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Timber Design Awards winners announced!

COVER STORY P 2

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Celebrating excellence in timber design

Highlights from the Timber Design Awards – 2025.

THE 25th Australian Timber Design Awards, hosted by the Timber Development Association (TDA), took place this year in Melbourne at the Rydges Hotel -CBD. The event began with a lively reception of drinks and canapés at 6.00 pm, before guests moved into the dining area for the official proceedings, which commenced promptly at 7.00 pm.

TDA CEO Andrew Dunn advised earlier on the growing significance of timber in Australian architecture. "As we reach the quarter mark for this century, the Australian Timber Design Awards continue to affirm timber's place at the forefront of contemporary architecture. This year's entries not only display extraordinary design quality but also highlight

timber's evolving role as a driver of sustainable, resilient, and human-centred spaces," he said.

The Master of Ceremonies for the evening was Rebecca Gilling, Co-CEO of Planet Ark, and well-known for her previous career in Australian television, with notable roles in

Return to Eden and The Young Doctors. With her trademark warmth and charisma, Gilling brought energy to an already vibrant room and guided the evening's events with poise and enthusiasm.

Gilling also extended thanks to the event's sponsors, without whom the awards

would not be possible. This year's sponsors included WoodSolutions, Intergrain Trade & Industrial, XLAM, ITI Australia, Responsible Wood, Kennedy's Timber, Timber Construct 2025, Timber NSW and Planet Ark.

The judging panel, comprising five respected industry figures, was introduced with full credentials, including names, titles, and affiliated organisations. The judges were:

Anthony Burke,
Professor of
Architecture,
University of
Technology Sydney

(UTS)

Burke is a dynamic figure across academia and media, he hosts ABC TV's Restoration Australia, Grand Designs Australia, and co-hosts Grand Designs Transformations.

Cont P 3



1/ The entryway of the refurbished and designed Boot Factory is a spectacular display of timber's capabilities

2/ The Boot Factory's new roof draws the eyes upward and allows light to flood into the whole space.

Images: Peter Bennetts



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From P 2

In 2025 he launched a new ABC Radio National series, Home Front with Anthony Burke, exploring how design can reshape Australia's housing future. Previously Head of UTS Architecture and Associate Dean of International Engagement, he is acclaimed for his work in architectural design, curation, writing, and global lecturing.

James Fitzpatrick, Founding Partner, Fitzpatrick + Partners, Architects

Fitzpatrick + Partners, is a Sydney based architecture studio established in 2001 that has become a leader in innovative, sustainable, and timber-focused design across Australia. Educated at the University of Tasmania and the National Institute of Dramatic Art, he brings a unique multidisciplinary perspective to architecture. A respected voice

in timber innovation and carbon-conscious design, James lectures internationally and continues to champion architecture.

Meryl Hare, Director, Hare & Klein

Hare + Klein, is an award-winning Sydney-based interior design studio. Originally from South Africa and raised in Zambia and Swaziland, she migrated to Australia in 1988. She is a Fellow of the Design Institute of Australia, inducted into its Hall of Fame (2011), and honoured in the Australian House & Garden Hall of Fame (2018); in 2024, she received the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for her



Rebecca Gilling, Co-CEO of Planet Ark introduced the five, highly respected industry judges. Image: One Picture Photography

prefabrication in Australia. With more than two decades of experience spanning structural consultancy, CLT manufacturing, and prefabricated buildings. He has delivered hundreds of timber projects across Australasia. A leading voice in mass-timber discourse, Nick also co-founded Timber DiaLog, a community

extraordinary contributions to the field. She is also a two-time author (Texture Colour Comfort, 2014; Interior, 2020).

Nick Hewson, Director, Arboralis

A chartered structural engineer and timber specialist, who launched his consultancy firm in 2023 to advance high-quality timber structures and

initiative promoting knowledge-sharing.

Rebecca Gilling, Co-CEO, Planet Ark

Planet Ark is Australia's most trusted environmental organisation, where Gilling has served in leadership roles

Cont P 4



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From P 3

for over two decades. With a Master's degree in Sustainable Development, she guides Planet Ark's strategy around the circular economy and sustainable resource use and connecting people with nature. Under her leadership, Planet Ark launched the Australian Circular Economy Hub and delivers impactful programs like National Tree Day, National Recycling Week and Cartridges 4 Planet Ark.

The winners for this year's Timber Design Awards were announced.

AWARD WINNERS

Overall Winner – Boot Factory by Archer Office with Partridge.

The Boot Factory is a striking example of how timber can breathe new life into heritage architecture. Originally constructed in 1892 and once slated for demolition, the building has been re-imagined as a modern civic innovation



The Australian Timber Design Awards night was a well-attended. Image: One Picture Photography

hub through adaptive reuse.

The project preserved the original brick perimeter walls, while the interior and roof were entirely reworked using glue-laminated Australian hardwood. Exposed Victorian Ash columns and an inverted floor system highlight outstanding timber craftsmanship, providing both warmth and long-term adaptability. A distinctive new roof design, with radial timber rafters converging at a central skylight, draws natural light

deep into the interior.

Timber plays a central role, connecting the building's storied past with its forward-looking future. The result is a warm, durable, and sustainable interior where structure and design are seamlessly integrated. Sustainability guided every decision—from conserving heritage fabric and using locally sourced materials to boosting energy performance and lowering embodied carbon. By retaining and showcasing the original 1890s brickwork, the design embraces circular principles and significantly reduces waste.

The Boot Factory illustrates how heritage buildings can be transformed into future-ready, low-impact community assets—elegantly combining timber, history, and innovation.

EXCELLENCE IN TIMBER APPLICATIONS:

- **Residential Class 1** – New Building – Nebraska by Lara Maesele
- **Residential Class 1** – Alterations & Additions – Lower Line House by Incidental Architecture
- **Fit Out** – Residential – Echo House by Parabola
- **Commercial Building** – Northern Memorial Park Depot by Searle X Waldron Architecture
- **Public Building** – Boot Factory by Archer Office)
- **Fit Out** – Commercial and Public – Consulate General

of Malaysia by Cheah Saw Architecture

- **Furniture & Joinery** – Australian War Memorial Spiral Staircase by Details By Ned:
- **Sustainability** – First Building by Bradfield Hassel:
- **People's Choice** – Tumbalong Green Sound Shell by Hassell
- **Australian Certified Timber** – Nebraska by Lara Maesele
- **Recycled Timber** – Cake House by Alexander Symes Architect

Kevin Peachey, Head of WoodSolutions Program said, "on behalf of Australia's timber industry, I extend warm congratulations to all entrants, finalists, and winners of the 2025 Australian Timber Design Awards. Your work exemplifies the innovation, craftsmanship, and forward-thinking that continue to propel timber design and construction across the nation."

Peachey added, "we're proud to celebrate the remarkable achievements of all those honoured in the 2025 Australian Timber Design Awards and look forward to the inspired designs that will continue to shape our cities and landscapes."

A final word from Andrew Dunn, "I encourage you to explore the exceptional projects recognised this year. Whether you are an architect, engineer, builder, or design enthusiast, I hope these works inspire you to imagine new possibilities for timber in shaping the built environment."

For further information, including a list of all the finalists, please visit the website: www.timberdesignawards.com.au

On the cover: Archer Office with Partridge, overall winner of the Australian Timber Design Award for their outstanding Boot Factory in Bondi Junction, NSW. Image: One Picture Photography

Australian Forest Products Association

AFPA THE LEADING VOICE FOR AUSTRALIA'S FOREST PRODUCTS SECTOR

Built by Nature Prize 2025 winners announced

IN a landmark celebration of sustainable building practices, the Built by Nature Prize 2025 has announced its winners at the organisation's annual summit in London. This global award recognises projects that exemplify responsible timber construction, drawing from nearly 400 submissions across 39 countries and territories.

The prize evaluates projects against the Principles for Responsible Timber Construction, a framework endorsed by over 260 organisations worldwide. These principles focus on extending building lifespans, accounting for whole-of-life cycles, ensuring sustainable forest management, maximising wood's carbon storage potential, and promoting a timber bioeconomy.

THE 2025 PRIZE WINNERS

This year's six winners span diverse regions and building types, from affordable housing to public infrastructure. Each demonstrates technical



The Black and White Building by Waugh Thistleton Architects. Photo: Ed Reeve

excellence alongside significant environmental and social benefits:

- **Appelweg** (The Netherlands, by Moos): A responsive blueprint for modular social housing in Amsterdam, prioritising adaptability and community needs.
- **The Black and White Building** (UK, by Waugh Thistleton Architects): Pushing boundaries in commercial circularity and scalability in London, showcasing reusable design at new heights.
- **Circular and biobased two bedroom home** (Uganda, by Easy Housing Concepts Uganda Ltd): An affordable, modular model for Sub-Saharan housing in Kampala, emphasising bio-based materials for accessibility.
- **Heartwood** (USA, by atelierjones, LLC): A mid-rise timber solution tackling affordable housing and climate challenges in Seattle.
- **La Maison de la Réserve Écologique** (France, by Archipel Zéro): An educational facility in Épinay-sur-Seine using locally sourced bio-based materials to reflect its ecological mission.
- **Queensland Fire and Emergency Services North Coast Regional Headquarters and Maryborough Fire and Rescue Station** (Australia, by Baber Studio Architects): A timber redesign that reimagines a heritage site for public service in Maryborough. See issue #871 for an in-depth look at this project.

MARYBOROUGH FIRE AND RESCUE STATION

The Hyne Group's General Manager, Corporate Affairs, Katie Fowden, said this is a remarkable achievement which now gives this building, international exposure

as a leader in design and construction.

"Congratulations to Kim [Baber, Principal Architect of Baber Studio] and the project team as well as the Queensland Government and the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service following this well-deserved recognition of an outstanding building selected from almost 400 entries," Ms Fowden said.

"Being locally grown and manufactured mass timber from certified plantation pine, it delivered sustainability credentials, carbon sequestration, excellent fire performance qualities and aesthetic appeal.

"The structure was constructed in just two weeks with few trades on site, and was substantially cleaner, quieter and less disruptive in the heart of Maryborough when compared to a traditional construction project," Ms Fowden said.

As the world tackles climate challenges, the Built by Nature Prize 2025 underscores timber's potential to create a regenerative future. For more details on all winners and commended projects, visit the official Built by Nature website 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

Forestry Industry Supply Chain Support Program

Enews was appalled at the announcement on Father's Day of the not so GKNP. The grant below does not compensate for losses but may provide some help to impacted businesses, but you need to act fast as there is a limited pool of funds! If you need assistance, contact us and we will arrange for a free consultation with our grant advisor.



The moratorium on timber harvesting in the GKNP has deeply affected businesses. This grant will assist some of those most affected by the announcement. Image: Shutterstock

supporting evidence of supply (direct or indirect) from a sawmill or contractor that has had the majority of their hardwood or by-product supply cut through reduced wood supply agreements as a consequence of the moratorium

- You operate as a sole trader, partnership, trust or company in Australia
- You have an active Australian Business Number (ABN)
- You are registered with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

THE GRANT

Supports businesses impacted by the moratorium on timber harvesting within the proposed boundary of the Great Koala National Park.

The objectives of the Program are to provide financial support to impacted businesses that have had the majority of their hardwood or by-product supply cut from sawmills that have had a reduction in their wood supply as a consequence of the moratorium on harvesting in the Great Koala National Park.

The required outcomes

of the Program are that impacts on the operations of impacted businesses are reduced by the financial support provided by this Program.

The scope and types of initiatives offered by the grant opportunity aim at including short term targeted support to offset the increased costs on impacted businesses of hardwood and by-product goods and freight, reducing the immediate financial burden caused by supplier impacts.

To be eligible for grant funding, applicants must

meet all of the following requirements:

- You are an impacted business that (directly or indirectly) sources at least 50% of hardwood or by-products from a sawmill or contractor that has had the majority of their hardwood or by-product supply cut through reduced wood supply agreements as a consequence of the moratorium on harvesting in the Great Koala National Park
- You have a contract, agreement or other

GRANT DETAILS

Provider: NSW Rural Assistance Authority
Amount: Up to \$100,000
ROUND 1

Opens: 7 October 2025

Closes: 8 December 2025

Location: NSW

Who Can Apply:

Businesses impacted by GKNP moratorium

Co-Contribution Required:

None specified

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/grants-and-funding/forestry-industry-supply-chain-support-program>

OCTOBER

20-22: International 20-23: 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

NOVEMBER

19: Webinar – ONLINE,

1:30pm – 3:00pm (AEDT). Navigating Australia's illegal logging laws - For Importers and Processors. Click here to join.

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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Masswood's Accoya timber range: built for performance, designed for longevity

From structural glulam beams to architectural cladding, low-maintenance decking, and versatile battens learn why Accoya is a wise investment.

By EVA DELLOW

MASSWOOD has proudly expanded its product offering to include a premium range of Accoya timber solutions, engineered to meet the highest standards in durability, stability, and environmental responsibility. Recognised globally as one of the most advanced modified timbers on the market, Accoya is the result of a revolutionary acetylation process that transforms sustainably grown timber into a material with exceptional performance characteristics. Masswood has harnessed these qualities to develop a suite of products including Glulam, Cladding, Decking, and Batten solutions – all crafted to deliver long-term performance in Australia's demanding climate.

What makes Accoya truly stand apart is its dimensional stability and resistance to decay. It outperforms traditional hardwoods and treated softwoods in virtually every category: it doesn't warp, swell, or crack, even in exposed or wet environments. With a minimum 50-year above-



Accoya is engineered to meet the highest standards in durability, stability, and environmental responsibility. Image: Accoya

ground lifespan and 25 years in-ground or freshwater, Accoya is ideal for structural and aesthetic applications that demand longevity without compromise.

Masswood's Glulam range in Accoya combines structural strength with the inherent benefits of

the species. The result is a beautiful, high-performance timber member that are suitable for exposed outdoor use – perfect for pergolas, portal frames, commercial structures and marine environments. The stability of Accoya makes it uniquely suited to Glulam, allowing Masswood to produce long spans and curved elements with precision and confidence.

The Accoya Cladding range is a standout option for Architects and Builders seeking both durability and design flexibility. With its clean, consistent

grain Accoya Cladding offers low-maintenance façade solutions with an unmistakably premium appearance. Masswood's wide offering includes three standard profiles; Shiplap, Rusticated and Bevel available in multiple sizes and finishes plus they can create custom profiles.

Masswood's Accoya Decking boards offer unmatched performance underfoot. Resistant to moisture, UV degradation, and insect attack, it remains stable and splinter-free for

“RECOGNISED GLOBALLY AS ONE OF THE MOST ADVANCED MODIFIED TIMBERS ON THE MARKET”

Cont P 9

From P 8

decades, making it a safer and more comfortable choice for high-traffic outdoor spaces. Masswood's unique splayed profile means that debris falls more easily between gaps, helping to maintain a cleaner surface and reducing long-term maintenance by preventing the buildup of organic matter.

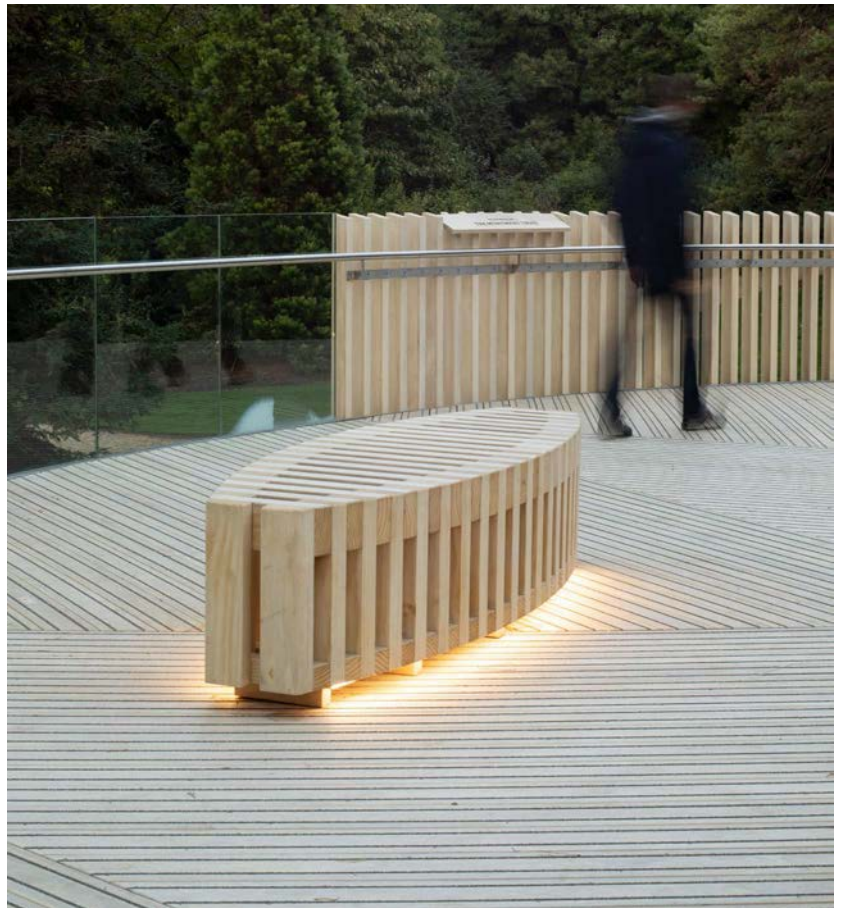
The Accoya Batten range provides endless creative potential and helps solve design challenges such as sun & light control, façade enhancement and visibility management. Lightweight

yet strong, the Masswood Accoya Batten profiles hold their form and resist cupping or twisting over time.

By embracing Accoya and offering multiple finishes and colour options, Masswood continues to push the boundaries of what timber can do – delivering sustainable, durable, and beautifully crafted solutions that stand the test of time.

Learn more at www.masswood.com.au

“MASSWOOD ACCOYA BATTEN PROFILES HOLD THEIR FORM AND RESIST CUPPING OR TWISTING OVER TIME



Accoya is a low-maintenance façade solution with an unmistakably premium appearance.

Image: Accoya

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Enews - special ongoing investigation

Enews looks into past research by NSW Government and ask, “Why have they ignored their own findings?”

AS part of the NSW Koala Strategy 2018-2021, the NSW Government asked the Commission to deliver independent research to better understand how koalas and their habitat are responding to harvesting in state forests on the NSW north coast.

This research program was initiated to address knowledge gaps identified by the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer around the effects of timber harvesting practices on koalas, both in NSW and nationally.

This research was carried out by eminent scientific researchers from the Australian National University (ANU), Western Sydney University (WSU) and the Department of Primary Industries Forest Science Unit and the findings were published in May 2023.

The research was undertaken across 9 sites and covered a total of 400ha in the North Coast Koala Management Region:

- 3 treatment sites in state forests - where selective harvesting occurred.
- 3 sites that had previously been - intensively harvested (5 to 10 years ago).
- 3 control sites - in national parks where harvesting did not occur.

The researchers worked in collaboration to investigate koala movement, occupancy, density, and the nutritional quality of koala habitat on north coast state forests. Key findings from the research are that:

- Koala density was higher than anticipated in the surveyed

forests and was not reduced by selective harvesting.

- Koala density was mostly similar between state forest and national park sites that had similar forest types, and a mix of old growth and regrowth from historical harvesting.
- Tree species composition – not tree size – is the key determinant of habitat nutritional quality for koalas and, therefore, the density of koalas that can be supported.
- Selective harvesting did not significantly change canopy tree species composition at the treatment sites, so is not expected to impact on the nutritional quality of koala habitat.

Overall, the research indicates the current forestry

rules to protect koalas are effective at managing the risks to koalas from selective harvesting at the study sites within NSW north coast state forests.

The findings also support the current approach to native forestry, which focuses on retaining a mix of tree species and sizes across the landscape.

Although this research focuses on the immediate impacts of selective harvesting, researchers also carried out acoustic surveys at three sites that had been more intensively harvested within the previous 5 to 10 years. They found koalas were still using these sites and detection rates and density were comparable to unharvested sites.

For the full report click [here](#).

Enews - interview with David Haywood

DAVID and Darlene Haywood own Haywoods Bulk Transport, a South Kempsey-based business that began as a haulage operation in 2005 before expanding into landscaping supplies. Today, the company employs 25 people and services customers across several industries.

When asked about the potential impact of the Great Koala National Park (GNKP) on their business, David's response was blunt: “Massive.”

Haywoods collects wood waste and sawdust from various sawmills—including the large Pentarch mill, which David noted is currently “very quiet.” Their fleet of heavy trucks, carrying loads of 25 to 37 tonnes, delivers processed material to the poultry, sugarcane, and

meat industries, as well as to landscape suppliers. Their delivery network stretches from Gympie in Queensland to Wee Waa in the west and as far south as Bega, New South Wales.

As David explained, recycling is at the heart of their operation. Sawdust, for example, is supplied to poultry farms and later collected again—mixed with manure—to be repurposed as a rich fertilizer for farming. “Nothing is wasted,” he said.

However, David warned that supplies are now harder to secure and must be sourced from greater distances, driving up freight, labour, and delivery costs. Reduced availability is also leading to higher raw material prices as demand outpaces supply.



David and Darlene Haywood built their business on quality service, reliability and long-term relationships. Image: Haywoods Bulk Transport

Haywoods services most of its own fleet in-house but relies on specialist contractors for major repairs and complex maintenance work.

David didn't mince words about the GNKP's broader implications:

“The GNKP has nothing to do with protecting koalas—it's about winning votes and propping up NSW icare, which

looks broke. The truth is, koala populations thrive better in managed forestry than they ever will in a national park. But the government doesn't care about the facts.”

He added that Haywoods' success has always been built on quality service, reliability, and long-term relationships, but the uncertainty surrounding the GNKP is testing every part of their business.

“We hope the moratorium is lifted—or at least that the park's size is significantly reduced. Some businesses won't survive this, and unemployment will rise right through the supply chain, including the industries that support us.”

Uncertainty grips timber industry amid forestry shutdown

IN the wake of the New South Wales government's abrupt decision to halt native forest logging, businesses across the supply chain are grappling with increased competition, supply shortages, and widespread economic ripple effects. Rachel Mitchell, co-owner of Macleay River Hardwoods in the Macleay Valley, describes a tense atmosphere. "We're still really unsure how long we'll be able to survive," Mitchell told Timber & Forestry eNews. "It's a lot more uncertain now."

Macleay River Hardwoods, a medium-sized operation with 13 employees, sources logs exclusively from private properties but purchases green sawn timber from mills reliant on state forestry allocations. The announcement, made six weeks ago, sparked immediate concerns. "The immediate reaction was nervousness about the big competitors in this area that get forestry log that will now be competing with us for private property log," Mitchell explained. "And also, unsurety of supply from the mills that we buy sawn off."

Staff anxiety was palpable from the outset. "That Monday morning, when I got to work, quite a number of the staff were nervous," she recalled. "Are we still going to have a job?" While no layoffs have occurred yet, Mitchell and her business partner have been "scraping it through" for the past three weeks, finding tasks to keep everyone employed amid a downturn in green sawn arrivals. "As an owner of a business and an employer, I'm quite stressed and nervous about what the future holds," Mitchell admitted. "I've really got no idea... if we will be able to survive this."



Already Macleay River Hardwoods has noticed a drop in their green sawn timber and is expecting the pricing and/or the availability of the private logs to become an issue before Christmas. Image: Macleay River Hardwoods

Competition has intensified rapidly. Mitchell reports calls from private property owners indicating that larger rival sawmills are offering 25 to 33 per cent more for logs—far above current rates. "I thought it might take a few months for that to start to happen, but it's within four weeks," she said. One of their source sawmills has already closed its gates, with others under non-disclosure agreements during government negotiations, adding to the uncertainty.

Government support feels inadequate. No officials have contacted Macleay River Hardwoods, likely because they don't directly access

forestry logs. The Forestry Industry Supply Chain Support Program, flagged by an avocado farmer friend rather than industry channels, appears out of reach. "Looking at it initially, I don't think we would qualify," Mitchell said. "It's a pretty empty gesture, I think, that grant from the government." Eligibility requires proving alternative sourcing, which she deems unrealistic: "I don't know where I'm going to find those new suppliers."

The ripple effects extend far beyond sawmills. By-products like sawdust supply local chicken farms and landscaping. Macleay River Hardwoods spends \$200,000

annually on freight with local companies, which are already feeling the impact of reduced loads and price undercutting. Local mechanics, hydraulics firms, electricians, fuel suppliers and water providers could suffer. "We spend a lot of our money locally... probably close to 90 per cent," she said.

Broader environmental and global implications concern Mitchell deeply. Australia's heavily regulated forestry industry contrasts with unregulated imports from overseas. "All they're really encouraging is importation from other countries that have lower logging rules, restrictions, responsibilities," she argued. "It's more devastating globally. And you've got more carbon offset with purchasing timber and shipping it and transportation."

Critiquing the Great Koala National Park proposal, Mitchell highlighted flaws. "National parks don't count koalas... all the data we have is forestry data," she said. Overgrowth from poor maintenance creates fire hazards and poor habitat: "They don't live in the overcrowded forest floor." With survival in doubt, Mitchell remains pragmatic: "We'll just keep going along and see how it goes. If we can keep getting timber, then we'll keep showing up." The industry's plea is clear: reconsider for the sake of jobs, communities, and sustainability.



1/ Macleay River Hardwoods manufactures decking, exterior cladding and more, ideal for Australian conditions.



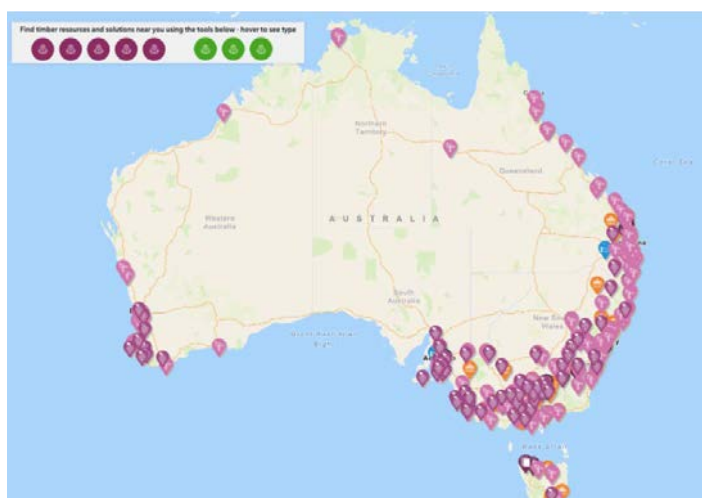
2/ Hardwood is used in many interior features. Photos: Macleay River Hardwoods

The National Centre for Timber Durability and Design Life

THE National Centre for Timber Durability and Design Life (the 'Centre'), hosted by University of the Sunshine Coast and supported by Forest and Wood Products Australia (FWPA), the University of Queensland and the Queensland Department of Primary Industries was established as Australia's focal point for practical, industry-facing timber durability research. In 2025, the Centre has shifted from establishment to delivery, producing new collaborative projects, leadership, and research outputs aimed squarely at improving timber durability, extending service life, and finding circular solutions for treated timber and engineered wood products.

The Timber Circularity Project

The flagship Timber Circularity Project is a coordinated programme designed to identify environmentally and economically viable pathways for re-use, repurposing and recycling of treated timber and engineered wood products (EWPs). The aim is pragmatic: reduce waste, recover value from end-of-life timber, and provide industry with clear decision frameworks, so that treated timber and EWPs can be managed across its lifecycle. The project brings together timber manufacturers, chemical suppliers, treaters,



The Timber Circularity Project map showing resources, support and infrastructure, and solutions across Australia. Image: supplied

and users to test real-world options for recovery, sorting, remanufacture, alternative commercial uses, and safe disposal. Outcomes show promising progress on mapping material flows, identifying key technical and regulatory barriers, and piloting use options that can be scaled through industry networks.

Durability research

The Centre continues to prioritise process-based predictive models for wood decay and rigorous evaluation of both the natural durability of Australian commercial timber species and the performance of durability enhancement treatments. This research is deliberately translational - designed to give specifiers, builders and asset owners robust guidance on expected in-service life under different exposure and treatment

scenarios. By combining laboratory accelerated testing with field exposure trials, researchers are bridging the gap between laboratory performance metrics and actual Australian climates and construction practice.

Leadership and collaboration

Leadership and collaboration have been important to the Centre's success, with Professor Tripti Singh as the Centre's director providing ongoing momentum into its multi-institutional work program. The Centre has focused on building stronger industry advisory mechanisms and international research links to ensure Australian practice reflects global best practice while solving local problems. The Centre's advisory board and partnering researchers now include a broad cross-section of industry and

academic experts, which helps translate research outputs into standards, guidance and commercial practice.

Benefits to industry

What does this mean for industry? For manufacturers and specifiers, it promises clearer longevity data and design tools that support higher-confidence timber use in infrastructure and buildings. For policymakers it provides evidence to underpin sustainable end-of-life pathways and improved consistent regulations. And for the environment it offers pathways to reduce landfill, recover material value, and support the circular economy for timber products. As the Centre moves from pilot studies to scalable solutions, its collaborative model, FWPA backing, university capability and government in-kind support, positions Australia to better leverage timber as the preferred durable, renewable and recyclable construction material.

For updates, the Centre's newsletters and FWPA newsfeed publish regular briefs and project updates that summarise trials, publications and industry guidance emerging from the work. The Timber Circularity Project will be one to watch as industry pilots move from feasibility to operational roll-out.

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Timber transformed: insights, innovation and integration at Timber Construct 2025

Global perspectives, technical challenges and landmark case studies.

TIMBER Construct 2025 offered a comprehensive exploration into the evolving world of timber construction — from its global application in architecture and regulation to major commercial and infrastructure builds on Australian and international soil. Over the course of its sessions, the conference made one thing clear: the future of construction is rooted in timber — but unlocking its full potential demands precision, collaboration and bold rethinking at every stage of delivery.

Session five: mastering timber – global perspectives

on architectural excellence in wood design

Chair: Kevin Peachey, Head of Built Environment Programs, Forest and Wood Products Australia (FWPA)

Kevin Peachey opened this internationally focused session by reaffirming WoodSolutions' commitment to design innovation and cross-border collaboration.

Daryl Patterson, Director at West Island Workshop,



Timber Construct 2025 didn't include only sessions but also had booths where attendees could explore ideas and see scale models of projects such as Air NZ Hanger 4. Photo: One Picture Photography

brought over 15 years of insight into timber and industrialised construction. He identified chronic

productivity challenges — from skill shortages to inflated build costs — and introduced System 600, a prototype solution initiative by Homes NSW and Building 4.0. Centred on productisation, the system enables scalable, simplified timber construction using standardised components — a “design first” approach to solving construction inefficiencies.

Daniel Firth (PKA) and Alex Campbell (Pliteq ANZ) tackled the often-misunderstood issue of acoustic performance in

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lightweight timber structures. Firth critiqued the reliance on single-number ratings and advocated for deeper analysis, particularly in the low-frequency range (below 50Hz) that impacts occupant comfort. Campbell expanded on regional differences in acoustic regulation, noting the need for education and transparency in both lab testing and design standards across markets like Canada and the U.S.

From Japan, Yuichiro Shinohara and Shingi Tarirah of the Shinohara Group delivered a compelling presentation on pre-cut timber technology and its integration into large-scale, modern projects – from the timber elements of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic venues to Expo 2025 Osaka. They also provided a cultural perspective, framing their work in the company's

mantra: "Tree/Wood is the origin" – highlighting timber's place not only in sustainable construction, but in tradition and identity.

**Session six:
timber's greatest
challenges
– acoustic
performance and
fire safety**

*Chair: Phil Tondl,
Group Manager
of Design and
Innovation, Lipman*

Session six shifted focus to the technical and regulatory barriers that still hinder timber's broader adoption.

Nate Helbach, joining remotely from the U.S., introduced Neutral's modular building systems, which incorporate geothermal cooling, steam heating, and triple-glazed facades to slash



Connection, innovation and collaboration are essential for the future of timber construction on a mass scale. Photo: One Picture Photography

operational energy. Most notably, Helbach shared progress on 1005 N Edison Street, North America's tallest mass timber residential building. He reinforced that far from being a risk, mass timber's predictable charring behaviour offers a proven fire strategy.

Dr Ryan Hilditch and Dr Imran Ahamed from Halliwell presented a comparative

review of fire codes across six countries, placing Australia's National Construction Code (NCC) in the global context. Their call to action was clear: if timber is to play a serious role in Australia's built future, performance-based fire design must evolve alongside international science and practice.

Boris Iskra, National Codes & Standards Manager at FWPA, closed the session by outlining the industry's plan to introduce an Industry Standard for 18-storey exposed mass timber buildings. Drawing from international precedents and years of advocacy,

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Iskra's proposal aims to simplify compliance without compromising fire safety — a timely initiative in the face of Australia's urgent housing and sustainability goals.

Session seven: case study – Canopy at Chifley, Moorabbin Airport

Chair: Perry Forsythe, Emeritus Professor, University of Technology Sydney

The focus moved from theory to application with this compelling case study of Australia's largest mass timber industrial development.

Architects Philippa Carr and Jacob Blennerhassett of Michael Carr Architect described the early concept and client engagement for the 15,000m² multi-tenancy development near Moorabbin Airport. With 136 car spaces and seven EV chargers, the design featured timber prominently across its façades, with four different protective coatings used based on exposure.

Tyson Infanti, Director of Business Development at Hasslacher Timber Australia, explained the extensive international logistics behind the supply. The project involved 1,372m³ of glulam, 33m³ of CLT, and 21.3 tonnes of steel, manufactured across five European factories and shipped in 33 containers. Despite shipping delays from the Red Sea crisis, successful delivery hinged on detailed planning, factory-applied coatings, and centralised project management.

Chris Lindsay, Director at H Troon, provided a builder's perspective, outlining the value engineering decisions that kept the program on track. From pre-routed rafters to increasing purlin spacing via upgraded roof sheets, each choice reduced



Rothoblaas is an innovative company, last issue we covered their new timber automated warehouse that was a nominee for the Built By Nature Prize.
Image: Campbell McInnes

crane time and optimised installation. He praised timber's benefits — carbon storage, insulation, aesthetics, and even fire performance — but didn't shy away from the challenges: cost premiums, contractor unfamiliarity, and strict moisture protection requirements. His message was balanced: with careful planning, mass timber is not just viable — it's high-performance.

Session eight: case study – Air New Zealand Hangar 4

Chair: Kylan Low, Engineer, Timber Development Association

In the conference's final session, attendees were treated to a rare insight into the design and construction of the largest timber aircraft hangar in the Southern Hemisphere: Air New Zealand Hangar 4.

Patrick Thompson, Principal at Studio Pacific Architecture, detailed the seven-year journey from masterplan to completion in 2025. Designed to accommodate one widebody and two narrow-body aircraft — or four narrow-bodies with doors closed — the hangar also includes technical workshops, service pits, a bespoke docking system,

and 80-metre-wide ETFE-clad vertical doors.

Chris Speed, Director at Dunning Thornton, walked through the structure's bold engineering: a hybrid system of LVL flanges and CLT webs held together by hundreds of thousands of screws. When local wind codes changed, the team responded with upgraded flanges, new connection strategies, and structural modifications to keep the project compliant and resilient.

Daniel Jones, Construction Manager at XLam, highlighted the project's logistical complexity. Massive trusses were divided into five sections to accommodate ferry transport limitations, with purlins pre-assembled and stored off-site. A total of 7,141 components and 306,516 fixings were installed — including a 35.2-metre-long beam, the largest element on site.

Jimmy Corric, Project Director at NZ Strong, brought the story to life with

behind-the-scenes detail on sequencing and crane operations. At the centre of it all was the Liebherr LTR 11200 — a 400-tonne crane capable of lifting 53-tonne trusses with millimetre precision. "The price of temporary works should never be underestimated," he said, reflecting on the challenge of planning and executing such a feat. He urged suppliers and clients to recognise that mass timber success is a team sport, reliant on integration, communication, and preparation.

Closing reflections: collaboration is the new currency

Timber Construct 2025 made one thing clear: the success of timber is not just in its materials — it's in the method.

From Japanese joinery and modular fire-resilient systems to landmark builds like Canopy at Chifley and Air NZ's Hangar 4, the sessions demonstrated timber's capacity to deliver at every scale — if paired with the right systems, strategy and skills.

Technical, regulatory and logistical challenges remain — particularly around insurance, acoustic standards, code evolution, and cost pressures. But every challenge presented at the conference was met with an equal or greater innovation. Whether it was reducing crane time with pre-routed beams or re-engineering entire truss systems in response to shifting wind codes, the industry continues to adapt, collaborate and push boundaries.

In the words of NZ Strong's Jimmy Corric, "The best innovation often goes unnoticed." But at Timber Construct 2025, the innovations were impossible to ignore.

“THE FUTURE OF CONSTRUCTION IS ROOTED IN TIMBER”

Safeguarding Australia's log export market

AUSTRALIA'S log export industry faces growing pressure to reduce its reliance on methyl bromide (MB), a fumigant under increasing global scrutiny. New research funded by Forest & Wood Products Australia (FWPA) has identified promising alternatives that could safeguard exports and support worker safety.

The project, *Safeguarding Australian exports of logs from future withdrawals of methyl bromide (PNC643-2324)*, found that methyl iodide (MI) offers strong potential as a replacement in future. Trials demonstrated MI's effectiveness against key pests at lower application rates than MB, with a safer environmental profile.

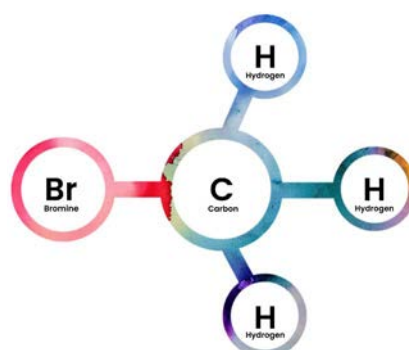
Beyond MI, the research highlights the importance of diversifying treatment options. Alternatives such as

ethanedinitrile (EDN), sulfuryl fluoride (SF), phosphine gas (PH₃) and non-chemical methods including microwave and joule heating are being explored to reduce the risks of relying on a single solution. This diversification not only builds resilience against regulatory change but also supports innovation across the supply chain.

FWPA's Head of Forest Research Jodie Mason said the work underscored the importance of proactive action.

"Our log export markets are too valuable to risk. By investing in alternatives and engaging with regulators and trading partners now, industry has the best chance of securing long-term market access while demonstrating leadership in sustainable trade practices."

The findings also emphasise



CH₃Br – Methyl Bromide

Methyl bromide is globally being scrutinised and phased out. FWPA's research is exploring multiple options that are safer and effective alternatives. Image: Jessica Hockridge

the need for stronger engagement with international regulators and trading partners to ensure Australian exports continue to meet phytosanitary requirements. A coordinated industry approach combining research investment, commercial-scale trials and policy advocacy will be vital to

delivering practical and acceptable alternatives at pace.

Building on these findings, we are pursuing continued industry investment with a subsequent research project that will focus on advancing and validating alternative treatments to meet international market requirements.

Through industry workshops, lab and field trials, commercial-scale demonstrations, and targeted engagement

with regulators and trading partners, the project aims to support acceptance of safe and effective alternatives, ensuring continued market access and biosecurity compliance for Australian log exports.

[Read the full report here.](#)

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Debunking common myths about Australia's illegal logging laws

Mastering Australia's illegal logging laws protects importers and processors from risks and supports a sustainable timber industry.

AUSTRALIA'S illegal logging laws play a crucial role in safeguarding the nation's timber market from illegally sourced products. Enacted through the Illegal Logging Prohibition Act 2012, these laws aim to prevent the importation and processing of timber harvested in violation of foreign or domestic regulations. Recent reforms, including the Illegal Logging Prohibition Rules 2024, have streamlined processes while upholding the core objectives: protecting the environment, supporting legitimate trade, and ensuring long-term sustainability.

However, misconceptions persist among importers, processors, and customs brokers, potentially hindering compliance. By clarifying these myths, we can foster greater understanding and commitment to these vital regulations. This article draws on insights from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to address 17 common misunderstandings, highlighting the truths that underpin effective due diligence.

Myth 1: 'New due diligence requirements were introduced by recent reforms'

Fact: Due diligence obligations have been part of Australia's Illegal Logging Prohibition Act 2012 since its inception. The Illegal Logging Prohibition Rules 2024 simplified the due diligence process whilst preserving its core requirements: gathering information, assessing



Illegal logging laws in Australia require importers and processors to be meticulous and rigorous with their due diligence obligations. Image: Shutterstock

risks, mitigating risks, and maintaining records. These steps align with the original legislation.

Myth 2: 'Alternative activities can replace mandatory due diligence obligations'

Fact: Whilst industry efforts like independent timber testing or supply chain audits are valuable, they cannot substitute the mandatory due diligence requirements outlined in the Act and Rules. These laws mandate a structured, verifiable process to ensure timber products or raw logs are not illegally sourced. Alternative measures can support, but not replace, these obligations.

Myth 3: 'Due diligence is a one-time process or applies broadly to suppliers or shipments'

Fact: Due diligence must be conducted for each unique shipment, delivery, or consignment. The Rules include a repeat import/

processing exception, applicable only when all circumstances remain unchanged within 12 months, supported by clear evidence. This exception covers only risk assessment and mitigation, not information gathering or certification verification.

Myth 4: 'The laws only apply to importers'

Fact: Both importers and domestic processors are equally accountable under Australia's illegal logging laws, with identical due diligence responsibilities.

Myth 5: 'A 6-month grace period was provided to comply with the new Rules'

Fact: The amendments took effect on 3 March 2025, with the Rules published on 2 January 2025. There was no grace period allowing reliance on the previous 2012 Regulation after 3 March 2025. Importers and processors were required to

have compliant systems in place by that date, supported by departmental guidance.

Myth 6: 'The department randomly selects companies for compliance checks'

Fact: The department follows published frameworks for compliance activities, using a risk-based, flexible approach

to prioritise assessments of regulated entities.

Myth 7: 'The department aims to close non-compliant businesses'

Fact: The department's Compliance Posture, publicly available, focuses on a proportionate, risk-based response. Non-compliance is handled by a separate enforcement team, with actions tailored to the situation. Serious violations, such as fraud, may be referred under the Crimes Act 1914, whilst penalties align with the Act's provisions. Regulated entities have rights to review and appeal enforcement actions.

Myth 8: 'The department must agree with our risk assessment outcome'

Fact: The department evaluates whether importers or processors have fulfilled

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their obligations, including gathering and assessing all required information. The risk assessment is judged for reasonableness based on the specific circumstances, not whether the outcome was "correct".

Myth 9: 'Due diligence records start from the order date'

Fact: Records must be retained for five years from the date of import (for importers) or processing (for domestic processors).

Myth 10: 'Due diligence can be completed after receiving a notice to provide information'

Fact: Due diligence, including risk assessments, must be finalised before importing or processing. Conducting assessments only after receiving a Requirement to Give Information or Documents Notice does not meet legal requirements. Submitting retrospective records may be considered false or misleading, potentially constituting fraud.

Myth 11: 'A supplier declaration and documents are enough for due diligence'

Fact: Supplier declarations and documents are part of the information-gathering stage but do not fulfil the entire due diligence process, which includes risk assessment, mitigation (if needed), and record keeping. All stages must be completed to comply with the law.

Myth 12: 'Using an Australian agent for logistics means I'm not the importer'

Fact: Under the Act, the



Do you know where your timber products come from? Have you verified the supply chain?
Image: Shutterstock

person ordering timber products from overseas, even through an agent, is considered the importer and is subject to the Act's obligations and penalties, regardless of who handles logistics.

Myth 13: 'Due diligence can be done after goods arrive in Australia'

Fact: Due diligence must be completed before the goods arrive at an Australian port or airport for use in Australia.

Myth 14: 'A yes/no checklist is sufficient for risk identification and assessment'

Fact: All required elements of due diligence must be supported by evidence. A simple checklist of yes/no answers does not meet the requirement for a written risk assessment that evaluates all prescribed risk factors.

Myth 15: 'I can rely on a supplier's consistent supply chain for future imports or processing'

Fact: Information must be gathered for each import or processing event. Periodic or one-time information collection does not satisfy the legal requirements.

Myth 16: 'Multiple risk assessments are needed

for products with multiple species or harvest countries'

Fact: A single, comprehensive risk assessment addressing all relevant factors of the timber product is sufficient, regardless of the number of species or harvest countries.

Myth 17: 'FSC/PEFC Chain of Custody manuals fulfil due diligence obligations'

Fact: Whilst FSC or PEFC Chain of Custody manuals may support some due diligence elements, they do not fully meet the requirements of the Rules, which are distinct and specific to Australia's illegal logging laws.

Proactive compliance is key. For more information join the department's 19 November 2025 information sessions: Customs Brokers (12:00–1:00pm AEDT); Importers/Processors (1:30–3:00pm AEDT). The sessions will overview laws, share insights, and answer questions.

Together, informed action builds a sustainable timber industry.

To read more on illegal logging, click here.

Source: Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry



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