting undergraduate wood science programs in North American, South America, Asia and Europe. This will be the first time SWST meets in our part of the world and more than 160 abstracts have been submitted from 25 countries. The meeting will bring together scientists from around the globe to address topics including basic timber properties, mass timber construction, plantation resources, timber certification and timber processing. Registration is now open at www.swst.org.

SEPTEMBER

11-16: Gottstein Trust Understanding Wood Science Course – Sunday evening, September 11, 2022, in Albury, NSW, for the field trip component, ending on Friday, September 16, 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 program can be downloaded at www.gottsteintrust.org

OCTOBER

26-28: DANA-Gingko Global Woodchip and Biomass Trade Conference, Singapore. Focus on woodchips and biomass. (Venue to be advised). Website live and early bird registrations now open. Visit <https://danaevents.co.nz/2022singapore> Contact conference organiser Mariela Ferrari mariela.ferrari@danaevents.co.nz

From P 6

resourcing of DBCA forest environmental planning, a shortage of harvest and haulage contractors, and recruitment gaps at the Forest Products Commission all conspired to make it difficult to harvest the long-term sustainable volumes that the forest scientists know are out there in our forests."

Forestry Australia says Minister Kelly is receiving very poor scientific advice on



Suggestions have gone awry that WA's forests are declining and are no longer productive.

the topic of forest productivity and impacts of climate change. Whatever advice he is getting, it is not coming

from members of Forestry Australia.

The government has announced that native forest

harvesting in WA will end at the start of 2024. The state's next forest management plan – covering the period 2024-2033 – would not include native forest clearing, and the government will spend \$350m to expand softwood timber plantations and \$50m to support affected workers and communities.

On the cover: Regrowth jarrah forests at Harvey, 140 km south of Perth between Pinjarra and Bunbury. Photo Todd Brittain

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Shortage of skilled tradesmen worst in 16 years

SKILLED professionals and tradespeople across the architecture, engineering and construction sectors are in massive demand amid a huge volume of work in detached home building and civil infrastructure, new data has found.

Released by the National Skills Commission, the March monthly job vacancy data shows a worker shortage of unprecedented proportions across many design and construction roles.

The number of vacancies for tradespeople, machinery and equipment operators and



The 2022-23 federal Budget splashed billions of dollars on small businesses and apprentices in the wake of skilled labour shortages.

other manual labourers sit at levels not seen since the data began in 2006.

Meanwhile, unfilled vacancies across construction management and many types of engineering are at their highest levels since the mining boom.

Simon Bristow, senior regional director at leading recruitment firm Hays, says there is a candidate shortage of a magnitude which has not been seen before.

“There are shortages across all areas of trades and labour as well as many areas

of skilled engineering,” he said.

Mr Bristow says factors driving the shortage include lower-than-normal levels of overseas and interstate migration, a competitive job market for school leavers and graduates and demand pressures arising out of high levels of activity on public infrastructure projects and residential construction.

Release of the latest skills data follows the 2022-23 federal Budget which splashed billions of dollars on small businesses and apprentices. New apprentices and their employers will be eligible for hefty payments, particularly for those in “priority” industries.

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Cont P 9

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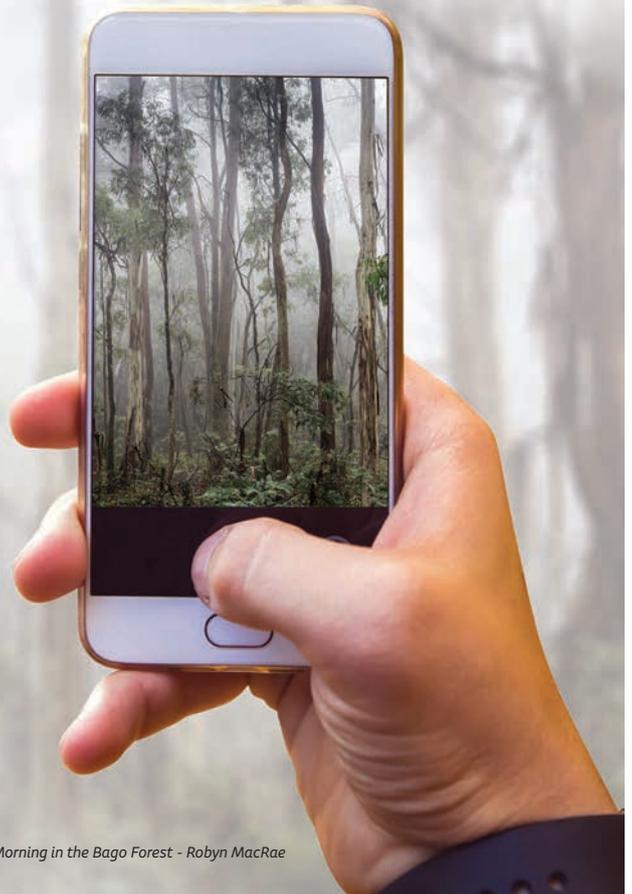
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* Photos must be taken from a Responsible Wood certified forest. For more information visit responsiblewood.org.au



Photo: Early Morning in the Bago Forest - Robyn MacRae



Industry leaders warn on legality of Far East imports of Russian birch plywood

CONSTRUCTION leaders have warned that some timber products sourced from the Far East could be illegal to import.

The UK Construction Leadership Council has warned that Far East imports of birch plywood come from Russian logs and are therefore deemed illegal in the UK.

Supplies of the product will continue to tighten in the coming months, especially in the summer, the council says in its latest report.

“Birch plywood will become increasingly scarce as the northern summer progresses,” CEO of the Builders Merchants Federation John Newcomb said.

“Outside of Russia there is only limited production from Europe, principally Finland,” he said.

Imports of products from Russia and Belarus were banned following the Russian invasion of Ukraine which began in February, but the



Birch plywood becoming increasingly scarce.

group said imports from the Far East could also be illegal due to Russian materials being used in the region.

“If the UK market is offered birch plywood for later in the year from the Far East, it will be based on Russian birch logs and will be illegal to import,” the report says.

An impacted birchwood supply chain is most likely to affect the joinery, shop fitting and finishing sectors. But most other wood products, including structural softwood, are fully stocked in the UK, the report adds. The joinery and shop fitting industries may also find alternatives to Russian redwood and whitewood, but these could end up being more expensive.

From P 8

widespread complaints of a skills shortage constraining the ability of SMEs to hire and retain qualified talent. The Budget shows employers will be eligible to claim up to \$4500 in the first year of the system.

The Coalition plan hinges on the creation of the new Australian Apprentices

Incentive System, a development the Coalition says will update and refine the 30 or so payments already available to employers and apprentices.

To sweeten the deal for workers, the Coalition says it will furnish priority apprentices with \$5000 in training support payments, split into half-yearly instalments over two years.

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Brexit, Covid, Ukraine among hurdles for timber markets in UK and Canada as volumes get tighter

178,000 cub m decline in softwood imports hit housing and renovation markets in Britain

A SLOWER British housing and home renovation market in the first quarter this year is reflected in timber import volumes, which fell below the record levels seen in 2021, according to Timber Development UK statistics.

They show that while timber import volumes are nearly 20% lower in February 2022 than those of February 2021, they remain slightly above the pre-pandemic levels of February 2020.

While this was the fifth consecutive month where total timber import volumes were below the previous year, it marks a return to more expected patterns



Nick Boulton... companies in the wood sector will need to be more flexible in 2022.



Chris Sutton... 2021 was a record year for timber imports in the UK.



Kevin Mason... brutal logistics have kept the market tight for Canadian producers.

and commercial projects in order to maintain strong growth," he said.

"While overall these import volumes suggest a more 'regular' year for the timber market, the terrible events unfolding in Ukraine are likely to cause market disruption.

within the market.

The biggest factor driving change between February 2022 and February 2021 was a 178,000 cub m decline in softwood imports, with

hardwood and plywood imports up by 32% and 8% respectively.

"After the 12% construction growth and a record year for timber imports in 2021, we were always expecting more modest import volumes in the early months of 2022," Timber Development UK head of trade Nick Boulton said

"Softwood imports correlate heavily with the home repairs, maintenance and improvements and new housing markets. All have had a slow start to the year," Mr Boulton said.

"It is likely these markets will continue to slow as we head into our spring season, with the latest CPA forecast suggesting that inflation will impact these construction sectors the hardest."

Mr Boulton said this was coupled with a likely slowdown in consumer confidence as the energy and cost of living crisis began to bite in the coming months.

"It's clear that companies in the wood sector will need to be more flexible in 2022 seeking out infrastructure

Timber

Development UK chairman Chris Sutton said the last two years had put considerable stress on businesses and staff, with Brexit, Covid and Ukraine all happening within a short space of each other.

"Demand for timber products has also been exceptionally high over the last year, with 2021 proving a record year for timber imports in the UK," he said.

INFLATION WILL HIT HARDEST FOR CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

"With the world in a climate crisis, this high demand is likely to continue given timber's importance in decarbonising the UK's construction industry.

"Speaking to many of our members over the last few months, the resilience of the timber industry cannot be underestimated. Regardless of the significant recent challenges, they are

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Cont P 11

From P 10

controlling where they can and are getting on with the job at hand.”

Meanwhile, Canada-based ERA Forest Products Research, an equity and fixed income research firm, says lumber prices are poised to move higher again after a short-lived correction.

Managing director Kevin Mason says the impacts of the Russian-Ukraine war are broad-based and still developing. However, the focal point of the challenges remains Europe, particularly with respect to energy.

“Global currency shifts are in motion,” Mr Mason said.

“Housing starts remained strong last month and rising rates aren’t expected to meaningfully impact demand until 2023.

“Log markets are good



The construction industry absorbs 60% or more of all sawn softwood used in the UK. Another 40% is used in pallets and packaging.

almost everywhere, with prices rising sharply in the Pacific Northwest and some parts of the US South. Location matters.”

Mr Mason said average prices this year were expected to exceed 2021.

“Panel prices have cracked, but they are likely to post upside surprises this year,” he said.

“OSB imports have seen a dramatic war-related drop.

Pulp prices are still headed up in all markets amid supply challenges.

“Brutal logistics have kept markets tight, but China issues are a risk. Newsprint prices are climbing through April-May and we don’t believe we are at the peak yet.

“Offshore pricing is much higher than domestic. Paper prices are up everywhere, with more gains coming

through Q2 and likely Q3. Buyers are panicked amid limited supply.

“European newsprint prices have record-breaking differentials between high and low prices. A convergence to the high end is coming. European paper-price increases continue,

pressured by high energy costs.”

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New global partnership formed at forestry congress

AS governments turn to the benefits of sustainable forest management and forest products to support climate action and post-pandemic economic recovery, a new agreement struck last week at the World Forestry Congress in Seoul will help advance forestry solutions and policy dialogue around the world.

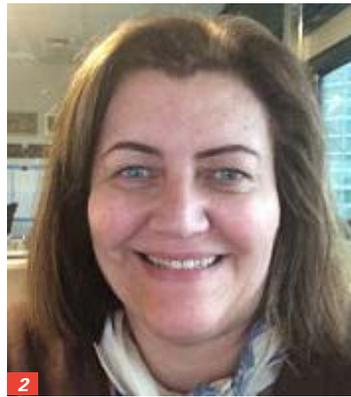
The announcement by the United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat and the International Council of Forest and Paper Associations will provide a framework for the two organisations to work together to discuss and implement forest-related policies and agreements that are “good for people and the planet”.

Forest Products Association of Canada president and CEO Derek Nighbor will serve as the liaison between the 18 ICFPA member organisations and the UNFF.

“The United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030 calls for a world



1/ **Derek Nighbor... will liaise with 18 ICFPA member organisations.**
 2/ **Barbara Tavora-Jainchill... 25% of the global population relies on forests.**



where forests are sustainably managed, contribute to sustainable development, and provide economic, social, environmental, and cultural benefits for present and future generations,” said Barbara Tavora-Jainchill, program forest affairs management officer with the UN Forum on Forests Secretariat.

“An estimated 1.6 billion people, or 25% of the global population, rely on forests for their subsistence needs, livelihoods, employment, and

income,” Ms Tavora-Jainchill said.

“The private sector is fundamental in the promotion and implementation of sustainable forest management, so working with our partners in the forest industry will be critical to our ultimate success.

“ADVANCING FORESTRY SOLUTIONS AND POLICY DIALOGUE

“There is no path to a lower carbon economy without sustainable forest management and sustainably-sourced forest products. This new collaboration between ICFPA and UNFF will allow us to advance policy insights and learnings across international borders to build a resilient global economy – one that creates greater economic and social opportunities for the nearly 2 billion people who live in or near forested communities around the globe.”

Derek Nighbor said he was honoured to have been selected by his international colleagues to serve in his liaison role.

“My goal is to make a difference by bringing Canadian innovation, experience, and know-how to the global policy table and by bringing the best ideas from countries around the world to strengthen opportunity for forestry families and communities here at home.”



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Vive la LVL! Stora Enso builds on French connection

FINNISH manufacturer Stora Enso has taken a 35% share of French wood processor ACDF Industrie SA.

The investment is in line with Stora Enso's growth strategy for mass timber building elements, enabling value-added, bespoke CLT solutions to its long-term French partners.

ACDF produces a wide range of engineered wood products such as CLT, glulam and laminated veneer lumber supplying the residential and non-residential building sector, mainly for the French market.

"France is one of our priority markets for growth, with building regulations favouring sustainable, renewable materials and low carbon property development," executive vice-



1/ ACDF's second production line operational in February will increase the capacity of mass timber elements.

2/ Lars Völkel... partnership strengthens market reach.

president of Stora Enso's wood products division Lars Völkel said.

This investment builds on the Helsinki-based company's capacity to produce CLT and LVL near sustainably-managed forests, and ACDF's

readiness to further process our wood products into walls, floors and roofs near construction sites all over France.

"This partnership strengthens our market reach and position as a leading global provider of sustainable

engineered wood products," Lars Völkel said.

ACDF has invested in a second production line at its plant in Vercel-Villedieu-le-Camp in eastern France.

In addition, Stora Enso has advanced its strong partnership network in France by signing a business partnership with Bouygues SA, securing a stable delivery of CLT to Bouygues' building projects.

Stora Enso recently divested its interest in two sawmills in Russia at Nebolchi and Impilahti. The company says due to the uncertainties in the Russian market, local ownership and operation can provide a more sustainable long-term solution for these business operations and the employees working there.

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NZ Design Centre will play a key role in supporting and encouraging greater use of mass timber products

NEW Zealand's Timber Design Centre will play a key role in supporting and encouraging greater use of mass timber building products within the construction sector, says newly-appointed director Dr Robert Finch.

Dr Finch was formerly director of the Quake Centre, hosted at the University of Canterbury. Prior to this, he was the chief executive for the Structural Timber Innovation Company.

The Timber Design Centre was launched in March to provide expert advice, research, information and educational resources for key stakeholders involved in building design and construction.

The centre is an initiative between Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service – and a consortium comprising Scion Crown Research Institute, the Wood Processors and Manufacturers Association,



1/ New Zealand Timber Design Centre nearing completion... increasing use of timber, particularly in structures such as offices, hotels and multi-storey apartments.

2/ Dr Robert Finch... promoting and assisting more widespread selection and application of New Zealand timbers into built structures.



New Zealand Timber Design Society and BRANZ.

“Timber, in all its forms, is a highly desirable building material and the more that is sourced from sustainably managed forests and deployed into built structures, the greater the sequestration of CO₂ from the atmosphere,” Dr Finch said.

“This will bring real benefits to our communities, the built environment and the planet. The Timber Design Centre will promote and assist more widespread selection and application of New Zealand timber into built structures, with a particular focus on commercial, retail, public and industrial building sectors.

“Along with other countries, New Zealand is facing the very real challenge of limiting

and dramatically reducing total greenhouse gas emissions to minimise the adverse effects of climate change.

“A critically important mitigation strategy in sequestering CO₂ from the atmosphere is to ensure that sustainably-grown timber is recognised and used wherever possible and appropriate in the built environment sector.”

Scion sustainability architect Andrea Stocchero says the director appointment is an important step forward for the centre.

“Dr Finch brings a unique set of skills and experience that will enable the design centre to grow quickly and support wider adoption of timber-based construction technologies and systems,” she said.

Te Uru Rākau is funding the centre as part of the government's Fit for a Better World roadmap. The centre is one of several key initiatives under way this year to help transform the forest and wood processing sector.



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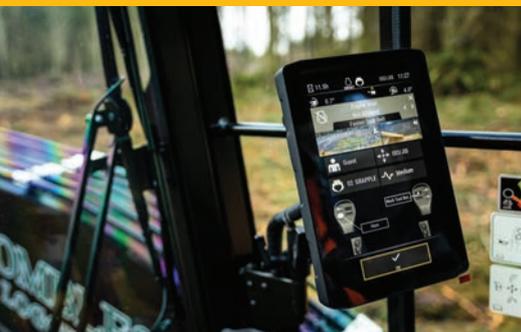
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Autonomous pruning the future of plantation forest management in Australia and overseas

Technology supports bushfire risk management, improves value of timber resource

THE findings of a new report into the current state of autonomous pruning equipment, both in Australia and overseas, have given confidence to plantation managers around the future potential of these technologies.

With anticipated future innovations, this type of technology could be used to support bushfire risk management, improve the economic value of the nation's timber resource and overcome occupational health and safety risks.

A new report, 'A review of current mechanical and robotic tree pruning equipment', was developed by the University of the Sunshine Coast's Forest Research Institute and international research partners.

"In recent years, increased interest has been expressed by Australian plantation forest managers in the potential use of mechanical or robotic tree pruning systems," said lead author Mark Brown, Professor of Forestry Operations at USC

“INDEPENDENT GLOBAL REVIEW OF MECHANICAL TREE PRUNING”



1/ **Mark Brown... increased interest in the potential of mechanical or robotic tree pruning systems.**



2/ **Sam Van Holsbeeck... technologies such as robotics and stick-insect-inspired robots show promise.**

and director of the Forest Industry Research Centre, who led the review.

"Meanwhile, Australian researchers agree there could be potential value in importing and testing specific commercial solutions, or even designing and developing specific solutions domestically," he said.

Before committing to significant financial investment in this space, FWPA commissioned an independent global review of mechanical tree pruning technologies currently being used in plantation forest management, as well as the prospective development of future technologies both domestically and internationally.

A technical desktop review was used to inform the

branch size, height, tree age, species, trees per hour and the impact of gradient.

Equipment was also compared for technological readiness, capital and operating costs, range of application, and the general strengths and weaknesses for potential use in the Australian setting.

"While the mechanics of these inventions have improved, the agility and range of application are still limited, in particular when applied to radiata pines," said co-author of the report Dr Sam Van Holsbeeck, a research fellow at the University of the Sunshine Coast who worked closely with Professor Brown on the review.

The report highlighted issues with early robotic pruning systems, such as the Sachs Tree Monkey, including the equipment's weight, agility, range of application, and capacity to move along whorls and cut large branches on stems.

"The heaviness makes equipment unattractive for use on young trees, or to be carried by forest workers, particularly in steep or rough terrain," Dr Van Holsbeeck said.

TALKING TIMBER

With Eileen Newbury
Head of marketing and communications and head of WoodSolutions program

report, alongside a review of academic literature published in the last five years and industry journals published in the last two years.

Information was collected on each identified system of interest, covering capabilities and performance, while considering stem and

Cont P 17



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From P 16

“Often the equipment needs to be carried by two or more people, and still results in physical strain on the body.”

However, the researchers identified trends indicating likely upcoming improvements and investments. These include the more recently developed technologies such as PATAS, Unmanned Ariel Vehicle (UAV)-based pruning, and futuristic stick insect-inspired robots.



Developing future pruning technologies both domestically and internationally.

“The PATAS manufacturer noted that rough bark increased the performance of the system, that performance is dependent on-site conditions and is potentially higher in plantations, and that

further developments are under way,” said Professor Van Holsbeeck.

“More recent technologies such as robotics and autonomous systems such as UAVs and stick insect-inspired

robots also show promise,” he said.

“Their remote control and access to rugged terrain, as well as some high-performance artificial intelligence in terms of branch detection and automated tree measurements, are attractive attributes.

“However, these technologies still need to overcome several technical and operational challenges to become operational and commercial.”

The findings of the report will be used to inform decisions around future Australian R&D investment in this space.

“REMOTE CONTROL ROBOTS TO ACCESS RUGGED TERRAIN

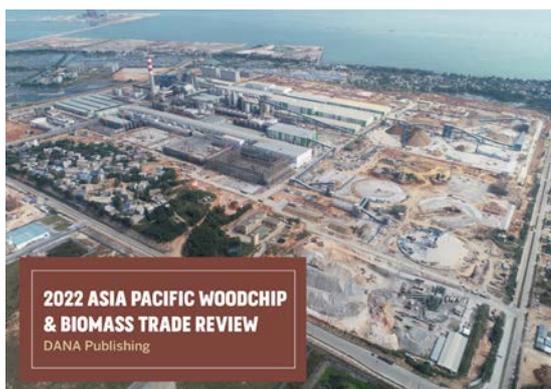


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Forest fires in Siberia threaten Russia's economy

WHILE smoke and flames spread across Ukraine as Russia's military attacks worsen, Vladimir Putin is dealing with a different fire and smoke crisis as more than 4000 forest fires ignited across Siberia.

Putin told regional officials this week that there could be no repeat of last year's fire season, the worst on record.

Speaking on state TV, Putting said the blazes were causing significant material damage and posing a threat to life, the environment and the economy.

Russia's Department of Emergencies said there had been 4000 forest fires since the start of the year across 270,000 ha – an area larger than Luxembourg.

The 2021 fire season was Russia's largest ever, with

18.8 million ha of forest destroyed.

The worst hit region is Yakutia, a vast semi-autonomous republic around 4830 km east of Moscow that in winter is one of the coldest inhabited places on Earth. The fires have been burning since late spring in Yakutia and are already among the largest ever recorded.

The regions are enduring a historic drought that is feeding the fires. Huge quantities of smoke have drifted as far as Alaska and the North Pole. Local authorities are struggling to contain the infernos, saying



Russian forest fires... a repeat of last year's fire season, the worst on record.

they have only a fraction of the manpower and equipment needed.

The agency said aircraft could not be used to fight fires due to the high wind load.

As of late April, wildfires were more widespread than at the same point last year and the head of the forest program at Greenpeace Russia said much would

depend on the summer weather when Russia was likely to see another historically large fire season.

Sixteen people have died in fires in the past week with at least eight people dying in Siberia at the weekend as fires ripped through

hundreds of buildings in several villages, with high winds hampering efforts to extinguish the blaze.

Environmentalists fear fires and hot weather may thaw the Siberian permafrost and peatlands, releasing even more carbon that has long been stored in the frozen tundra.



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As things were: trees and snippets from forest history

ROGER UNDERWOOD

FOR people interested in reading about forestry, Queensland and history, this book fills an immediate literary need. It is a wonderful compendium of facts, events and data, supplemented by historic and contemporary photographs, maps and illustrations.

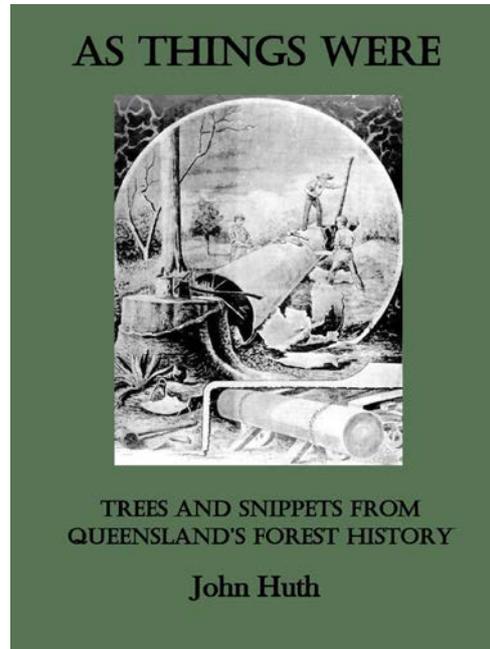
The focus is the history of forest management in Queensland and the people who made that history.

I am one of those interested people, having been introduced to Queensland's forests and foresters when I was a student at the Australian Forestry School in 1961. In those days the third-year students were taken on a 'Queensland Tour', several weeks of exploration of, and briefings into the fascination and beauty of the state's trees and forests, and meetings with famous research and operational foresters who were responsible for them. I was captivated, and I remember to this day the hoop pine plantation at Imbil, cypress pine woodlands at Barakula, magnificent stands of blackbutt and flooded gum, and the southern pine

plantations at Beerwah, nestling among the spectacular Glass House Mountains.

Since those days I have been to Queensland many times, each time increasing my admiration for the forests, respect for the foresters and for the once great Department of Forestry (RIP).

So, I welcomed the arrival of John Huth's book with enthusiasm and read every page. I especially liked the first section, dealing with the notable trees of Queensland, so many of which have been planted around the world (and I have planted myself), either as ornamentals or in commercial plantations. I also valued the history of the departmental districts, and reflected on how significant forestry districts once were (all over Australia), and how their history has almost disappeared after they were



largely disbanded in the late 1990s.

There is far too much detail in the book to do justice in this brief review. There are sections on survey camps, nurseries, fire lookouts, Fraser Island, memorials, school plots, Baltic displaced persons, Italian internees, tramways, botanic gardens and crown hammers, just to name a small selection. Everything is meticulously referenced.

The photographs are especially interesting. They add enormously to the value

of the publication, bringing to life the places, the trees and the people who constitute Queensland's forest history

John Huth is to be congratulated and thanked for this work. It is a most notable contribution, not just to Queensland, but to Australian natural and economic history. As the science and practice of forestry so swiftly disappears from the Australian scene, I find myself wishing that there were John Huth counterparts in all the other states, people who could document the history of forest management before it is lost for ever.

Queensland foresters and dendrologists will love this book, and dip into it again and again. But it is equally appealing to those of us from the rest of Australia – and even those with no interest in forestry will appreciate the comprehensiveness of John Huth's research and his memorabilia.

As Things Were by John Huth – \$35 posted in Australia. Email johnhuth55@gmail.com

(John's second book 'As We Were: Prose, Poetry and People from Queensland's Forest History' available soon).

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HEAD OFFICE

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

PUBLISHERS

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

MANAGING EDITOR

Jim Bowden | +61 (0) 401 312 087
cancon@bigpond.net.au
PO Box 330, Hamilton Central QLD
4007, Australia

ADVERTISING

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

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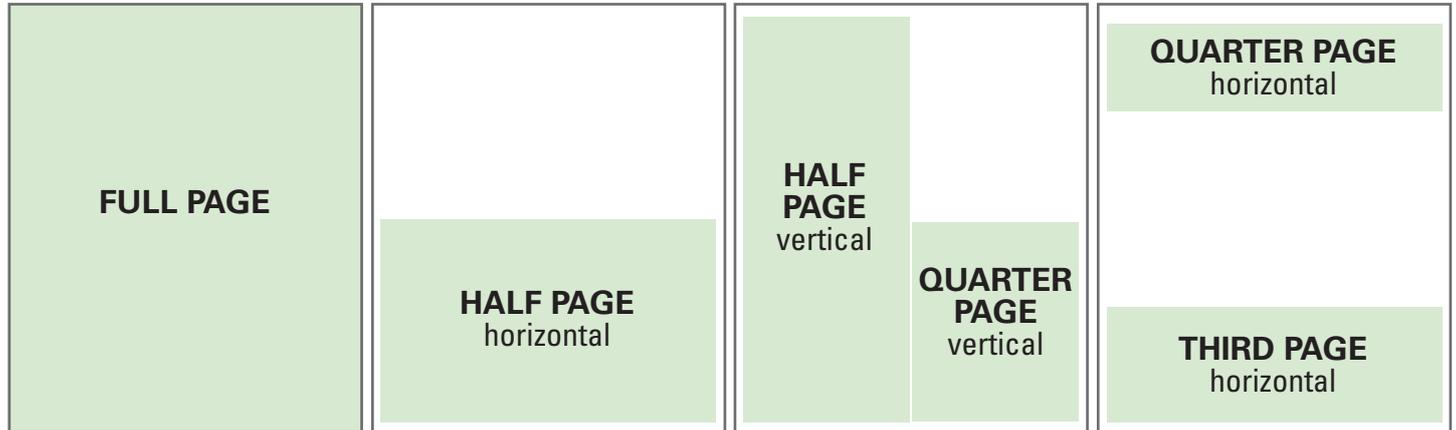
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