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ISSUE 841 // March 13 2025

# timber & FORESTRY *e*news

## Alfred's damage being counted

COVER STORY P4



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# AFWI calls for new research proposals

## Expressions of interest for AFWI's second round are now open.

THE Australian Forest and Wood Innovations (AFWI) National Open Call for Research has launched its second round of Expressions of Interest (EOI) for transformative, industry-focused forestry research, open until 14 April 2025.

Interested parties should click here to register for today's information webinar (Thursday 13 March) at 2pm AEDT.

"This call is about funding innovative ideas that can deliver real commercial outcomes and help solve industry challenges," said AFWI's Executive Director Dr Joseph Lawrence.

"We're looking for research that will make a tangible difference by strengthening local manufacturing, supporting sustainable forestry practices, or driving the transition to a circular bioeconomy."

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Julie Collins MP, encouraged industry and researchers to collaborate and submit research proposals with an end-user focus.



**Forest management solutions are included in AFWI research focus areas.**  
Photo: supplied

"Research like this is how we keep our forestry industry competitive, sustainable and able to face challenges head-on," she said.

"Australia's forestry industry has enormous potential and I want to see it grow and thrive. The sector is a vital economic contributor and a huge source of jobs in my home state.

"Last year's projects are researching practical solutions to a range of challenges, from finding Australian timber species for sports flooring to developing ways to stop pest animals from eating seedlings. I'm looking forward

to seeing what the next crop of researchers will discover."

This year's call introduces a two-stage application process, designed to streamline submissions and strengthen industry engagement. The first stage invites Expressions of Interest, with selected applicants progressing to a full proposal submission.

"By introducing an EOI stage, we're ensuring early engagement with industry and giving applicants an opportunity to refine their proposals before moving to the next step," Lawrence said.

"This will help attract bold,

high-quality ideas that directly address industry needs."

Last year's National Open Call resulted in eight successful projects sharing the first \$5 million in grant funding and unlocking an additional \$8.3 million of matching investment from industry and research partners.

Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) CEO Diana Hallam welcomed the second round and encouraged strong participation.

"After the success of the first round, I'm excited to see what transformative ideas are proposed through the Second National Open Call," Hallam said.

"I am confident industry is united in wanting to ensure the \$100 million investment called for by AFPA and delivered by the Australian Government creates the products, jobs and climate solutions needed to decarbonise our economy and turbocharge this great Australian industry."

For further details on eligibility, key dates, and the application process, click here.

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# WA's expensive waste

## Political inaction has led to piles of wood fibre languishing.

WHEN Western Australia's withdrawal from native forest harvesting was announced in 2021 for implementation at the start of 2024, experts warned that the short time frame for transition would lead to multiple unwanted impacts.

Now those impacts are being seen and the cost to the state is stacking up.

Gavin Butcher and David Utting from the Sustainable Forest Industries Roundtable (SFIR) have flagged an estimated 100,000 tonnes of logs from ecological thinning currently stored in waste stacks at Diamond Mill, Dean Mill, Palgarup and the bauxite minesites – after just one year of the planned four-year ecological thinning program.

Butcher is an independent forester and former director of the WA Forest Products Commission. He spoke with *T&F Enews* about the situation, saying that the problem was complex, but with two root causes.

"Wood is being produced from ecothinning by the bucket load and is being removed from the forest to avoid the fire risk," said Butcher. "But the method of thinning employed is largely only producing small logs unsuited to standard milling. Even then they aren't being recovered and sent to mills. The only exception is veneer logs being supplied to Wesbeam from karri thinning."

While the small log sizes represent a challenge, Butcher and Utting point out there are highly productive opportunities for the use of this wood, ranging from finger-jointed timber to biochar, biomass pellets and veneers. Such ventures would actually pay for the thinning project and



**An ecological thinning stockpile at Palgarup. Secure contracts would encourage investment for productive use.** All photos: courtesy SFIR

return southwest WA to being a timber manufacturing hub. But the government has been unwilling to contract for this usage. Instead, the stockpiles represent \$160 million (the figure coming from Budget estimates) of waste, which they rightly say could be used in hospitals, housing or schools.

Butcher acknowledges the numbers of mills in the region has dropped significantly since the native timber ban. "Most mills left because there was a bigger payout to go than compensation to stay," he said. "They could see that there was no guarantee for a large business. Smaller family businesses stayed, hoping to continue to eke out

an existence, based on the government advice.

"However, they have contracts with no minimum (ie no obligation for government to deliver a log) and there has been very little for 18 months, so unless they can get private wood (which is rare in WA) they are starving to death. The Minister refuses to make a commitment to supply any wood so no-one can invest in the appropriate technology to process this wood as biochar, biomass energy, using small peeler technology, etc. Instead, it's just being stockpiled. This obviously can't go on for too long as the cost of storing and managing this wood is likely to be astronomical."



**1/ Gavin Butcher is an experienced forester who is horrified by the expensive waste.**

**2/ SFIR's David Utting has called on the WA government to act.**



The SFIR has criticised the WA Government and Jackie Jarvis, MLC, Minister for Agriculture and Food, Forestry, and Small Business for failing to commit to secure timber supply contracts, including innovative solutions that could make use of the smaller logs. Butcher said, "[The government has] been approached for 3RT technology and biomass as options but these have been knocked back."

At the time of the Native Forestry Transition announcements, the WA government said that it would be supporting forestry jobs with development grants that "will attract new and sustainable industries to the regions and allow existing businesses to expand and create jobs to future-proof WA's economy."

In actuality, the failure to offer secure timber contracts that would allow for investment to use this resource productively is creating a big pile of decaying carbon that could instead be locked away in people's homes and other products.

"There's very little future for WA sawmilling unless harvesting methods change," said Butcher. "There isn't enough wood. The only markets for these logs at present are export, but the minister doesn't want to be seen to export unprocessed wood, so this, too, is banned.

"It would take time to develop the local industries that could use this wood but there is no industry plan or signal from the government that they are willing to seek any investment in native timber processing. Instead, there's just waste."



# Counting Alfred's toll

State forests remain closed and homeowners are warned of clean-up risks.

AT the time of writing, State Forests and some plantations across South East Queensland and Northern NSW are still closed and reckoning up the damage cause by ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred. Floods are still moving throughout the local systems as emergency services rush to restore power and clear roads.

There's been a lot of appropriate swearing and just as much relief that it wasn't as bad as it first threatened to be. Communities are working together to provide



**Queensland's RoadTek teams have been putting in a Herculean effort.** Photo: courtesy Transport and Main Roads Queensland/X

**“KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR ASBESTOS IN DAMAGED BUILDING MATERIALS**

assistance, relief and clean-up assistance and the Federal and both State Governments have announced assistance packages for residents and

businesses. And, as after any disaster, there's a list of recommended actions.

The first and most obvious is to expect delays. Many parts of the timber supply chain have warehouses, manufacturing and offices based around Brisbane and even those that weren't directly affected have been limited in what they can do thanks to the aforementioned road closures and power outages, as well as employees being either unable to get to work or having to prioritise family or property responsibilities (not to mention the trove of brilliant emergency volunteers from the timber sector). Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) import and export inspections in the affected area were also disrupted and DAFF has warned the delays will take some time to clear.

HQPlantations teams have been out conducting a safety assessment of roads in plantation areas and hope to have updated announcement out today (check their social

media pages).

While news is still filtering in from affected areas, it does look as though the worst impacts at multiple sawmills, particularly across the NSW Northern Rivers, have been avoided this time. Many changes were implemented in business as well as residential rebuilds after the 2022 floods, which have no doubt helped.

The team at Asbestos Awareness is warning people working with both residential and commercial building damage to keep an eye out for asbestos in damaged building materials, as the damage caused by significant events can turn it from comparatively safe solid boards to dangerous fibres. Visit [www.asbestosawareness.com.au](http://www.asbestosawareness.com.au) to learn how to identify and manage asbestos.

Finally, listen to the nice emergency personnel and stay out of flood waters!

**On the cover: In NSW, the SES and RFS have been clearing trees from roads and residences.**  
Photo: courtesy NSW RFS/X

Australian Forest Products Association

## AFPA THE LEADING VOICE FOR AUSTRALIA'S FOREST PRODUCTS SECTOR



# AKD Otway Trail Run

## Limber up to support Colac Area Health.

THE famous AKD Otway Trail Run is back for 2025 on 23 March, and you can tackle it one of three ways depending on how your knees are feeling. There's the 16km timed run starting at 9am, the timed 6.3km trail run starting at 10am and the 6.3km walk, starting at 10.05am.

AKD is once again the major sponsor for the event and this year all funds raised for Colac Area Health will go towards a paediatric simulator which will allow local nurses and healthcare professionals to complete life-saving training without leaving Colac.

The 16km run starts in Barongarook, proceeding down through cool bush to Birnam Station then on to Kawarren, which marks the starting point for the 6.3km events, before all events conclude at Rex Norman Park in the delightful Otways village of Gellibrand.

Buses will be running to the start lines and there is some parking also available at Barongarook, with more



The AKD Otway Trail Run is back to raise funds for local health. Photo: courtesy AKD

at Kawarren. Bags will be available for nonvaluables which will be transported from the start lines to the finish.

The race course is designed to be accessible to a wide range of abilities, while still providing some challenges for those wanting to put their skills to the test.

At the end of the course, you'll have more than just the reward of exercise in the beautiful surrounds and the

warm feeling of having done some good for Colac Area Health. Ice baths are being provided by local gym One Movement, so you can cool down like a pro! And for those

“THE RACE COURSE IS DESIGNED TO BE ACCESSIBLE TO A WIDE RANGE OF ABILITIES.”

who would like to also (or instead!) cool down on the inside, Bulla ice creams will be offering sweet treats to participants, while Pro Feet Footwear Ocean Grove & Geelong will be available for massages and shoe consultations to keep your legs happy!

Live music and the foodie delights of Gellibrand will welcome all participants

and friends, as well as the chance to stay and explore the beautiful Otways. And the best treat at the end? Finisher medals – courtesy of the legends at Rotary Club Of Colac .

Fees start at just \$30, with under 10s free in the walk as long as they are with a participating guardian.

To register by 21 March, click here.

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# Business Grants

Access state and/or federal funding to grow your business!

Enews has partnered with a professional grant writing business. Watch this space as not all grants are made public. We will publish grants for various states/

territories for our industry here in Enews. Our connection might be available to assist you with eligibility criteria, grant writing, application process and

lodgement. They have a high success rate, so contact us if you would like to make an appointment. Contact: editors@timberandforestrynews.com

## Support Plantation Establishment Program

NATIONAL grant opportunity invites organisations via a Demand Driven (eligibility-based) process to apply to deliver services under the Support Plantation Establishment Program.

The objectives of the program are to:

- Increase future plantation forest resources available for processing, as well as for plantation forest management, harvesting and haulage employment;
- Support private industry, First Nations businesses, farm foresters and state and territory government forestry bodies to expand the Australian plantation forest estate;
- Contribute to meeting Australia's carbon emission reduction targets, including under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Kyoto Protocol to the Climate Change Convention.

At the time of submitting your application, you must not have planted the trees as part of your project activities

Intended outcomes:

- Increase domestic timber supply, particularly construction and manufacturing timber resources, to contribute



Plantations such as the one these pine seedlings are destined for will be supported by this grant. . Image: Shutterstock/jiraphoto

to the demands of the Australian market

- Support private industry, First Nations businesses, farm foresters and state and territory government forestry bodies to reduce their carbon footprint by storing it in plantation trees and to contribute to Australia's carbon emission reduction targets
- Support the retention and/or creation of regional jobs and support for regional communities.

You also cannot include any activities that have or will be undertaken prior to the earliest activity start date for the relevant batch you are applying to as part

of your grant funded or co-contribution activities.

The earliest activity start dates for each batch are:

- Batches 1 + 2 are closed
- Batch 3: September 2025
- Batch 4: December 2025
- Batch 5: February 2026
- Batch 6: April 2026.

Applications are due by:

- 8 May 2025 if applying for funding in Batch 3
- 17 July 2025 if applying for funding in Batch 4
- 24 September 2025 if applying for funding in Batch 5
- 5 November 2025 if applying for funding in Batch 6.

To be eligible, you must

be one of the following entity types:

- Company
- Cooperative
- Corporate State or Territory Entity
- Incorporated Association
- Indigenous Corporation
- Sole Trader
- Partnership.

If you are applying as a Trustee on behalf of a Trust, the Trustee must

have an eligible entity type as listed above.

### GRANT DETAILS

**Provider:** Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

**Amount:** Unspecified

**Closes:** series of dates from 8 May to 5 Nov 2025

**Location:** National

**Who Can Apply:**

Government, non-government, businesses, community groups and other

**Co-Contribution Required:**

Unspecified by Provider

<https://www.grants.gov.au>



**MARCH**

**22: NTHA QLD State Awards – Brisbane City Hall, Brisbane.** Join us in celebrating the QLD Timber and Hardware Industry. Contact Tahlia at events@ntha.com.au

**25-28: DANA Global Wood Products Supply and Demand Trends Seminar, Global Forest Investment Conference, and WWII Battle of the Bulge Battle sites tour – Europe.** Contact admin@dana.co.nz

**APRIL**

**10-11: Forestry Australia 2025 Forest Carbon Summit – National Press Club, Canberra.** For full details and to register, visit <https://www.forestry.org.au/2025-forest-carbon-summit/>

**MAY**

**7-8: Sydney Build 25 – ICC, Sydney.** Australia's largest construction and design show. Enews is a media partner for Sydney Build 2025. For more details visit <https://www.sydnebuildexpo.com>

**14: AFCA National Forum & Dinner – Gold Coast, QLD.** SAVE THE DATE. More details to follow.

**11-17: Japanese Wood Architecture Tour – Japan.**

Tour the world's oldest and most impressive wooden buildings. From Hōryū-ji, the world's oldest wooden building to the World Expo in Osaka - home to the world's largest wooden ring building. For more information and view the program, visit <https://www.woodsolutions.com.au/events/woodsolutions-sponsors-tda-japan-study-tour?>

**26-30: LIGNA 25 – Hannover, Germany.** The world's leading trade fair for woodworking and wood processing plant, machinery and tools. For more details visit <https://www.ligna.de/en/for-visitors>

**30: 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

**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. For more information visit <https://www.wcte2025.org/event/df0d5655-c16d-47df-b4a6-457a7dc63d96/wcte-2025>

**29-JULY 2: 5th International Conference on Timber Bridges – Rotorua, New Zealand.** The focus is on timber bridges and the current need for resilient infrastructure to support thriving communities. For more information and to register your interest, visit <https://ictb-conference.org/2025/>

**SEPTEMBER**

**2-3: Timber Queensland Biennial Conference "Doing Timber Business in Queensland" – Brisbane.** For more information, email [admin@timberqueensland.com.au](mailto:admin@timberqueensland.com.au)

**OCTOBER**

**13-14: Timber Construct 2025 – Melbourne.** To register your interest, visit <https://timberconstruct.org/>

**20-22: International Woodchip and Biomass Seminar and Networking Event – Singapore.** For more information visit <https://danaevents.co.nz/2024singapore/home>

[co.nz/2024singapore/home](https://danaevents.co.nz/2024singapore/home)

**20-23: Forestry Australia 2025 Conference – Adelaide Convention Centre, Adelaide.** The conference theme is 'Restoring forests and landscapes to secure Australia's future' and aims to develop both local and national collaboration. For more details visit <https://www.forestry.org.au/2025-conference/>

**22-23: Melbourne Build 25 – MCEC, Melbourne.** Victoria's largest construction and design show. For more details visit <https://melbournebuildexpo.com>

**23-24: Field Trip – Vietnam.** (Follows on from the woodchip and biomass seminar in Singapore.) For more information visit <https://danaevents.co.nz/2024singapore/fieldtrip>

**24: GTTIA – The Barn, Mt Gambier, SA.** Nominations are now open for 2025 Green Triangle Timber Industry Awards. Nominate online: <https://gttia.com/nomination-form/> For full details on award categories and submission guidelines, visit: <https://gttia.com/2025-award-categories/>



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# Promoting local

## Australian Made welcomes new support for Aussie manufacturers and exporters.

A RECENT \$5 million commitment by the Federal Government has been welcomed by the Australian Made Campaign Ltd (AMCL).

The commitment will see AMCL receive a \$5 million injection over three years to promote and protect the famous Australian Made, Australian Grown (AMAG) logo in key export markets as part of the Federal Government's support for Australian manufacturers and exporters.

The Hon. Ed Husic, Minister for Industry and Science, said, "An investment in the Australia Made logo is an investment promoting Australia's world-class products. Make it here, ship it everywhere – backing Australian Made helps back Aussie businesses and

Aussie jobs."

There are around 4500 businesses with products licensed to carry the AMAG logo across a wide range of goods. These AMCL licensees represent approximately 40,000 jobs and generate a combined annual revenue of \$8.1 billion. The Australian Made logo is a registered certification trade mark which indicates that the products which carry it have been made or grown in Australia.



Ed Husic, Minister for Industry and Science, said the investment was "promoting Australia's world-class products". Photo: supplied

from our supermarket shelves to Kennedy's Timbers, Hyne Timber and AKD Softwoods. Timber Media Australasia is a proud to feature the logo on our own publications, as well as printing locally on Australian-made paper.

Australian Made chief executive Ben Lazzaro said, "This [funding injection] is fantastic support for Australian manufacturers and exporters.

The gold kangaroo in a green triangle is a familiar sight on products ranging

manufacturers and exporters.

Cont P 9

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From P 8

It's important that we value our manufacturing sector and provide an environment that encourages and assists manufacturers to innovate and build on their success while providing pathways to new markets. The end result being a healthy manufacturing sector, job creation and better access to markets.

"While much work has been done in extending the reach and effectiveness of the Australian Made logo, with the Government's support, AMCL will be able to further strengthen Australia's reputation for high-quality, clean, green products in overseas markets.

**"IT'S IMPORTANT WE VALUE OUR MANUFACTURING SECTOR."**

"The Australian Made logo has been connecting genuine Aussie brands with buyers here and overseas for nearly 40 years, so it makes real sense to enhance its effectiveness for the benefit of all Aussie manufacturers," he added

The logo is central to 'Brand Australia' both at home and abroad and encapsulates many of the wonderful attributes Australia is famous for. In export markets, the Australian Made logo makes the 'Australian connection' instantly and clearly, providing recognisable third-party accreditation and delivering confidence to consumers.

Use of the logo is restricted to licence holders, with each licence assessed by AMCL for adherence to the rules around the logo's appropriateness and usage. There are different descriptors that can be added to the logo to indicate how much local input has gone



**The Australian Made logo is a sign of quality and trustworthiness.** Image: supplied

into each product, from those which have been substantially transformed within Australia to a point that qualifies as Australian Made, to products where all the significant ingredients and all or virtually all the processes that go into a product are Australian.

As well as being allowed to show the logo, licenced companies are featured on the searchable database, which

can be viewed by category as well as using search words, helping consumers find Australian Made producers for the goods they want.

For more information on the various levels and how products qualify as well as how you can apply for a licence, visit [www.australianmade.com.au](http://www.australianmade.com.au).

The AMAG logo is already a registered trademark in the USA, China, South Korea, Singapore, India, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam, the United Kingdom, the European Union and the United Arab Emirates – with more regions underway.

The Coalition has matched the commitment ahead of the upcoming election.



# Certify your products as Australian Made

Apply to use the logo at [australianmade.com.au](http://australianmade.com.au)





# Get our message out first

## The Greens plan to target timber this month, it's time to beat them to the media.

WANDER around a major city and you'll see a lot of signs for March in March for Forests. It's a Bob Brown Foundation plan to end native timber forestry that is being supported by the Greens and has multiple public marches planned across much of Australia on Sunday 23 March.

This week and next are the time to get out to our local, state and national media with positive and accurate stories about the timber sector before photos of winsome young people with hand-painted koala signs flood the airwaves.

While the stated goal of the marches is to lobby the government, its two actual goals are fundraising and to sway public opinion against forestry operations in state forests.

When it comes to the second of these, the timber sector holds strong cards in the fight for social license. Far beyond the simple economic questions of jobs and providing crucial support for other industries, especially construction, we have substantive science showing the sustainability of well-managed forestry and its minimal impacts on wildlife.

This message of regrowth is too often lost in media coverage of forestry, drowned out by emotive spin. Think of the media impact of that photo of a single large tree on a flatbed truck in Tasmania that hit the papers and social media about 18 months ago. Even when the

accurate story that it had been felled for safety reasons was released by Sustainable Timber Tasmania, that coverage was mostly framed in the language of anti-forestry activists (click here for an example).

Of course, STT aren't psychic and couldn't know there would be a Greens supporter in the perfect spot to take that pic, but the whole industry working together can limit the political mileage made out of photos like that. We're all understandably busy, but it is worth the extra effort to bringing journalists out to harvesting areas, talk about the dangers of sick and damaged trees to forest users and other trees (remember the great job Forestry Corp, Hyne and AKD did explaining the rationale behind bushfire salvage after Black Summer?), explain where our harvests go and why we do safety felling, particularly in areas near roads and walking tracks.

Proactive messaging can reverse the media assumption that logging = bad, making it clear that anti-timber activists are calling for the closure of sustainable industries, ignoring the rehabilitative work of forest managers, shifting our national need for



**The good people of Sydney's Inner West are being invited to voice their opinions on forestry, so it's for the best if those of us who know about the industry do the same.**

timber resources offshore to more vulnerable ecosystems that lack Australia's extensive regulation and oversight, and often relying on the manipulation of facts – think of the many narrow-focus shots showing woodland 'devastation' that are actually neat coupes of 20 harvested trees with the thousands still standing around them blurred in the background.

One thing the Greens do well most of the time is get media attention, so use their

“PROACTIVE MESSAGING CAN REVERSE THE MEDIA ASSUMPTION THAT LOGGING = BAD”

methods to get it first.

- Get locals involved, not just industry leaders and business owners. Real-life stories make for compelling copy and journalists love interviews.
- Have photos and video available that addresses activists' claims of broad destruction and minimal benefits.
- Be honest and upfront. Yes, we cut trees down. Then we replant them. That's how we store carbon in your house for a century.

Local media is always a great place to start, though too many publications are now run out of urban hubs. But there are still local contacts for most (you can usually find a newsroom editor listed on the contacts page of the website). Don't forget radio: ABC radio is always on the lookout for a good story, find your local newsroom at this link <https://www.abc.net.au/local> and use one of their connect methods. State and national media may be less responsive, but there is a real hunger for good content on all titles. And if you've got an Insta or TikTok account, now is the time to start putting up real-world content that shows who's really the green one here.



# Timber engineer sponsorship

The Gottstein Trust is helping early career engineers attend the WCTE.

THE World Conference on Timber Engineering (WCTE) will be held in Brisbane on 22–26 June this year. With confirmed keynote speakers including Jodie Bricout, circular economy lead at Aurecon, and Gerald Epp, president and chief engineer of StructureCraft, it's shaping up to be a powerhouse event.

The WCTE is the world's leading scientific forum for speakers to deliver the latest technical and architectural developments and innovations in timber construction. The Gottstein Trust is offering six fully paid conference places at the WCTE for Australian engineers in the early stage of their professional career. Early career is considered to be from one to six years working

as a qualified engineer but this is not a hard and fast rule. Each application will be considered on its merits.

The Trust is delighted to support this significant global conference as it comes to Australia, and expects that competition for the scholarships will be strong. Each sponsored place receives a full conference registration which includes any social event/s that are included. Assistance with travel and accommodation costs will also be provided in the form of a grant paid to a nominated bank account. Each person is responsible



**Monterey Apartments in Brisbane, a hybrid concrete, CLT and glulam residential tower delivered by Aurecon.** Image: courtesy Aurecon Group

for making all their own travel bookings and payments.

The international conference organising committee is led by Professor Keith Crews; prominent as a timber research leader and director of the Australian Research Council Industrial Transformation Research Hub to Advance Timber in Australia's Built Environment. A specialist in research and design of large-scale timber

structures he's internationally recognised as an expert on Sustainable Infrastructure. Crews was a Gottstein Fellow in 1990 and is a valued contributor to the Gottstein Understanding Wood Science course.

Applications will close at midnight on 30 March and can be lodged anytime before then, through the online form.

To apply and for more details, click [here](#). For more on WCTE, click [here](#). In the event of any difficulties lodging your form contact [team@gottsteintrust.org](#)

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# Tigercat's new 6900 Grinder

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EQUIPPED with a powerful Cat C32 engine and aggressive teeth on the top roller, Tigercat's new 6900 Grinder can handle a wide variety of materials, from logs, tree limbs and brush, to waste material and more. This robust upswing grinder's durable construction ensures longevity and reliable performance even in the most demanding conditions.

Operators will appreciate the intuitive control panel, which offers straightforward operation and easy adjustments to optimise processing efficiency. The machine features remote control capabilities and a user-friendly 25cm (10-inch) display screen for monitoring the machine and adjusting its functions, for easy operation and on-site mobility.

Tigercat's 6900 Grinder has a built-in service mode that allows all machine functions required for service to be actuated without the need to start the engine, so the engine is always off for any service functions. During this service/maintenance mode, an auxiliary electric pump powers the top feed roll, both the feed and discharge conveyors, grate frame extend and retract, and virtually every other function except for the track drives – for safer, quieter maintenance routines, fuel savings and reduced engine hours.

Maintenance becomes effortless with convenient service access provided:

- The split hog box opens over the centre for complete access to the rotor and screens.
- The anvil and screens can be hydraulically retracted.



**1/ Grinding waste can both help return it to soil nutrients faster in the forest and provide suitable material for added value waste products at the mill, from briquettes to mulch.**

**2/ The discharge system can lift from 3.6m to 6m and operates at 183-335 metres per minute.**

- The single discharge conveyor is open at the bottom for seamless operation and easy maintenance.
- All lubrication points are remotely located for access via ground or maintenance platform locations.
- A tool storage area is positioned on the machine's side, which can be hydraulically raised and lowered for added convenience. This removes the need for anybody doing maintenance to carry items up a ladder.

- Each machine is supplied with a Milwaukee three quarter impact wrench, blower and charger.

In all, it's a very well thought out machine regarding safety, convenience and accessibility for maintenance and servicing.

This carries through to the operation and design of the machine when in action. Adequate belt and ground clearance offer benefits in muddy terrain and on uneven surfaces. The 6900 model features a distinctive tilting frame that pivots on the undercarriage, enabling operators to stack materials

higher and adjust the infeed angle as needed. This flexibility also allows operators to navigate rough terrain and modify the pivot for increased ground clearance or to reach heights necessary for loading products into trucks.

An optional large diameter magnetic head pulley is available to effectively remove metal from the end product and protect the machine. An additional protection and safety measure is the impact detection system that has a series of actions that mitigate damage. It is operated by an accelerometer that triggers the retracting of the grate frame and reversing of the infeed when it detects a particular impact. This action creates an opening for the trapped metal to be released. In the case when the object is too large to be released and causes another impact, shear bolts enable the grate frame to retract even more. Finally, there are two shear pins that will disengage on the two sections of the grate frame as a result of another impact.

Whether used in forestry, landscaping, or waste management, the 6900 grinder is a versatile and indispensable tool that helps professionals get the job done with precision and speed. The Tigercat 6900 Grinder's carefully planned design, safeguards both the users and the machine, ultimately ensuring the protection of your bottom line.

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# More Houses Sooner

## FWPA research provides in-depth analysis of housing challenges and potential solutions.

*MORE Houses Sooner* is the first and only in-depth study to project the total dwellings required by 2034 to reach equilibrium and affordability levels. The research indicates Australia needs to deliver approximately 2.48 million new dwellings to keep pace with population growth and address historic unmet demand. This equates to roughly 225,400 new dwellings per year.

The report, commissioned by Forest & Wood Products Australia's (FWPA) Statistics and Economics program (click here for details), provides scenarios for filling the housing supply gap by increasing timber use in multi-residential constructions and encouraging builders to adopt more prefabricated home solutions.

These insights support FWPA's members and the wider industry to make strategic decisions and explore these opportunities to grow the market for wood products.

Subtitled *Finding the Australian Dream: Australian Housing Demand and Timber Use Scenarios to 2034*, the report acknowledges current and future challenges, but also identifies practical and achievable solutions.

Population growth is

a key driver of housing demand, with projections showing nearly 31 million people and a decline in household size to fewer than 2.4 people per household by 2034. This comes off a base of lower-than-required housing completions and rapidly rising costs over an extended period.

FWPA Head of Built Environment Programs, Kevin Peachey, says increasing timber usage in construction can help address the current imbalance of supply and demand. "There are opportunities and challenges for the industry," said Peachey. "Leveraging prefabrication systems and factory-based manufacturing offers reduced costs and construction times compared to conventional methods. Systemic change is required; all of Australia will benefit from more efficient use of timber in the built environment, as this will help meet one of society's most important and pressing needs of building more



**More Houses Sooner delivers accurate analysis of housing challenges, plus workable solutions.**

houses sooner."

The report says that achieving this level of construction will require greater efficiency in timber use, particularly in free-standing homes and mid-rise multi-residential developments (4-8 storeys). The demand for sawn structural timber is expected to exceed 2.5 million m<sup>3</sup> per year by 2027, highlighting both supply challenges and opportunities for the forestry and wood products sector, including prefabrication, factory-based manufacturing,

and innovative timber solutions.

Lead Researcher Tim Woods says the report was compiled using integrating historical trends in housing affordability, disposable income, and population data. "Other reports in the market focus on projecting ABS building activity data, such as dwelling approval, commencement, and completion, without involving other indicators relevant to housing issues. By using an integrated analytical approach, this report provides practical pathways to fill the housing supply gap."

Historically, Australia produced an average of 192,100 dwellings per annum over the decade to 2024. The More Homes Sooner analysis indicates that Australia can deliver the additional 2.48 million dwellings the nation requires over the coming decade to meet the demand.

FWPA is confident that the forestry and wood products industry is uniquely placed to contribute to a future where more Australians can realise the dream of owning a home.

To download the *More Houses Sooner* report, click here.



# Kea in NZ plantations

OneFortyOne's plantation forests are helping this endangered parrot.

IT'S hard not to be charmed by the antics of kea in their mountain homes, unless those are your sunglasses they're flying off with while you complain pointlessly. But the big, clever, mountain-dwelling birds are endangered, with only 3000-7000 birds remaining, mostly in the Nelson-Tasman region.

This is the same area in which OneFortyOne grows 80,000 hectares of plantation forest, but far from competing with the kea, this plantation forest has become a regularly visited site for the local birds.

Research by the Kea Conservation Trust and funded by OneFortyOne is the basis for a paper published in *The New Zealand Journal of Forestry*, Feb 2025, which shows that

plantation pine forests provide both food resources and nesting opportunities for kea, while the edge habitat between plantation blocks creates diverse feeding zones.

Diet analysis even suggested that the kea may time their visits to the plantations for specific times, such as after harvest has made it easier to find specific food items. These kea also seemed to spend more time in the trees than other populations. It's possible that the plantations are safer for them, with the presence of



**Kea observed in OneFortyOne's NZ forests. The parrots lived up to their reputation and were difficult study subjects.** Photo: courtesy OneFortyOne

food to keep it away from the birds, 200m setbacks from active nests and special procedures, including a 'kea-kit' with covers and tarpaulins to protect machinery and equipment from damage.

The research has shown that forestry operations can be modified to protect and enhance kea

habitat while maintaining productive forestry.

Click here to download the full paper – even if ecology isn't your cup of tea, it's worth it for Chris Dyer's photo of a huffily annoyed parrot being banded.

humans and their pest control measure for predators such as stoats, feral cats and possums creating a kea-friendly zone.

The study has influenced forester behaviour, too, with careful monitoring of human

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# Thank you, Alastair Woodard

As the timber sector stalwart retires, he talks with Kat Welsh, Editor FTMA News, about what he hopes his legacy will be and where we need to work more.

DR Alastair Woodard is a familiar name to many of us. For the lifespan of FTMA, Alastair has been a major collaborator. He's always been available at the end of the phone for advice or information about anything technical. He's turned up to countless conferences and events to be the voice of knowledge and insight. He's authored and contributed to an abundance of resources showcasing the science and capability of wood. Some might say he's the glue in the glulam when it comes to bringing the industry together – connecting as a whole.

Last year, Alastair came along to the Bowens expo to help me man the Carbon Warrior stall, and that's when he mentioned the 'R' word (retirement). I felt a leap of panic thinking of Alastair disappearing from the timber sector, which was quickly negated somewhat by him reassuring me he couldn't imagine going to that extreme... But Alastair is retiring from fulltime work.

I knew I had to write something that would celebrate his achievements so far, and Alastair was gracious enough to invite me into his home to talk. On a balmy Melbourne morning, under the coolness of his verandah, I got a special insight into just how much Alastair has done over his career.

Alastair has been working in the industry for more than 30 years. His expertise is not just about sustainable timber and all its possibilities and capabilities, but also his encyclopaedic knowledge of the industry's history



**Dr Alastair Woodard receiving a token of recognition from the FTMA Board. He told Kat Welsh that he expects to remain engaged in connecting people across the timber sector.** . Photo: courtesy FTMA

and evolution: pretty much every association or group that is, or was, how they evolved and their focuses. His personal understanding of the successes and shortfalls of the sector has been critical to the growth of timber design, engineered wood product specification, and the awareness and recognition of the environmental and lifecycle benefits of this amazing product.

"I finished school in '78," Alastair says, "had a bit of a gap year, came back and did my engineering degree, finished that in the mid 80s. I went out as a consulting structural engineer. That's probably where I got my interest in timber.

"One of the guys I used to work for was then Lord Mayor of Melbourne Trevor Huggard. We used to do lots of refurbishments of historic buildings in the CBD... all these 8-, 9-storey buildings in the city might be brickwork on the outside, but they're all timber on the inside... The project

I remember the most when I was an engineer, was the refurbishment of the Princess Theatre – a magnificent timber structure."

Restoring the theatre to its 1920s glory started Alastair on a journey of working with timber. In the 90s he went back to Uni at the Monash Timber Engineering Centre, did a Masters, then converted it into a PhD in timber engineering.

He was headhunted by the Timber Promotion Council (TPC) to set up education programs for the timber industry, "...which I started in 1995 in Victoria and then spread nationally later that year. I am happy to say, it's probably one of the longest-running industry programs, still going 30 years later under the FWPA WoodSolutions Education program."

In the mid 90s, there were a lot of people doing the generic technical work in timber he was drawn to. "There were about 80 technical people like me throughout Australia. The state associations and CSIRO

were very strong back then; TPC alone had about 15 staff, and a similar size technical promotional association in most other states."

These people and their agencies and organisation were working strongly in the timber sector, educating, promoting, and developing new product and market opportunities. Now he estimates there's as little as half a dozen people in similar roles, as the state associations have diminished over the years.

Alastair recalls six-monthly meetings with time for both strategical and technical groups to meet and coordinate. Since then, the number of available people with that level of generic timber technical capacity has dropped notably, as has the available funding. It's led to his concerns about the next generation coming through to fill the sector's needs.

Alastair has been keen to do something about this as a legacy project – to grow that human resource and encourage new younger people into the niche. He hopes the new industry-funded Future Framing Initiative, focussed on further growth of the lightweight low-rise timber framed construction market will help to attract and engage the best building professionals, to start to rebuild that generic technical timber expertise.

FTMA has benefitted from our relationships with Alastair since our formation and he has been a keen advocate for advances in timber fabrication.

"When you see the products



From P 16

out there that are accepted these days or new systems it's amazing," he says. "Like cassette floors – when we started that no one even knew what a cassette floor was, and to see them now being used all the time and accepted is very satisfying. A bit like the Princess Theatre, very personally satisfying to still know that after all these years people are still enjoying the beautiful refurb we did on that."

Similarly, he articulates a systemic approach to the timber sector and its goal of a prosperous future. He describes it as multifaceted, multi-layered, and multidimensional, requiring key understandings and deliberate action to bring it together.

"These timber industry organisations have changed over the years, they're very critical, but they're hugely understaffed at the moment," he says. "The theme of my career has been collaboration, cooperation, innovation. These are the sort of things I tend to get passionate about. These are the things industry needs to continue to pursue."

It's a philosophy he's put into action with the Collaborative Communications Group, where dozens of industry communications people share what we're working on and look for ways to provide support and cooperation. Alastair has also been the facilitator of FTMA's Strategic Technical Group, pooling the collaborative technical wealth of the nailplate companies



**FTMA's CEO Kersten Gentle said, "Alastair has this rare ability to not only make complex topics interesting but also to inspire everyone around him to see the bigger picture and fight for a more sustainable future."** Photo: courtesy FTMA

and innovative frame and truss fabricators looking to find new product/system offerings and new business value propositions. And, of course, he's been engaged in many WoodSolutions program activities since 2011, including as Victorian technical manager, educational program manager and author or co-author of a large number of technical online resources and webinars, as well as countless seminars, workshops, conversations and implemented training modules for a wide range of building professionals.

Above all, Alastair is always ready to participate, to explain to new people, listen to questions and have a wonderfully clear answer.

A recent prostate cancer diagnosis has fast-tracked his retirement plans. He talked openly about it a recent FTMA gathering, encouraging the men to ensure that they get regular medical check-ups, and not neglect their health – "make sure your doctor includes a PSA test as part of your annual blood tests!"

While Alastair is taking some time off to focus on

his family and his health and wellbeing, he expects to be contributing again at some stage with both mentoring and policy.

"Forestry and wood products have always been a great story, renewable, sustainable material, locally produced, all of the benefits that come with it," he says. "Yet while designers and consumers all love wood products, forestry very frustratingly continues to lose social licence. It's been the political football. It hasn't continually invested to make sure that people really understand its huge environmental, economic and social benefits. It's lost its credibility... as an industry we really need to get out there and reverse this."

"A second legacy thing I'm really happy I got done before I finished up was the Steps Towards a Greener Future report. It focuses on this critical low-embodied emission benefit story. The report now gives a clear road map for industry associations and companies as to what needs to be done. There's 23 recommendations... across government policy, voluntary initiatives, education, and broader industry action. It quite clearly explains what we all need to be doing to get the best outcome."

Alastair, thank you for your consistency, positivity and being a driver for change. FTMA wishes you all the very best over the next several months and we'll look forward to collaborating with you as soon as possible, in whatever way retirement ends up looking like for you.

*This is an edited version of an article that first appeared in FTMA News, for the full story, click here. To download Steps Towards a Greener Future, click here.*



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