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COVER STORY P3

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Sydney Hoo Hoo Club 215 reignites with inaugural post-COVID meeting

AFTER six years in recess, the Sydney Hoo Hoo Club 215 reconvened on Tuesday 30 September 2025, at Club Ryde Ex in Ryde, NSW. The evening marked a significant milestone in the club's history, welcoming back members of the timber and forest products industry for an insightful and inspiring night of networking, presentations, and discussion.

Club member Danny Gattone opened the evening by welcoming the 27 attendees and acknowledging the club's hiatus since 2019. Reflecting on the changing social landscape, Danny shared optimism about the club's revival: "This is the start of the reinvigoration of the club." He outlined plans for four meetings per year to maintain momentum and foster ongoing engagement within the industry.

A highlight of the evening was a presentation by Ron Gattone, former Snark of the Universe, who shared the rich history of Hoo Hoo. Founded in 1892 in Arkansas, USA, the club originated from a



1/ Justin Smirk, Senior Economist at Westpac Bank.



2/ Ron Gattone, former Snark of the Universe.



3/ Bianca Murdaca, NSW Design and Colourhub Manager for Brickworks. All images: Campbell McInnes

chance meeting of timber professionals who saw the need to build community within the industry. Ron eloquently shared the symbolism behind the club's black cat mascot and powerful motto: *Health, Happiness, and Long Life*.

The meeting featured two keynote presentations. The first, from Bianca Murdaca, NSW Design and Colourhub Manager for Brickworks, provided an engaging look at current and upcoming design trends in the building sector. Bianca emphasised the growing importance of lightweight and mixed materials, including timber, in modern architecture. She also

unveiled Brickworks' innovative new product INTENT – a lightweight brick façade system designed to address the shortage of bricklayers, highlighting both design flexibility and construction efficiency.

The second speaker, Justin Smirk, Senior Economist at Westpac Bank, delivered a thought-provoking economic update. He discussed the macroeconomic shifts influencing interest rates, inflation, and global trade. Notably, Justin projected near-term mortgage rate reductions, contrasted with long-term upward pressure on business lending rates

due to global investment in defence and the green energy transition. He also addressed the challenges in Australia's housing supply, advocating for streamlined regulations to ease construction bottlenecks.

The evening concluded with gratitude expressed to both speakers and attendees. Ron Gattone encouraged everyone to support the club's resurgence by returning for the next meeting and inviting colleagues along. The event was a clear reminder of the value in coming together—sharing knowledge, experience, and camaraderie within the timber and forest products community.



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Timber Construct 2025

Embracing innovation, collaboration and a greener built environment.

Melbourne's vibrant CBD set the stage for Timber Construct 2025, held on Monday 13 October at the Rydges Hotel. Hosted by Andrew Dunn and the Timber Development Association, this year's conference marked 25 years of timber innovation in construction, tracing its roots from Frame Australia and Timber Offsite Construction to today's nationally respected event.

What emerged throughout Day One was clear: the timber industry is no longer simply playing catch-up with other construction materials. It's leading from the front—with sustainability, precision, and productivity at its core.

From international project showcases to local R&D breakthroughs, the day captured the dynamism of a sector redefining the built environment. Developers, fabricators, engineers, and academics united around a common purpose: to harness timber's full potential across residential, commercial and industrial projects.

Session one: building beyond convention – developer's timber awakening

Chair: Georgia Coutts, Brand Manager, NeXTimber at Timberlink

The day opened with a compelling keynote by Rory Hunter, CEO of MODEL, who challenged the industry to think differently. Drawing from his eco-luxury development in Cambodia and current Build-to-Rent ventures in inner Melbourne, Hunter emphasised timber's role in delivering sustainable, scalable housing.

Hunter gave the audience an interesting history of how in his twenties, he was



1/ **Rory Hunter, CEO of MODEL.**



2/ **George Dolezal, Principal Engineer at Meyer Timber..** All photos: Campbell McInnes

presented with an opportunity to buy an Island in Cambodia, which he did. Hunter went on the clean up the Island and surrounding waters in partnership with locals, and ended up developing Song Saa Island, one of the world's first sustainable eco retreats. He partnered with Prince Albert, who also has a passion for the environment, and created the first marine sanctuary in Cambodia. Hunter understood the importance of not just developing a building, but to think of the other stake holders in the project.

In Australia, cities are growing due to migration. The Australian Government has recently announced their net zero target by 2050. For this to be achieved, timber in buildings will need to play a big part. While building net

zero properties now may seem expensive, in twenty years' time investors and the likes of super funds will seek these types of buildings. MODEL has plans for 700 highly sustainable BTR apartments in inner-Melbourne. Hunter advised, "we need to have different thinking for new buildings".

Chet Ratnakara, MD of Versobuild, followed with insights from the Geneo Glulam Canopy in Singapore—now the world's tallest timber canopy. Ratnakara underscored the carbon advantages (storing over 950 tonnes of CO₂e) and the logistical mastery behind its five-month installation. He also highlighted timber's potential in the data centre sector—valued for its speed, adaptability and low embodied carbon.

Session two: future frame innovations

Chair: Kersten Gentle, CEO, FTMA Australia

Nick Hewson, MD of Aboralis, reframed Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) as a process innovation—not just prefabrication. His Modscape + Modbotics project, comprising over 1,000 social housing modules, exemplified the power of MMC when paired with timber and digital workflows.

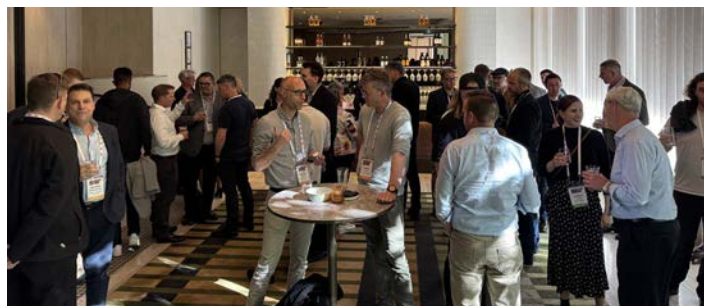
Barry Brunton of Legacy Engineering delved into DfMA (Design for Manufacture and Assembly), declaring, "We're not just drawing buildings—we're designing data." His talk emphasised how digital modelling, logistics, and tolerance planning are now essential to successful timber delivery.

Dr Louise Wallis rounded out the session with early findings from the Future Lightweight Timber Framing project, a major research initiative with national backing. While timber quality and manufacturing inconsistencies remain issues, the project is revealing new pathways for automation, smarter framing systems, and updated standards.

Session three: timber's competitive positioning in residential and commercial construction

Chair: Alex Campbell, Regional Director ANZ, Pliteg

Industry veteran Bruce Wallace, Director of The Truss Joint, delivered a rousing call to arms: a "Timber Counteroffensive" against steel and concrete. With nearly four decades in truss fabrication,



Timber Construct 2025 also featured space for networking at the end of the day. Photo: Campbell McInnes

Cont P 4

From P 3

Wallace urged better collaboration, earlier design involvement, and an embrace of value-led prefab.

Robert Nestic of TGA Engineering showcased timber beams as viable and often superior alternatives to steel—backed by case studies including Australia's largest timber warehouse (21,000m² for Meyer Timber).

George Dolezal, Principal Engineer at Meyer Timber, closed the session with the meyBRACE portal system and MTB pre-fabricated shear walls—solutions designed to meet modern open-plan living needs and wind load requirements. His work underscores timber's adaptability in structural innovation.

Session four: point-supported mass timber systems – structural innovation in action

Chair: Dr Louise Wallis, Centre



Left to right: Dr. Louise Wallis, Barry Brunton, Nick Hewson and Kersten Gentle. Photo: Campbell McInnes

for Sustainable Architecture with Wood

A highly technical but equally forward-looking session explored the next generation of mass timber construction systems.

- Dr Richard Nero and Karthik Ganesan introduced Post + Plate, a system proving faster, more flexible, and cost-effective than traditional wall-supported CLT. Their Sydney case study found it to be 15% cheaper and 50% faster to install, with real-world implementation underway.
- Andy Russell (Proctor Group Australia) and Jeremy Church (NeXTimber) unpacked the benefits of stone wool insulation for mass timber—offering fire resistance, thermal, and acoustic performance in a non-combustible NCC-compliant package.
- Sebastian Jaimes from Rothoblaas presented next-gen connectors, including ETA-certified radial and ring systems, designed for fast, accurate prefabrication and disassembly.
- Gareth Connell of Cabot's introduced new intumescent

coatings for interior timber achieving Group 1 fire ratings—with developments for BAL29-rated exterior finishes underway.

Day one takeaway: timber's moment is now

Across four sessions and 14 speakers, a strong message echoed throughout Day One: timber is no longer niche. It's smarter, faster, and greener—a legitimate front-runner in mainstream construction. From data-driven design to prefabricated portal systems, the industry is building not just with timber, but with intention, collaboration, and vision.

Timber Construct 2025 has set the tone for the next chapter of the industry—one where innovation and sustainability walk hand-in-hand.

On the cover: Alexander Esser (left) and Morgan Le Guludec (right) from Hasslacher Timber showcasing what they are achieving with timber.
Image: Campbell McInnes

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Responsible Wood announces revision of AS/NZS 4708

RESPONSIBLE Wood is an Accredited Standard Development Organisation and has responsibility for developing and maintaining Australian Standard AS/NZS 4708 Sustainable Forest Management. Responsible Wood has announced the commencement of revision of AS/NZS 4708.

AS/NZS 4708 specifies the environmental, economic, social and cultural requirements that must be met to demonstrate good practice and continued improvement towards Sustainable Forest Management.

Responsible Wood reviews this Standard every 5 years to ensure it incorporates the latest knowledge, best practices and evolving stakeholder expectations. The review will be undertaken in conjunction with Standards New Zealand to develop a joint Australian/New Zealand Standard suitable for delivering Sustainable Forest Management in both countries. The review will align AS/NZS 4708 with the latest benchmark requirements of

PEFC for sustainable forest management provided in PEFC ST 1003:2024.

This revision is crucial to maintain PEFC endorsement, which is essential for market access under illegal logging laws in Australia, New Zealand, and internationally. The updates will address the European Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) by strengthening prohibitions on forest conversion and degradation, including detailed reviews of definitions for forest types like primary, old-growth, and planted forests. It will also incorporate EUDR requirements on trade and customs legality, remove allowances for plantations in degraded areas, and ensure reforestation avoids ecologically sensitive non-forest zones. Additionally, clauses related to indigenous peoples will be reviewed to enhance recognition and support, aligning with tools like the Green Building Council of Australia's ratings. Changes to ISO 14001 on climate change will be considered in management system clauses to better integrate



Matt de Jongh,
Sustainability
Manager at
Responsible Wood.



Simon Dorries,
CEO of
Responsible
Wood.

environmental impacts.

The process follows Responsible Wood's policies, emphasising consensus, public review, and impartiality, as outlined in their Standards Development Policies and Procedures Manual. This ensures balanced representation from diverse stakeholders, leading to a credible standard that promotes sustainability across the forestry sector.

Responsible Wood has invited stake holding organisations in the following categories to nominate candidates for the AS/NZS 4708 Standards Reference Committee and Working Groups.

- Forest Growers
- Business and Industry

- Indigenous people
- Non-Government Organisations
- Scientific and Technology Community
- Workers and Trade Unions
- Local Authorities

Responsible Wood continues to accept nominations, to nominate or to lodge an Expression of Interest please contact: Simon Dorries at Responsible Wood by email sdorries@responsiblewood.org.au or by phone 0438265975. Alternatively, mail your nomination or Expression of Interest to the Standards Review at PO Box 768, New Farm, Qld 4005.

Further information on the project and scope is available on the Standards Development Proposal [here](#).

Information on the Standards Setting Process and Standard Settings Procedures is available [here](#).

Responsible Wood welcomes feedback on the revision project, scope and Standard Setting Processes. Feedback can be lodged using the contact details above.

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Rothoblaas' timber revolution: a world-first automated warehouse

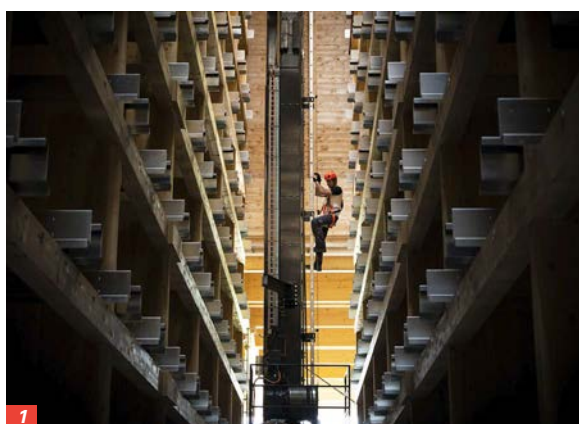
IN the heart of Italy's Alpine region, near the Austrian border, Rothoblaas has unveiled a groundbreaking feat of engineering: the world's first fully timber-built, self-supporting automated warehouse. Located in Cortaccia sulla Strada del Vino, Bolzano, this 4,800-square-metre expansion redefines what's possible in sustainable construction. Completed in 2021, it showcases how timber—specifically cross-laminated timber (CLT), laminated veneer lumber (LVL), and glued laminated timber (glulam)—can replace steel in industrial applications, blending environmental stewardship with cutting-edge design.

The warehouse serves as a vital hub for Rothoblaas' operations, streamlining the supply chain for its diverse product range, from lightweight membranes to heavy screws and plates. This addition to the company's 6,000-square-metre headquarters, which spans 83,000 cubic metres of offices, storage, and recreational spaces, includes three distinct volumes: a 75-by-40-metre, 21-metre-high automated warehouse, a goods entry zone, and a connector to the existing facility. Together, they add roughly 80,000 cubic metres of volume. The old warehouse, now transformed into open-plan offices for 80 new staff, reflects Rothoblaas' commitment to adaptive, human-centric spaces.

What sets this project apart is its self-supporting structure. The warehouse's shelves don't just store goods—they form the building's load-bearing framework, supporting the roof and walls while withstanding

the weight of stored materials, automated stacker cranes, and external forces like wind and earthquakes. To tackle horizontal stresses, the design incorporates two bracing systems. Along the north-south axis, 12 LVL and glulam bracing towers, each 1 by 2.5 metres, are anchored into concrete foundations with pre-inserted plates, channeling seismic forces from the shelving. In the east-west direction, 500 glulam columns, interlocked at the base and linked by a rigid roof of glulam beams and CLT panels, provide stability. This ensures minimal sway—just 19 millimetres east-west and 12 millimetres north-south at 20 metres high—keeping the four automated cranes running smoothly.

The site's unique history shaped its foundation. Built on the reclaimed 18th-century bed of the Adige River, the warehouse rests on a slab supported by 300 continuous helix drilled piles, each 40 centimetres wide and 27 metres deep—a nod to the timber "forest" above. In a region of low seismic risk, the structure still demanded careful planning. A non-dissipative design with a structure factor of 1.5, per EN 1998-1, and a seismic joint to



1/ During the build and in the design of the building, Rothoblaas has taken safety very seriously.

2/ The volume of timber used for this project is extraordinary. Rothoblaas traded out much of what is traditionally steel for timber, not only saving on steel costs but storing the sequestered carbon for the lifespan of the building. All images: Rothoblaas

separate the new and existing buildings ensures resilience.

Fire safety was a key challenge. Without sufficient water for sprinklers, the design achieves R30 fire resistance through timber's natural properties and innovative connections. Rothoblaas' LBS screws and VGZ and VGS all-thread connectors replace traditional nails and exposed steel, with intumescent coatings used sparingly. Safety extends to working at height, with vertical lifelines on ladders and cranes, plus a rooftop lifeline for maintenance.

Sustainability is at the core of this project. The warehouse, housing 17,000 to 18,200

pallet positions, uses 3,000 cubic metres of PEFC or FSC-certified timber sourced within 60 kilometres, sequestering approximately 2,400 tonnes of CO₂—equivalent to an average car circling the globe 500 times. A 465-panel, 250-kWh photovoltaic array powers the facility, with regenerative braking in cranes boosting efficiency. Fully screwed connections allow future disassembly and reuse, aligning with circular construction principles.

Tailored to Rothoblaas' needs, the warehouse is divided into four zones, with heavier items like screws stored lower to

reduce seismic impacts, and bulkier, lighter materials like membranes placed higher. The aluminium-clad exterior, accented with larch slats, balances fire safety with aesthetic ties to the timber interior, complementing the headquarters' signature large windows and timber finishes.

This pioneering warehouse proves timber's potential in industrial logistics, a sector long dominated by steel. By slashing embodied carbon and prioritising occupant well-being, Rothoblaas sets a new standard for sustainable, high-performance architecture.

Source: Rothoblaas

OCTOBER

20-22: International Woodchip and Biomass Conference and Networking Event – Singapore. Subjects covered include: global & Asian macro-economic outlook, pulp-woodchip end user, improving chip quality and export yields, carbonised pellets, biomass trends and much more. For full conference details and to register, visit <https://www.danaevents.co.nz/2025singapore/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: Conference Field Trip – Perth, WA. Follows on from the woodchip and biomass conference in Singapore. 2-day trip includes accommodation, breakfast, lunch, dinner and bus transport for site visits. Registrations or full field trip details, visit: danaevents.co.nz/2025singapore/fieldtrip

24: GTTIA – The Barn, Mt Gambier, SA. Gala dinner and awards ceremony. 6pm - pre event cocktails and 7.00pm - awards ceremony. Tickets available via the website: www.gttia.com

2026

MARCH 23-24: SAVE THE DATE: DANA – 2026 Special event. Global Natural Capital Investment Conference – Melbourne. Topic: *Why*

Oceania so popular with investors.

25: Conference Field Trip – Perth, WA. Follows on from the 'Global Natural Capital Investment Conference' in Melbourne. More information and special early bird rates to come soon for both events.

MAY 17-19: SAVE THE DATE: Professional Woodworking Expo – NEC, Birmingham, UK. Dedicated event for woodworking professionals, the Professional Woodworking Expo is the essential platform for joinery and installation businesses. For more information, contact Jess Hardisty: jess.hardisty@montgomerygroup.com

MAY 20-21: SAVE THE DATE: 5th International Forest Business Conference – Sheraton Sopot Hotel, Poland. A two-day conference on megatrends that shape responsible forest and wood industry investments. The

conference aims to bring together leading timberland investment management organizations, investors interested in forestry asset class and sustainable wood industry representatives in order to exchange and share experiences and ideas about new forest business frontiers. Register at www.fba-events.com or contact rafal@forest-analytics.com

JUNE 9-11: SAVE THE DATE: Woodex Trade Exhibition – Gallagher Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa. Africa's premier trade exhibition for timber, woodworking machinery, tools, and forestry. WoodEX for Africa has evolved into a true international event, consistently attracting visitors and exhibitors from more than 20 countries. Visit www.woodexforafrica.com for more information.

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Shape the future of responsible forest management

FSC has launched public consultations on the revision of its Principles and Criteria, International Generic Indicators, and other forest management normative documents (collectively referred to as PCI) and the development of country requirements. The consultations are open from October 1, to November 30, 2025.

Forest Management Standards under revision

FSC is innovating its Forest Management Certification by developing more user-oriented Forest Stewardship Standards and introducing outcome orientation and risk-based approaches. These revisions will maintain both environmental and social integrity and are aiming to reduce unnecessary burden on certificate holders and standard developers. Help shape the future of the core standards and procedures by participating in ongoing public consultations.

PCI revision

The PCI revision aims to uphold sustainable and equitable forest management practices that are adaptable to both current and evolving environmental, social, and economic challenges.

As part of this conceptual phase, FSC is conducting a public consultation to collect input on the proposed direction of changes, clarification of open issues, and initial solutions that will guide the drafting of revised

requirements. Stay informed and access all background materials through the PCI Hub at pci.fsc.org.

Topics for consideration include:

- Streamlining the structure of PCI through a modular and user-oriented approach.
- Making the PCI outcome-oriented, guided by the theory of change (ToC) approach
- Revising the scope of application, including vegetation types and urban forests.
- Strengthening social requirements, such as gender equality and Indigenous Peoples' rights living in voluntary isolation.
- Addressing climate change, biodiversity conservation, and forest resilience.

Developing and revising FSC Country Requirements

FSC is revising its normative framework for developing and maintaining Forest Stewardship Standards (FSS) and Risk Assessments (RAs)—collectively known as FSC Country Requirements. This involves consolidating three standards and two procedures into a single, streamlined procedure: FSC-PRO-60-006 V3-0 EN Development and Revision of FSC Country Requirements. Approved by the FSC Board in March 2022, the process began in September 2022 and is expected to conclude by 31 December 2026.

Two addenda complement the main procedure:

- FSC-PRO-60-006a V2-0 EN – Structure and Content of Forest Stewardship Standards (ongoing)
- FSC-PRO-60-006b V2-0 EN – Risk Assessment Framework (effective from 1 July 2024)

The revision introduces a more focused, efficient, and adaptive framework. Key enhancements in the new approach are:

- Outcome Orientation – Working groups need to define 3–5 key intended outcomes to guide monitoring requirements and ensure impact.
- Streamlining – All FSC country requirements can be developed or revised through 3 types of processes: major, regular and accelerated. In addition, development timelines are capped at 3 years, promoting consistency and predictability.
- Risk-Based Approach – Indicators with negligible risk of non-conformity are excluded from evaluation, reducing unnecessary workload.

Additional improvements include:

Alignment with FSC-PRO-01-001 Developing and Revising FSC Requirements, introducing a conceptual phase and an accelerated track for urgent updates.

Mechanisms to resolve stalled processes, such as

replacing inactive working group members or restarting the process through a different process type.

For more details, visit the process page.

Participate today

To access the consultations, please visit the Consultation Platform. The consultations will be open from 01 October 2025 until 30 November 2025 and are available in English, Spanish, and French. Review our tips on providing feedback to maximise your participation impact.

The time invested in sharing your views is greatly appreciated and participants will be emailed a Consultation Report once available.

Upcoming webinars

To facilitate participation in the public consultation, webinars will be held in English with simultaneous translation into Spanish and French. These webinars will provide an overview of the consultation process and address questions and comments from participants.

Overview of Forest Management Consultations:
Tuesday, 14 October 2025.

- 18:00 to 19:30 AEDT | 20:00 to 21:30 NZDT Register here.

PCI Consultation webinar:
Thursday, 20 November

- 18:00 to 19:30 AEDT | 20:00 to 21:30 NZDT Register here.

We are looking forward to your participation!



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Strengthening safety management systems

THE forest industry has a longstanding history of innovating safety improvements in log haulage and the newly registered Log Haulage Code (LHC) is another contribution that strengthens forest safety management systems.

"Funded by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) through their Heavy Vehicle Safety Initiative (HVSI) program and supported by the Australian Government, we are developing an online tool and guidance materials to support businesses to maintain compliance with work health and safety regulations of the LHC and the Master Code," says Tim Lester, CEO, Australian Forest Contractors Association (AFCA).

NHVR CEO Nicole Rosie said, "The NHVR was pleased to release the LHC after working closely with AFCA and other critical stakeholders.

"AFCA's online tool and guidance materials will support industry in implementing the guidance outlined in the LHC, maximising compliance and reducing transport risk.

"The NHVR is proud to continue investing in innovative projects through our HVSI program that are making a tangible improvement to safety."

AFCA Project Manager Dionne Olsen explains, "In addition to supporting businesses to assess their safety systems to incorporate the codes as required, the consultation



sessions offer an opportunity for everyone in the Chain of Responsibility to collaboratively discuss the commercial implications and requirements of the codes.

"How the codes are interpreted and applied needs to be an open discussion.

"We are also fortunate to have an industry reference group guiding the project who again are contributing their time and expertise to strengthen safety outcomes for the industry," says Ms Olsen.

AFCA is delivering national in person and online consultation sessions to ensure everyone across the supply chain has an opportunity to participate and provide input. AFCA is committed to developing practical tools and guidance that promotes safe forestry operations for their members and the industry.

For more information or to provide input, please contact the project team.

- **Dionne Olsen:** Pursuit Consultants - Project Manager on behalf of AFCA
Ph: 0429 202 929
Email: dionne@afca.asn.au
- **Tim Lester:** CEO AFCA
Ph: 0437 524 933
Email: tim@afca.asn.au

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Auswood formwork

A powerhouse for all your formwork needs.

By **CHRIS PARKER**

WE introduced AUSWOOD back in our May/June issue this year. Founded in 2004 and located in Milpera, NSW, with outlets in Laverton North, VIC and Yatala, QLD, AUSWOOD has expanded to include a warehouse and distribution centre in Cockburn, Perth, WA.

I met with James to discuss the growth of his formwork division and to gain insight into what differentiates AUSWOOD from other suppliers. James stated 'We use our extensive experience as a formwork supplier to offer a full range of formwork materials. Our products include Formply and Timber LVL. These are designed to be strong, stable, and fit for purpose, helping our customers achieve outstanding results. We can also provide H20 beams, props and all the accessories to match your construction requirements.'

I asked James to explain to our readers more about Formply and the range available. James articulated 'AUSWOOD manufactures and supplies sustainable Formply with added value and reliability for builders, contractors, and form workers. Our Formply can be reused many times over, is resistant to construction moisture, has reduced chance of expanding



1/ **F17 Formply and H20 being collected by a client.**

2/ **Formply in use on a construction site in Sydney.** All images: Auswood

or contracting, is highly durable and each Formply product focuses on quality requirements for formwork tables, modular panels, and onsite forming of slabs and walls.' James continues 'As a Formply manufacturer and a Formply supplier, AUSWOOD guarantees enhanced surface quality, making it a top choice for construction projects. Our Formply solutions are ideal for repeated use, ensuring durability and a superior concrete finish.'

Is Formply guaranteed? 'All our Formply product is compliant with Australian standards and quality is

assured'. James added 'AUSWOOD stands behind all our products with an uncompromising guarantee and our long-term, repeat clients are testament to this'.

FORMPLY RANGE ARE CHAIN OF CUSTODY FSC CERTIFIED AND COMPLY WITH AS6669

Enviroform F17: Is a high-

“OUR FORMPLY CAN BE REUSED MANY TIMES OVER

quality formwork plywood made of all sustainable plantation Eucalyptus and quality control system certified. Features include, hardwood construction, enhanced hard surface, traceability of production data,

improved water permeability and strict dimensional tolerance. Sheet sizes are 2400 x 1200 or 1800 x 1200 and all are 17mm thick.

Enviroform F14: High quality Eucalyptus Formply suitable for most onsite formwork applications. Sheet sizes are 2400 x 1200 and 1800 x 1200 and all are 17mm thick.

Bending Plywood: Is a double-sided overlay with a superior balance of flexibility and strength, ideal for any curved-form applications. Sheet sizes are 2400 x 1200 and available in 4mm, 6mm, 9mm and 12mm thickness.

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FORMWORK ACCESSORIES AND FLOOR PROPS:

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From P 10

coil tie bolts, soft-fit spacers, coil tie cones, steel strapping and coil tie plates. Floor props are durable and strong, have guaranteed safety levels, simple and quick maintenance, adaptable and available in hot dip galvanised finish.

I was keen to understand stock availability for their range and how orders are delivered and James explained 'We carry plenty of stock at each of our outlets so you won't be left high and dry, we completely



Warehouse stock of Formply ready to go. Photo: Auswood

“AUSWOOD GUARANTEES ENHANCED SURFACE QUALITY, MAKING IT A TOP CHOICE

understand the importance of availability and will pack your order and have it on the delivery truck to meet your needs or we will have it ready for customers who prefer to collect with their own truck'. 'We can even work towards

same day delivery where the need is urgent'.

When I asked about further technical information, James was quick to point out 'Our staff are ready and keen to help however possible, we

have technical specification sheets on hand which include detailed information on the standard, bond type, overlay, surface grade, edge sealing, stress grade, certificate, tolerances, along with material safety data sheets (MSDS).

We paused for a moment, and James added 'We know and understand our business relies upon looking after our customers, through quality service, and the ordering process right through to delivery.' James added 'AUSWOOD has a solid base of long-term repeat customers, and we are ready to look after more, he concluded'.

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Enews - special ongoing investigation

LAST week *Enews* uncovered hardwood log harvesting going straight past the gate for Pentach (Issue #871) and on the road to other locations, leaving the largest hardwood sawmill processor high and dry. The result is longer travel, increased fuel, additional road impact resulting in repairs and of course increased emissions.

Enews has now uncovered the Industry Advisory Panel (IAP) report provided to the NSW Government in February of this year.

The IAP endorsed 4 key principles for the development of what is now called the Great Koala National Park (GKNP). They were:

- Respect for the politic process to deliver on the dual election commitments to create a GKNP **and retain a viable native hardwood industry.**
- The complete preservation of plantations with the park boundaries for timber production, including buffers, access and ability for Forest Corporation of NSW to actively manage fire.
- A demonstrable improvement in koala populations within the final park boundaries to be measured, audited and regularly communicated.
- An honest and transparent budgeting process inclusive of industry transition, a fair deal for displaced workers, park establishment and ongoing management costs.

The IAP put forward 2 preferred options for the park boundaries:

- Option 1 (preferred) – 37,000ha



So many businesses have already been significantly affected by the GKNP announcement, and with more still unfolding the uncertainty continues. Image: Shutterstock

- Option 2 (acceptable) – 53,000ha

The total area under review was 176,000ha.

Option 1 (preferred – 37,000ha): \$352m

It was identified that option 1 would cause a reduction of 13% in total hardwood supply* and the cost to the NSW Government would be \$189m over 5 years from reduced delivery against wood supply agreements and factored in some costs for plantation establishment to re-establish supply in the long term. Fire management, fuel load reduction services and ecological thinning or cultural burning programs were based upon NPWS of \$80 per ha, totalling another \$3m per annum.

Freight subsidies for logs travelling longer distances, fragmented supplies and difficulties meeting species'

“THIS WAS NOT IN KEEPING WITH THE NSW ELECTION PROMISE OF RETAINING A VIABLE NATIVE HARDWOOD INDUSTRY

requirements were estimated to be another \$6.5m per annum.

Whilst no sawmills were directly identified at risk of closure, employment impacts would occur with some workers becoming redundant based on reduced volumes and this was estimated to be \$104m in the first year.

**This percentage is against the total NE Supply, not just what is part of GKNP.*

Option 2 (acceptable - 53,000ha): \$495m

The word acceptable was a fallback position which would require significant cooperation and planning. Option 2 would cause a reduction of 18% in hardwood supply* and the cost to the NSW Government would be \$271m over 5 years from reduced delivery against wood supply agreements and factored in some costs for plantation establishment. Fire management, fuel load reduction services and ecological thinning or cultural burning programs were based upon NPWS of \$80 per ha, totalling another \$6m per annum.

Freight subsidies for logs travelling greater distances,

fragmented supplies and difficulties meeting species' requirements were estimated to be another \$9m per annum.

Whilst the report still expected no sawmills would close, additional employment redundancies would be essential, and this was estimated to be

\$145m in the first year.

**This percentage is against the total NE Supply, not just what is part of GKNP.*

The report included the full GKNP cost of 176,000ha as being \$1,250m, however at no time did the industry panel consider the full closure, as this was not in keeping with the NSW election promise of retaining a viable native hardwood industry.

Over the past 5 issues since the announcement on Father's Day, *Enews* has been publishing statements from political parties, interviews with members of parliament who are in the high impact zones, primary harvesting, sawmills and transportation businesses directly hit by this decision. The flow on impact down the supply chain is nothing short of significant, directly hitting supplementary services like saw sharpening, Australian manufacturing of saw blades, equipment servicing for large machinery, biofuels and the steam power generation at processing plants, such as Nestle™, sugar refinery, and a molasses factory plus a meat processing abattoir just to name a few.

Enews - interview with Shane Hoffman

THE Hoffman group is a fifth generation family business which commenced in 1986 with one dozer and today the family operates a fleet of machines, haulage trucks and have a staff of over 40 employees. They are currently based in Wauchope, moving from Dorrig and then Kempsey during their long careers. During our early morning interview, Shane's mum, Christine, entered the office to start work for the day and we paused whilst he wished her a happy birthday!

From all of us here at Enews – happy Birthday Christine.

Laurence Hoffman started in the timber industry in 1964. Aside from this work he and Alan Greensill started the then North Coast Loggers Association, which is now part of Australian Forest Contractors Association (AFCA). Both Laurence and Alan are listed within their members hall of fame first group (2010).

Shaun said they became concerned about their future several years ago and expanded their operations into other operational areas. Hoffman has added 3 more divisions alongside harvesting and haulage, with civil excavation, dam construction and salvage all part of the business mix. In recent times that have added road repairs to the civil division.

The not-so-great GNKP immediately impacted 2 harvesting crews and their haulage teams and to make matters worse they have several private parcels of land growing their own private



Within weeks, significant impacts are being felt across in the industry. The Hoffman Group already have two of their harvester crews and haulage teams affected. Image: Hoffman Group

timber supplies and these will be potentially land locked with the GNKP surrounding them. The way forward for future harvesting operations is unknown even for their own land. Shane added, even with access the special rules within a national park will be extensive, more expensive and difficult to navigate – the situation is miserable.

Shaun said the full impact to their business is difficult

to estimate but expects it to be somewhere between 30% - 50%. On top of the direct impacts, Hoffman service and repair all their own heavy equipment and trucks in-house. We have 6 full-time mechanics, a parts manager and a direct admin support person here in the office. We undertake all the preventative maintenance, any issues out in the field and source and replace parts. Clearly any reduction in our work is going

to hurt several teams.

When we asked Shaun about impacts on mental health, he pointed to several people who had packed up and left the industry from various sawmills and related businesses in the first few weeks following the announcement, but others are in a holding pattern, waiting with a lot not sure what else would be suitable for them (referring to qualifications, age and skill set). He said his parents noted they had been through several tough times, but this was shaping up to have the largest impact in one hit.

Shaun has received calls from businesses that supply the Hoffman group with services, parts and small equipment wanting to know about future orders, like many others he really doesn't have a lot to offer as yet. Shaun is concerned for the wider industry, including landscape supplies, gardeners, as a lot of the residue will not be readily available.



Both in-house and outsourced mechanical teams are affected, as a drop in work means a drop in personnel required to service machinery used in the business. Image: Hoffman Group



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The new Komatsu 895.3: taking forwarding to the next level

Since its initial launch in 2013, the Komatsu 895 has continuously evolved to meet the demanding needs of modern forestry. Now, with the introduction of the Komatsu 895.3, the forwarder takes another major leap in performance, productivity, and durability.

This latest generation is the result of close collaboration with forestry professionals worldwide. Valuable input from plantation operations in South America and Australia, along with final felling insights from the Nordic countries and North America, have played a crucial role in shaping the 895.3 into a machine built for global forestry challenges.

The first Komatsu 895.3 forwarder was delivered in late September to Triple H Contracting Pty Ltd, based in Tasmania. Owned by Manuel Hall, the company has been a loyal Komatsu customer for over 20 years. His fleet currently includes five Komatsu 895 forwarders and one 875, with the oldest 895 clocking over 19,000 operating hours and was traded in for the new model.

In 2022, Manuel added a Komatsu 895.2 featuring the XT transmission and Comfort Ride cab. He was quick to praise the upgrade:

"It's the right transmission for Tassie conditions," said Manuel. "You wouldn't get the benefits without Comfort Ride. The higher speeds would be just too rough on the operator."

After inspecting the new 895.3 at Komatsu Forest's Tasmanian branch, Manuel shared his expectations:



HHH's Komatsu 895.3 in Tasmania. Image: Komatsu

"I'm really impressed with the size of the new crane, the rotator, and the grapple—all mounted on a much sturdier frame with a more robust load area."

And while he acknowledges the added investment, he summed it up clearly:

"The new features cost much more, but they'll be worth it."

The Komatsu 895.3 comes fully equipped to handle the toughest forestry conditions. From its enhanced hydraulics to its upgraded operator environment, this model raises the bar in large-scale timber operations.

KOMATSU 895.3 KEY FEATURES & UPGRADES

Powerful new crane – Komatsu 205F lifting torque: 205 kNm

- Slewing torque: 51.9 kNm
- Optimised for plantation work with a robust welded crane pillar and redesigned inner/outer booms
- Reach: 8.5 m (standard, single telescope) or 10 m (optional two-stage combi telescope)

Larger grapple – Komatsu G85H

- New, upsized grapple designed to match the 205F crane
- Tip-to-tip area: 0.4 m²
- Paired with a powerful GX Rotator for smoother, more controlled handling

XT transmission option

- Available alongside the standard Speed Shift
- The XT transmission offers increased tractive effort and higher low-range travel speeds, ideal for steep and difficult terrain

Reinforced frame

- A completely redesigned frame and articulation system built to handle the added crane weight and torque, improving durability and service life

Enhanced load space

- Hydraulically raised and lowered telescopic gate
- New, wear-resistant bunks with telescopic widening function to increase loading efficiency and adaptability

Advanced hydraulic system

- New, larger hydraulic pump
- Electrically controlled for

improved precision, speed, and fuel efficiency

Smart Forestry & MaxiFleet integration

Part of Komatsu's expanded SMART FORESTRY digital suite, the 895.3 includes full MaxiFleet integration and supports three core applications:

- Fleet monitoring – Real-time machine status, planning, diagnostics, and remote support
- Vision – Mapping tools, team collaboration, and production tracking
- Precision – High-tech positioning tools for optimised machine guidance and task accuracy

Improved operator comfort

- Upgraded cab design for better ergonomics and safety
- Start button ignition, remote central locking, and additional LED work lights
- Optional Comfort Ride suspension system for reduced fatigue during long shifts

Built for tomorrow's forestry challenges

The Komatsu 895.3 is more than just a forwarder—it's a productivity powerhouse engineered for the real-world challenges of today's forestry operations. Whether in steep terrain, dense plantations, or high-yield harvesting zones, the 895.3 delivers increased lifting capacity, smarter control, and enhanced operator experience.

With its rugged build, digital intelligence, and high-performance components, the 895.3 sets a new standard for efficient, sustainable forwarding.

KOMATSU

Komatsu 895.3



Komatsu with Bigger Crane & Smart Forestry

The Komatsu 895.3 offers new larger Komatsu 205F Crane with G85H Grapple supported by Smart Forest technology;

- XT Transmission.....for 307kN torque
- Reinforced Frame.....for heavier loads
- Enhanced Load Space.....for increased productivity

The new 895.3 for higher productivity in tough conditions

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Woven from the woods: str.ucture's Parkarena

A timber gridshell masterpiece for Furth im Wald.

IN the rolling hills of Bavaria's Upper Palatinate, where ancient forests meet community spirit, str.ucture GmbH has crafted a landmark that marries innovation with nature. The Parkarena in Furth im Wald, a 1,435-square-metre timber gridshell venue, stands as a testament to sustainable engineering. Completed in May 2025 as the centrepiece of the Bavarian State Garden Show, this single-storey structure replaces a weathered old hall, offering a permanent hub for up to 450 people. It's not just a building—it's a breathing pavilion that invites locals and visitors alike to gather under a canopy of local timber, fostering cultural events, concerts, and even dramatic dragon displays that echo the town's folklore.

Nominee for the prestigious Built by Nature Prize, the Parkarena embodies str.ucture's vision of low-impact, high-ambition design. Collaborating with PH2 Architekten, Prof. Dr. Christopher Robeller from the Digital Timber Construction Lab at HS Augsburg, and local firms like Holzbau-Penzkofer GmbH, the project transforms a simple festival meadow into a lasting civic icon. Spanning 40 to 45 metres with a soaring 14-metre height, its honeycomb-like shell achieves double-curved elegance using only straight glulam beams—sourced straight from Furth im Wald's municipal forest and processed just five kilometres away. This regional loop minimises transport emissions, while the reciprocal gridshell geometry optimises material use, proving that beauty and

efficiency can coexist in timber's embrace.

At its heart lies a demountable node system, blending traditional mortise-and-tenon joints with modern fully threaded screws. This design-for-disassembly approach ditches bulky steel plates, slashing CO₂ emissions by up to 22 tonnes and enabling future relocation or reuse. The lightweight PVC membrane roof, stretched taut over the gridshell, shields the timber from the elements while preserving an airy, translucent feel that floods the space with dappled light. Below, a stage and seating flow seamlessly into the surrounding parkland, turning performances into immersive outdoor spectacles. As one visitor noted during the topping-out ceremony in early May 2025, "It's like the forest folded itself into a stage for us."

Engineering the Parkarena demanded precision at every scale. The structure comprises 168 planar hexagons, each a puzzle piece in a parametric digital model. This interdisciplinary workflow assigned unique identifiers to nearly 1,900 bespoke timber elements—complete with pre-drilled joints and cuts—streamlining structural analysis, CAD-



1/ The completed Parkarena in Furth im Wald, a sustainable timber venue with its lightweight PVC membrane roof and double-curved elegance, serving as a lasting community hub.
2/ The Parkarena's intricate honeycomb-like timber gridshell during construction, showcasing the reciprocal geometry of straight glulam beams and the emerging stage and seating that blend with the natural surroundings. Images: str.ucture GmbH

to-CAM fabrication, and assembly. Over 400 laser-cut steel components anchor the foot points, but their minimal footprint underscores the project's timber-first ethos. On-site, prefabricated hexagons slotted together freestanding in just two weeks, scaffold-free, like a giant 3D jigsaw defying gravity. The result? A 40-centimetre-deep shell that spans vast distances with featherlight grace, all while meeting rigorous safety standards for wind, snow, and seismic activity.

Sustainability pulses through every detail. The micro-pile foundation plunges just four metres into stable

ground layers, bypassing deep excavations and saving another 60 tonnes of CO₂ compared to traditional concrete slabs. This gentle touch disturbs minimal soil, preserving the site's ecology amid the garden show's floral displays. By maximising timber's renewability—drawn from certified sustainable sources—the Parkarena sequesters carbon, reduces embodied energy, and showcases circular principles. Post-garden show, it will host year-round events, from theatre to talks, ensuring its legacy as a community heartbeat rather than a fleeting exhibit.

The Parkarena's opening on 22 May 2025, alongside the State Garden Show, drew crowds and acclaim, including from Bavarian Premier Dr Markus Söder. International architects have already flocked to study its software-driven optimisation, born from FNR-funded research at TTZ Aichach, which automates complex wood-to-wood connections. For str.ucture, this isn't mere construction—it's a blueprint for tomorrow's public spaces: adaptable, eco-conscious, and deeply rooted in place.

Source: str.ucture GmbH

Wood-Mizer appoints Ben Brydges as CEO

WOOD-MIZER, a global leader in sawmilling and wood processing equipment, has named Ben Brydges as Chief Executive Officer. Brydges will lead the company into its next era of growth and innovation, strengthening Wood-Mizer's position as a trusted partner to sawmillers, woodworkers, and forestry professionals worldwide.

Founded in 1982, Wood-Mizer revolutionised the industry with the introduction of the portable sawmill and has since grown into a worldwide manufacturing leader. As an employee-owned company, Wood-Mizer takes pride in combining its workforce's expertise and commitment with a customer-first philosophy that fuels long-term success. From its headquarters and manufacturing plants in Indiana, Wood-Mizer designs, engineers, and builds a broad product portfolio that includes portable and industrial sawmills, resaws, board edgers, sawmill blades,

pallet recycling equipment, log splitters, and log handling equipment. The company operates across six continents, serving customers in more than 100 countries with a reputation for quality, reliability, and industry-leading customer support.

Brydges joins Wood-Mizer with extensive leadership experience across automotive, industrial, security, and consumer goods markets. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering Technology and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Toledo. His career includes senior leadership roles at Dana Incorporated, FRAM Group, and most recently at dormakaba, where he served as the North American leader based in Indianapolis.

Recognised for his expertise in operations, engineering, and organisational leadership, Brydges is known for building strong teams, driving innovation, and delivering products that set industry



Wood-Mizer's new CEO, Ben Brydges.
Image: Wood-Mizer

benchmarks. His appointment underscores Wood-Mizer's commitment to providing premium quality products with legendary customer service through an unmatched network.

"My leadership philosophy aligns strongly with Wood-Mizer's values," said Brydges. "I'm truly excited to join the Wood-Mizer team and build on this company's strong foundation. Together, by listening to our customers, supporting one another, and embracing new opportunities,

we will achieve incredible things and shape a bright future. Wood-Mizer is a powerful brand with a passionate following that I am both humbled and honoured to lead."

ABOUT WOOD-MIZER

Since 1982, Wood-Mizer has earned their reputation as a global-leading sawmill and woodworking equipment manufacturer. From Forest to Final Form®, Wood-Mizer offers an extensive line of equipment including portable and industrial sawmills, resaws, board edgers, wood kilns, planer/moulders, firewood processing equipment, pallet recycling equipment, material handling equipment, sawmill blades, and blade maintenance equipment. For more than 40 years, Wood-Mizer has remained committed to serving sawmilling and woodworking hobbyists and professionals all over the world throughout an established and growing distribution network.

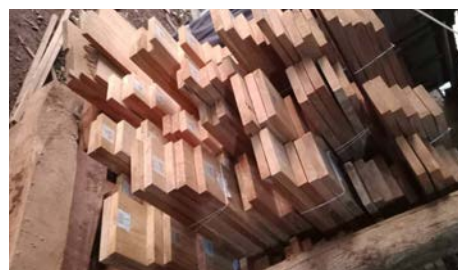
A new certification from Nigeria includes carbon accountability

BLACKCAMEL Energy Ltd, a Nigerian-based sustainability company, has introduced the NetZero Carbon Guilt-Free Seal, a breakthrough certification and traceability platform for the global timber and forest products sector. Unlike conventional certification schemes that focus mainly on legality and sustainable sourcing, this innovation embeds carbon accountability and reversibility into every certified product.

The Seal calculates the carbon sequestered within the product, ensuring that each piece of timber or finished forest product acts as a long-

term carbon lock. In addition, it develops and monitors a carbon mitigation plan, such as large-scale tree planting, to reverse at least 150% of the emissions generated across the value chain within the first year. Independent third-party agencies verify these actions, ensuring credibility and transparency.

Each certified product is issued a unique digital ID (via QR code) that provides buyers and regulators with real-time access to verified carbon data, mitigation activities, and audit reports. This innovation directly supports international frameworks including the Paris



BlackCamel Energy is introducing a new certification with the goal of improving traceability and carbon accountability in products. Image: BlackCamel Energy Ltd

Agreement, EU Green Deal, EUDR compliance, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 7, 12, 13, 15, 17).

With global demand for sustainable, traceable, and carbon-positive products

on the rise, the NetZero Carbon Guilt-Free Seal offers both market differentiation for producers and trust for buyers and consumers. It is a practical, scalable solution to accelerate the transition to net-zero supply chains in forestry and beyond.

BlackCamel Energy Ltd is currently inviting collaborations with sustainability bodies, timber buyers, and verification agencies to scale the Seal across Africa, Europe, and Asia.

Test production commences at new Äänekoski Kerto LVL mill

Metsä Wood is responding to the growing demand for resource-efficient wood-based materials by building a new Kerto LVL mill in Äänekoski, Finland. The project is reaching an important milestone on schedule: the first test runs will begin in October, and production is scheduled to start at the end of 2026. With this major investment and an additional research and development laboratory, Metsä Wood is solidifying its innovative strength and sending a clear signal for the future of European timber construction.

At the same time, as the first test runs, the installation work for the second production line will begin. The project is thus consistently continuing its ambitious schedule. "The goal is to start extensive trial operations towards the end of the winter so that the mill can start operations as planned at the end of 2026," explains Project Director Eero Lampola. Particular attention is being paid to occupational safety: despite the parallel work of construction and assembly teams, the number of accidents has remained exceptionally low thanks to a consistent focus on occupational safety. Comprehensive preventive measures were taken to identify potential risks at an early stage and eliminate them immediately.

STRONG SIGNAL FOR THE EUROPEAN CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Especially in a challenging market environment, Metsä Wood is sending a clear signal with this project. The past few years have been marked by

1/ **Metsä's new Kerto LVL mill in Äänekoski, Finland.**

2/ **The Kerto LVL options produced by Metsä.**

Images: Metsä

a marked reluctance in the European construction industry, especially in residential construction. This downturn has also influenced timber construction. Nevertheless, the market outlook for Kerto LVL and other advanced wood-based materials remains positive in the long term. "Although the general uncertainty continues to inhibit investment, the popularity of timber construction is growing worldwide. In addition, stricter European regulations that favour timber construction are increasing demand," says Ulla Kivistö, VP, Sales for Kerto LVL in Central Europe. She adds: "In recent months, there have been signs that the construction industry in Europe is slowly starting to recover."

INNOVATION LOCATION WITH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT LABORATORY

The main markets for Kerto LVL are in Europe, but North America and Australia are also supplied. Despite the economic situation in Europe, Metsä Wood's LVL mills are running around the clock. "The market is growing, and the additional capacity in Äänekoski is needed," says Kivistö. Consequently, a new research and development laboratory for veneer-based wood products is being built on the site parallel



to the mill. Metsä Wood is thus making targeted investments in the further development of Kerto LVL and other innovative wood-based materials.

KERTO LVL – HIGH-PERFORMANCE MATERIAL FOR THE FUTURE OF CONSTRUCTION

Kerto LVL (Laminated Veneer Lumber) is an innovative wood product that consists of three millimetre thin veneer layers glued together. It impresses with a combination of high strength, dimensional stability and versatility in use – from load-bearing structures in building construction to industrial applications. With an investment of around 300 million euros, the new plant, which is being built on a total area of 50,000 square metres and with a production area of 45,000 square metres, is one of Metsä Wood's largest single investments. After completion, around 150 jobs will be created. The annual production capacity is planned at 160,000 cubic meters of different Kerto LVL products.



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