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COVER STORY P 6

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Senate vote lets INFM proceed

A motion to disallow the controversial method has been defeated.

BOB Brown was against it, as were three Greens Senators in the Federal Parliament, but that wasn't enough to stop the Albanese Government siding with the remaining Greens and a handful of others to keep the INFM method, defeating a disallowance motion that had been lodged by NSW Nationals Senator Ross Cadell.

In the end, the motion was defeated by 34 votes to 27.

Senator Cadell, the Nationals whip in the Senate was blunt in his condemnation of the method during the debate. "The INFM method has been a rort from the beginning about the realism of what it does and what it's there for," he said. "It's being used to justify the establishment of the Great Koala National Park with no additionality for the environment. The trees that are there will stay. The animals that are there will stay. We are not seeing any more absorption by this. In fact, it is just creating millions of ACCUs at a discounted rate for the sake of a state government looking to fund a koala park.

I've said here many times before that we saw what happened in the Pilliga in New South Wales when this happened. A group of 18,000 koalas lived in the



Nationals Senator Ross Cadell (centre) proposed the discontinuance of the INFM. Here he is with Liberal Senator Andrew Bragg (centre right) talking with Newcastle builders about cost and supply difficulties, which will only worsen with the loss of Australian native timbers. Image: Andrew Bragg/Facebook

Pilliga when it was locked up as national park, away from any state forest where logging happened. Just two years after it was locked up, a fire went through, and we now have the koala population of the Pilliga listed as functionally extinct. That is a population less than 500. That is all because we want to lock these things up. We want to do this and we just look for excuses."

The Government's arguments in favour of the method made no mention of issues to do with additionality or leakage, but they did include promised changes to the INFM itself. NSW Greens environment spokesperson Sue Higginson said after the vote: "The Greens have secured significant wins

as part of this decision. We have guaranteed that credits from INFM projects won't be sold to fossil fuel projects, logging will completely end in large areas, there will be a permanent overall reduction in logging, and the definition of plantations will be made clear to exclude seeded forests. We fought for these changes because we refused to allow the protection of public forests to become a blank cheque for coal and gas."

However, not all Greens members were in favour.

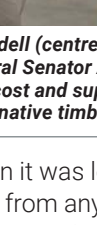
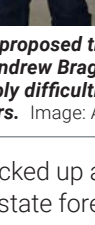
The Tasmanian and Western Australian branches came out against the INFM and Tasmanian Greens Senators Nick McKim and Vanessa Bleyer, along with WA Senator Jordon Steele-John voted for the disallowance motion. Senator McKim said, "we do not support the relentless commodification of nature, and we will not be part of making it easier and cheaper for big carbon polluters to continue to emit, which is what the INFM does."

Liberal Senator Andrew McLachlan crossed the floor to vote against the disallowance, saying, "I believe nature has intrinsic value, but I accept at this moment in time we live in a capitalist

Cont P 3

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From P 2

world and we must find some way to finance these forests. It may be an imperfect solution. It's a solution that does not give me great happiness, but I can't bring myself to not vote against the motion."

While the motion was defeated in the Senate, discussion in the House of Reps was just as powerful, with Nationals MP for Lyne Alison Penfold saying: "We just heard a speech from the Minister for Climate Change and Energy that did not mention jobs, did not mention real people once. Well, Minister, my electorate has Herons Creek Mill. The green mill is now shut. Jobs are lost. Jobs started to be lost on Father's Day when the NSW government announced the moratorium.

"Can you imagine the impact? It's fine for you here in Canberra to say 'Oh, economic development...' There's no economic development in Heron's Creek. I'll tell you what there is: there's job losses. And not just for the mill at Herons Creek, but the impact on mills up and down the coast."

Penfold went on to describe the broader impacts already in play, even before the INFM and Great Koala National Park had been officially recognised. She said, "When you shut down one mill, you kill communities up and down the coast. And Gibson's, in Kendall, which supplies machinery to the mills. I've been to see them and the impact on them is acute.

"These are real people. Real small businesses that are affected by a decision and by a methodology that just does not stack up. And just because the Minister stands up at the despatch box and says 'Oh yes, it's got credibility,' I can tell you out there in the real world, out there in my electorate... I'd love the Minister to come and eyeball the real people out in the electorate and say what he said in here to them. Because these decisions we make here in Canberra, they affect the people in my electorate. And in the electorate of Cowper and the electorate of Page.

"Real people are losing their jobs for



1



2



3

what? For a methodology that doesn't stack up. That simply doesn't stack up," she concluded.

INDUSTRY RESPONSE

Penfold's words have been echoed across the timber and forestry sector.

FWCA Chair Steve Dobbyns said the parliamentary vote settled a political question, but it did not settle whether ACCUs generated under the method represent genuine, additional and conservatively calculated carbon abatement.

"You cannot fix a carbon-accounting problem with a political deal," Dobbyns said.

"Whether the Greens support the INFM, the Coalition opposes it or Labor promotes it is ultimately irrelevant to the integrity test.

"An Australian Carbon Credit Unit is supposed to represent one tonne of genuine carbon dioxide equivalent abatement. That requires evidence, not political agreement."

FWCA has already lodged a formal request with the Emissions Reduction Assurance Committee under section 255AA of the Carbon Credits (Carbon Farming Initiative) Act seeking a statutory review of the INFM method.

That request asks ERAC to examine unresolved issues including:

- the method's arbitrary 40 per cent ceiling on indirect carbon leakage;

“YOU CANNOT FIX A CARBON-ACCOUNTING PROBLEM WITH A POLITICAL DEAL

1/ Senator Nick McKim was one of three Greens who opposed the INFM in the Senate, calling it a "neoliberal response to a crisis caused by neoliberalism". Image: Australian Greens

2/ Greens Senator Vanessa Bleyer also stood up against the INFM. Image: Australian Greens

3/ Nationals MP for Lyne Alison Penfold has been a stalwart supporter of the timber industry in her region. Image: Alison Penfold/Facebook

- evidence that reductions in Australian native forest timber production are substantially displaced to imported timber;
- whether projects based on pre-existing government commitments satisfy the statutory additionality test;
- Forestry Australia's concerns about FullCAM modelling and potentially substantial over-crediting;
- the relationship between the 15-year regional harvesting constraints and 100-year carbon protection obligations; and
- significant changes made to the method following public consultation.

Dobbyns said none of those fundamental issues had been resolved by this week's agreement between Labor and the Greens.

"The Greens say they have secured an increase in the required reduction in harvesting to 25% in 2028 and 30% for projects registered after 2030, changes to plantation definitions and restrictions on who can purchase credits from projects such as the Great Koala National Park," he noted.

"But the Federal Government's own announcement says the Assistant Minister has asked ERAC for advice on variations to the method, including the proposed 30 per cent threshold and plantation definitions.

"So before anyone declares the method 'fixed', we need to distinguish between a political undertaking and an

Cont P 4

From P 3

amended methodology determination."

Dobbyns said increasing the amount of timber production that must be removed from a region did not resolve the leakage problem and could potentially increase it.

"If Australia removes more domestic hardwood production while Australian demand for timber remains, the obvious question is where the replacement timber comes from," he said.

"Recent Australian research found that approximately 81% of reductions in native forest hardwood production were displaced to imports. That does not automatically mean 81% carbon leakage, but it makes rigorous leakage assessment essential.

"Yet the INFM method prevents the indirect leakage deduction from exceeding 40% even if an independent assessment were to conclude that the actual carbon leakage was higher.

"That is precisely the sort of issue ERAC should independently examine."

FWCA also noted that Forestry Australia has warned that structural features of the INFM method could overstate claimed abatement by between



1/ The INFM will necessarily push Australian hardwood supply towards imports. While some, such as these logs from Scotland, are responsibly produced, others lead to significant deforestation and habitat loss for endangered species. Image: CC Wikimedia/Patrick Mackie

2/ FWCA's Steve Dobbyns (left) with a work colleague. Image: supplied



40 and 100 per cent before the full effects of leakage and carbon stored in harvested wood products are considered.

"These are not arguments about whether people like national parks or whether koalas should be protected," Dobbyns said.

"FWCA supports effective conservation based on sound science. The issue is whether taxpayers and Australian businesses should be required to pay for carbon credits unless the claimed carbon benefit can withstand rigorous independent scrutiny.

"The Great Koala National Park was a government election commitment made before the INFM existed. It was announced as government policy and public funding had already been identified.

"If the park was going to be created anyway, the fundamental additionality question remains: what extra carbon abatement is the taxpayer or ACCU purchaser actually buying?"

Dobbyns pointed out that the extraordinary division within the environmental movement reinforced the case for an independent examination rather than treating the Senate vote as the end of the debate.

"FWCA does not necessarily agree with their broader views on forestry or carbon markets, but on one point there should be common ground: carbon credits must represent real additional abatement," Mr Dobbyns said.

"The Senate has voted. The integrity questions remain. ERAC should now undertake the statutory review requested by FWCA and the Clean Energy Regulator should refrain from registering projects or issuing credits until those questions have been properly examined.

"If the method is scientifically and legally robust, independent scrutiny will strengthen confidence in it.

"If it cannot survive that scrutiny, Australians should know before millions of carbon credits are issued – not afterwards."

While coming at the issue from a very different angle, the dissenting Greens agree with many of the foundational problems FWCA identifies in the INFM. In a statement, Senators McKim and Bleyer said the INFM method was "a neoliberal response to a crisis caused by neoliberalism".

"It sets an alarming precedent," Senators McKim and Bleyer said.

"If it passes, we may never again see a National Park or marine protected area created unless carbon or biodiversity can be monetised in some way."



Social licence at the FA Symposium

Forestry Australia has reached out to experts to help our sector under attack.

WHETHER it's the parliament or the ABC, it's easy to feel we've been in the crosshairs in recent months. But surveys again and again show that the more people understand about forestry and its sustainable practices – including regrowth, forest and threatened species management and carbon-storing products – the more they support timber and forestry industries.

The term 'social licence' covers this phenomenon, and it will be familiar to most of us: the goodwill from communities who rely on forestry firefighting forces, or see money and families coming into their communities from timber jobs. In the regions, it's an easy sell. In the cities, we're losing to emotive but incoherent arguments made by people who couldn't tell a greater glider from a ringtail possum, who fly in the face of decades of science showing managed forests are good for wildlife with a plaintive wail of "The koalas!"

The 2026 Forestry Australia Symposium begins with this uncomfortable premise: that the sector's difficulty is not its science but the telling of it.

Running at the Rex Hotel in Canberra from Wednesday 7 to Friday 9 October, the Symposium's theme is The forestry story: strategies for improved awareness, social licence and effective engagement.



Journalist, writer and academic Professor Stan Grant will lead the opening session of the Symposium. Image: CC Wikimedia/Yu Chu Chin

"It's a strong program focused on a critical issue for the future of the sector," Forestry Australia chief executive Jacquie Martin said. "How we communicate, engage and build trust with the broader community is increasingly important, and the Symposium gives us an opportunity to look critically at what works, what

needs to change and how we can do better."

Professor Stan Grant will open the event with a plenary on the nature of public debate, social licence, media and contentious issues. The choice of opener sets the tone: a journalist rather than a forester, on how contested arguments are conducted in public.

The second plenary puts evidence under the theme. Dr Amanda Cahill of The Next Economy delivers the keynote, followed by Giselle Stollznov of Stollznov Research on what the public actually thinks of forestry and the terms on which it grants a licence to operate. Robbie Sinclair of HQPlantations argues that trust is built through risk management as expectations rise, and Dr Tyron Venn of the University of Queensland makes the case for why a strong forestry sector matters to Australia.

Learning from Rural Industries follows, with experts who have lived similar issues from the salmon sector, farming, mining and Snowy Hydro.

Other sessions will include political and union experts on building influence, First Nations and ethical perspectives, lessons in effective advocacy and ways to reach younger generations.

For registration, the full program and field trip details, [click here](#).

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Women in timber dig deep

WFTN Cocktails for Charity raises a record \$40,000 for Zephyr Education.

SATURDAY'S Women in Forests & Timber Network (WFTN) Queensland Cocktails for Charity event was an outstanding success, bringing together more than 120 industry members, colleagues and supporters for an afternoon of connection, generosity and fundraising in support of Zephyr Education.

Thanks to the incredible support of attendees, donors, prize contributors and sponsors, the event raised a record-breaking \$40,000, the highest amount achieved in its history. These funds will help Zephyr Education continue its vital work supporting children whose education has been disrupted by domestic and family violence, helping them get back to school quickly with all the uniforms, books and devices they need.

The generosity of the timber, forestry and broader industry community was on full display throughout the afternoon. Guests enthusiastically supported the cause through donations, raffle ticket sales, and the live charity auction, helping drive this remarkable fundraising result.

A particular highlight of the event was the highly anticipated auctions, which generated significant interest, friendly competition and plenty of excitement among the crowd. Auction items included framed and signed State of Origin jerseys from both the men's and women's teams, complete with certificates of authenticity, along with a luxurious Emporium South Bank Staycation and High Tea experience. These sought-after prizes attracted strong bidding and contributed significantly to the fundraising success of the day. The raffle prizes were equally well received, with attendees embracing the opportunity to support Zephyr Education while vying for an impressive range of generously donated prizes. The enthusiasm shown throughout the raffle and auction demonstrated the commitment of our industry to making a meaningful difference.

WFTN Queensland said, "We extend

our sincere thanks to all attendees, donors, auction bidders, raffle participants, and prize contributors. We would also like to acknowledge and thank our valued Platinum Sponsor: Woodhouse; Gold Sponsors: ITI Australia, James Hardie, Porta, Bretts and FWPA; Silver Sponsors: Langs, Parkside Timber, SmartFrame by Tilling, Weathertex and Vida; Bronze Sponsors: FTMA, Megabeam, AKD, Wilson Timbers, NTHA and HQ Plantations plus donation sponsors for raffle prizes combined with our Annual Partner Wesbeam, whose generous support played a critical role in making the event possible and ensuring its success.

"Raising a record \$40,000 for Zephyr Education is an achievement that everyone involved should be incredibly proud of. Together, more than 120 attendees helped create a memorable event that will have a lasting impact on the children and families supported by Zephyr Education."

The success of Cocktails for Charity is also a reflection of the passion and commitment of the dedicated WFTN Queensland Committee members who volunteer their time to bring this event to life each year. WFTN Queensland said, "A special thank you to Tahlia Bellotti (NTHA), Jenni Day (Versace Timbers), Jacinta Colley (Vida Wood), Dee Atkinson



1/ Kathy Leddy from Versace Timbers (second from left) with the WFTN committee (L-R): Dee Atkinson (Wesbeam), Jenni Day (Versace Timbers), Casey Lanyon (Dindas), Tahlia Bellotti (NTHA), Alicia Langfield (NTHA) and Jacinta Colley (Vida Wood).

2/ The room was filled with over 120 people who all came to support Zephyr Education who are doing wonderful things for children in the DV space.

3/ Kelsey Powell, operations manager at Zephyr Education, was extremely grateful and humbled by the generosity of WFTN supporters.

All images: T25 Images

(Wesbeam), Casey Holmes (Dindas) and Alicia Langfield (NTHA), whose hard work, energy, and dedication were instrumental in delivering another outstanding event.

We also acknowledge and thank their employers for supporting their involvement and contribution.

"Events such as these are a testament to the commitment these women have to the timber and forestry sector, their colleagues, and the broader community. Through their leadership and enthusiasm, they continue to strengthen industry connections while helping create meaningful outcomes for worthy causes such as Zephyr Education. Thank you to everyone who supported WFTN Queensland's Cocktails for Charity 2026 and helped make this year's event our most successful yet."

For more on Zephyr Education, [click here](#).

On the cover: most of the WFTN Committee: (L-R) Dee Atkinson (Wesbeam), Jenni Day (Versace Timbers), Jacinta Colley (Vida Wood), Tahlia Bellotti (NTHA) and Casey Lanyon (Dindas). NTHA's Alicia Langfield is missing.
Image: T25 Images

SEPTEMBER

22: Forestry Australia Webinar 2 – ONLINE EVENT, 11.30am - 12.30pm AEST. Session Two - Prescribed Burning in Practice: Lessons from California and Western Australia. **Registrations close 9 Sep at 10am.** To book, visit <https://forestry.memnet.com.au/MemberSelfService/EventBooking.aspx>

23-24: residues2revenues Conference, North Quay, Brisbane. We have the potential to transform the forestry sector into a provider of biofuels, bioenergy and a range of renewable bioproducts. This event highlights the real value of wood residues. To register or see the speaker program visit <https://innovatek.co.nz/event/residues2revenues-2026/#Registration>

OCTOBER

6: Forestry Australia – University House, The Australian National University, Canberra. Special colloquium celebrating the *centenary of national forestry education* in Australia, held immediately prior to the 2026 Forestry Australia Symposium. Free of charge, however registration required for catering and logistics. **Registrations close: 10am, Tuesday 29 September 2026.** For more information and to

register, visit <https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1643036>

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/>

19-20: International Woodchip and Biomass Trade Conference – Singapore. The conference will serve as a key meeting point for the global biomass community. For more information and to register, visit: <https://web.cvent.com/event/7fd17c6e-d403-4eb4-a6cd-ab69df757864/summary>

21: SAVE THE DATE: Timber Design Awards – Museum of Contemporary Art, The Rocks, Sydney. Event is almost full. For more information and to obtain tickets, visit: <https://timberdesignawards.com.au/>

30: SA, NT & WA Timber & Hardware Industry Awards – National Wine Centre, Adelaide, 6.30pm - 11.30pm.

Join us in celebrating the SA, NT & WA Timber and Hardware Industry. For more information, visit <https://www.ntha.com.au/events/2026-industry-awards/> or contact tahlia@ntha.com.au

NOVEMBER

8-13: The Gottstein Trust's Understanding Forest Science Course – The Country Club, Launceston, Tasmania. For those working in, or with an interest or association with the timber and forestry products sector, this unique course will provide an update on core aspects of forest science and aspects of management of the nation's public and private estates. Participants will also gain a better understanding of the national and international forces impacting upon forests. Bookings are now open. For more information, visit <https://gottsteintrust.org/> or phone Helen Murray on 0419 991 424

18: 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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Illegal logging update

New funding will support Australia's illegal logging reforms.

THE Australian Government is investing \$5 million from 2026–27 through the Forestry Growth Fund to support implementation of two illegal logging law reforms: the new notification requirement and the use of timber testing technologies to verify species and origin claims. These reforms are provided for in the legislation but are not yet in effect.

The funding will help the department establish a digital notification system for importers and processors to provide required due diligence information before importing regulated timber products or processing raw logs. Earlier access to this information will support more timely risk assessment and targeted compliance activities.

The funding will also support the integration of timber testing technologies within the department's compliance operations. These technologies will help the department to verify claims about the species and origin of regulated timber products where appropriate, supporting a consistent, evidence-based approach to implementing Australia's illegal logging laws.

This work will be delivered progressively over several years, with the Government keeping stakeholders informed as the digital system and timber testing capability are developed, including through future e-updates and consultation on implementation and transition arrangements.

APPLYING DUE DILIGENCE TO PRODUCT TYPES AND STOCK KEEPING UNITS

Guidance has been updated to help clarify how due diligence requirements



The new funding is designed to help people meet their obligations in sourcing timber from legal, managed sources, such as these German plantation pines.

Image: CC Wikimedia/Lukas Beck

apply to product types. A common area of confusion is whether due diligence should be applied to Stock Keeping Units (SKUs).

Due diligence applies to the regulated timber product – not to internal SKUs. This means businesses should focus on the actual characteristics of the timber product, including:

- product type and trade name;
- timber species;
- country and area of harvest;
- supplier and manufacturing details.

In practice, this means importers do not need to assess every SKU separately where products share the same timber characteristics. Instead, they can:

- group product types with the same timber inputs and supply chain;
- map multiple SKUs to a single grouping;
- apply one due diligence process to that grouping.

Written due diligence systems should clearly set out any SKU grouping processes that form part of a due diligence process.

REPEAT DUE DILIGENCE EXCEPTION

Where businesses use SKUs, the repeat due diligence exception should be considered at the level of the regulated timber product (or product grouping), not at the individual SKU level.

This means you may rely on a previous due diligence assessment where multiple SKUs map to the same timber product, and you are satisfied that:

- the SKUs represent a product that is materially the same (based on product type, trade name, timber species, harvest origin, supplier, and processing arrangements);
- the product is sourced through the same supply chain;
- the import occurs within the relevant timeframe.

Importantly, reliance on a previous assessment does not remove your other obligations. For each import, you must still:

- gather the required information
- confirm that the SKUs continue to fall within the same product grouping
- verify that key timber and supply chain characteristics are unchanged
- consider whether any new information or changes increase the risk of illegal logging

If differences between SKUs reflect changes in timber inputs or supply chain factors, such as species, harvest origin, supplier, or manufacturing arrangements, those SKUs may no longer form part of the same product grouping. In these cases, a new due diligence assessment is required.

This means the repeat due diligence exception can support efficient management of multiple SKUs, but only where those SKUs genuinely represent the same regulated timber product in all material respects.

The government has published materials to help the sector understand how due diligence applies at the timber product level. For examples, [click here](#), and for a dedicated case studies page, [click here](#).

For more information and resources, check out the Department's Illegal Logging web page, [click here](#) and to subscribe to the updates email list, [click here](#).

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New SA AI camera

FORESTRYSA has officially launched an AI-powered fire detection camera at Mount Crawford, marking a significant advancement in early fire detection and bushfire preparedness in South Australia.

The camera is the first AI-powered fire detection camera operating in a peri-urban area in Australia and the first such system deployed by ForestrySA.

Located at the Mount Crawford Fire Tower, the technology uses artificial intelligence to continuously monitor the landscape for signs of smoke and potential fire activity. By helping detect fires earlier, the system has the potential to support faster response times and improve protection for communities, forests, and the environment.

ForestrySA Chief Executive Nathan Paine said the project demonstrates how innovation can strengthen South Australia's bushfire preparedness capabilities. Rather than replacing humans in fire prevention, the AI cameras provide tools that make their work more effective and faster.

"This technology represents an



1/ Nathan Paine (front) at the launch of the AI-powered fire detection camera.

2/ The new AI camera featured in front of ForestrySA's FireKing truck. All images: supplied

important step forward in how we monitor and respond to fire risks. Early detection can make a significant difference, particularly during periods of elevated fire danger."

ABC Radio Adelaide presenter Nikolai Beilharz spoke with Paine about the project's significance and the collaborative effort involved in bringing it to life.

"It's the first AI-powered five-section camera for a peri-urban area anywhere in the country," Paine told Beilharz. "We already operate eight fire cameras down in the southeast. They've been used for the last three fire seasons and were funded by the SA Government. They're an enmeshed network down there..."

"What we wanted to do was get this technology in a peri-urban area, one where we've actually got a lot more interface with people with businesses, with communities. This is really good technology that has proven its worth in other areas, we want to get one up and running here ... and then look at rolling out even more.

To listen to the interview, [click here](#).

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New Timberlink CEO

TIMBERLINK Australia & New Zealand has announced the appointment of Sarah Bellman as chief executive officer.

Bellman joins Timberlink with extensive strategic, customer and operational leadership experience across the manufacturing, mining, and quarrying sectors. Throughout her career, she has earned a reputation for strengthening operational capability, delivering sustainable commercial growth, and leading high-performing teams. With more than a decade of executive leadership experience at Hanson Australia and Heidelberg Materials Australia, most recently as general manager, Southern Region, she brings a proven track record of leading complex operations and achieving strong commercial results.

Bellman has also made a significant



Sarah Bellman, Timberlink Australia & New Zealand's incoming CEO. Image: supplied

contribution to the broader construction materials industry through leadership, governance and industry advocacy roles, as chair of the Cement Concrete and Aggregates Association in Victoria and South Australia and director of the Institute of Quarrying Australia.

Ken Boundy, chairman of Timberlink Australia & New Zealand, said: "The Board is confident that Ms Bellman's combination of manufacturing and heavy industry experience together with her proven ability to lead customer delivery, operational excellence and drive organisational performance, supports Timberlink's strategy and growth ambitions."

Bellman said: "I am honoured to be joining Timberlink, who play a vital role in the use of sustainable building materials and supporting Australian manufacturing in regional communities. I look forward to working with our dedicated team, customers and partners to build on the company's strong legacy and drive future growth."

Bellman will be based in Timberlink's National office in Scoresby, Victoria and will commence on 16 November 2026.

Outgoing CEO Paul O'Keefe will remain with Timberlink to support an effective transition until he retires as planned in mid-December 2026.

BELLMAN HAS EARNED A REPUTATION FOR STRENGTHENING OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY

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ForestWorks finds new home

The industry training stalwart now operates under the FibreSkills Australia banner.

FOR decades, ForestWorks has been successfully delivering skills development services across forestry, forest management, timber and wood products industries. Recently, the industry-owned not-for-profit has transitioned its parent company structure to FibreSkills Australia.

The new organisation links three related bodies: ForestWorks, FurnishingWorks and TextileWorks. Related through their focus on fibre, these three industries share challenges ranging from workplace concerns to supply and



The new umbrella body FibreSkills Australia is made up of three related not-for-profits with related needs and goals, including ForestWorks. Image: supplied

transport issues. As well as having access to a broader knowledge pool in supporting businesses and workers, FibreSkills Australia better reflects the connected supply chains that underpin the nation's manufacturing and sustainability capability.

The new body is governed by a Board with balanced employer and employee representation, and the organisation leverages the combined power of all three sectors without losing its specialist skills in each industry. Stakeholders will continue working with the same trusted teams, industry experts, and sector

specialists they always have.

Along with ForestWorks, FibreSkills Australia is part of the Jobs and Skills Council network through Skills Insight, working collaboratively with employers, employees, unions, governments, and training providers to address workforce and skills challenges across the industries it represents.

For more, [click here](#).

Simon Dorries headed to ATIF

AFTER last week's announcement of Simon Dorries concluding 11 successful years at the helm of Responsible Wood (Enews #915), the Australian Timber Importers Federation has announced his appointment as the Federation's new General Manager, commencing in October 2026.

ATIF said: "Simon brings more than 35 years of experience in the forest products industry, along with extensive expertise in certification, standards, and compliance through his work with Responsible Wood and the Engineered Wood Products Association of Australasia (EWPA)."

"Simon's deep industry knowledge and practical understanding of certification frameworks will enable him to effectively support ATIF members and stakeholders as they navigate the increasingly complex and evolving compliance landscape for imported timber and engineered wood products."



Simon Dorries, incoming General Manager of ATIF.
Image: Responsible Wood

The ATIF board said it is confident that Simon's experience, leadership, and industry relationships will provide significant value to the Federation and its membership.

"With many challenges currently facing the timber importing sector, Simon's expertise will be instrumental in representing members' interests and engaging with government, industry associations, and key stakeholders across the broader forest and wood products sector.

"Please join us in welcoming Simon to ATIF and wishing him every success in his new role."

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Timber Design Awards shortlist

Part three of the 2026 Awards finalist reveals.

ONE of the great joys of timber is its beauty. At every stage of its lifecycle, wood entices with its rich colours and textures, and – as celebrated in many of the following projects – its strength and adaptability. In 2026, the Australian Timber Design Awards celebrates 27 years of highlighting the best timber projects in the country.

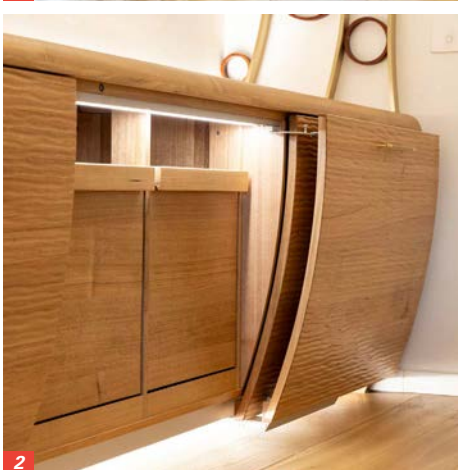
Part three of this year's shortlist has just been announced (see Enews #914 and 915 for parts one and two), with two more instalments to follow before the official gala dinner on Wednesday, 21 October at the Museum of Contemporary Art (see below for details).

The shortlisted entries show the flexibility of timber as a material as well as highlighting its physical beauty. From intricate handcrafted joinery to monumental infrastructure projects, timber has been the right choice for every one of these finalists. Its strength, ability to insulate from both sound and weather extremes, and flexibility in construction were already enough for timber to be the material of choice even before factors such as carbon storage and sustainability were considered. These finalists are fitting answers to any designer wondering if timber is the right solution for them.

Over the coming weeks, we'll feature more of the shortlisted finalists before recapping the winners once they are announced next month.

Tickets are selling fast for the gala dinner. Starting with cocktails at 6pm, a three course meal will follow as the winners – including People's Choice for everyone who voted in previous issues – are announced in front of leaders from the design, timber and architectural worlds.

The dinner will be held in the Harbourside Room, Level 6 of the Museum of Contemporary Art, The Rocks, Sydney. Enter from Circular Quay side. To purchase tickets, [click here](#).



1 & 2/ The Curved Grainmatched Foyer Record Unit by Select Custom Joinery is made entirely from environmentally friendly materials. Photos by Jennifer Nagy, Exclusive Images. All images: courtesy Timber Design Awards

FURNITURE & JOINERY

Curved Grainmatched Foyer Record Unit

The Curved Grainmatched Foyer Record Unit by Select Custom Joinery was designed by cabinet maker Gino Monteleone. His work exclusively uses environmentally friendly materials: this four-metre, all-timber foyer piece is crafted entirely from certified Tasmanian Oak. No MDF, no particleboard anywhere in the build.

Four curved sliding doors carry a hand-machined 'sand dune' relief that flows unbroken across the full length of the unit, with the grain matched door to door without a 5-axis CNC in sight. A record player platform rises from the benchtop on automated actuators, its lift-up door grain-matched to within a millimetre gap.

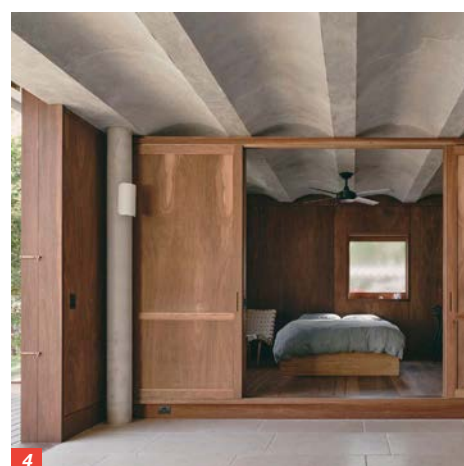
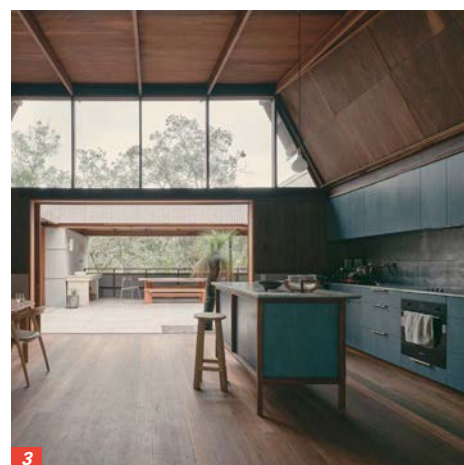
Every curve, joint and detail, down to the custom in-house designed record-tilt hinges, reflects the kind of craftsmanship this category was made to celebrate.

For more from Select Custom Joinery, [click here](#). See images 1 and 2.

RESIDENTIAL CLASS 1

Enclave House

Bohane Campo Architect's Enclave House is a finalist in this year's Residential Class 1 – New Building category. Designed by John Bohane and Luke Pigliacampo, it was built by Avalon Constructions, with joinery from Luke Geercke Joinery.



3/ Interior living areas lead directly to exterior ones, both ideally suited to life in the bushland surrounds. Photo by Martin Siegner

4/ Bedrooms are tucked away out of the flow of the living spaces for quiet and privacy. Photo by: Martin Siegner

From P 14

Accessible by boat only, Enclave House sits within the Pittwater waterway. The building replaced a deteriorated shack with a robust, restrained dwelling embedded in the landscape, where interior and exterior living spaces flow seamlessly. A repetitive spotted gum frame gives rhythm and warmth to the interior while enabling efficient fabrication and assembly on a site with no road access. Timber runs through the structure, linings, flooring, cladding, doors, joinery and furniture, forming a cohesive material language built to endure the exposed coastal climate.

A copper-clad roof shelters the timber structure from the elements and helps the building merge into its natural surrounds, while overlapping materials reduce reliance on sealants, allowing a looser, more forgiving method of construction. Shaped by remoteness and restraint, the house balances durability with warmth, and permanence with adaptability.

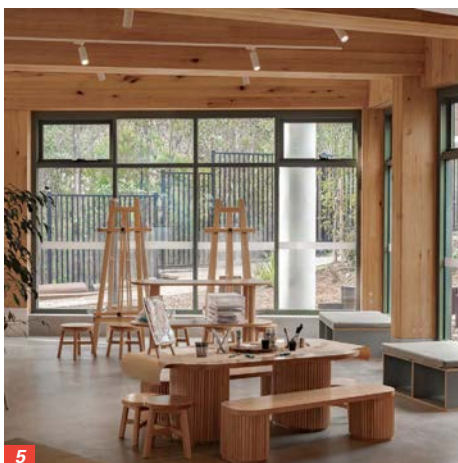
For more from Bohane Campo Architects, [click here](#), and from Luke Geercke Joinery, [click here](#). See *images 3 and 4*.

COMMERCIAL BUILDING

Grace Village ELC

Grace Village Early Learning & Childcare by Envision Building Design Studio ([click here](#)) and Alessi Design + Build ([click here](#)) is a new 85-place childcare facility in Blacktown. Built on an uncompromising commitment to biophilic design and mass timber innovation, the centre is set on a challenging 1750m² Western Sydney site with a steep 5m fall, sitting right alongside a nearly 3-hectare woodland reserve. The building responds by rising as an organic spiral that gracefully terraces the natural topography.

Timber is the foundational pillar of the design. The primary structure is built from a combination of XLAM CLT panels ([click here](#)) and plantation oak MASSLAM 38 Glulam ([click here](#)), allowing the design team to achieve complex curvilinear geometries without leaning on carbon-heavy concrete or steel. Left intentionally exposed throughout the interiors, the mass timber brings biogenic warmth, natural acoustic buffering and tactile honesty to



5/ The glulam and CLT interiors are left intentionally exposed at Grace Village Early Learning & Childcare, helping kids connect to nature. Photo by Spurlo Style Photography

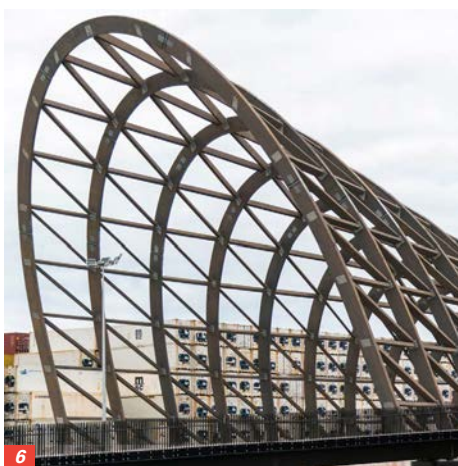
the classrooms, while helping regulate indoor humidity to optimise air quality for growing children. The complex engineering was delivered by M&G Consulting (structural) and VOS Group (services).

Expansive structural glazing cuts through the exposed timber skeleton to frame views of the neighbouring forest canopy, inviting nature indoors as a genuine 'third teacher'. By celebrating the raw aesthetic and structural integrity of mass timber, the project delivers significant embodied energy savings and functions as a net-negative carbon sink – a soft-edged architectural sculpture that supports child development and lifts the suburban streetscape. See *image 5*.

PUBLIC BUILDING

West Gate Tunnel

Delivered across Yarraville and Footscray as part of Melbourne's \$5.5



6/ The FSC-certified radiata glulam was prefabricated for quick assembly over the tunnel portals. Photo courtesy of Red Stag and the West Gate Tunnel Project

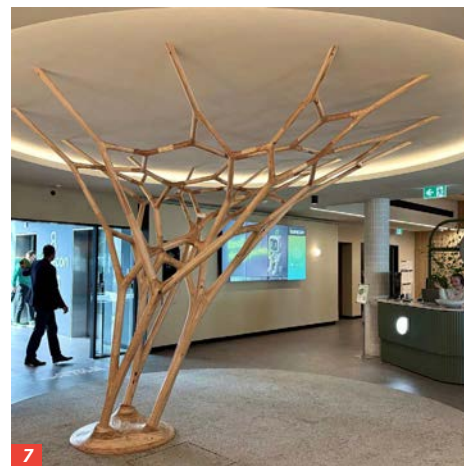
billion West Gate Tunnel Project, these three monumental glulam portals are the sculptural signature of one of the city's largest pieces of road infrastructure.

Designed by Wood Marsh ([click here](#)) and drawing on the visual language of woven fishing nets, each portal is built from a complex glulam lattice – more than 700 individual timber elements per structure – with the largest reaching 30m in height and spanning six lanes of traffic. The timber design and manufacture for the project was done by Red Stag Timberlab ([click here](#)) with construction by CPB Contractors and John Holland Joint Venture and engineering from CREATE (NZ).

It's a striking demonstration that mass timber can hold its own in exposed, high-traffic transport settings, not just buildings. FSC-certified radiata pine was chosen for its low embodied carbon and renewable sourcing, prefabricated off-site with steel connecting elements to allow rapid assembly over the tunnel portals under the Maribyrnong River. See *image 6*.

AUSTRALIAN CERTIFIED TIMBER

The Foundation Tree



7/ The timber for the tree has been certified under PEFC and Responsible Wood and comes from a process that doubles the usable material of conventional sawing. Photo by Dr Djordje Stojanovic

Installed in Aurecon's Melbourne office at Docklands, The Foundation Tree honours the values of the firm's late colleague Jeffrey Robinson through a prototype timber structure that embodies the form, growth and spatial qualities of a natural tree. Rather than replicating nature, the design draws on its underlying

Cont P 16

From P 17

principles: efficiency, structural optimisation, adaptability and material expression.

Developed by researchers from the Melbourne School of Design Architecture, Building & Planning at the University of Melbourne with Aurecon engineers, the form emerged through computational design, tension cable form-finding and iterative structural testing. It was then refined with Charles Sandford's team for fabrication and assembly. The result is 97 Y-shaped Tasmanian Oak components, individually CNC-machined in two halves and joined with timber dowels and a magnet-driven connection system, demanding minimal tolerances and exceptional precision. Architectural

services came from JPE Design Studio and fit-out by SHAPE Australia.

The timber itself carries its own certified story. Rather than premium, high-grade logs, the Tree is built from wide-board fine-sawn Tasmanian Oak from Crafted Hardwoods, an Adelaide business that rotary-peels timber the industry typically passes over into architectural-grade hardwood, recovering roughly double the usable material of conventional sawing. All raw material is certified at source under PEFC and Responsible Wood, traceable end to end.

The Foundation Tree shows how research, industry and craftsmanship together can shape the future of timber construction. See image 7 (P15).



8/ **The blackbutt-clad timber pavilions reflect the visual language of Dendy Beach.** Photo by Peter Clarke Photography

SPORTS & RECREATION

Dendy Beach Pavilion & Brighton Life Saving Club

Designed for Bayside City Council by Jackson Clements Burrows Architects ([click here](#)), this project reimagines a beloved community asset that has served Dendy Beach since 1921, replacing a 1950s clubhouse that had outgrown its purpose. Sitting on the dune between the upper Esplanade and Port Phillip Bay, two timber pavilions separate clubhouse functions from café, their modest footprint respecting the site's banksia trees and the heritage-listed Brighton Bathing Boxes nearby.

Blackbutt cladding and open-battened screens wrap shaded decks with bay and city views, while a generous central deck and elevated timber boardwalks bridge the dune escarpment, navigating tree protection zones and protecting the natural ecology below. The pavilions' lightness deliberately contrasts a robust concrete podium recessed into the dune, which accommodates high-impact lifesaving activities, aquatic storage, amenities and first aid. The project was built by FOURSQ, with engineering by Stantec.

Inside, Blackbutt floorboards extend the coastal material language from the external decks and boardwalks through to the upper-level public and community spaces, unifying the building's civic and functional roles. A cascading seating terrace lets the public realm flow between the upper deck and lower forecourt, continuing a tradition of timber structures along the bay. See image 8.

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Prescribed burning shows results

WESTERN Australia has halved the share of its south-west forests it burns deliberately each year, and the area those forests lose to wildfire has more than tripled over the same period.

That is the finding of authors John Cameron, Dr Neil Burrows, David Packham and Dr Glen Kile, whose meta-analysis of 60 years of fire records was published this month in *Australian Forestry*.

The three regions the study covers have run very different programs. South-west Western Australia treated a mean of 9.2% of its forest region every year between 1965 and 2024, compared with 1.9% in Victoria and 0.7% in New South Wales. Wildfire extent ran in the reverse order. Over the six decades studied, unplanned fire burnt the equivalent of 60% of the western forest area, 112% of Victoria's, and 141% of the New South Wales estate. Large parts of the eastern estates burnt more than once (hence the totals over 100%), and some burnt four times in 25 years.

The gap is not explained away by other factors. Western Australia records the lowest spring and summer rainfall of the three, the highest drought index readings, the longest fire season and the most total fire ban days, and its karri forest carries the heaviest fuel loads. Lower maximum wind speeds offset those conditions, leading the authors to



Dr Mohammad-Reza Ghaffariyan, managing editor of *Australian Forestry*, the journal that published the study. Image: courtesy UniSC Forest Research Institute

conclude there is no significant regional bias in fire-proneness.

Measured per million residents across the six decades, Victoria lost houses at five times the Western Australian rate, with New South Wales at double. Deaths ran 18 times higher in Victoria and five times higher in New South Wales, and where most of the deaths occurred, Cameron et al. found them rising in step with the number of houses burnt.

The study also sets a floor. Treat less than 4% of a region with prescribed burns each year and the area lost to wildfire does not move. Above 8% it falls sharply.

The authors bring considerable expertise to the task: Cameron is a forestry consultant. Dr Neil Burrows spent 42 years as an applied bushfire scientist, science manager and fire policy adviser with Western

Australia's Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions and its predecessors, and recipient of the Australian Fire Service Medal. David Packham worked two decades as a CSIRO bushfire scientist, and Dr Glen Kile ran CSIRO's forestry and forest products division.

"Relying on early detection and rapid initial attack/suppression has failed, and will continue to fail, particularly with multiple fire outbreaks in heavy, dry fuels," the authors say in the paper: 'Contrasting regional prescribed burning regimes effects the extent and impact of forest wildfire'.

They found fires starting in recently burnt forest either self-extinguish in very low fuels or are controlled quickly, and a prescribed fire burns below 500 kilowatts a metre where a wildfire can pass 100,000. Well executed, the paper says, burning leaves crowns unscorched and much of the duff layer intact, consuming 70-90% of each management cell and leaving riparian strips standing.

For Victoria and NSW, the authors recommend incremental increases toward a first target of 5 per cent a year, the figure the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission settled on in its 2010 final report.

To read the paper, **click here.**

Source: Forestry Australia



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