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ISSUE 889 // 12 March 2026

# timber & FORESTRY *e*news

## Community comes together for forestry Clean Up Australia Day

COVER STORY P 2



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# Community volunteers tackle illegal dumping

VOLUNTEERS pulled on the gloves to help dispose of tonnes of rubbish in the Broken Bago and Burrawan State forests, south of Port Macquarie, and Wallaroo State Forest near Karuah, as part of Clean Up Australia Day events on the Mid North Coast and at Port Stephens.

Clean Up Australia Day, held annually on the first Sunday in March, spotlighted the ongoing issue of illegal dumping in NSW state forests. Coordinated efforts saw over 15 tonnes of dumped rubbish cleared from these areas, with volunteers marking burnt out vehicles for removal and personally removing everything from scrap metal, tyres, and a mattress, to household, building and agricultural waste.

Forestry Corporation thanked the many volunteers in Port Stephens who took part in a community clean-up in Wallaroo State Forest. This event was coordinated by the NSW and ACT Four Wheel Drive Association and the Hunter 4WD Council.

The Wauchope event ran from 9am to 4pm, with volunteers meeting at the Forestry Corporation Depot at 110 Cameron St, Wauchope. A briefing was held, equipment distributed, and a free barbecue lunch provided for all involved. Participants were advised to bring a hat, sunscreen and lace-up boots, with all other equipment supplied on the day.

The clean-ups in Burrawan and Broken Bago State forests were coordinated by Northern NSW mountain bike clubs, the NSW and ACT 4WD Association, and



1/ The community effort on Clean Up Australia Day has helped to remove an excessive amount of illegally dumped trash from state forests in NSW.

2/ Burnt out cars were marked and their location recorded for later removal. All images: FCNSW

the Mid North Coast timber industry, in partnership with Forestry Corporation. Rangers have noticed a stark increase in illegal dumping in these particular forests in recent times.

Forestry Corporation staged a key event in the Broken Bago and Burrawan State forests. Forestry Corporation Lead Fire and Operations Officer Shane Dickinson highlighted the value of community involvement.

“Forestry staff have been supported by the Mid North Coast community, including 4WD and mountain bike club members,

cleaning up our local state forests for many years,” Mr Dickinson said.

“We appreciate the community support, which makes a real difference and shows how much people value these forests as places to enjoy nature and the outdoors.

“While most visitors do the right thing, illegal dumping remains an ongoing issue in state forests, particularly those close to towns and cities.

“Across NSW hundreds of tonnes of household and construction waste, scrap metal and abandoned vehicles are removed from state forests each year at a significant cost to the community.

“We know forests with strong community involvement tend to experience less dumping, and we’re grateful to regular forest users – bushwalkers, mountain bike clubs, horse riders, dog walkers and adjoining property owners – who help look after these areas.”

These collaborative efforts demonstrate the power of community action in protecting NSW’s state forests. By coming together, volunteers not only remove tonnes of waste but also send a strong message against illegal dumping, helping preserve these natural spaces for future enjoyment.

For more information or to register for future events, click [here](#).

**On the cover: Clean Up Australia Day saw volunteer teams heading into the state forests to clear out rubbish, household trash, tyres and more.**  
Image: FCNSW

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# Forestry sector stability amid shifts and challenges ahead

FOLLOWING on from the article in last week's *Enews* #888, the latest forecast from the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) provides deeper insights into the forestry sector. The ABARES March 2026 Agricultural Commodities Report indicates robust growth across the broader agricultural sector, with combined production value for agriculture, fisheries and forestry expected to reach a record \$107.4 billion in 2025-26. However, within this optimistic outlook, the forestry industry stands out for its projected stability rather than expansion. Forestry production value is set to remain largely flat over the next five years, highlighting both resilience and significant headwinds.

Forestry's gross value of production (GVP) is forecast to rise modestly by one per cent to \$2.16 billion in 2025-26, followed by a three per cent increase to \$2.23 billion in 2026-27. However, these are the raw dollar figures, in real terms, after those amounts are adjusted for inflation, the value will actually stay fairly flat at around \$2.1 billion through to 2030-31. This steadiness masks underlying shifts across sub-sectors, where gains in one area offset declines in others. Softwood plantations, which primarily supply domestic sawlogs for construction, are expected to see slight growth in the short term due to a projected recovery in detached housing commencements. In contrast, hardwood plantations, focused on export woodchips, face downward pressure from easing global prices, while native forestry continues at historically low levels following two decades of contraction driven by conservation efforts and harvest restrictions.

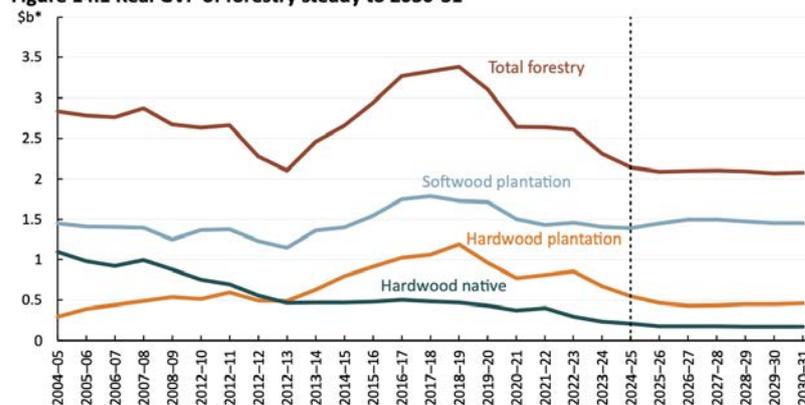
Export values underscore these dynamics. Australian forestry exports, dominated by woodchips and paper products, are projected to fall by five per cent to \$2.74 billion in 2025-26, before

stabilising at \$2.81 billion the following year. These revisions represent a notable downgrade from earlier estimates in the December 2025 report, with production value down 21 per cent and exports reduced by 23 per cent due to softer prices and volumes. The report notes that movements in hardwood and softwood markets are expected to offset one another, keeping total forestry GVP stable.

One key challenge lies in the evolving housing market, which directly impacts softwood demand. The domestic construction sector accounts for the bulk of softwood sawlog use, particularly in detached houses. However, Australia is undergoing a structural shift towards higher-density dwellings, such as apartments and units, which typically require less timber. Detached house commencements peaked at 140,000 in 2020-21 but fell to 100,000 in 2023-24. The Housing Industry Association projects a partial recovery to around 125,000 in 2026-27 and 2027-28, before a further decline. Over the decade to 2029-30, detached houses are expected to drop from 66 per cent to 54 per cent of new commencements, while units in buildings

“THE FORESTRY INDUSTRY STANDS OUT FOR ITS PROJECTED STABILITY RATHER THAN EXPANSION”

Figure 14.1 Real GVP of forestry steady to 2030-31



Note: Data to the right dotted line indicate estimates, forecasts and projections. \*2025-26 Australian dollars. Source: ABARES (2025)

ABARES highlights the gross value of production (GVP) for forestry and projects the values for the next five years. Image: ABARES

of four storeys or more rise from 18 per cent to 30 per cent. This transition tempers overall timber demand, with projected increases in softwood log availability potentially easing unit prices further.

For hardwood plantations, global market pressures present even starker hurdles. Australia's sector is export-oriented,

with China as the primary destination for woodchips linked to paper and paperboard production. The COVID-19 era saw a boom in e-commerce, boosting packaging demand and spurring Chinese mill investments. However, anticipated growth failed to materialise, leading to high stocks and reduced demand. Recent US tariffs on Chinese paper imports, which previously accounted for 12 per cent of China's exports, exacerbate this by potentially forcing mill capacity reductions. Global woodchip prices have fallen as a result, with pressures expected to persist and limit Australian export values.

Compounding this is fierce competition from Vietnam, whose share of China's woodchip imports surged from 46 per cent in 2017-18 to 72 per cent in 2024-25, while Australia's fell from 33 per cent to 15 per cent. Vietnam's lower-cost Acacia-based supply undercuts Australia's premium Eucalyptus woodchips, which offer higher pulp yields suited to quality paper products. Although Australia retains an edge in specialised segments, broader price competitiveness suffers. Domestically, hardwood pulplog supply is set to increase between 2025 and 2029 as growers delay harvests of mature trees amid weak markets, prioritising older stands until conditions improve.

From P 3

Native forestry, meanwhile, remains marginalised. Production value has declined steadily over 20 years due to transfers of public forests to conservation reserves and expanded harvest restrictions, reflecting broader environmental priorities.

Despite these challenges, the report identifies opportunities for growth through innovation. Advanced wood processing and engineered timber products, such as cross-laminated timber and laminated veneer lumber, could expand timber's role into mid-rise and high-rise construction. These technologies often utilise lower-grade logs and residues, including from hardwood plantations, to create high-value streams and boost domestic demand. Growth in the value of production from softwood plantations in the medium to longer term will be influenced by the sector's ability to gain market penetration in the use of wood products in high-density and high-rise dwellings.

**\$2.2b**  
Value of production in 2026-27



**Forestry overview**

Softwood and hardwood markets shift while total forestry GVP remains stable.

**The ABARES report shows shifts in various areas of forestry but overall stability for the sector.** Image: ABARES

Over the medium term to 2030-31, softwood production value is projected between \$1.38 billion and \$1.55 billion in real terms, with a baseline of \$1.45 billion. Upside scenarios include a slower transition towards higher-density housing with more growth in detached housing. Downside risks include lower production values from weaker domestic demand for detached houses from further increases in interest rates, an increase in the speed of shift toward higher-density housing and increasing market penetration of steel framing. Greater use of structural steel in residential and mid-rise construction presents a downside risk to sawlog markets, particularly plantation softwood used in framing and engineered timber products. Industry feedback since COVID has indicated increasing use of steel framing in detached housing, driven by price competitiveness, supply

certainty, prefabrication efficiencies, or changes in building standards.

For hardwood, the range is \$400 million to \$550 million, with a baseline of \$450 million, hinging on global demand resilience versus further price erosion. Potential upsides

include resilient global woodchip demand and growers deciding to harvest mature stands. Potential downside risks include further reductions in woodchip unit price, noting that the forecast for the global market for Australian woodchips is already pessimistic.

In conclusion, while forestry's stable outlook provides a foundation, realising its potential requires addressing headwinds through targeted innovation. Movements in global paper and woodchip markets are expected to remain the main determinants of hardwood plantation production value. With strategic interventions, the sector can transition from stability to ongoing expansion, contributing more robustly to Australia's economic and ecological goals.

For more information view the report here.

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**Dear Editor**

**timber & FORESTRY e news**

# Inspiring the next generation

STUDENTS at Ryde Secondary College in Sydney recently explored the science, values and career pathways behind sustainable forest management during a visit from Matt de Jongh of Responsible Wood and Beth Welden from ForestLearning.

The session examined how environmental processes and interconnections – from climate, soil and water systems to biodiversity and carbon cycles – influence the way forests are managed. Students were encouraged to consider how human values and worldviews shape decisions about land use, linking directly to senior geography themes of environmental management, sustainability and global interconnections.

Ryde Secondary College teacher Paul McCartan welcomed the opportunity for students to engage directly with industry.

"It's invaluable for our students to hear from professionals working in the field," Paul said. "They can see how classroom learning about ecosystems, geography and sustainability connects to real-world careers and decisions. It broadens their understanding of what environmental management actually involves."

Matt de Jongh, Sustainability Manager at Responsible Wood, emphasised that sustainable forest management is grounded in both science and accountability. "Forests are dynamic



1/ **Beth Welden, Program Manager of ForestLearning for FWPA.** Image: FWPA



2/ **Matt de Jongh, Sustainability Manager at Responsible Wood.** Image: RW

ecosystems," he told students. "To manage them responsibly, you need to understand how biodiversity, carbon cycles, water catchments and community values are interconnected. Certification provides a framework to independently verify that environmental, social and economic considerations are balanced."

He encouraged students to think critically about where products come from and how responsible sourcing supports climate and biodiversity outcomes. "When you choose certified forest products, you're supporting systems that are designed to prevent deforestation and promote regeneration. It's about long-term stewardship."

Beth Welden, Program Manager of ForestLearning, focused on building environmental literacy and empowering students to explore careers connected to sustainable land management.

"Understanding environmental processes isn't just for scientists," Beth said. "It's essential for informed citizens. Geography helps students critically examine how environments function, how they are managed, and how competing values are negotiated and integrated into long-term planning to ensure forests remain healthy for current and future generations."

Beth also encouraged students to reflect on how perspectives influence environmental choices.

"Forests hold environmental, social, economic and cultural values simultaneously. Sustainable management requires thoughtful planning to recognise, respect and successfully integrate these diverse values over time."

The session invited Year 10 and Year 12 students to explore forest cycles, global case studies and the role of planning, regeneration and certification in contemporary forest management, connecting classroom learning to real-world environmental practice and career pathways.

"Our students are learning to evaluate complex environmental issues," Paul said. "Hearing from professionals helps them test ideas, ask questions and apply their learning in meaningful and authentic ways."

For more information on the ForestLearning program, see page 12.

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# IWD - Celebrating leadership, connection & impact

THE Women in Forestry and Timber Network (WFTN) proudly hosted its annual International Women's Day Breakfast on Friday, 6 March, bringing together more than 70 industry professionals at the Brisbane Airport Conference Centre for a morning of inspiration, storytelling, and community. This flagship event continues to spotlight the achievements of women across the timber, forestry, logistics, and supply chain sectors, while strengthening the professional networks that keep our industry thriving.

## A MORNING OF INSIGHT: HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR GUEST SPEAKERS

### Janice O'Connor – Logistics & Operations Leader, Allied Seafreight & General Distribution

Keynote speaker Janice O'Connor shared leadership reflections shaped by more than 30 years in logistics. As a senior leader overseeing more than 100 staff across multiple distribution sites, Janice spoke about:

- Leading with respect, safety, and clear purpose
- Navigating a career in traditionally male dominated environments
- The value of continuous improvement and customer centred operations

Her practical wisdom and authenticity set an inspiring tone for the morning.

### Lewis Rolls – CEO, Bretts

CEO Lewis Rolls brought energy and humour to his address, drawing on two decades of experience in retail and trade management. Lewis highlighted:

- How culture influences performance
- The power of integrity and collaboration
- Why meaningful work should also be enjoyable

His message reinforced that strong leadership and strong relationships go hand in hand.

### Briana Wills – CFO, Wesbeam

Briana Wills, CFO and Company Secretary



1/ L-R: Tahlia, Dee, Jenni, Jacinta, Alicia and Casey, committee members of the Women in Forestry and Timber network. Image: WFTN

2/ Over 70 industry professionals joined together to celebrate IWD. Image: Zonya Bird

at Wesbeam, delivered an insightful presentation on financial stewardship within the timber manufacturing sector.

Since beginning her career in 2006, Briana has progressed through senior finance and governance roles, moving into the position of CFO and Company Secretary in 2023.



L-R: Janice O'Connor, Allied Seafreight & General Distribution, Lewis Rolls, Bretts; Briana Wills, Wesbeam. Image: WFTN

She spoke on:

- The critical role of transparency and governance
- How financial strategy supports innovation and long term resilience
- The evolving expectations of finance leaders in modern manufacturing

Her insights highlighted the impact women are making in technical and executive leadership roles across the industry.

## A NEW CHAPTER: WFTN ANNOUNCES CHARITY PARTNER FOR 2026-2027

WFTN is honoured to announce Zephyr Education as its charity partner for the next two years.

Attendees heard from Kelsie Powell, Operations Manager, who shared the profound impact Zephyr has on children affected by domestic and family violence—providing school essentials that help restore normality, dignity, and hope during incredibly challenging times.

This partnership reflects WFTN's commitment to compassion, safety, and real community impact. We are proud to support an organisation that uplifts families when they need it most.

To learn more about Zephyr Education click here.

## THANK YOU TO WESBEAM – OUR ANNUAL PARTNER

WFTN extends its sincere appreciation to Wesbeam for their ongoing support as an annual partner. Their continued commitment enables us to deliver impactful events that celebrate and support women across the sector.

## LOOKING AHEAD

Thank you to everyone who joined us and helped make the morning a success. As we move through 2026, WFTN remains dedicated to:

- strengthening industry connections
- creating meaningful professional opportunities
- celebrating the leadership and achievements of women in forestry and timber

We look forward to an exciting year ahead and to seeing you at our upcoming events. Join the network here.

**MARCH**

**27: Perth Timber Construction Playbook – Fraser's, Kings Park, Perth, 8.00am - 10.30am.** Hear directly from Playbook contributors as they unpack key insights, practical guidance and real-world case studies demonstrating timber innovation in action at this Timber Insight-hosted event. To register, visit: <https://events.humanitix.com/perths-timber-construction-playbook-launch/tickets>

**30-31: Forestry Australia Forest Valuation Summit – Rendezvous Hotel, Melbourne (includes summit dinner on day one).** Topic: *Valuing and Reporting Sustainability in our Forests*. For full details of speaker topics and to register interest, visit <https://www.forestry.org.au/2026-forest-valuation-summit/>

**APRIL**

**29-30: Sydney Build Expo 2026 – Sydney.** Australia's largest construction & design show that includes timber, designers, building and lots of international booths. For more information or to register visit <https://www.sydneybuildexpo.com/>

**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](mailto:jess.hardisty@montgomerygroup.com)

**18-19: FTMA National Conference – Sunshine Coast Convention Centre, Novotel Twin Waters, QLD.** The conference theme, At the Crossroads – Reframing for Growth, reflects the pivotal decisions facing our sector as we navigate a rapidly evolving housing market, new technologies and changing material preferences. Delegates will hear from internationally renowned futurist and best-selling author Michael McQueen along with long-time industry expert, Tim Woods, who will provide his comprehensive housing and market update. For more information, contact [kersten@ftma.com.au](mailto:kersten@ftma.com.au)

**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](http://www.fba-events.com) or contact [rafal@forest-analytics.com](mailto: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](http://www.woodexforafrica.com) for more information.

**23: SAVE THE DATE: AFPA members dinner – QT Hotel, Canberra, 6.30pm - 9.30pm.** Further information, including speakers and registration details coming soon.

**OCTOBER**

**7-9: Forestry Australia 2026 Symposium – Rex Hotel, Canberra.** This Symposium will explore how the forestry sector can articulate and share its values and engage constructively with diverse audiences and stakeholders – from local communities and Traditional Owners, to politicians and policymakers, the media, and the wider public. For more information visit <https://www.forestry.org.au/2026-symposium/>

**NOVEMBER**

**18: SAVE THE DATE: 2026 SIM-PAC Sustainability Awards – Castlereagh Boutique Hotel, Sydney.** The Awards recognise practical leadership in decarbonisation, circular economy, and sustainable industrial practice across the Asia-Pacific region. Further information will be available soon on the Awards website <https://www.sim-pac.live/2026-awards>

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# Leading finance and workforce development at NTHA

## Transforming finance and championing training after 16 years in timber.

ALISSA Mizon is the Finance Manager and Company Secretary for the National Timber & Hardware Association (NTHA), where she has worked for over 16 years.

"During that time, I've worked across many areas of the business – from payroll and event coordination and assistant accountant – before stepping into my current leadership role of Finance manager & Company Secretary 3 years ago," shared Alissa.

"Today, I oversee the finance function across all four divisions of the association, including our Group Training and Registered Training operations," she explains. "My role involves financial modelling, board reporting, governance oversight and supporting operational leaders to understand how their strategies are tracking financially."

Ultimately, Alissa views her role as "about providing visibility and clarity. When leaders understand the story behind the numbers, they can act earlier and more strategically."

She didn't set out to join the timber and forestry industry. "I was returning to the workforce after having children and had previously worked in construction, so the environment felt familiar and comfortable." What has kept her there is "the people within the association and the strong sense of authenticity within the industry." She has always found those working in timber and forestry to be "practical, intelligent and willing to support one another."

Workforce development is a particular passion for Alissa. "In many of our trades, formal qualifications are not always mandatory. However, I strongly believe that structured training provides foundational building blocks that strengthen critical thinking and innovation." When people "understand the 'why' behind what they do, they are better equipped to improve processes within their organisations, grow businesses and support the long-term sustainability of the industry." Over the



**Alissa Mizon is a dedicated professional passionate about authentic people, structured training, and generational industry growth.** Image: Alissa Mizon

years she has seen "many NTHA trainees and apprentices progress into leadership roles and even become business owners – including one former apprentice who later became a host employer and reconnected with us." Watching that "generational development occur reinforces why training and education matter."

Stepping into leadership was her biggest challenge. "Technically, I have always been confident in my ability to analyse numbers and solve problems. However, articulating that knowledge to stakeholders – particularly at board level – was something I initially found daunting." Three years ago, "presenting in board meetings was incredibly nerve-racking. I struggled with imposter syndrome and often felt that others in the room knew more than I did." Over time,

as she developed "deeper financial models and built a stronger understanding of operational drivers," confidence grew. "I still feel nervous before each board presentation – but I now trust my preparation and my knowledge. I know the numbers, I understand what drives them, and I can confidently respond to questions." That growth has shown her "that I am capable of more than I once believed – and that leadership often means stepping into discomfort and growing through it."

Among her biggest professional highlights is "transforming the finance function into a structured,

compliant and forward-looking department." When she started, "budgeting and reporting were heavily based on historical data without always reflecting the real operational activity occurring within the business." By implementing "activity-based budgeting and forecasting models, we improved accuracy, reduced unnecessary costs and provided clearer financial visibility across divisions." She takes great pride in the fact that "our financial audits are consistently clean," and she is "fortunate to work alongside a dedicated finance officer who contributes significantly to that success." On a personal level, "being able to walk into board meetings today and confidently present, something I once thought I would never be able to do, is a personal milestone I am proud of."

Her advice to young women entering the industry is clear and encouraging: "Be confident in your capability and remain curious. The timber and forestry sector is full of authentic, intelligent people who value hard work and merit. If you are passionate and willing to keep learning, there are always opportunities to grow."

“BEING ABLE TO WALK INTO BOARD MEETINGS TODAY AND CONFIDENTLY PRESENT...IS A PERSONAL MILESTONE I AM PROUD OF

# Tasmanian Premier's State of the State address

IN his State of the State address on 3 March 2026, Tasmanian Premier Jeremy Rockliff outlined a vision for a new era of economic opportunity, focused on accelerating infrastructure delivery, housing supply, and sustainable growth. Central to this was the announcement of a major restructure of the Department of State Growth, including the creation of a new delivery-focused department called Building Tasmania (led by Minister Vincent) to supercharge housing, roads, and essential infrastructure projects, alongside a re-aligned Economic Development entity to drive the state's broader growth agenda under the 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future. These machinery-of-government changes position key industry sectors for enhanced support and integration into Tasmania's economic priorities.

"The Tasmania Forest Products Association (TFPA) welcomed the



**Jeremy Rockliffe, Premier of Tasmania.** Image: Tasmanian Government



**Nick Steel, CEO of TFPA.** Image: TFPA

Premier's State of the State address highlighting the Liberal Government is entering into a phase to build a stronger economy and caring community, said Nick Steel, CEO of TFPA the recognised peak body for forestry in the State.

"The TFPA understands that forestry will be part of the newly created Economic Development agency.

"This is a great fit for forestry, as not only is forestry an important part of the

Tasmanian community, supporting local jobs and families, but we are also an enabler for the regional and state economy."

Mr Steel said forestry is a cornerstone of sustainable economic development in Tasmania, offering a myriad of direct and indirect benefits to our community. Forestry provides \$1.2 billion to the state economy and has over 3,000 direct and indirect jobs.

"We also look forward to working with the new head of Building Tasmania department, Minister Vincent, in building new essential homes with sustainable, local timber to drive our economy and help drive down emissions.

"The TFPA appreciates the governments consistent and ongoing support, and our sustainable forestry industry should remain a key priority for all levels of government - ensuring the continued sustainable growth of both the forestry sector and the broader economy," Mr Steel said.

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# Driving customer experience at Dindas Australia

## Thriving in timber's male-dominated world through challenge, learning and mentorship.

CASEY Holmes is the National Customer Experience Manager at Dindas Australia, a leading wholesaler of engineered wood products.

Casey explains her role as, "I lead the strategy and day-to-day operations that shape how our customers interact with the business. The role sits within the senior leadership team and focuses on ensuring our people, systems, and processes work together to deliver a consistent and high-quality customer experience.

"My responsibilities span several areas including leadership of the National Design Centre, customer service operations, marketing collaboration, product and pricing management, and the implementation of our ERP systems," she says. "A large part of my role involves connecting these functions so that teams across the business operate efficiently and customers receive reliable, well-supported solutions."

At its heart, Casey sees her work as "about supporting our teams to perform at their best while continuously improving the systems and processes that help us deliver for our customers."

The timber and building products industry first appealed to her because of the challenge it presented. "It has traditionally been a very male-dominated environment, and I was motivated by the opportunity to step into that space and challenge myself both professionally and personally," she recalls.

However, what has kept her in the sector is the ongoing learning. "The industry is incredibly diverse, and every day provides new insights into building practices, materials, and the broader



**Casey Holmes is a resilient leader who thrives on challenges, lifelong learning and mentoring others to success.**

Image: Casey Holmes

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Australia

**Casey Holmes is the National Customer Experience Manager at Dindas Australia.**

Image: Dindas

construction sector. That continual learning has been both rewarding and motivating," Casey shared.

The role has also "opened doors to opportunities I may never have experienced outside this industry," allowing her "to grow into leadership roles, contribute to major projects within the business, and develop a broad understanding of how different parts of

“THE ROLE HAS ALSO OPENED DOORS TO OPPORTUNITIES I MAY NEVER HAVE EXPERIENCED”

an organisation operate."

One of her biggest challenges has been evolving her natural problem-solving style into effective leadership. "I tend to be someone who wants to help and get involved, which over time has led me to gain knowledge across many areas of the business," she reflects. While that broad knowledge has been valuable, "leadership requires learning when to step back, trust your team, and create space for others to develop their own capabilities." Striking the right balance, supporting the business, empowering her team, and making time for family and personal life, "has been an important part of my leadership journey and something I continue to work on."

The most rewarding aspect of her career, she says, is "the opportunity to mentor and support the development of others." She finds it

"incredibly fulfilling [to] help people grow in confidence, develop new skills, and progress in their careers." Watching team members "step into new responsibilities or leadership roles of their own is something I am very proud of." That same journey of supporting others has "helped shape my own career," enabling her "to grow into senior leadership roles within the business and to be trusted with major initiatives such as large system and operational projects." For Casey, "knowing I have played even a small part in someone else's success is something I consider one of the most meaningful highlights of my career."

# Bowens launches carbon calculator for timber choices

BOWENS Timber & Hardware, a well-established fourth-generation family business in Australia, has rolled out an industry-first carbon calculator that's helping builders showcase the real environmental benefits of using timber.

Introduced on 15 January and now live across all timber product pages on their eCommerce site, the tool delivers instant, science-backed data on carbon storage and emissions avoided. It equips builders to have confident sustainability conversations with clients, meet growing reporting expectations, and make smarter material decisions without guesswork.

Director Andy Bowen said the calculator changes the game, "It provides builders with credible carbon figures right at the point of purchase. This helps them choose wisely, satisfy client demands for greener builds, and clearly explain the positive impact of timber to homeowners."

With increasing pressure on the construction sector to reduce carbon



**With the new carbon calculator it is easy to see how much carbon remains locked up in the timber being purchased and how much was pulled out of the air as the tree grew.** Image: Shutterstock

footprints and comply with future emissions reporting, many builders lack simple tools to demonstrate timber's advantages. By embedding the calculator in product listings, Bowens removes barriers and highlights how timber outperforms many alternatives in lowering a building's embodied carbon.

Carbon Warrior's Kersten Gentle put it bluntly, "Your home is usually the biggest investment you'll make—and choosing certified timber makes it your biggest environmental investment too."

The underlying science is compelling. Trees capture CO<sub>2</sub> as they grow, and when timber is built into structures, that carbon stays locked away for the life of the building—often decades or centuries. The calculator uses product weight and established carbon factors to show two key metrics: carbon stored (around 0.42 kg per kilogram of timber) and CO<sub>2</sub> removed from the atmosphere (approximately 1.54 kg per kilogram of timber).

It turns complex environmental data into clear, client-friendly numbers. Builders can quickly assess impacts, communicate benefits effectively, and prepare for upcoming sustainability requirements without added effort.

As Australia pushes towards greener homes, Bowens' carbon calculator stands out as a practical step forward. It empowers builders to champion timber as a renewable, carbon-storing material that benefits both the environment and the people living in those homes.

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# Building community understanding has never been more important

FWPA has developed a practical, ready-made way to lead that conversation.

FORESTLEARNING, an initiative of Forest & Wood Products Australia, is inviting industry professionals to become Industry Champions and help bring the story of sustainable forestry into Australian schools.

With as little as one hour to one day per year, industry representatives can make a meaningful impact on how young Australians understand forests, wood and opportunities available for their future.

## INDUSTRY CHAMPION TOOLKIT

At the centre of the program is the ForestLearning Industry Champion Toolkit, a comprehensive, easy-to-use suite of resources designed to remove the guesswork from school engagement. Whether supporting a classroom presentation, hosting an excursion or participating in an incursion, the toolkit provides structured guidance aligned to the Australian Curriculum from Foundation to Year 12.

For industry, this is not about becoming a teacher, it's about sharing real-world experience in a supported and credible way.

The toolkit includes practical "how-to" guides for engaging both primary and secondary schools, outlining the forestry and wood related themes students are already learning at each year level. These non-prescriptive program outlines allow Industry Champions to tailor their involvement to their own expertise, region and time availability.

Importantly, teachers are equally



The guide includes guidance for detailing lightweight timber-framed and mass-timber buildings. Image: supplied

supported. Dedicated Primary and Secondary Teacher Guides provide clear learning objectives, curriculum links and preparation checklists. This ensures that every interaction between industry and school communities is structured, purposeful and educationally relevant.

## IMMERSIVE VR KITS

Industry Champions can also take advantage of ForestLearning's immersive VR kits, offering students a virtual experience of working forests and wood processing environments. Kits can include up to 4 headsets and are free to loan, just pay shipping. These interactive tools bring forestry to life in the classroom, allowing students to explore harvesting operations, sustainable management practices and manufacturing processes in a safe, engaging and highly visual way, creating a lasting impression that traditional presentations alone can't achieve.

## DELIVERING BENEFITS TO STUDENTS AND INDUSTRY

For students, the benefits are significant. They gain direct access to professionals working in sustainable forestry, wood

processing, innovation and manufacturing. They see real career pathways. They connect classroom learning with real-world application and they develop a more informed understanding of how responsibly managed forests contribute to housing, packaging, renewable materials and regional communities.

For industry, the opportunity is equally compelling.

Becoming an Industry Champion helps:

- Strengthen community trust and understanding
- Build awareness of modern, sustainable forestry and wood processing practices
- Inspire interest in future careers across the industry
- Position your organisation as a local leader

In an environment where misinformation can shape perceptions, proactive engagement can make a lifetime of difference.

ForestLearning provides the structure, credibility and support so industry can deliver it with an authentic voice.

By extending the message of forestry and wood into schools, businesses are not only supporting education; they are investing in the long-term resilience and reputation of the sector.

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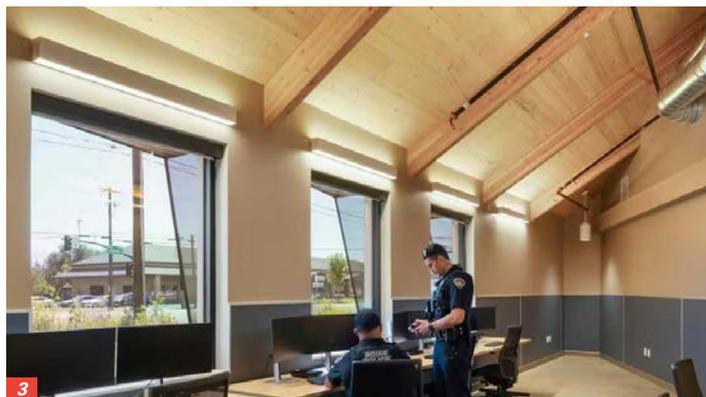


# Transforming fire station design for strength and staff wellbeing

IN the evolving world of architecture, cross-laminated timber (CLT) is emerging as a gamechanger for construction. This innovative material, made by bonding layers of lumber at right angles, creates robust panels that offer exceptional strength and versatility. Fire stations, which demand resilience against harsh conditions and a supportive environment for personnel, are increasingly adopting CLT to meet modern challenges. A prime example is the recently completed Boise Fire Station 13 in the United States, where CLT not only forms the building's framework but also enhances its aesthetic appeal.

One of CLT's standout features is its impressive durability, particularly in fire scenarios. When exposed to flames, the outer layers of the timber char, forming a natural barrier that protects the inner structure. This process allows the material to retain its integrity far longer than unprotected steel, which can warp under intense heat. Such properties make CLT ideal for emergency facilities, providing extra time for safe evacuation and response. Architects note that this predictability in performance gives designers confidence to incorporate larger open spaces without compromising safety.

Beyond structural advantages, CLT promotes sustainability in ways traditional materials like steel and concrete cannot match. Its production generates a significantly lower carbon footprint, aligning with global efforts to reduce environmental harm. Cities aiming for eco-friendly infrastructure find CLT helps achieve



**1/ Biophilic design shines in the station's fitness area, where warm CLT wood surfaces and expansive glazing promote physical wellbeing and mental recovery for firefighters in a high-demand profession.**

**2/ The expansive apparatus bay features robust CLT beams and natural wood finishes, combining fire-resistant strength with a welcoming, low-maintenance environment that supports daily operations and crew morale.**

**3/ Exposed CLT ceilings and abundant natural light create a calm, collaborative workspace in Boise Fire Station 13, reducing stress and enhancing focus for emergency responders.** All images: Pivot North Architecture and Tobin Rogers

certification under green building standards. The prefabricated nature of CLT panels also speeds up construction,

cutting down on-site time and minimising disruption to surrounding communities. This efficiency means stations can be operational sooner, a critical factor in public safety planning.

Perhaps most compelling is CLT's role in enhancing firefighter wellbeing. Drawing on biophilic design principles, the natural wood surfaces create a soothing atmosphere that combats the high-stress nature of the job. Exposed timber elements absorb noise, improving acoustics in rest areas and reducing fatigue. The warm tones foster a sense of calm and connection, supporting mental health in line with trauma-informed approaches. In Boise Fire Station 13, which opened its doors in mid-2025, these elements have been integrated to promote collaboration through open layouts, while the material's natural ageing adds character with minimal upkeep.

Jeremy Kircher, Boise's Division Chief of Logistics, praises CLT for bringing a homely feel to what could otherwise be stark environments. "It improves daily living and keeps projects on track through off-site fabrication," he explains, highlighting its practical benefits.

As fire services worldwide face climate pressures and workforce retention issues, CLT represents a forward-thinking solution. By blending durability, eco-responsibility, and human-centred design, it's reshaping how we build spaces for those who protect us.

# Colorado School of Mines students tackle biomass waste in wildfire-prone forests

UNDERGRADUATE students at the Colorado School of Mines are stepping up to address one of the most stubborn obstacles in modern forest management: what to do with massive piles of leftover biomass that fuel wildfires.

In the FUTURES course offered through the McNeil Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, small groups of freshmen and sophomores have been given just six weeks to develop creative, practical solutions. The project was launched by Evergreen Fire/Rescue, with Wildland Division Chief Jason Puffett presenting the challenge directly to the class.

The biomass in question includes five main categories: downed logs, pine needles, wood chips, beetle-killed wood, and slash (the branches and debris left after thinning operations). Some of this material accumulates naturally on the forest floor as "litter," while much more is generated during proactive mitigation efforts (when heavy equipment is used to clear brush, create firebreaks, and improve



**Simple solutions such as selling biomass as wood chips has fallen flat and the hunt is on for novel, out of the box solutions.** Image: Shutterstock

firefighter access). All of it contributes to dangerously high fuel loads that can turn small fires into fast-spreading infernos.

Previous attempts to manage the waste have fallen short. Burning pine needles, for example, releases harmful toxins into the air. Efforts to bag and sell wood chips or process material into biochar have been tried, but they haven't proven economically viable or scalable enough to make a meaningful dent in the problem.

Evergreen Fire/Rescue isn't looking for

quick fixes. They're hoping the students will propose bold, innovative ideas with strong potential for commercialisation; solutions that can be produced at large scale, remain environmentally sustainable over time, and actually get implemented in the field.

The challenge wraps up on April 3 with team presentations at the School of Mines campus. Judges will evaluate the proposals using a scoring rubric, awarding extra points for ideas that demonstrate clear commercial promise. The top team will receive a \$4,000 prize, plus the satisfaction of contributing tangible ideas to wildfire prevention in Colorado's forests.

This isn't just a classroom exercise. It is a direct collaboration between future innovators and frontline fire professionals who deal with these issues every day. With mentorship from experts at the McNeil Center, local fire districts, and other partners, the students have real support to turn their concepts into something actionable.

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Image: AKD

# And they're racing!

## That extra half a percent adds up over a year.

By PAUL DAVIS

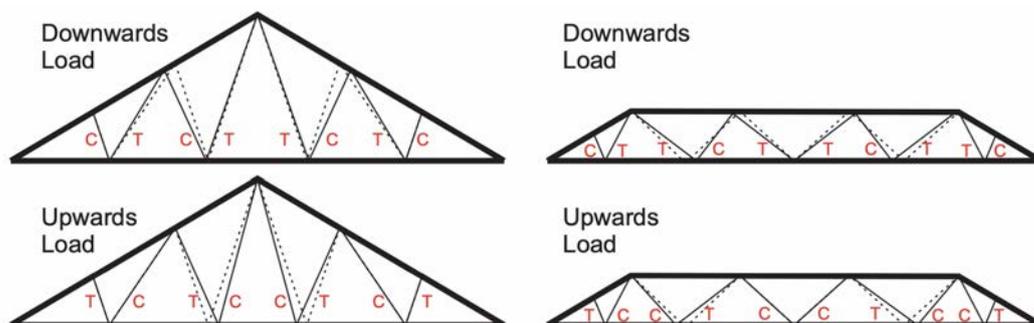
THE story goes that my father as a young boy used to get up onto the roof of their two-storey terrace house and watch the Kempton Park horse races in what was a grim postwar London. A few years later, and he managed to sneak into the races under-age. As we call it in our family, he had "the luck of the Davises". He "backed the card"; betting and winning on first place for every race! It's not surprising that from that day on until the end of his life he was a diehard punter!

Your immediate thought might be that he lost a lot of money, but in fact the opposite is the case. He won over the long term which makes him an absolute unicorn amongst punters. He did it by firstly dedicating himself to vast amounts of time in research. Every weekend he was at the races to make sure he was on top of the latest gossip and horse form – and perhaps even get wind of a "fix". In his retirement he was easily spending 25 hours a week studying the form and applying his "system" for selecting horses. Importantly, he didn't place bets he wasn't comfortable losing, he didn't chase losses, and he didn't go after the big wins. Rather, he played to average a few percent profit margin across all his betting turnover.

### LONG TERM AVERAGE

So, Dad looked to average a few percent return over the long term. It was not uncommon for him to go to a race meeting and not place a single bet if he didn't think the odds were in his favour. Dad liked a beer or ten, but he was an absolute teetotaler at the races - it

**“ A 10% REDUCTION IN LENGTH CAN IN RESULT IN A 20% INCREASE IN STRENGTH**



**These diagrams show two options for web layout with the tension and compression marked and T and C respectively.**  
Images: Paul Davis

was far too serious a business for that! Personally, I hated the whole thing; as a young lad it took my Dad away from me on the weekends, and the drone of the races on the radio and telly permeated my parents' house full-time.

The truss and frame game is a little bit like Dad's punting. You are never going to make your fortune on a single job, but if you get your offering to the customers right and your pricing right then over long-term there's money to be made.

Since every extra half percent saving in design is all profit, it's worth trying to average a fraction of a percent on every job. Across all your jobs that can add up! One way to try and do that is not to accept your software's default webbing. With a bit of experimentation, you may be able to finesse a few savings here and there.

### TRUSS, WEBS, COMPRESSION AND DESIGN

My last *Timber Trader News* article was about the buckling of members. In the case of webs, their capacity is strongly dominated by the length of the web in compression. For example, a 10% reduction in length can in result in a 20% increase in strength. So, if you find a truss, particularly a tall truss with heavy webs, or perhaps a design that flips to a double truss then, it may be worth trying to finesse the web layout. You might get lucky and pass the finishing post a little further ahead!

In the diagram in this article, I've

shown which webs are in tension and which are compression - shown C and T. It's given for downward gravity and upwards wind loads for a typical B-type truss and a truncated truss. With more or less webs the same basic T-C patterns repeat themselves.

I've also shown what a typical software default pattern might be as dotted lines where panel lengths are equally spaced out. That's not necessarily the perfect solution. The solid lines are what I recommend you might check as an alternate web configuration. So, the compression webs that have the combination of largest loads and greatest length are shifted and shortened slightly. Doing that might blow out the cord sizes in which case that's a bad idea. Or it might make absolutely no change in which case what's the point. But every so often, you may get a saving. Over the long-term, those little savings can add up to the equivalent of a good year punting at the races!

Betting is now closed. It's time to race!

Source: Timber Trader News

**Paul Davis is an independent structural engineer managing his own consulting firm Project X Solutions Pty Ltd. The views in this column are Paul's professional opinion and may not necessarily reflect the opinion of Timber Media Australasia.**



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# Discover Forestry New Zealand brings the forest to the classroom

IN New Zealand, where forestry plays a major role in the economy—contributing billions in exports annually and often surpassing traditional sheep and beef sectors—the industry has long been under-represented in school curricula. While students can easily pursue qualifications in agriculture or horticulture, forestry education has remained limited, leaving many young people unaware of its potential as a career and a sustainable resource.

That's where Discover Forestry New Zealand steps in. Under the leadership of CEO Erica Kinder, this levy-supported program has spent the past eight years bridging that gap. With a compact team of just five, it connects with hundreds of schools across the country, reaching thousands of primary and secondary students through interactive, real-world experiences.

The approach is deliberately adaptable, slotting forestry topics into existing subjects rather than demanding dedicated time. In science lessons, for instance, students might examine the natural processes behind tree growth and wood formation. Economics discussions could explore how adding trees to farmland creates extra revenue streams while delivering ecological advantages, such as improved soil health and biodiversity. The program covers not only commercial plantations but also sustainable land



**Discover Forestry New Zealand is working hard to help bring forestry concepts into the classroom and educate students about the potential for both careers and sustainability.** . Image: Freepik

management more broadly.

Field experiences bring the concepts to life. A recent example saw 40 Year 11 agriculture students from St Francis Douglas College in New Plymouth head to Ararata Forest for a hands-on day hosted by MGB Logging and Forest360. This marked the fourth consecutive year the school has joined such outings, giving boys practical insight into logging operations and forest management.

This year, the initiative is ramping up its focus on younger learners, prioritising direct visits to rural primary schools. The flagship Wood is Good program sees educators arrive with a logging truck in tow for lively, age-appropriate sessions. Children discover how wood features in their everyday lives—from packaging like cereal boxes that protect exported food products to household essentials like toilet paper—helping them see forestry's close ties to agriculture and daily consumption.

Kinder is candid about the occasional friction between farming and forestry communities in rural areas. Yet she views the program

as a constructive way to highlight shared benefits: local employment, economic boosts for small towns, and community vitality. In her own hometown of Masterton, she notes, the sector delivers real, positive impacts that build pride rather than division.

Progress is evident, even if gradual. Enrolments in the University of Canterbury's School of Forestry have climbed impressively—from roughly a dozen undergraduates per year in the recent past to more than 40 now. Several incoming students have traced their interest back to school visits by forestry professionals, suggesting these early exposures are making a difference.

By linking classrooms directly to forests and industry realities, Discover Forestry New Zealand is helping reshape perceptions. It positions timber as a renewable, versatile material with strong career prospects and a key place in New Zealand's future economy—encouraging the next generation to view the sector not as overlooked, but as full of opportunity.



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