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Dandenong pallet mill to close due to hardwood shortage

COVER STORY P 3

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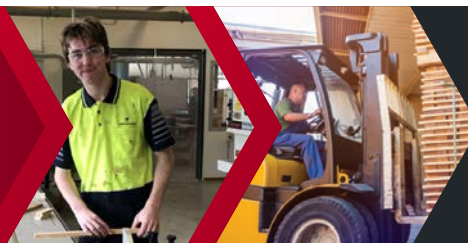


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Tree Breeding Australia receives government boost

Building a national research facility in Mt Gambier.

TREE Breeding Australia (TBA), the national body for tree breeding and genetic improvement, has received \$450,000 from the South Australian Government to support the development of a purpose-built research facility in Mount Gambier.

TBA will match the government's contribution, ensuring the successful establishment of the new facility. TBA General Manager Dr. Tony McRae welcomed the support, emphasising the importance of the investment.

"The state-of-the-art facility will play a crucial role in the future of Australian tree breeding and gene conservation efforts as part of national tree improvement programs for pines and eucalypts," Dr McRae said.

"Key features include a purpose-built laboratory for processing and storing biological samples such as pollen, seeds, needles, and foliage for DNA analyses."

"Importantly, the facility will enhance safety, support



1/ TBA Board Chair, Dr Andrew Jacobs, Minister for Primary Industries and Forestry, Clare Scriven MLC, TBA General Manager, Dr Tony McRae, SAFPA CEO Nathan Paine, Independent Member for Mount Gambier, Troy Bell.



2/ Improved genetics will be essential for future productivity and plantation resilience.

a more efficient and effective working environment for employees and consolidate all activities on-site."

TBA, a not-for-profit cooperative, has been at the forefront of research and genetic improvement for plantation timber species since 1983, supported by Green Triangle forest growers.

Collaborating across industry and research sectors, the organisation leverages cutting-edge science to enhance genetic outcomes.

Dr. McRae highlighted the facility's transformative impact.

"This investment will turbocharge our tree improvement programs, significantly improving the rate of genetic gain. New tree varieties used in regional plantations will grow ten percent faster over a decade, with even better wood quality than current plantings."

"Forestry is such an important sector in the Green Triangle and the region's economy. Local sawmills will receive better logs, and communities will enjoy better wood products," Dr. McRae added.

"...the research facility will address critical challenges associated with climate change, and resilience to pests and diseases."

"Improved genetics and innovative tree varieties will be essential for future productivity and plantation resilience."

"We are grateful for the recognition and support from Government and the South Australia Forest Products Association for the role TBA plays in ensuring Australians have quality timber products for generations to come."

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Dandenong pallet mill closes

700,000 Australian-made hardwood pallets taken out of circulation thanks to Victorian Government decision.

PENTARCH Forestry's pallet mill in Dandenong will cease operating next month due to a shortage of hardwood timber.

The mill, which had been operating since 1989 and was acquired by Pentarch in 2021, produced 700,000 hardwood pallets each year and employed 49 staff at its peak output.

Hardwood pallets were produced by the Dandenong Palletiser, which is a four-station manufacturing process that was fed by first-grade timber sawn on site and supplied from the Swifts Creek and Eden mills.

Whole, green logs were sawn to the required timber sizes and the lengths of timber are then graded for quality and strength, either via an automated laser system or visually by qualified timber graders to identify timber suitable for pallet production.

The timber was then specifically packed for use at the Palletiser. The packs of timber entered three stations via a vacuum feed system, which positioned the pallet components in the jigs for



1/ *The Dandenong Palletiser produced high-quality pallets at a rate of 200 pallets per hour.*

2/ *Pentarch Forestry CEO Paul Heubner* Images: Pentarch Forestry

forming and nailing.

The fourth station was a quality check prior to passing through the paint line and onto the auto stacker. The Palletiser, while automated, was manned at each station to ensure plant performance and quality assurance and had the capacity to produce high-quality pallets at a rate of 200 pallets per hour.

However, a lack of supply of hardwood caused by the closure of the native timber sector in Victoria Means operations at the Dandenong South site will end.

"This outcome is the result of the Victorian Government decision to end timber harvesting," Pentarch Forestry CEO Paul Heubner said.

"When the mill was acquired, we were confident that the Victorian Government had a workable plan for timber supply until 2030 followed by a transition into plantation, but they have



failed to deliver on either promise.

"The sudden decision to shut down the native timber sector has resulted in significant job losses for Pentarch and other hardwood suppliers, and now 700,000 pallets out of the supply chain each year.

"It is another blow to our sovereign capability to supply domestic wood products and reduce our dependence on imports, which impacts the global timber economy."

The Dandenong pallet mill is one of several Pentarch Forestry operations which supply much needed and renewable hardwood timber products to the Australian and global markets. Pentarch also used every part of the log, outside of the

pallets they had numerous secondary products such as industrial-grade timber, sawdust, woodchip, and mill fibre sent to third parties to produce packaging, paper, landscape supplies, animal bedding, and biofuel.

It is not only a terrible loss for Pentarch Forestry and the staff who worked in the Dandenong pallet mill but also for the industry at large as it shows the level of commitment the Victorian government has to the long-term viability of the timber industry in Victoria.

Hardwood pallets are an important part in the Australian retail supply chain with their ability to safely handle heavy loads, Pentarch Forestry's pallets were capable of supporting 2,000kg.

The shortfall from the Dandenong Mill will now be replaced with pallets made with imported timber from jurisdictions that are unlikely to have the same sort of control and forest management practice as Australia.

The Australian native timber sector harvests and regrows, by law, 6 trees in 10,000. In Victoria, prior to the closure of the sector, the figure was 4 trees in 10,000. Despite only harvesting such a small percentage of trees, the sector supported an estimated 5,760 jobs in regional Victoria and contributed \$1.6b in sales and \$582m in added value.

“THIS OUTCOME IS THE RESULT OF THE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT DECISION TO END TIMBER HARVESTING

On the cover: Stacks of hardwood pallets at the Dandenong pallet mill, just one of several Pentarch Forestry operations

PEFC's strategic visit to Indonesia strengthens regional forest certification ties

RESPONSIBLE Wood recently visited Indonesia in collaboration with the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) International and the Indonesian Forest Certification Cooperation (IFCC). This strategic trip aimed to enhance cooperation among PEFC national governing bodies and fortify the network of sustainable forest management in the Asia-Pacific region.



A rubber plantation in Sumatra was among one of the locations visited by Matt de Jongh, (right) Sustainability Manager for Responsible Wood.

During the visit, representatives from Responsible Wood, PEFC Asia Pacific, and IFCC engaged in productive discussions with

key importers and exporters of forest and wood products destined for Australia. A key outcome from the visit was to further understand

the Indonesian market for Australian forest and wood products. These meetings were pivotal in reinforcing the importance of certified forest products in international trade and underscoring the benefits of sustainable forestry.

Matt de Jongh, Sustainability Manager at Responsible Wood, highlighted the significance of the trip, "Our visit to Indonesia provided an invaluable opportunity to connect with stakeholders across the forestry sector. By strengthening our relationships with importers and exporters, we are not only promoting sustainable sourcing but also ensuring

Cont P 5



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Australian Forest Products Association

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From P 4

that certified wood products continue to meet the growing demand in Australia."

The collaboration also underscored the commitment to maintaining high standards in forest certification. The discussions emphasised the need for continued support for certified forest products and highlighted the benefits of certification for both environmental sustainability and economic growth.

Richard Laity, PEFC Asia Pacific Manager, echoed these sentiments: "The trip to Indonesia has been instrumental in solidifying the linkages between PEFC national governing bodies at the APAC level. Our shared goals of promoting sustainable forest management and enhancing certification

standards are crucial for the region. Strengthening these relationships ensures that we can collectively address the challenges and opportunities within the forestry sector."

A key outcome of the visit was the reinforcement of the PEFC's presence and influence in the Asia-Pacific region. By fostering closer ties with IFCC and other regional

stakeholders, Responsible Wood and PEFC Asia Pacific aim to create a more cohesive and robust certification network. This network is essential for promoting sustainable forestry practices and ensuring that certified products are recognized and valued in the global market.

The trip also allowed for the exchange of knowledge and best practices among the participating organisations. By sharing experiences and insights, Responsible Wood, PEFC Asia Pacific, and IFCC can continue to innovate and improve the certification processes, ultimately leading to more sustainable and responsible forest management practices.



1/ Members of PEFC and IFCC join Matt de Jongh, Sustainability Manager, Responsible Wood at a eucalypt plantation in Kalimantan (Borneo).

2/ Meeting with a processor in Java is Matt de Jongh, sustainability manager, Responsible Wood, together with other PEFC and IFCC members. All images: courtesy Responsible Wood

“REINFORCING THE IMPORTANCE OF CERTIFIED FOREST PRODUCTS IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Nominations open for the Richard Stanton Memorial Award...

Read our selection criteria.



responsiblewood.org.au



Applications close this Sunday for Timber Queensland's Growth Scholarships

CALLING everyone in Queensland's forestry and timber value chain, including architects, builders, certifiers, harvesters, machine operators, engineers, plantation workers, operations staff behind the scenes (like HR, Marketing & Accounts), students and researchers: Timber Queensland's Growth Scholarships close this Sunday 30 June - don't miss your chance to put up to \$10,000 towards a learning opportunity of your choice!

The only limit is your imagination – there are 4 awards:

- Kennedy's Timber Award - \$10,000
- HQPlantations Award - \$5,000
- AKD Award - \$5,000
- DTM Timber Award - \$2,500

The winners can use these awards for:

- Course fees
- Conference attendance
- An international study tour to see how people manage forests or work with timber in other countries
- Secondment to experience a different job
- or something else entirely.

But... you have to be in it to win it!

2023/24 TQ Growth Scholarship Kennedy's Timber recipient Katie Fowden has just returned from her study tour examining Canadian processes to establish First Nations sustainable forestry partnerships, which are significantly more advanced than Australia's. AKD Award



Applications close 5pm this Sunday, 30 June.

recipient John Said travelled to Germany to explore various new options for mechanised pruning that are being implemented internationally and DTM Timber Award supported Daniel Schweitzer to undertake a Certificate IV in

Work Health and Safety

Don't miss your chance to put up to \$10,000 towards a learning opportunity of your choice! Open to anyone in the forest and timber value chain - from people growing, harvesting and producing timber right through to those designing and building with it!

The application is a simple, accessible, and fair process via an online application form. Click here to view the Growth Scholarship website page for more information. Applications close 5pm 30 June 2024.

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JULY

2: WoodSolutions Webinar - AMRF First Building - Designing for Country and Disassembly - ONLINE EVENT, 11.00am-12noon. For more details and an RSVP link, visit <https://www.woodsolutions.com.au/events/woodsolutions-webinar-amrf-first-building-designing-country-and-disassembly>

3: FSC Aligned for EUDR program - ONLINE EVENT, 6-7.30pm. To register, visit <https://www.linkedin.com/events/launchevent-fscalignedforeudr7193967598538022912/>

22: WA Field Day - Plantation Forestry - Chowerup Hall, Chowerup, WA 9.30am-4.00pm WAST. Forest Australia's WA branch field day focusing on plantation forestry. Join hosts PF Olsen, discussing topics including ongoing Blue Gum operations, conversion operations between agriculture/blue gum/pine, as well as carbon, conservation, and stewardship. For more info visit <https://www.forestry.org.au/wa-events/>

28-2 AUG: Gottstein Understanding Forest Science Course - Sunshine Coast, QLD. The course is open to everyone associated with the timber and forestry products sector

in some way. For full details, visit <https://gottsteintrust.org/grants-courses/understanding-forest-science-course>

AUGUST

12-13: Timber Construct Conference - Rydges, Melbourne. The Timber Offsite Construction Conference and Exhibition has been rebranded as the Timber Construct Conference to encompass the full spectrum of timber building. The conference provides an invaluable forum to address pressing challenges and opportunities influencing timber's role across the built landscape. Technical sessions will cover research updates, emerging products, building code enhancements, and best practice case studies. For more information, visit <https://timberoffsiteconstruction.com>

SEPTEMBER

13: NTHA NSW/ACT State Awards - Hilton, Sydney. Join us in celebrating the New South Wales & ACT Timber and Hardware Industry. Nominations open at <https://www.ntha.com.au/events/2024-nswact-state-awards-nominations/> Contact Tahlia at events@ntha.com.au

23: Latin America Forest Investment Conference - Porto Alegre, Brazil.

24-25: International Woodchip and Biomass Trade Conference - Porto Alegre, Brazil.

25-27: Field Trip - Rio Grande do Sul State, Brazil.

OCTOBER

22-23: International Woodchip and Biomass Seminar and Networking Event - Singapore.

29-31: Forestry Australia's 2024 Symposium - Mercure Ballarat Convention Centre, Golden Point, VIC. Theme: Healthy and resilient forests for our future, will facilitate conversation and collaboration that regardless of land tenure and ownership, healthy and resilient forests should be the objective for all forest and land managers. The Symposium is a focused three-day gathering, consisting of two days of plenary and concurrent sessions, and a day of Field Trips. The two-day program will feature a range of Keynote and Invited Speakers, who are experts and thought leaders in their field. The Symposium will also feature several social functions, facilitating networking and collaboration in an informal and relaxed environment. For more information, visit www.forestryconference.com.au/

NOVEMBER

13-15: AFCA annual Gala

dinner & conference - Launceston, Tas. For more information visit: <https://www.afca.asn.au/Events/afca-2023-conference-photo-gallery>

SAVE THE DATES 2025

MARCH 22: NTHA SA/NT/WA State Awards - National Wine Centre, Adelaide. Join us in celebrating the SA, NT & WA Timber and Hardware Industry. Contact Tahlia at events@ntha.com.au

MAY 30: NTHA QLD State Awards - Brisbane City Hall, Brisbane. Join us in celebrating the New South Wales & ACT Timber and Hardware Industry. Contact Tahlia at events@ntha.com.au

JUNE 22-26: World Conference on Timber Engineering - Brisbane. WCTE is the world's leading scientific forum for the presentation of the latest technical and architectural solutions and innovations in timber construction.

OCTOBER 20-22: International Woodchip and Biomass Seminar and Networking Event - Singapore.

OCTOBER 23-24: Field Trip - Vietnam.

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Branching out with Combilift

Innovation is being pushed forward.

FOLLOWING the launch of five new models in its 25th anniversary year in 2023, Irish Materials Handling Specialist Combilift has already announced the premiere of yet another innovation. The Combi-CLL (Container Log-Loader) was recently exhibited at EXPO Richmond 2024, one of America's leading trade shows for the forest products industry.

The concept and operation of the Combi-CLL is based on that of the Combi-CSS (Container Slip Sheet), which has been successfully deployed across numerous industries for the mechanised loading of long products such as packs of timber or steel into containers. This not only

reduces the risk of accidents to the workforce and product damage but is incredibly fast compared to other methods – a 40' container can be fully loaded by one operator in under 6 minutes.

The 30t capacity electro-hydraulically powered Combi-CLL offers the same benefits when it comes to speed, safety and product integrity. It was designed to address the requirements of exporters of softwood and hardwood logs, the nature and shape of which make them much trickier to handle than palletised or packed products. Logs can be individually lifted and pre-loaded into a robust, high-sided metal "tub" before the patented push-pull mechanism powers

the tub into the container. Once inside, the hydraulic dropdown hatch is closed and locked into position to hold the logs securely in place, and the tub is retracted to allow the logs to settle within the container.

Once again, Combilift has come up with a customer-led solution that also has potential for applications beyond the forestry industry.

For more information, please click [here](#).

Combilift have also created a demonstrative video of the Combi-CLL in use. This video shows how easily and quickly the Combi-CLL manages to load all the logs into the container. To take a look at the video, click [here](#).

Combilift are the largest manufacturer of multidirectional, sideloading and articulated forklifts globally. Innovation, flexibility and service is the ethos on which Combilift's success is built and has seen us become the world's fastest-growing forklift manufacturer, exporting to more than 85 countries and with more than 80,000 trucks in use worldwide. No other manufacturer in the world can deliver the same level of customisation and adaptability or cater so effectively to the diverse needs of every individual customer, whether their enterprise is large or small.



- 1/ The Combi-CLL's tub full of logs ready to go into the container.
 - 2/ The Combi-CLL lined up with the container ready to begin the loading process.
 - 3/ The full Combi-CLL tub is pushed into the shipping container.
 - 4/ The tub sits fully inside the container, this ensures the logs fit neatly into the container once the tub is removed.
 - 5/ The hydraulic dropdown hatch on the Combi-CLL closes over the tub prior to the tub's removal.
 - 6/ With the hydraulic dropdown hatch fully locked in place, the tub is removed slowly, leaving the logs to settle into the container.
- All images: courtesy Combilift

LOAD LOGS INTO A CONTAINER IN 6 MINUTES WITH COMBILIFT.

THE COST EFFECTIVE SOLUTION FOR LOADING LOGS INTO CONTAINERS

Introducing the Combi-CLL Log Loader, based on the highly successful Combi-CSS Container is incredibly fast compared to other methods. It can fully load logs into a 40' container in under 6 minutes to a 30t capacity. The risk of accidents to the workforce is minimised and product damage is eliminated.

The Logs are pre-loaded into the robust, 40' long high-sided Tub. The patented push-pull mechanism powers the loaded Tub into the container. Once inside, the Hatch is closed to hold the logs securely in place, and the Tub is retracted.

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To find out how Combilift can help you unlock every inch of your storage space.



Workplace injury and illness costs tens of thousands of work years

A study by Monash University.

AUSTRALIA loses 41,194 work years annually due to work-related injury, disease and mental health conditions; a new measure of the national burden of workplace injury and illness has found.

This equals more than 41,000 lost jobs.

The Monash University team developed the new 'Working Years Lost' metric to measure the national burden of work-based injury, illness and disease resulting in compensation claims.

Published in the Medical Journal of Australia, the study aimed to quantify the national burden of working time lost to compensable occupational injury and disease and how working time lost is distributed across age, sex, injury and disease.

Professor Alex Collie from Monash University's School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine said it was the first time such figures had been collated.

"Normally we track injury and disease at work by counting the number of people making compensation claims or the amount of time they spend off work," he said.

"This new measure combines those two concepts and presents it as something more meaningful, which can be summarised

as the number of people off work for a full year."

Professor Collie said the working years lost (WYL) measure provided a different view of the 'challenge' of workplace injury.

"The impact of some types of injury and disease are more accurately represented in this new metric," he said.

"For instance, mental health conditions have a much higher percentage of working years lost than of workers' compensation claims. This is because we take the long time off work for each mental health claim into account, whereas simply counting claims does not do this."

The national study covered people with accepted workers' compensation claims and receiving wage replacement benefits for time off work, lodged between July 2012 and June 2017.

Male workers incurred 25,367 (61.6 per cent) WYL while female workers accounted for 15,827 (38.4 per cent). A total of 21,763 WYL (52.8 per cent) were from workers aged over 45 years, despite these workers accounting for 66,742 (44.1 per cent) accepted claims.

Traumatic injury resulted in 16,494 (40 per cent) WYL per annum, followed by Musculoskeletal disorders



Professor Alex Collie, Monash University's School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine.

(8,547 WYL; 20.7 per cent) and Mental health conditions (5,361 WYL, 13 per cent).

"Annually, compensable occupational injury and

disease in Australia results in a substantial burden of lost working time, equivalent to over 41,000 lost jobs," Professor Collie said.

"The distribution of burden reflects the higher labour force participation of males, slower rehabilitation in older workers, and the relative impact of common occupational injuries and diseases. Effective occupational health surveillance, policy development and resource allocation will benefit from population-based monitoring of working time loss."

For more information click here.

**Do you have
SOMETHING
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Send media releases, news stories, events, any timber and forestry news related information anytime to Nicky, Donyale and Jess at the following dedicated email address -

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Dear Editor

**“THIS EQUALS
MORE THAN
41,000 LOST
JOBS**

New industrial manslaughter laws now in effect

NSW has cracked down on worker safety with tough new laws.

THIS week saw the Industrial Manslaughter Bill pass through the New South Wales parliament after 20 years of campaigning by the families, friends and unions of those who have been killed at work. New South Wales was the last mainland state without an industrial manslaughter offence.

Timber Trade Industrial Association wrote "The industrial manslaughter laws will allow for a business or

individual to be held responsible for the death of a person due to gross negligence in the workplace."

The NSW government noted that over 300 workers have been killed in NSW since 2019, this is why the Minns government promised to legislate industrial manslaughter.

The NSW government outlined the key points of the law:



Sophie Cotsis, Minister for Work Health and Safety wants the new legislation to act as a deterrent.

- The maximum penalty will be 25 years jail for an individual, which is consistent with the existing maximum penalty for

manslaughter in the NSW Crimes Act.

- There will be a maximum penalty of \$20 million in fines for a body corporate, the highest in Australia.
- It will be supported by a new unit established in the NSW Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.
- The new law does not create new work health and safety obligations or duties for employers but creates a strong new offence to deter unsafe practices and strengthen accountability.

The Minister for Work

Cont P 13

**“OVER 300 WORKERS
HAVE BEEN KILLED
IN NSW SINCE 2019**

arxada

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Private Forestry Guidance Materials

AUSTRALIA'S commercial forests play a vital role in meeting the increasing global demand for wood fibre. The contribution of small-scale, privately owned forests is an important part of the fibre supply chain. One of the most significant challenges for private landholders and Indigenous forest owners and managers being more actively involved is lack of knowledge regarding the management of plantations and native forests as profitable land uses that contribute to Australia's future wood fibre needs.

These Private Forestry Guidance Materials aim to break down these knowledge barriers. Developed in collaboration with Greenwood Strategy Solutions and funded by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Forestry, these materials are a comprehensive introduction to the business of commercial forestry, tailored for small-scale private owners of plantations and native forests, as well as Indigenous landowners and forest managers.

This project provided:

Four detailed commercial forestry guidance reports:

- An introduction to the business of small-scale forestry
- Farm forestry
- Indigenous owned and managed forests
- Private native forestry

Click here to view the reports.

Private Forestry Guidance Materials



The FWPA has created a wealth of Private Forestry Guidance Materials to assist the small-scale forestry practitioners across Australia as they help to secure and provide for our future wood pulp needs. Image: FWPA

Private forestry reference search: discover forestry publications and guidance

An online database of over 1,400 historic programs, literature, documents and guidance materials has been compiled. To facilitate your access to this wealth of information, a searchable function has been provided to identify published resources by region, forestry type, species and topics of interest such as genetics, silviculture, harvesting or wood properties. The built-in search function allows you to input keywords and filters to quickly find relevant publications. It's a valuable tool to enhance your understanding and support your involvement in sustainable forestry practices.

Click here to explore the database.

Fact and information sheets

There are 23 fact and information sheets covering specific commercial timber species, information about the Regional Forestry Hubs

and commercial advice about things to be considered when you are looking to sell your trees. The list includes:

- Benefits of private forestry
- Indigenous forestry guidance – what, why and how
- Forests and carbon
- Selling your trees
- Regulation of native forest operations
- Regulation of plantation operations
- South West Timber hub
- Green Triangle Forest Industries hub
- Tasmania Regional Forestry Industries hub
- Gippsland Forestry hub
- Murray Region Forestry hub
- South East NSW Forestry hub
- Central West Forestry hub
- North East NSW Forestry hub
- North Queensland Forestry hub
- South and Central Queensland Forestry hub
- Northern Territory and Ord Valley Forestry hub

- Tasmanian blue gum
- Shining gum
- Spotted gum
- Gympie messmate
- Sugar gum
- Radiata pine

Click here to view all the info sheets.

Key benefits of the private forestry guidance materials for small scale forestry practitioners

- The materials contain step-by-step guidance on various aspects of forestry, including planning, management, and financial analysis.
- They are designed to provide understanding of the processes involved in forestry to help individuals make informed decisions when starting their own forestry projects.
- They contain advice on where and when to seek professional advice to support decision-making and good on-ground outcomes.
- There is both generic and species-specific examples of financial analysis models and commercial concepts relevant to forestry, such as contractual considerations and price points along the supply chain.
- It provides an overview of the policy, regulation, and planning requirements for forestry activities in Australia.



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From P 11

Health and Safety Sophie Cotsis said, "This is an historic moment for worker safety in New South Wales.

"These are not laws we ever want to use. We want them to act as a deterrent and a reminder that this government takes worker safety seriously.

"We want those responsible for workplace safety – who are responsible for the lives of their workers – to take that role with utmost seriousness.

"The message sent today is clear – unsafe practices will not be tolerated.

"It is a fundamental right of every worker to go to work and come home safely to their loved ones."

Co-Chair of the SafeWork Families and Injured Workers Support and Advisory Group (FIWSAG) Jacqueline

Quinlivan stated, "This has been such a long time coming, but we can now say we have the industrial manslaughter laws that are required.

"On behalf of the Family and Injured Workers Support and Advisory Group (FIWSAG) and all those who are injured or have lost a loved one through industrial death, we would like to say, 'this is for them'.

"This is a step forward for NSW as a jurisdiction and I want to thank absolutely everyone who made this possible."

FIWSAG member Dave White added, "The passing of the industrial manslaughter bill is a milestone that the



Jacqueline Quinlivan, Co-Chair of the SafeWork Families and Injured Workers Support and Advisory Group (FIWSAG).

FIWSAG has been working towards over the past five years.

"This bill introduces an additional and significant deterrent for those individuals in the workplace who continue to risk the health and safety of workers.

"Whilst this won't bring back our loved ones who've been lost in workplace incidents, this passing of the

bill may save other families from having to endure the grief and pain of losing someone who never came home from work."

FIWSAG member Patrizia Cassaniti said, "I would like to thank and congratulate Minister Sophie Cotsis and her team for all the hard work and the Minns Government for making this Bill a priority and a long overdue reality.

"A big thank as well to everyone involved including Unions NSW, CFMEU, and the Families and Injured Workers Support and Advisory Group for advocating and lobbying for industrial manslaughter to finally be accepted and become law.

"Rob and I would like to dedicate this accomplishment to Christopher and every other worker who went to work and never came home."

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Image: AKD

Programmed Timber's integrated approach

A long-term commitment to innovation, sustainability and reliability.

By **CAMPBELL MCINNES**

INNOVATION, sustainability, and reliability – these are the pillars upon which Programmed Timber Supplies stands tall in Australia's timber industry landscape. Owner Warwick Drysdale explained, their recent rebranding, shedding the 'Supplies' to reflect their integrated role in timber resource management, processing, and distribution. Programmed Timber as it is now known reaffirms its commitment to delivering value across the entire supply chain.

As I delved into the heart of Programmed Timber, it's evident that their 25-year journey isn't just about producing timber; it's about maximising the potential of every wood fibre while ensuring zero waste. The importance of achieving this milestone isn't merely about environmental stewardship; Drysdale advised, "it's a testament to the company's dedication to efficiency and resource optimization. By turning every residue into a valuable asset, Programmed Timber sets a benchmark for sustainability in the industry" and one that Drysdale is very proud of. Furthermore, Drysdale added, "we must provide a positive advantage to both our suppliers and customers – they must all receive a value benefit when product is handled through our operation."

EMBRACING MODERN CONSTRUCTION METHODS

The timber sector is undergoing a transformative phase, marked by the rise of Modern Methods of



1/ Loading and unloading bays with one of Programmed Timber's stock storage locations, awaiting the production process.

2/ High speed planner, with its automatic in-feed and quality control on the out-feed.

3/ Robot, Fanuc R-2000ic 165F in action, making light, speedy work of packing and strapping.

Construction (MMC) such as off-site and mass timber construction methods which are gaining momentum. Drysdale explained, "While this sector is still finding its way, it has an undeniable opportunity

to be a significant contributor to meeting our housing needs.

The growth in this modular construction using DMA (Design for Manufacturing and Assembly) principles along with traditional Frame

& Truss moving more into a panelised format will see volumes and more streamlined systems develop. Pre-cut or even prefabricated components supplied ready for installation in the factory is a proven winner as seen in all other production line type industries e.g., automotive and electronics." The inevitable 'less sites and more cranes' trend in construction will demand better upstream supply options.

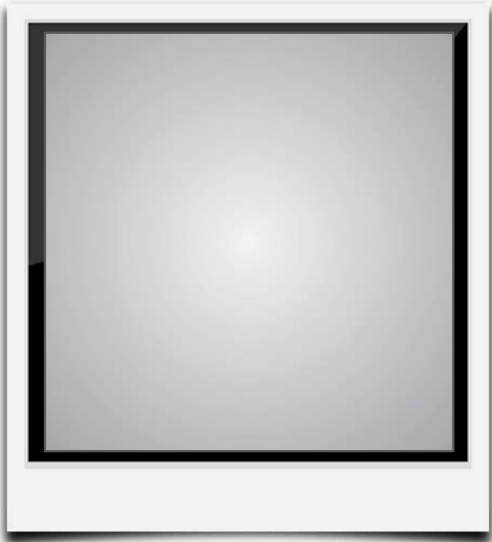
Here, Programmed Timber doesn't just supply timber; it envisions and contributes to the future of construction through its commitment to offer pre-cut, ready to assemble timber components. With a keen eye on emerging trends and technologies, Programmed Timber is poised to seize new opportunities, where pre-cut components play a pivotal role.

LOGISTICS, INFRASTRUCTURE AND A SUSTAINABLE OPERATION

Located in Western Sydney, Programmed Timber faces the challenge of urban costs, but it turns this obstacle into an advantage through streamlined logistics and inventory management. Serving primarily domestic markets, Programmed Timber ensures a reliable supply chain across New South Wales, ACT, Victoria, and Queensland, leveraging its strategic location and robust transport infrastructure.

Moreover, Programmed Timber's investment in solar power underscores its

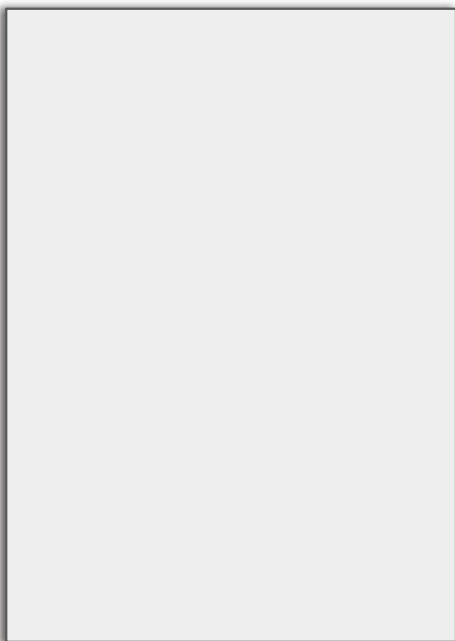
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The staff

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The equipment lease



The waste bin &
contents

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- to be able to **do more**



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dedication to sustainability and cost-efficiency. By harnessing renewable energy, Programmed Timber not only increases its carbon sequestration footprint, but also insulates itself from rising energy costs, reinforcing its position as a forward-thinking industry leader.

INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES

Labour shortages have plagued many industries, but Programmed Timber has adeptly navigated these challenges by investing in technology and fostering flexibility in its processes. Drysdale explained, “In manufacturing, it is always understanding the available technology then utilising its capacity to the greatest possible extent”. One of the best examples of this is with the scanning technology we have employed in our plant, through our MicroTec scanner. Although this technology is becoming more widely implemented globally, it is how it is used and understanding the full capabilities. The technicians from the European company who installed the equipment were impressed by the extent of the capacity to which our plant would be utilising the scanner. Programmed Timber are only one of a few companies around the world that are using this technology to achieve full wood fibre utilisation across a range of inputs to manufacture totally 100% fit-for-purpose timber components for widespread applications over numerous industry sectors.”

With high-tech machinery driving efficiency and accuracy, Programmed Timber not only ensures optimal timber utilisation but also creates a conducive work



Snapshot of the MicroTec scanning machine's display screen, capturing the rapid scanning process of each timber board.

All images: courtesy Programmed Timbers

environment for its staff. By embracing automation and robotics, Programmed Timber not only mitigates labour concerns but also sets new benchmarks for reliability and precision.

Drysdale said “It is not just zero waste in terms of volume but also in terms of utility to application. A generality across the industry is to maximise or best optimise volume return but we go further, much further. The optimisation of wood fibre grade/utility along with volume optimisation is the grail to which we strive.”

Furthermore, the inclusion of robotics into the production process has certainly improved the work experience for the on-floor workers at Programmed Timber, as this reduces the manual labour requirements and therefore reduces the risk of possible injury to staff and has the added benefit of providing an atmosphere in the production areas that staff are part of a sophisticated full-scale facility.

Ligna Fair in Hannover Germany is a machinery expo that showcases all the latest technology, which Programmed Timber visit bi-annually. As regular attendees and known for their own innovation, Programmed Timber are well known to many exhibitors and are

always willing to enter into discussions which invariably both parties are able to gain valuable information. AI and machine learning is being introduced more into the software algorithms so better total wood fibre optimisation can occur. Just ‘chopping up wood’ is almost extinct in most global markets. As technology continues to change and improve, it is important to stay up to date, visiting Ligna is part of this process.

CUSTOMER-CENTRIC APPROACH

What sets Programmed Timber apart is not just its products but its unwavering commitment to customer satisfaction. With a diverse range of over 700 SKUs tailored to various industries, Programmed Timber caters to a wide spectrum of clients, from multinational corporations to small local businesses. Drysdale explained, “The old saying of I’d rather be the innovator than the imitator, is true to our view. We offer specialist process and supply to meet the customer’s needs. We know what can and can’t be done.

“ RATHER BE THE INNOVATOR THAN THE IMITATOR

We don’t make promises we can’t keep, through all market cycles.

Reliable supply of fit-for-purpose product on time, every time from a committed manufacturer that has broad industry support which has been formed through honest dealings – is just what we do.” By offering dependable supply, Programmed Timber allows its customers to focus on their core competencies, confident in the reliability of their timber solutions.

As the demand for all wood fibre grows disproportionately to domestic resource availability, there is an absolute need to ensure we achieve the best outcome from our forest resources. This is something that Programmed Timber has already been doing for the past 25 years. The supply imbalance over the next decade and beyond will allow Programmed Timber to continue to expand on the work they have commenced on.

Drysdale explained “We have a responsibility to gain the maximum benefit from the resources that have been entrusted to us. Therefore, utilising the right piece of timber in the right application is all part of what our industry needs to get better at.”

Programmed Timber exemplifies the convergence of innovation, sustainability, and reliability in the timber industry. With a steadfast commitment to excellence as well as a proactive approach to emerging trends, and finding solutions to customer’s needs, Programmed Timber is not just a supplier of timber but a partner in progress, shaping the future of construction and resource management in Australia and beyond.

For more information, click here.

New testing proves efficacy of real-time silica monitor

NEW test findings, confirm the efficacy of a world-first real-time monitor for silica dust, which represents a revolution in the protection for workers exposed to respirable crystalline silica (RCS) dust.

The AIR XS Silica Monitor was developed by Trolex, a leading workplace safety technology company, and is designed to protect Australians against lung diseases such as silicosis by providing real-time readings of levels of crystalline silica in the air.

Trolex recently commissioned a leading occupational hygiene and laboratory testing organisation to conduct independent testing of the AIR XS. The results show the Air XS repeatedly provided consistent, accurate, real-time data throughout an eight-hour testing period.

The testing demonstrates that AIR XS can improve worker safety by providing instant information to businesses and workers exposed to RCS, instead of having to wait up to four weeks to know their level of exposure to this killer dust, which is the current industry standard.

While the Australian Government recently implemented a ban on engineered stone, commencing 1 July 2024, the process most synonymous with creating silica dust, Group CEO of UK-based Trolex, Glyn Pierce-Jones said this ban alone would not solve the current health crisis caused by RCS.

"Silica dust is found in most building materials, so while banning engineered stone is a positive step, it's not a holistic solution. The real issue facing the industry is the current archaic methods of testing

for silica dust and the delay it causes in creating the safest possible workplace."

The AIR XS is already being used in Australia to monitor RCS levels in many industrial locations.

Silica occurs naturally in soil, sand and granite; however, it is almost harmless in that state. Once those materials have been disturbed through construction or mining silica dust is generated and can be inhaled into the lungs. This dust can cause silicosis, and other types of lung diseases and cancer, which are often irreversible and progressive.

Recent research from The Lung Foundation showed an estimated 600,000 Australian workers¹ are exposed to silica dust across a wide range of industries including quarrying, construction, tunnelling, mining and many manufacturing processes.

The current approach to test for RCS is gravimetric sampling, the process requires collection, processing, and laboratory analysis of the sample, which is both time-consuming and costly for businesses. Direct-reading instruments offer businesses the ability to monitor employee safety on sites in real-time, eliminating the delays of weeks typically associated with potential RCS exposure.



1/ **Inhalation of dust causes 100x more workplace deaths than anything else.** Image: Shutterstock

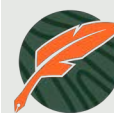
2/ **The AIR XS Silica Monitor by Trolex.** Image: Trolex website

Mr Pierce-Jones emphasised the urgent need for enhanced safety measures for anyone who may be in contact with silica.

Aleks Todorovic, Managing Director, from Active Environmental Solutions (AES), the Australian distributor of the product, commented "In the two years we've been supplying the AIR XS, we've seen how simple it is to set up and how effective it can be in providing real-time data to our customers. This allows them to respond instantly to dangerous levels of RCS and to provide the best controls and safety procedures to protect their workers."

Click here for more information on AIR XS.

¹ Lung Foundation Australia, *Silica dust exposure: What is it and what can you do about it?*



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