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Skill worker increase eases trade shortage

"THE HIA Trades Report for the June Quarter 2023 shows continued improvement in the availability of skilled tradespeople across the country," stated HIA Senior Economist Tom Devitt said in a statement,

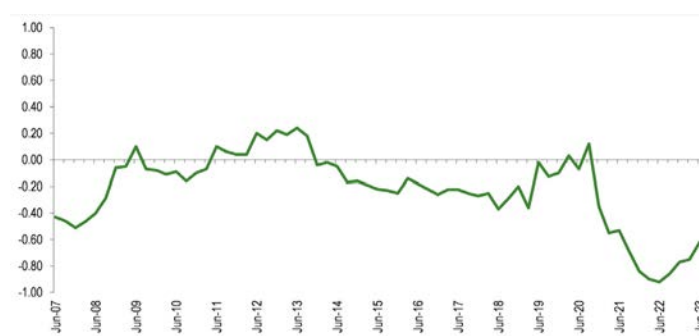
The 'Trades Report' released last week provides a quarterly review of the availability of skilled trades and any demand pressures on trades operating in the residential building industry.

"While the Index still reflects some of the most acute shortages of skilled tradespeople since HIA started this Report in 2003, the trajectory is most encouraging," added Mr Devitt.

"The Report's Trades Availability Index registered -0.62 for the June Quarter 2023, compared to the -0.92 peak a year ago. An index of less than zero represents a shortage of tradespeople and an index of greater than zero represents a surplus.

"Some of the greatest improvements in availability over the last year have been in the trades of carpentry, roofing, and bricklaying, precisely where the most acute shortages had been a year ago.

HIA TRADE AVAILABILITY INDEX



Improvement of the availability of skilled tradesmen is easing the stress on demand Source: HIA Trades Report

"The return of skilled workers since the re-opening of Australia's international borders in late 2021, is making a difference to a number of sectors, including house and apartment construction, and manufacturing businesses.

"As tradespeople have become more available, the price of trades has also slowed. The price of skilled trades increased by 3.4 per cent in the last year, compared to the 10 per cent peak a year earlier. This is much closer to the 2 per cent average annual increase that prevailed in the decade-and-a-half before the pandemic.

"The outlook is that



as home building activity declines, demand for skilled trades will slow further.

"The rise in the RBA's cash rate over the last year has seen a significant drop in new work entering the pipeline. The record volume of projects awaiting commencement has shrunk, but there are still more than 100,000 houses under construction around the country.

"Builders have struggled to complete these projects, held back by the materials and labour shortages that have plagued the industry in the last few years.

"Next year, the rise in interest rates that we have already seen is expected to produce the weakest year of new house commencements since 2012. An increasing number of projects will also reach completion.

"This is expected to produce a further easing of trades shortages, with the volume of homes under construction shrinking rapidly from late this year.

"Next year will be the ideal time for governments to start investing in new public housing stock. The timing of this investment will not only ensure that governments are able to gain the greatest return on their investment, as costs and delays will be at a minimum, but also ensure that skilled tradespeople are not lost to other industries and that the industry can rebound on the other side of this RBA-induced trough," concluded Mr Devitt.



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Timber summit timely as house building incentives mount

An essential missing ingredient in all the political house-building hype is the supply of building products, notably timber.

HOUSING shortages are certainly in the national political spotlight at the moment with the Federal government's marquee house construction bill about to be reintroduced to the parliament for a second time. Should it pass in the Senate the bill will set up a ten billion housing fund that would unleash \$500 million a year to build social and affordable housing.

This is but one of the Federal government's initiatives to prime the house building pump and to start to address the estimated more than a million new houses that are urgently needed. State governments also have their own range of house-building incentive schemes to accelerate house construction.

However, the essential missing ingredient in all this political house-building hype is the supply of building products, notably timber. It is therefore very timely that the Timber Supply Summit will be held in Melbourne on 29 and 30 of August headlined by a range of prominent national and international speakers addressing the growing Australian housing needs as well as the timber supply and demand issues being faced by timber industries.

Industry experts will be unpacking these ongoing challenges, including the building industries' reliance on timber imports, and the implications to the timber supply chain and the Australian economy. The collective minds of the industry can make a positive contribution, and open

communications regarding timber supply today and into the future.

International speakers from North America, Europe, Russia, China, New Zealand and Malaysia will be discussing contributions various regions/countries can make to assist the Australian solid wood processing sector by supplying sawn timber, including plywood, Laminated Veneer Lumber (LVL) and Cross Laminated Timber (CLT).

Presentations will cover the key development trends of European softwood-sawn wood and engineered wood production and export, focusing on the potential to supply the Australian market, and highlighting the current major developments, like new constraints in roundwood supply, and growing LVL capacities.

Heikki Vidgren, a Senior Principal at AFRY Management Consulting will focus on solid and engineered wood products and value chain. He has over 20 years of experience working with primary and secondary producers, distributors, and investors.

China is a major log (especially from New Zealand) and timber (especially from Russia) importer. But it also exports timber products,



Housing shortages are certainly in the national political spotlight but the essential missing ingredient is the supply of building products, notably timber.

Indeed, with the restrictions of trade from Russia, and disruptions across Europe, China is becoming a more important exporter of timber

products, including to Australia.

Minhui (Malinda) Zhu will be covering the current China situation.

The summit will be relevant to all participants in the timber supply chain. Registrations for the timber summit are now above

expectations so get in to reserve a remaining chair.

For further information click this link.

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New opportunities for Australian log exporters

Australian exporters will receive new opportunities to ship logs to China following a 2.5-year ban, but exports are not anticipated to reach historic levels.

AT the end of 2020, China banned the importation of plantation pine logs from Australia, stating that bark beetles had infected the logs. This decision resulted in a collapse of Australian exports as China was practically the only log market being served.

As a result, total shipments from Australia fell from over 3.5 million m3 annually during 2016-2020 to less than 400,000 m3 in 2022 (see chart). When the ban was implemented, Australian log traders started exploring alternative destinations in



Lumber export to increase as trade with China rebuilds

Asia and, in 2021, shipped about 1.2 million m3 of logs to previously insignificant markets, including India,

South Korea, and Vietnam.

However, the jump in shipments to those markets was short-lived, and a sharp drop occurred in 2022, partly because of increased competition from U.S. log exporters. The decline continued in early 2023, with only 27,000 m3 being shipped in 2023Q1, compared to 112,000 m3 during the same period in 2022.

Australia will likely have opportunities to re-establish trade with China now that the ban has been lifted, but shipments will probably not reach levels seen in the past. Previously, a large share of the pine logs Australia shipped to China was of lower grades, close to "pulp log" material-type wood, which was less desirable for Australian sawmills. However, the domestic industry in Australia will increasingly

compete with the export market for small-diameter logs as log supply tightens across the country.

With the limited expansion in pine plantations over the past 30 years (0.3 per cent annually), the domestic timber supply is unlikely to increase in the coming decades. In addition, many large pine plantations were destroyed by fires in 2019 and 2020 (roughly six per cent of the plantation area), which will even further limit log availability for domestic sawmills in the short- and medium-term horizons.

Three venues can meet a predicted increase in lumber demand in Australia:

1. Upgraded sawmills that can utilize smaller logs and increase their lumber yields,
2. Increased lumber imports, and
3. Decreased log exports.

However, with the outlook of softwood lumber prices increasing worldwide, the importation of lumber from Europe could become costlier. This scenario could open opportunities for shipments of logs and lumber from New Zealand to Australia in the coming decade (this would require higher timber qualities than for logs shipped to China). To have sufficient domestic softwood timber supply longer-term, the conifer plantation area in Australia must be significantly increased.

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OPPORTUNITY TO RE-ESTABLISH TRADE WITH CHINA

Ten Tasmanian sawmills join to seek hardwood supply security

A COALITION of ten Tasmanian family-owned sawmills has publicly called on the Tasmanian Government to commit to their security through access to the Tasmanian hardwood plantation resource.

The resource was specifically established to secure the future of those mills after successive lockups of Tasmanian State-owned forests through the RFA, TCFA and the TFA.

"The Tasmanian industry was pulled kicking and screaming into supporting those lockups by successive Tasmanian Governments," Spokesperson for the coalition, Terry Edwards said.

In a statement released on social media, Edwards said "they only supported them due to assurances that the plantation estate would be created and managed to specifically provide a resource to those mills to support an incrementally increased reliance on plantation wood.

"We have met with the Premier with the assistance of Independent MHA, John



The state government is being called on to guarantee the local family-owned mills fair access to the resource.

Tucker and asked Mr Rockliff to ensure those commitments are met. We've asked that these long-established mills, mostly operating in regional communities, are not thrown to the wolves in an unfair tender process that appears to have been established specifically to advantage the Victorian Government-owned company Australian Sustainable Hardwoods Pty Ltd (ASH)," Mr Edwards continued.

ASH has financed the

purchase of the Western Junction Sawmill in Northern Tasmania with a soft loan to a "Related Company" the details of which are secret.

Tasmanian Private Companies cannot be expected to compete on price with the Victorian Government treasury Mr Edwards' statement continued.

"This is a disgraceful misuse of a State Government's superior economic strength to destroy a Tasmanian industry and

thousands of local Tasmanian jobs. The Tasmanian Government must stand up and be counted and intervene in this process now," he said.

"We understand that ASH is currently getting approximately 40 truckloads of wood a week from Western Junction and importing them to Victoria to supply their mill. This is the fallout

from the decision

of Victorian Premier, Dan Andrews to close the Victorian native forest industry.

"It is appalling that the Andrews Government has deprived its own Victorian sawmill of its wood supply and is now threatening the future of the Tasmanian wood processing sector by buying native forest and plantation logs in Tasmania using inflated prices that are beyond

Cont P 6

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From P 5

the sensible economic reach of local mills," Mr Edwards said.

"The Premier and the Minister for Resources Felix Ellis have been long on rhetoric in this space saying they want Tasmanian logs to be processed by Tasmanians but what will they do when one mill, Western Junction Sawmill, seemingly favored by their own GBE, Sustainable Timber Tasmania, is totally funded by the Victorian Government owned Company, ASH?

"Will the Premier and the Minister match their rhetoric with action and guarantee the local family-owned mills with long-term contracts that they will be provided fair access to the resource created for them on reasonable commercial terms in accordance with their commitment during the most recent State election? The

mills have also proposed to the Tasmanian Government the establishment of an independent pricing oversight body to regulate the pricing of wood in much the same manner as occurs for electricity," Mr Edwards said.

"This will ensure that STT receives a fair price for its logs and will preclude gouging of prices, which is currently occurring with STT seeking increases in the order of 25 to 35% on top of increases of 7% for inflation. This will significantly increase the price of home construction when passed on to builders and exacerbate the social housing crisis facing the State.

"STT's own Sustainable Yield Report Number 6

“ THIS IS A DISGRACEFUL MISUSE OF RESOURCES ”

demonstrates it can only provide the minimum legally required contracted volume of 137, 000 cubic metres of sawlog each year with a combination of native forest and plantation logs so any logs that are provided to a Victorian Government-owned mill will mean fewer logs for Tasmanian mills and that will threaten the viability of those mills and their capacity to maintain employment, Mr Edwards continued.

"The mills I represent are almost exclusively operating in regional areas such as Smithton, the Huon Valley and in Bridgewater," Mr Edwards said.

"The loss of these mills through the export of the jobs and value-adding processes to Victoria will be hard felt in those regional, challenged socio-economic areas where alternative employment options are few and far between just to prop up jobs destroyed by the Victorian Government."

"We have undertaken a forensic examination of the ownership structure of ASH and the Western Junction Sawmill in Northern Tasmania. It has been revealed comprehensively that the Victorian Government owns 99% of Heyfield ASH Holdings which in turn owns ASH which has totally funded the soft loan to purchase the

Western Junction Sawmill.

"Has the Tasmanian Government or STT similarly ascertained the ownership structure before agreeing to a contract relationship for the supply of Tasmanian forest products to the Victorian Government-owned business to the exclusion of locally owned businesses?" Mr Edwards asked.

"If they have not, they are seriously derelict in their due diligence processes so we have to assume this has been done with a deliberate strategy in mind, Edwards' statement continued.

"Will the Tasmanian Government allow STT to run a blatantly unfair Expression of Interest and Tender process where it is almost preordained that the winner will be the Victorian Government that can use its vast access to money to nullify any commercially sensible bids from local businesses and thereby send Tasmanian jobs and wealth offshore?"

"We call for an immediate commitment from the Premier that this farce will not be permitted to run and that the Tasmanian Government will act to protect Tasmanian businesses and jobs. We seek that the Premier respond positively to the requests presented to him in a meeting on 15 June 2023," Mr Edwards concluded.



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27-3 SEPT: Malaysian Timber Council Trade and Marketing Mission to Australia – Melbourne & Brisbane.

Including visits to Melbourne and Brisbane. To participate and for further information contact John Halkett at john.halkett@forestlands.com.au or 0417 421 187

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9: Women in Forest & Timber Network Charity Cocktail Fundraiser – Rose Room, Brisbane. 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Annual charity cocktail fundraiser in support of the Brisbane Domestic Violence Service (BDVS). This event

will raise much-needed funds to help BDVS respond to women, children and families experiencing domestic and family violence and to continue achieving safer families, free from abuse. For further information and sponsorship opportunities contact Jacinta. Colley@vidawood.com

11-12: Timber Off-Site Construction Conference – Crown Promenade Melbourne. The theme for 2023 is “Timber & Technology – The

Zero Carbon Future”. For more information visit www.timberoffsiteconstruction.com

OCTOBER

15-19: ANZIF Conference: Embracing our natural capital: The science, technology, and art of managing forests for all values – Twin Towns Conference Centre, Coolangatta, Queensland. Further details from Forestry Australia at: <https://www.forestry.org.au/>

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AI technology to monitor bushfires in SA's Green Triangle

In an Australian first, the ABC reports that artificial intelligence will be used in South Australia's Green Triangle forestry region to monitor for bushfires.

FOLLOWING on from last week's story on AI bushfire technology, the SA government has announced that American tech company Pano AI would build fire-monitoring infrastructure in the region, using cameras, satellite technology and AI to continuously watch plantation areas.

The system is designed to detect bushfires in their early stages before they can cause major damage to plantations and forestry infrastructure.

Green Triangle Fire Alliance chair Mike Lawson said early detection of fires was vital to the future of the industry.



An example of the AI system detecting a fire in a plantation in the US.

Photo: Pano AI

"At the moment we have to go through the process of communicating the fire back, it goes through the emergency services system and then we're paged," Lawson told

the ABC.

"If we can cut that time back and get resources out to those plantations quicker, then we're going to save a lot of valuable plantation."

The new AI-led systems will be installed at fire monitoring towers across the region and will be operational before the 2023-24 bushfire season.

An image of a vast forestry plantation with a plume of smoke coming out the top.

It will also be installed at a new tower at Penola North, due to be built and operational by the summer.

Mr Lawson said the industry was preparing for dry summers ahead.

"The Bureau of Meteorology is yet to declare an El Niño, although it's looking increasingly likely," he said.

"The fuel load has increased significantly over the past couple of years because we've had relatively benign summers.

"If we do get the El Niño that will change," he said.

The new system will detect fires through an AI algorithm. The detection will then be confirmed by a person, who

will send out an alert to emergency services.

Pano AI chief commercial officer Arvind Satyam was born in Australia before moving to the United States.

He said his inspiration for the new technology came from watching Australia's Black Summer bushfires from 2019 to 2020.

"As we look at fires, large megafires, one of the determinants is being able to allocate resources quickly, and we do that by leveraging technology," Satyam said.

"We use AI that's applied to ultra-HD cameras that are continuously getting a full panorama of the environment.

"We then use a smoke detection algorithm to work out exactly where the fire is and see how it's behaving, so you can get resources to that incident quickly.

"It also understands where it is relative to structures, to assets, so you're able to coordinate a much faster response."

The South East's forestry industry contributes around \$680 million to the South Australian economy each year.

Primary Industries Minister Clare Scriven said the technology was an "important step forward" for the region's safety.

"This is really doing an important job improving our fire detection capability and of course protecting things such as our ... forestry assets as well as the communities that support them."

Source: ABC National

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AKD welcomes 25 new apprentices

WITH the labor market struggling and impacting heavily on the timber industry there's some good news from Associated Kiln Driers Pty Ltd (known as AKD) this week.

The 100% Australian-owned and operated integrated forestry and timber processing company has announced they have added 25 new apprentices across their operations in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland.

"Ten of our existing apprentices completed their training and continued on with trade roles within the business," a spokesperson said in a statement.

"Overall, this brings our current number of apprentices in training up to 75, covering Fitting and Machining, Fabrication, Electrical, Saw Technicians and Wood Machinists.

"In the past 2 years, our total apprentice numbers have increased by over 50%. This means that 1 in 15 AKD employees are trade apprentices, reinforcing AKD's approach to training and

developing its people, and ensuring trade-based skills are available for the longer term to support our sawmilling operations."

This year, 65% of the apprentices engaged were from internal appointments from people "This is the highest number since the start of the program," they said.

"This shows our desire to create internal pathway opportunities and offer development opportunities for all employees."

"This year we also had two employees begin to undertake a second trade, what we call a 'Dual Trade'. This allows development opportunities for the individual and also provides a more highly skilled and flexible workforce for AKD.

"We wish all of our new apprentices all the best in their chosen career trade," they said.

AKD is one of the largest softwood sawmill operators in Australia. With six sawmills processing in excess of 2,000,000m³ of sawlog per annum.



The apprentices are spread across the company's various locations.

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NZ forestry sector pleased but not confident by Emissions Trading Scheme changes

A RESET of the Emissions Trading Scheme is a step in the right direction, but not enough to restore confidence in the forestry sector, the New Zealand Forest Owners Association says.

When the government tightened Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) settings late last year the unit price for carbon dropped from \$88 per unit to \$33.

The government has now accepted advice from the Climate Change Commission to raise the price reserve; from December the bottom price will lift from \$33 to \$60.

In updating the scheme's settings Minister of Climate Change James Shaw said the ETS is a key tool for New Zealand to meet its climate change obligations

"The Government has made its annual decision on unit limits and price control settings for the New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme for 2023 - 2028, to drive stronger action on emissions reduction target.

"Annual reviews of the unit settings and price control



The Forestry industry and owners have taken a big hit from past changes to the Emissions Trading Scheme price for carbon, a representative says.
Image: via RNZ

limits provide an important opportunity to ensure the settings are fit for purpose."

Shaw said as well as lifting the price, a two-tier cost containment reserve trigger price would also be introduced in December 2023.

The Tier 1 cost containment reserve trigger price would increase from \$82 to \$173 in the December NZ ETS auction.

Forest Owners Association president Grant Dodson said the move in price was welcomed and showed the importance of getting the ETS settings right - as previous

decisions had made a huge impact.

"Nationally there is about 95 million forestry units in New Zealand. At the peak they were worth about \$8.5 billion, they then dropped to under \$4 billion.

"That money is owned by local iwi, councils, farmers, foresters and investors, so it was a pretty significant loss in value."

“THE MOVE IN PRICE WAS WELCOMED

Dodson said changes to the ETS late last year knocked confidence out of the sector and have had huge flow-on effects.

"I know the company I run has pulled out of a substantial land transaction. We're expecting to plant the last of our land next year and then after that, we have nothing in the pipeline and we won't be buying any more land until we get some security.

"I'm also aware of significant seedling orders being cancelled for 2024 in nurseries across the country, so there will probably be job losses."

He said while this week's changes were good, they would probably not be enough to restart investment.

"People are definitely waiting for the outcome of the ETS overhaul before making any big decisions."

Submissions on changes to the ETS and the permanent forest category close on 11 August 11.

Source: RNZ

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Ultimate Renewable™ 2023 returns with bold \$1.8M campaign

AFTER a successful campaign in 2022, Forest & Wood Products Australia's (FWPA) The Ultimate Renewable™ 2023 campaign has launched and will go live across Australia on 20th August.

The imagery in the new television commercial and campaign challenges the current consumer perceptions of forestry, showing harvested and then replanted trees to reinforce The Ultimate Renewable™ positioning.

The new campaign will launch across free-to-air television, streaming video, out-of-home, radio, and social media, and is once again presented by popular ambassador Adam Dovile,

builder and television presenter. While last year's message focussed primarily on wood as a building material, the new campaign extends the communication from seedlings to the final product and promotes the transgenerational benefits of wood. Accompanied by videos and images of forestry and children in wood-rich environments, the messaging conveys that by growing and using more certified wood we can tackle climate change for future generations.

"This is an opportunity to reshape consumer perceptions of the industry," said Sarah Downey, Head of Marketing and Communications at FWPA. "People are naturally saddened



Adam Dovile returns for the bold \$1.8m 2023 campaign.

when they see images of a newly harvested forest area, but what they don't think about is the climate-change-tackling carbon stored in the wood that's been removed from the atmosphere by growing trees and the replanting of the trees for future generations."

"Sustainably sourced wood is an important renewable building material, and we should be supporting and celebrating the renewable aspects of its production and use."

The 2023 campaign is expected to achieve great results after the previous campaign resulted in one quarter (25%) of Australians recalling seeing at least one of The Ultimate Renewable™ messages.

FWPA said to truly understand their audience and their perceptions, they launched a comprehensive research journey and have undertaken a brand-new approach to their digital strategy.

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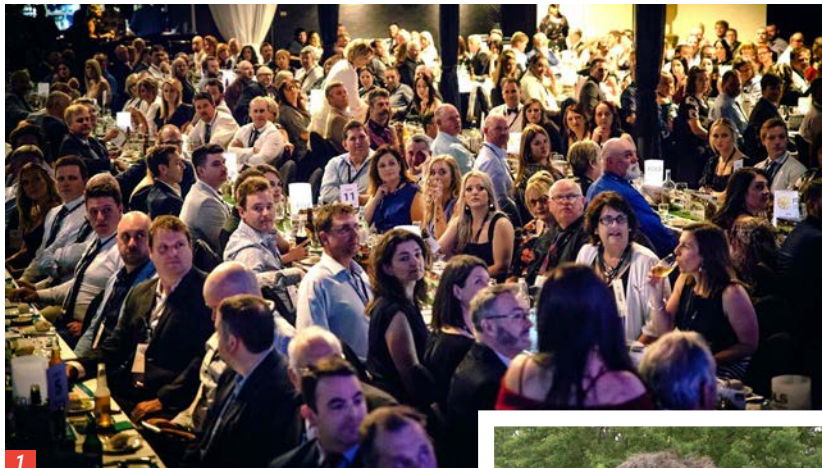
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Green Triangle Awards back in focus

THE Green Triangle Timber Industry Awards (GTTIA) are one of Australia's premier events in the timber industry's annual calendar, celebrating as they do, excellence in the country's leading plantation-based industry region.

For the first time this year GTTIA Chairman, Adrian Flowers confirmed that each award category will have a mentor from the GTTIA Committee.

"Our mentors are happy to help you get started, assist you to make sure all the criteria requirements are met in your submission and will make nominating someone or a business an easier process for you."



1/ **Green Triangle awards, one of Australia's premier events.**
2/ **Adrian Flowers, GTTIA Chairman ... awards designed to truly celebrate the unsung heroes who have shaped the local timber and forestry industry.**

"To be able to be together and celebrate our industry and its people's success is incredibly important. Our awards are designed to truly celebrate the unsung heroes who have shaped the local timber and forestry industry, and those who pave the way for a brighter future," said Mr Flowers.



Nominations are now open for the 2023 GTTIA. Each award category aims to showcase the remarkable achievements of individuals

and companies in the region's vibrant timber community.

The award winners will be

celebrated at the Gala Dinner on Friday, 27 October 2023 at The Barn, Mt Gambier, South Australia. Not only will the outstanding achievements of all nominees be honoured, but the profile of the region's timber industry will be acknowledged and celebrated.

The 2023 GTTIA categories are:

- Sawmilling and Processing Excellence
- Operations – Harvesting and Infield Chipping Excellence
- Operations – Silviculture and Timber Support Services Excellence
- Logistics Excellence – Port Operations, Marshalling and Timber Haulage
- Trainee/Apprentice of the Year Award
- Timber Legend Award
- Safety Excellence – Less than 30 Staff
- Safety Excellence – More than 30 Staff
- Safety Excellence – Individual
- Environment and Sustainability

More information can be found at the GTTIA website: gttia.com

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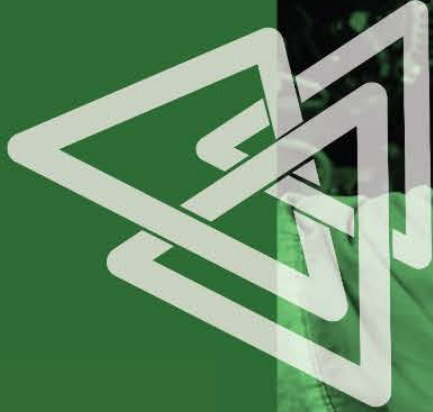


High fuel levels a risk for NZ bushfire season

THE upsurge of global wildfire events is an early warning for potential large-scale fires in New Zealand forests and rural landscapes this upcoming summer season, says the New Zealand Institute of Forestry (NZIF). NZIF president, James Treadwell, is calling for better coordination and management of these fire risks, saying there is an urgent need to prioritise at-risk land management issues over deployment of fire-fighting aircraft and building of more fire trucks.

Fire risks specific to New Zealand are the vast areas covered by self-sown exotics or retired hill and high-country tussock grasslands, which were historically burned every seven to ten years by lease-holding farmers. "The ceasing of these practices has resulted in an accumulation of fuel across the hill and high-country landscape throughout the country," Treadwell says.

GREEN TIMBER
TRIANGLE INDUSTRY
AWARDS



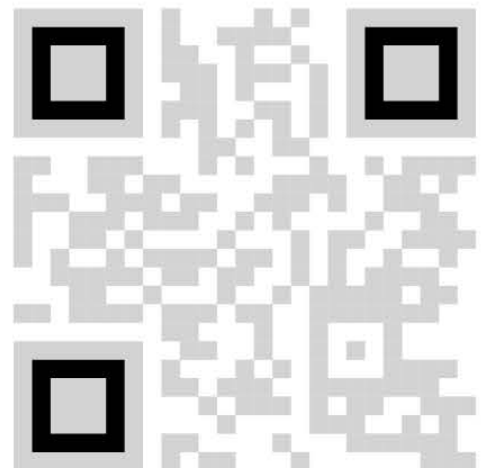
2023 Nominations Open

June 16- August 6

Nominate and Celebrate someone who deserves to be recognised for their contribution to the Timber Industry in 2023. To view the Nominations categories and criteria, visit www.gttia.com via the QR code.

KEY DATES

June 16- Nominations open
August 6- Nominations close
September - Judging Process
October 27 - Green Triangle Timber
Industries Awards



Sky high project for mass timber construction

A PROFESSOR of civil and mechanical engineering at the University of British Columbia (UBC), Dr Tony Yang, is working on a government-funded project to develop new materials, technology and guidelines that will make mass timber construction buildings of up to 20 storeys economically and technically feasible by 2028.

The goal is very ambitious, because, at the moment, Canada's national building code allows mass timber construction up to only 12 storeys.

"The next generation of mass timber construction will mark a turning point in how we build in this country, and potentially in the world," said Yang. "We're confident that with these new tools and materials under our belt, we will help Canada meet, if not surpass, its 2030 carbon emissions goals."

Yang is one of the participants in The Next Generation Wood Construction project (Next-Gen), a collaboration between the Canadian wood industry, universities, government agencies and the construction sector.

The goal of the initiative is to reset national building standards for mass timber construction and overcome the technical and non-technical obstacles to expanding construction using wood.

Some of examples of these obstacles, says Yang, are gaps in design methodologies, performance data and environmental impact assessment, and a shortage of skilled professionals equipped to meet the demands of increased wood usage.



1/ Dr Yang is working to develop new materials, technology and guidelines that will make mass timber construction buildings of up to 20 storeys economically and technically feasible by 2028.

2/ Dr Tony Yang is a University Professor of civil and mechanical engineering at the University of British Columbia.



Next-Gen has four themes: structural and serviceability performance; fire safety; building envelope and energy performance; and sustainable construction technologies and practices.

"The research consists of advanced simulation, experimental testing and code development," said Yang.

The Next-Gen team consists of 31 faculty members from 14 Canadian universities as well as 20 scientists and professionals from 12 government and industry organizations.

The team of academics and scientists will supervise a group of some 50 qualified trainees "who will actively contribute to our research endeavours."

Yang and his collaborators at UBC have been working on developing new forms of modular construction for mass timber buildings in high seismic regions that can withstand earthquakes, and, at the same time, reduce the carbon footprint of such construction.

Still a relatively new building technology, modular

construction has not been used in regions that are prone to earthquakes and other forms of seismic activity.

Yang and his collaborators have already developed a prototype for a high-performance mass timber modular building.

"To dissipate earthquake energy, the building will be equipped with higher performance dampers," said Yang.

Dampers protect a building from movement due to pedestrian loading, wind and seismic action. Motion control from dampers increases structural integrity as well as the comfort and safety of a building's occupants.

"The structural components, energy dissipation devices and connections have been tested," said Yang.

The next step is to finish the modelling of the entire building.

"Everything we are doing in this project is going to fundamentally change how we do things in the construction industry," said Yang. "In five

years' time, we will be able to deploy the next generation of technology to make infrastructure safer, more carbon-neutral and efficient. We will be able to protect people's lives from the kind of disastrous aftermath you see from severe earthquakes."

Research on seismic testing of mass timber buildings is also taking place in the U.S.

For example, testing is underway at the University of California San Diego (UCSD) on what the university says is the tallest building ever to be seismically tested.

The building, a 10-storey mass timber structure that is made up largely of donated mass timber, was constructed for testing as part of the Natural Hazards Engineering Research Infrastructure TallWood Project.

The project is an industry-wide initiative to prove the seismic resilience of mass timber and its strength as a low-carbon structural building material.

The principal investigators in the TallWood Project are researchers from the Colorado School of Mines, the University of Washington, the University of Nevada (Reno), Colorado State University, Washington State University and Lehigh University.

UCSD's shake table, where the testing is taking place, is the largest outdoor shake table in the world.

It recently underwent an upgrade that increased the number of axes of shake, in order to better simulate actual seismic events.

Source: Daily Commercial news

2023 Australian Timber Supply Summit

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PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **Keynote Address: David Gardner** – Chief Investment Officer, Forestry of London, UK based Fund Manager, Gresham House – *Climate Change and The Role of Forestry in Global Decarbonisation*
- **Housing Industry Chief Economist** – *Are the Australian Construction & Building Industries Increasingly Reliant on Timber Imports?*
- **Statistics & Economics Manager of Forest Wood Products Association, Kevin Peachy** – *Future Market Dynamics & Supply Chain Implications*
- **Chair of Timber Merchants Australia, Peter Alexander** – *The Role of Timber Merchants Australia, it's Position and Concerns on Supply*
- **Managing Director of SFM Agribusiness, Andrew Morgan** – *Australian Historical Present & Predicted Domestic Softwood Supply*
- **Director of Indufor Australia, Andrew Morton** – *Australian Historical Present & Predicted Domestic Hardwood Supply*
- **CEO of Engineered Wood Products Association Australasia, Gavin Matthew** – *The Need for EWP's Supporting the Supply Gap*
- **Communications Director of Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA), Joe Prevedello** – *AFPA's role in Boosting the Forestry Estate, Timber & Wood Fibre Supply*
- **Global Timber Supply Experts and International Speakers from Europe, UK, New Zealand, China, & Malaysia** – *Opportunities to supply the Australian Solidwood Sector and the Future of the Timber Supply Chain*

FIELD TRIP

On day two of the conference, we invite guests to join the Timber & Truss Field Trip to Geelong to visit frame & roof truss manufacturing plant **Big River Group**, who recently won the best frame and truss operation in the country! The second stop is to the woodchip processing & export facility **Midway**, a pioneer and major woodchip exporter to North Asia from Geelong and several other Australian ports.

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Hundreds of thousands join in for National Tree Planting Day

TREE planters were out in force over the weekend with people across the nation joining in National Tree Planting Day.

The event fell on Sunday, July 30th, with many stepping up to plant new trees.

Planet Ark reported more than 300,000 Australians joined in the annual event. Rebecca Gilling, the CEO of Planet Ark and spokesperson for National Tree Day, was pleased with the turnout this year.

"National Tree Day is so important because it does not only build an ethic of care for the environment in the young, which is so vital," Ms Gilling said.

"It also gives them the practical opportunity of getting their hands in the earth. And we know for a whole lot of children, that opportunity is becoming increasingly rare."

Councils and communities across Australia joined in the event of which Adam Goodes is the ambassador.

"A big thank you to all the National Tree Day volunteers around Australia who are digging in this weekend," Goodes said.

"Our volunteers come from all walks of life and span across generations. School children, teachers, Landcarers, bush carers, urban regenerators, wildlife



1/ **Snowy Mountains** - Children from Snowy Mountains Grammar celebrated 100 years of Kindergarten with tree planting. Photo: Facebook

2/ **Toyota** - Toyota has been partnered with Planet Ark for the school tree planting event for 24 years.

3/ **Cocos** - The tree planting event has gone international with residents of Cocos Keeling Islands taking the lead by planting 50 trees.

4 & 5/ **Students from schools in Wentworth** were among those who joined in to plant trees. Photo: Facebook

in a dedicated to Schools Tree Day which occurs on the last Friday of July.

Each year, thousands

of schools participate nationwide in environmental activities that educate individuals about the world around them. Activities range from planting bush tucker gardens, building habitats for native wildlife, nature play and more.

The schools event is supported by Toyota who also joined in with students to plant some trees.

"We're incredibly proud to have been a partner of PlanetArk for 24 years," they shared.

Established in 1996, Planet Ark's National Tree Day has grown into Australia's largest community tree planting and nature care event. The program is a call to action for all Australians to get their hands dirty and give back to their community.

carers and farmers who are looking to regenerate the land with their communities. THANK YOU."

In the City of Sydney, volunteers turned out in force to help plant 5000 native grasses, shrubs and ground covers to create native meadow habitat in Price Alfred Park.

And the planting was far and wide with Kindergarten kids in the NSW Snowy's also jumping on board the event.

"100 Days of Kindergarten! Today, our youngest learners celebrated the first 100 days of their learning journey by planting 100 trees and shrubs in our School's Garden as part of National Tree Day.

"We are so proud of the growth, discovery, and opportunities our students have embraced during their first 100 days of school," they shared.

Schools around the country were invited to participate

Crisis looms over Russian pulp and paper industry

THE Russian pulp and paper industry is facing an acute crisis in product sales. The main reasons for this difficult situation are sanctions and a severe lack of demand in the Chinese market, exacerbated by exorbitant export logistics costs.



1/ Demand from China has decreased but Russian producers are still counting on the return to Europe in the foreseeable future.
2/ The production of paper and cardboard declined 4.6%.



Pulp and paper mills have been forced to cut down production volumes. In the first half of 2023, the volume of production of wood pulp in Russia decreased 3.5% to 4,267 thousand tons, according to Rosstat. The production of paper and cardboard declined 4.6% to 4,863 thousand tons. Since the beginning of the year, the price of Russian BHKP in China has fallen by 43%, reaching \$449 per ton, the lowest since February 2021, according to Lesprom Analytics.

To counter this downturn, some of mills attempted to boost domestic sales

by lowering pulp prices and shifting to using pulp in corrugated cardboard production instead of recycled paper. This strategy has been deemed unsuccessful, leading to losses of approximately 100 million rubles (\$1.1 million) for each of the three major producers - Ilim Group, Segezha Group, and Arkhangelsk pulp and paper mill, as said insiders to Russian Kommersant newspaper.

Starting from the second quarter, the leading enterprises with pulp and paper mills in their structure have returned to traditional production schemes using recycled

paper. However, the domestic market's historically low demand continues to persist, creating a substantial surplus of pulp and paper products in Russia. One of the prominent producers, Segezha Group, has already redirected some of its export volumes of kraft paper, including from Segezha pulp and paper mill to the domestic market to cater to local needs.

Russia currently faces an excess of approximately 600 thousand tons of corrugated cardboard, and this surplus is expected to reach a total of 1 million tons, not accounting for the launch of the new pulp and paper mill of the Ilim

Group in Ust-Ilimsk.

Russian producers are still counting on the return to Europe in the foreseeable future, one of the experts said. However, over the past year, this market has already been taken over by pulp and paper producers from India, Brazil and Argentina, where they have recently launched large-scale capacities in fast-growing raw materials such as eucalyptus and bamboo. Products from these countries are likely to be significantly cheaper than pulp from Russian pulp and paper mills, most of which were built over 50 years ago.

Source: esprom



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