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Albanese Government announces ministerial reshuffle

COVER STORY P 2

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Albanese Government implements ministerial team shuffle

THE Albanese Government has made a series of changes to the appointment of cabinet ministers. The key changes affecting the Timber and Forestry industry are the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, The Minister for Housing and Homelessness and the Minister for Skills and Training.

- The Hon. Murray Watt – The previous Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has been reappointed as the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations.
- The Hon. Julie Collins – The previous Minister for Housing and Homelessness has been reappointed as the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. She also remains the Minister for small business.
- The Hon. Anthony Chisholm – Has been appointed as the Assistant Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.
- The Hon. Clare O’Neil – Has been appointed as the new Minister for Housing and Homelessness.



The changes made by the Albanese Government will affect not only the House of Representatives but also the Senate. Ongoing collaboration between the Timber and Forestry industry and the two levels of Federal government is essential. Image: Shutterstock

- The Hon. Andrew Giles – Has been appointed as the new Minister for Skills and Training.

The CEO of Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) Diana Hallam, and Australian Forest Contractors Association (AFCA) General Manager Tim Lester, extend a warm welcome new Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry The Hon. Julie Collins, who brings a wealth of knowledge to the role having held the portfolios in Opposition, as well as new

Assistant Minister The Hon. Anthony Chisholm. AFPA and AFCA both expressed thanks and appreciation to The Hon. Murray Watt for his efforts improving our sector under the Albanese Government, with the rollout of several industry initiatives.

AFPA CEO DIANA HALLAM

“We welcome Minister Julie Collins back to the forestry portfolio where she provided excellent representation for forest industries in the then Albanese Opposition, prior to the 2022 Federal Election.



Julie worked closely with industry on the policy and funding plan that has and is still being delivered for the sector. We look forward to working with Julie Collins and Anthony Chisholm to ensure forest industries realise their potential for the economy, climate and communities,” Diana Hallam said.

“Furthermore, Minister Collins comes directly from the Housing portfolio and understands the critical connection between forestry, timber and climate friendly housing. As a Tasmanian, Minister Collins also appreciates the value of our native, plantation and downstream manufacturing cogs in the forestry sector.

“Forest industries also thank Murray Watt for his service since taking the reins in the portfolio following the 2022 Federal Election. As Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Minister, Murray Watt helped guide the industry through manufacturing and plantation grant processes that were set up, alongside

Cont P 3

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From P 2

delivery of Australian Forest and Wood Innovations (AFWI) and other initiatives like the Strategic Partnership. We thank Minister Watt's diligence and attention to our sector during his time as Minister, as well as his engagement with AFPA and broader industry.

"Forest industries in Australia are still in a critical phase with the confluence of different areas of government policy, including climate change, the economy and jobs and of course housing. Forest industries are critical to all of these national and international policy issues. Under new Minister Collins and Assistant Minister Chisholm, we look forward to working further with the Albanese Government on the role our sector can play," Diana Hallam concluded.

AFCA GENERAL MANAGER TIM LESTER

"As Housing Minister and a proud Tasmanian, Minister Collins will know the importance of forestry and forest products to the economy and our communities," Tim Lester said.

"Forest contracting businesses provide an essential operations and workforce for Australia's \$24 billion forestry sector. Having government policies and regulations at Federal and State levels that support our sustainable, renewable and productive sector is a must.

"Across the hardwood and softwood estates forestry is a 'yes and' activity. Yes to regeneration, yes to renewability, yes to carbon sequestration, yes to effective landscape and environmental management and yes to quality jobs in rural and regional areas.

"We look forward to working with Minister Collins and Assistant Minister



The Hon. Andrew Giles MP, Member for Scullin, Victoria and Minister for Skills and Training.

Chisholm on the positive role being played by forest contracting businesses and the opportunities that are ahead of us," Mr Lester concluded.

HIA MANAGING DIRECTOR JOCELYN MARTIN

On the other side, The Housing Industry Association (HIA) recognises the loss of The Hon. Julie Collins and the subsequent gain of The Hon. Clare O'Neil and The Hon. Andrew Giles.

Jocelyn Martin said, "HIA acknowledges Julie Collins' valuable contribution as Minister for Housing, Homelessness and Small Business. Minister Collins' determination to put the issue of housing supply on the agenda for Australia and the progress she led to



The Hon. Julie Collins MP, Member for Franklin, Tasmania and Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.



Senator the Hon. Anthony Chisholm, Member for Queensland and Assistant Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Assistant Minister for Education, Assistant Minister for Regional Development and Deputy Manager of Government business in the Senate.

improve the system to deliver improvements to social housing has been a significant achievement. We wish her well in her new role."

"Off the back of today's cabinet reshuffle, what is needed now from the Albanese Government is true leadership over housing. Whilst the efforts to deliver social housing are important, it is builders who build homes not social housing policy."

"We need this government to recognise that they cannot continue to pile on more regulation and red tape and expect it to result in better outcomes for homeowners, investors and renters. They cannot continue to allow the



The Hon. Clare O'Neil MP, Member for Hotham, Victoria and Minister for Housing and Minister for Homelessness.



Senator the Hon. Murray Watt MP, Member for Queensland and previous Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, and Minister for Emergency Management.

current industrial relations environment to continue to be dominated by unaccountable unions."

"What the industry needs is strong and bold leadership including a pause on future regulation and to make systemic improvements to business conditions for builders."

"In addition to the housing portfolio, HIA would encourage Andrew Giles the incoming Minister for Skills and Training not only to retain the Government's current workforce aspirations to train, retain but there is an immediate need to substantially grow Australia's skilled construction work force."

"The government's housing agenda of building 1.2 million homes over the next five years will only be achieved if we have an adequate skilled workforce coming through and employers are supported to take on and train new workers."

"HIA will be extending a formal invitation to the new Ministers to meet as soon as possible to ensure that they understand why housing and skills must remain the top priority for the Government moving forward" concluded Ms Martin.

Timber industry addressing housing for the future

FOREST & Wood Products Australia (FWPA) has released a new report, *"Housing for the Future and the Contribution of the Timber Industry"*, as part of its Statistics and Economics Program and recent webinar series to increase understanding of the timber industry's market potential. The report was prepared by Erick Hansnata, Ph.D, Statistics and Economics Program Manager at FWPA.

FWPA is dedicated to providing the forest and wood products industry with insightful and timely analysis; hence the webinar series and summary report feature contributions from leading experts in the fields of economics, demography, and

urban planning, highlighting the collaborative efforts needed to address the ongoing housing challenges in Australia. The report is designed as an overview and discussion starting point for the challenges and opportunities of housing through the lens of the forest and timber industry and its diverse stakeholders.

Housing affordability worsened in 2023 when interest rates rose, on average, by 125 basis points. This rise affected many Australians, including mortgage holders, first-home buyers, renters, and builders. Now, as housing demand continues to rise amid a supply shortage, this new report and associated webinar series outline key

discussion points around how the timber industry can play a pivotal role in supporting the government targets for new housing construction.

The National Housing Accord aims to build 1.2 million homes over the next five years, and the forest and wood products industry is well-positioned to contribute through innovative construction methods and sustainable practices.

"The timber industry is

known for its association with housing construction. Recent data on ABS building activities and FWPA timber sales volume showed that there was a linear relationship between dwelling approval and sales of timber products," said Erick Hansnata.

The FWPA webinar series and summary report dive into housing issues from the perspectives of the property market, demography, the timber industry, and relevant associations.

"The forest and wood products industry has the capacity to help meet targets through innovation and improved approaches to constructing detached

“HOUSING DEMAND CONTINUES TO RISE AMID A SUPPLY SHORTAGE

Cont P 5



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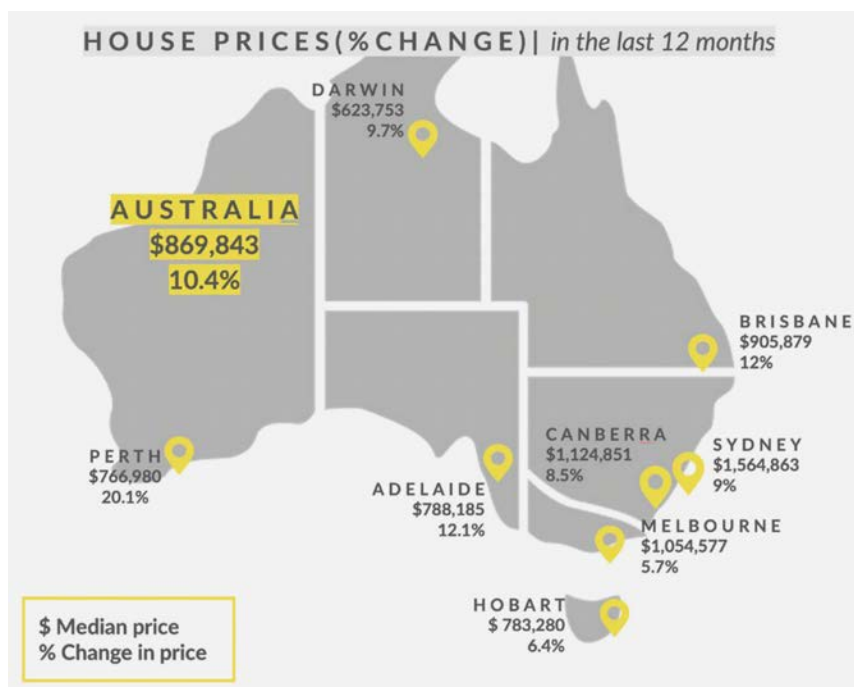
From P 4

houses, units, and low- and mid-rise residences that all store carbon. Applying best practices of modern construction methods, as well as expanded use of sawn timber and engineered wood products are just some of the opportunities our sector can provide for sustainable residential projects.”

WEBINAR 1 | AUSTRALIA'S FUTURE HOUSING AFFORDABILITY:

Webinar 1 covered a discussion around the housing crisis as a result of the long-term imbalance between supply and demand, the trend in dwelling supply related to migration intake and population projection, and the capacity and constraint of relevant industries (construction and timber) to address the supply issue. Speakers included Nerida Conisbee (Chief Economist at Ray White), Dr Liz Allen

“FWPA IS DEDICATED TO PROVIDING INSIGHTFUL AND TIMELY ANALYSIS



House price changes (%) by capital city and at the national level. Source: from FWPA report 'Housing for the future and the contribution of the timber industry.' ABS data, Nerida Conisbee presentation in the FWPA Webinar Series, 30 April 2024 'Australia Property Market: April 2024'. Image: FWPA

(Demographer and Senior Lecturer at the ANU Centre for Social Research Methods) and Dr Tom Alves (Head of Development at AHURI). Click here to watch webinar 1.

WEBINAR 2 | TIMBER SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE FUTURE OF SUSTAINABLE HOUSING:

Webinar 2 covered contributions and innovations

from the timber industry to build more houses by providing a technological approach to housing and low- and mid-rise residential constructions. Speakers included Nathan Calder (QLD State Sales Manager for AKD Softwood), Karl-Heinz Weiss (WoodSolutions Advisor and Director Weiss Insights), Craig Kay (National Product Engineer for Tilling Timber), and Andrew Dunn (CEO of Timber Development Association). Click here to watch webinar 2.

WEBINAR 3 | BRIDGING THE HOUSING ISSUES AND THE TIMBER INDUSTRY:

Webinar 3 discussed housing issues from the perspective of stakeholders (timber and housing associations, policy experts). The discussion reviewed current housing programs, including potential

barriers and incentives for the timber industry to support the programs. Speakers included Emeritus Professor Tony Dalton (Centre for Urban Research, RMIT), Simon Croft (Chief Executive of Industry Policy at HIA), and Richard Hyett (Acting Deputy Chief and Executive Officer and Director of Policy at AFPA). Click here to watch webinar 3.

For more information and to access the full report, please click here.

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Cyber threats are real

Protect your timber business with free cyber security training.

IN an era where a cyber-crime is reported every six minutes in Australia, small businesses, especially in the timber industry, face an escalating threat. The financial, operational, and reputational impacts are severe, with repercussions including:

- **Financial loss:** Small businesses lose an average of \$46,000 per attack.
- **Customer retention:** A significant drop in customers, up to 30%, can occur post-attack.
- **Downtime:** Businesses can lose an average of 25 hours after an attack.
- **Human error:** An overwhelming 95% of cyber-attacks involve human error, highlighting the importance of proper training.

Recognising the urgent need for protection, the National Timber & Hardware Association (NTHA) has partnered with the Council of Small Business Organisations Australia (COSBOA) to bring businesses and their staff the Cyber Wardens program—a free and simple online course designed to quickly safeguard your business from cyber threats.

WHY CYBER SECURITY MATTERS FOR TIMBER BUSINESSES

Small businesses account for 43% of all cyber-crime targets. These attacks are not only becoming more frequent but also increasingly sophisticated, making it essential for businesses to be proactive. Millions more cyber-attacks on small businesses are expected after the recent CrowdStrike global outage.

Timber businesses must be vigilant against a variety of cyber threats, including:

- **Email hacking:** Deceptive emails or messages aimed at stealing login credentials.
- **Ransomware:** Malicious software that encrypts data until a ransom is paid.
- **Data breaches:** Unauthorised access to confidential business information.
- **Insider threats:** Misuse of system access by employees or contractors.

INTRODUCING CYBER WARDENS: A SIMPLE, EFFECTIVE SOLUTION

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- **Free of charge:** No cost to you or your business.
- **User-friendly:** Designed for small business owners and employees with no IT jargon.
- **Self-paced:** Enrol in just two minutes and complete the program in 30-45 minutes.
- **Tailored for small businesses:** Addresses the specific challenges faced by smaller enterprises.

PROTECT YOUR BUSINESS TODAY!

The stakes are high, but the solution is simple. Get your team enrolled in the Cyber Wardens program to lock your digital doors to threats. This free training is a quick, effective way to ensure your business remains secure, your customer data stays protected, and your reputation remains intact.

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JULY

28-2 AUG: Gottstein Understanding Forest Science Course – Sunshine Coast, QLD.

The course is open to everyone associated with the timber and forestry products sector in some way. For full details, visit <https://gottsteintrust.org/grants-courses/understanding-forest-science-course>

AUGUST

12-13: Timber Construct Conference – Rydges, Melbourne.

The Timber Offsite Construction Conference and Exhibition has been rebranded as the Timber Construct Conference to encompass the full spectrum of timber building. The conference provides an invaluable forum to address pressing challenges and opportunities influencing timber's role across the built landscape. Technical sessions will cover research updates, emerging products, building code enhancements, and best practice case studies. For more information, visit <https://timberoffsiteconstruction.com>

SEPTEMBER

7: WFTN 'Cocktails for Charity' event, 2.00 - 6.00pm – Loft West End, Brisbane. Join us

for an afternoon of cocktails and charity to support RizeUp, an organisation dedicated to providing life-changing practical assistance to families affected by domestic and family violence. To purchase tickets and for more information, visit: <https://www.ntha.com.au/eventdetails/25321/wftn-cocktails-for-charity>.

13: NTHA NSW/ACT State Awards – Hilton, Sydney.

Join us in celebrating the New South Wales & ACT Timber and Hardware Industry. Nominations open at <https://www.ntha.com.au/events/2024-nswact-state-awards-nominations/> Contact Tahlia at events@ntha.com.au

23: Latin America Forest Investment Conference – Porto Alegre, Brazil.

24-25: International Woodchip and Biomass Trade Conference – Porto Alegre, Brazil.

25-27: Field Trip – Rio Grande do Sul State, Brazil.

OCTOBER

22-23: International Woodchip and Biomass Seminar and Networking Event – Singapore.

29-31: Forestry Australia's 2024 Symposium – Mercure Ballarat Convention Centre,

Golden Point, VIC. Theme: Healthy and resilient forests for our future, will facilitate conversation and collaboration that regardless of land tenure and ownership, healthy and resilient forests should be the objective for all forest and land managers. The Symposium is a focused three-day gathering, consisting of two days of plenary and concurrent sessions, and a day of Field Trips. The two-day program will feature a range of Keynote and Invited Speakers, who are experts and thought leaders in their field. The Symposium will also feature several social functions, facilitating networking and collaboration in an informal and relaxed environment. For more information, visit <https://www.forestry.org.au/2024-symposium/>

NOVEMBER

13-15: AFCA annual Gala dinner & conference – Launceston, Tas. For more information visit: <https://www.afca.asn.au/Events/afca-2023-conference-photo-gallery>

SAVE THE DATES 2025

MARCH 22: NTHA SA/NT/WA State Awards – National Wine Centre, Adelaide. Join us in

celebrating the SA, NT & WA Timber and Hardware Industry. Contact Tahlia at events@ntha.com.au

MAY 30: NTHA QLD State Awards – Brisbane City Hall, Brisbane. Join us in celebrating the New South Wales & ACT Timber and Hardware Industry. Contact Tahlia at events@ntha.com.au

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

JUNE 22-26: World Conference on Timber Engineering – Brisbane. WCTE is the world's leading scientific forum for the presentation of the latest technical and architectural solutions and innovations in timber construction.

OCTOBER 20-22: International Woodchip and Biomass Seminar and Networking Event – Singapore.

OCTOBER 23-24: Field Trip – Vietnam.

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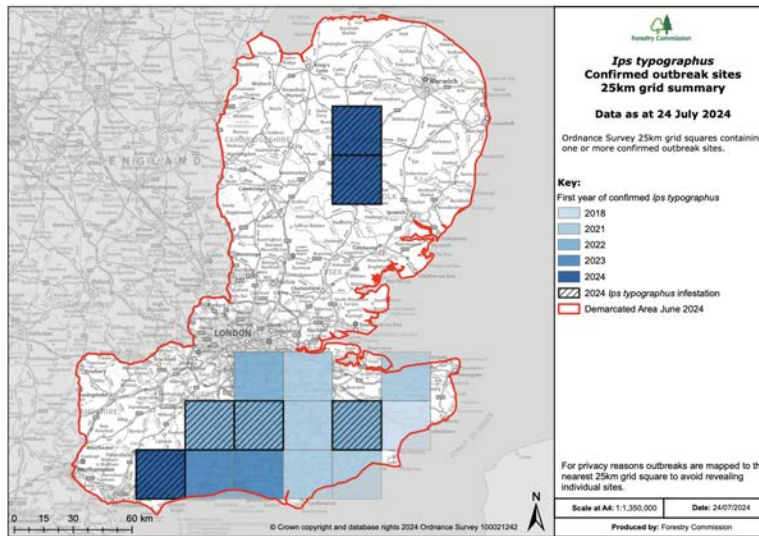
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New warning as *Ips typographus* tree pest found on new species

IN an update following the original article in Timber & Forestry eNews Issue #805, there have been some concerning developments surrounding the tree pests plaguing the UK.

Woodland managers, landowners and the forestry industry are encouraged to remain vigilant as the Forestry Commission announced a number of new *Ips typographus* findings in the South East of England on the 25 July.

Also known as the eight-toothed spruce bark beetle, *Ips typographus* is a serious pest of spruce trees in Europe which was first identified in the UK in 2018. It prefers stressed or dying trees



Map showing the confirmed outbreak sites of *Ips typographus* by year, making it easy to see the ongoing spread. Image: Forestry Commission website

but under the right conditions it can attack healthy trees and has the potential to cause significant damage to Great

Britain's forestry and timber industries.

Following extensive surveillance, further outbreaks

have now been found in the Demarcated Area in Kent and West Sussex, adding to the number of outbreak sites detected this year. The Forestry Commission continues to take swift and robust action including rapid eradication measures in response to the findings.

The finding of *Ips typographus* on a small number of cut and fallen Sitka spruce trees in close proximity to infested Norway spruce trees on a site in West Sussex marks the first time the beetle has been discovered on this species. There is no evidence of spread within the

Cont P 9

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From P 8

UK and the recent outbreaks are most likely due to natural dispersal of the pest from mainland Europe.

Defra Chief Plant Health Officer Professor Nicola Spence said:

“We can confirm that new findings of *Ips typographus* in the South East of England have been reported by the Forestry Commission on a small number of cut and fallen Sitka spruce trees in West Sussex.

“All landowners and land managers should remain vigilant for *Ips typographus* as temperatures rise, continuing to check the health of spruce trees on their land. Landowners, agents and timber processors should note ongoing restrictions for movement of spruce material and methods of forest operations in the Demarcated Area.”

Forestry Commission Director of Forest Services Dr Anna Brown said:

“Rapid eradication measures are being taken, alongside wider surveillance to determine the scale of the outbreak and identify further management steps required.”

The Forestry Commission is urging landowners to be vigilant and report any sightings of this beetle anywhere in Great Britain using the TreeAlert form in order to help reduce risk.

Landowners are encouraged to proactively remove spruce from the South



Map outlining the demarcated area and the proactive spruce removal area. Image: Forestry Commission website

East of England and replant with other non-susceptible species. They may also be eligible for funding if their land is in the ‘Proactive Spruce Removal area’. Landowners

and managers served with a Statutory Plant Health Notice due to an outbreak on their site may be eligible for grants to support felling and restocking activity through the Tree Health Pilot.

This announcement follows the introduction of new measures outlined on 5 June to protect against the impact of *Ips typographus* through the extension of the Demarcated Area. A Demarcated Area is in place in the South East of England and East Anglia to prevent potential spread of the pest, in line with the eradication action taken by the Forestry Commission to manage outbreaks. Within the Demarcated Area, the felling and movement of all spruce material, including trees and wood with bark, isolated bark, and wood chip with bark, is prohibited unless authorised by the Forestry Commission.

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UN report highlights need for more sustainable forestry and timber

AUSTRALIA'S world leading sustainable forestry practices and an expanded innovation agenda will only become more important locally and globally as a new United Nations (UN) report highlights the need for innovative solutions on the world forest front, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA), Diana Hallam said recently.

The State of the World's Forests 2024: Forest-sector innovations towards a more sustainable future (SOFO 2024) was launched at the 27th Committee on Forestry (COFO) at the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO's) headquarters in Rome this week – emphasising the



2024 saw a recognition of the need for increased sustainability practices on a global scale. Image: CC FAO. 2024. The State of the World's Forests 2025

role of innovation to achieve a sustainable future for global forestry.

Diana Hallam said, "We can be proud in Australia that we are already a world leader in production forest management and downstream innovation. Our

plantations and native forests are managed to the highest environmental standards. We are a model for global best practice, and we are moving strides ahead on the technological innovation front across the forestry supply chain, especially through the inception of Australian Forest and Wood Innovations (AFWI)."

The SOFO 2024 report states that 'although global deforestation is slowing, forests are under pressure from climate-related stressors and forest products demand is rising.' Global wood production is at record levels at 4 billion cubic metres per year with roundwood demand projected to increase up to nearly 50 per cent by 2050. It also states that 'innovation is required to scale up forest conservation, restoration and sustainable use as solutions to global challenges.'

"These pressures on global forests highlight the need for more sustainable forestry and more innovation. In Australia we are a global leader on sustainability, and we innovate right across the supply chain, from the best environmental forest management and harvest practices,

like replanting and regeneration, to advanced thinning, including using Indigenous practices. In the manufacturing stages we are rapidly innovating through the development of mass engineered timber products and increasing recycling of fibre," Diana Hallam said.

In order to manage required innovation, the SOFO report also states the need to 'boost skills, capabilities and knowledge to ensure that forest-sector stakeholders have the capacity to manage innovation, creation and adoption.'

"This emphasises the need for quality forestry education and underpins the value of our vocational and tertiary forestry skills providers in Australia," Diana Hallam said.

"SOFO also highlights that Australia is second globally for net gain in forest area between 2010 and 2020 adding an additional 4.4 million hectares, second only to China in area increased. In a world where deforestation continues to be a problem, this is a significant achievement.

"Australia can help lead much of the rest of the world on forestry best practice and innovation. AFPA will continue working with the Government to cement our higher quality outcomes for the environment and industry, for the national and global population we serve," Diana Hallam concluded.

For more information click [here](#).

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Housing supply crisis keeps inflation above target

ANNUAL housing inflation accelerated to 5.5 per cent over the year to June 2024, well above the average inflation rate of 3.8 per cent.

Master Builders Australia chief economist Shane Garrett said this was predominantly driven by rental price growth of 7.1 per cent over the year reflecting a lack of rental properties.

“For owner occupiers, the price of new dwellings is 5.4 per cent up on a year ago. This is partly the result of labour shortages and other

cost pressures in the new home building market.

“It’s further evidence that if we are to win the battle against inflation, we need to pull out all stops to build new homes.

“Building approvals released earlier this week show that June 2024 was the worst month since 2012 for higher density home building approvals.

“We need much higher volumes of new home building on this side of the market if rental market



The housing shortage is driving inflation up higher and higher. More homes will take the pressure off the rental market and help to keep inflation under control. Image: Shutterstock

lack of critical infrastructure, high taxes and charges, slow approval processes, and costly union EBAs.

“Inflation will remain too high if we don’t get a circuit breaker from Government to facilitate the building of more homes for both owner-occupiers and renters.

“The housing shortage makes it difficult to contain inflation. This puts pressure on the Reserve Bank to lift interest rates leading to even higher rental inflation and less building activity.”

pressures are to be relieved.”

CEO Denita Wawn said: “Whether it’s detached housing or higher density, the same constraints and cost drivers apply: workforce shortages, woeful productivity,

“THE HOUSING SHORTAGE MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO CONTAIN INFLATION

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Leaving a legacy in timber for future generations

FORESTRY Corporation is the largest commercial plantation manager in NSW continually harvesting and replanting approximately 225,000ha of softwood and 34,000ha of hardwood timber. Of the 2-million hectares of state forests managed by Forestry Corporation just 1% is harvested for timber products each year. Every tree harvested is replanted or regrown.

State forests have been managed for timber production, as well as tourism, cultural heritage, wildlife habitat and a host of other values, for over 100 years. In native regrowth forests, the same forests have been harvested and regrown many times over. In these forests the type of harvesting undertaken is chosen based on the forest type. The harvesting techniques employed influence the composition and structure of the forest that regenerates and grows on to become the future supply of timber, along with securing the environmental and social values into the future. In native forests managed by Forestry Corporation the Integrated Forestry Operations Approvals provide rules under which these operations occur.

In plantation forests there are two types of harvesting activities - thinning and clearfall. Thinning is the process by which excess,



1/ Every tree harvested is replaced with a new tree both in plantation and native forests.

2/ Forestry Corporation Silviculture Supervisor Isabel Smith. Images: FCNSW



defective or poor quality trees are identified and removed to encourage growth in the remaining trees. Clearfall is the final harvest and is undertaken at the commercial endpoint of the stand. The timing of both thinning and clearfall harvest events depends on a number of practical considerations such as species and growth rates, stand or site history, stocking and market requirements at the time of harvest. Each plantation would usually undergo up to two thinning operations, a clearfall and subsequent re-establishment. The silvicultural strategy, including planting rates, thinning and final harvest regimes is monitored and can be reviewed depending on economic and market considerations.

Plantations are re-established with a new crop of seedlings as soon as possible after harvesting to maximise the planted area and minimise

landbank, which is the plantation area that has not yet been re-established with trees. The landbank increased significantly following the Black Summer bushfires due to the area of plantation burnt by fire.

Replanting programs are currently underway in NSW state forest plantations. Forestry Corporation each year grows and dispatches 11-million seedlings at its two production nurseries at Blowering near Tumut and at Grafton with plantings occurring across recently harvested compartments in hardwood and softwood plantations. Every year Forestry Corporation replants over 12,000 football fields of trees in NSW plantations.

However, following the fires, Forestry Corporation has been working hard to rebuild the areas damaged by the fire. There has been a record numbers of seedlings grown and planted

to restock fire-affected plantations. The average annual number of seedlings planted has exceeded 14 million, comprising both post-fire planting and routine re-establishment of recently harvested plantations.

The nature of this work has never been as important given the loss of harvestable softwood that occurred during the Black Summer bushfires. Those wildfires in 2019-20 impacted five million hectares of land across NSW including 800,000 hectares of State forests and a quarter of the softwood plantations.

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Profiling three engineered wood projects in New Zealand

Diverse construction projects take advantage of engineered wood solutions.

By MICHAEL SMITH

NEW Zealand's architecture, engineering and manufacturing sectors have become increasingly familiar with building in engineered wood across a variety of construction projects. Timber Trader News considers three such projects (in aviation, low-rise residential and education), which emphasise the material's practicalities and advantages.

HANGAR 4

Currently under construction at Air New Zealand's engineering base in Mangere, Auckland is its new 10,000-square-metre Hangar 4 facility – about to become the largest single-span timber arch aircraft hangar in the southern hemisphere. *

** It's interesting to note that during the Pacific War, the RAAF constructed a number of hangars that incorporated local hardwoods into their designs – partially in response to a shortage of steel at the time. And, coming right up to date, is the Museum of Transport and Technology's Aviation Display Hall in Auckland. The hall is primarily a series of portal frames, purlins, girts and wall cross-bracing constructed of LVL – achieving an impressive 42-metre clear span.*

According to lead architect Patrick Thompson (of Studio Pacific Architecture), the LVL and CLT hybrid timber arch spans 98 metres and “is predominantly put together off-site in transportable sizes. The trusses are prefabricated



1/ Air New Zealand's Hangar 4: at 98 metres, it will be the largest single-span timber arch aircraft hangar in the southern hemisphere.

2/ The EFTE-pillow building envelope “provides great thermal and daylight benefits to the internal environment of the hangar”. Images: courtesy Studio Pacific Architecture

in five parts, assembled on site lying down and then lifted into place.”

Thompson notes that engineered timber has significantly lower upfront embodied carbon than steel. He adds that Hangar 4 is designed as a 5-6 Green Star rated building. “Internationally recognised for the design, construction and operation

of buildings, achieving this rating requires high sustainable performance across numerous design factors – including emissions reductions, energy efficiency, indoor environment quality, land use and ecology, building management, material selections, and water consumption.”

Thompson says the

hangar's EFTE-pillow building envelope “is lightweight and can span long distances relative to sheet products, which require more secondary structure. It also provides great thermal and daylight benefits to the internal environment of the hangar.”

Kulwinder Panesar, Senior Project Manager at Air New Zealand, says the hangar will be able to accommodate one wide-bodied aircraft and two narrow-bodied aircraft.

It will also house dedicated administration offices for planners and engineers to carry out aircraft maintenance.

Service pits will provide specialist services to the aircraft, including compressed air, potable water, mass airflow sensors, pre-conditioned air units, and a high-expansion foam firefighting system.

Panesar says the project's engineered timber is sourced from two places – the

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CLT from XLam in Australia and the LVL from Nelson. XLam's earlier shift of its production from New Zealand to Australia has not resulted in any supply chain issues – and the hangar is on track for completion (and due to be operational) in Q3 of 2025.

317 HARDY STREET, NELSON

This residential townhouse complex, situated in the heart of Nelson city, is a hybrid structure that comprises eight three-storey residential apartments. As noted in a Mid-Rise Wood Construction case study, it features “concrete foundations, ground floor slabs and low-level precast concrete walls, with extensive CLT walls and floors above”.

A spokesperson for the structural engineers (AMK Ltd) said CLT panels were chosen because the soft ground conditions “required a lightweight superstructure with a ground raft to mitigate long-term settlement issues that could have arisen from a heavier reinforced concrete solution”.

Further, the lighter-weight CLT allowed for increased speed of construction – shorter hook time and greater floor coverage per square metre for each crane lift. No temporary propping was required within the building's footprint, which meant early access to the lower floors for storage of



1/ **Lightweight CLT panels were chosen because of the soft ground conditions.**
 2/ **317 Hardy St, Nelson: incorporating EWPs into projects now “a must consider rather than a nice to have”.** All photos courtesy Michael Smith

materials and fit out.

The engineers noted that the CLT solution required early contractor engagement to determine the most efficient construction methodology.

Meantime, a spokesperson for the architects believed that “prefabrication required more work up front including computer modelling, which was beneficial to share between the specialised trades. Once on site the co-ordination of all trades went very well – noticeably the speed in getting up and out of the ground and ensuring the safety of construction workers. “Service penetrations were the one area we needed to provide more input and we’d change that in the future.”

The developer and builder both agreed that engineered wood has become an established construction material over the last 15 years in New Zealand. “It can be incorporated into multiple design solutions ... when protected appropriately from the elements.

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“Strength-to-weight ratio, ease of working, speed of erection and ability to sequester carbon make the incorporation of EWPs into projects ‘a must consider rather than a nice to have.’”

Interestingly, they concluded that the available off-the-shelf solutions specific for CLT have improved considerably since this project began (especially acoustic options) – which has made the system more usable, and easier to detail and get through the consenting process.

MARIAN COLLEGE

Following the 2011 Christchurch earthquake, when the Catholic college was destroyed, the search was on for a permanent home. That was only resolved in 2019 when a 3.15-hectare site was acquired in the suburb of Papanui.

The new land came with one of the largest distribution centres in the South Island (some 17,500m²) – and it was decided to make use of the existing warehouse by constructing a built-for-purpose timber school inside the original steel building.

The college’s facilities include six classroom blocks, a central, freestanding chapel, library, various technical rooms/laboratories, and double height performing arts and sports amenities space.

A Timber Unlimited case study of the project noted that using as much timber as possible within the steel structure “spread the seismic loadings on the ‘poor quality’ soils and met the economic demands of the Diocese. Like many projects, the budget had been under significant



1/ **Marian College: makes use of an existing warehouse by constructing a built-for-purpose timber school inside the original steel building.**
 2/ **The 2010-11 earthquakes put more focus on the resilience of buildings with a large component of timber.**
 3/ **Marian College’s facilities include a freestanding chapel.** Photos: Sarah Rowlands / Architects: Sheppard & Rout

pressure as a result of Covid, material supply and labour availability issues.”

Sustainability and attaining a 4 Green Star rating were important considerations for the client – most notably through materials such as glulam, LVL beams, the Potius® flooring and roofing, and Strandboard® linings, which combined to sequester more carbon than steel and concrete.

Jonathan Kennedy, spokesperson for the architects (Sheppard &

Rout), says that timber was the obvious construction material of choice. “Costs could be contained as far as possible, especially when a whole-of-life approach was considered.”

He notes that claddings

“AVAILABLE ‘OFF-THE-SHELF’ SOLUTIONS SPECIFIC FOR CLT HAVE IMPROVED CONSIDERABLY

specified by the Ministry of Education are usually based on the assumption that a school is an external structure, not sitting inside another building. “Retaining part of the original warehouse to shelter the college meant a significant saving on those costs.”

Kennedy adds that the Potius® panel system of cross-banded LVL box beams delivered the structural spans necessary to achieve large, open-plan teaching spaces. “These beams were also known by and acceptable to the ministry for use in a school, following our previous project experiences with them.”

In conclusion, Kennedy says: “Selecting the right consultant team, including those with prior experience and knowledge of timber technology, has enabled the realisation of a wonderfully warm and sustainable set of spaces within an otherwise uncompromising existing warehouse shell.”

NTHA answers questions around Health & Safety Representatives

Can a casual safety representative set their own hours?

MORE and more businesses have health and safety representatives (HSRs) in the workplace. HSRs are appointed by election and have specific powers and functions under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW) (the WHS Act), including:

- the ability to investigate complaints from workers relating to health and safety;
- the ability to monitor measures taken by the business to be compliant with the WHS Act; and
- the power to issue a provisional improvement notice (PIN) to a business that they believe has contravened the WHS Act.

Irrespective of their employment type, businesses must allow HSRs time to perform their functions under the WHS Act. HSRs are also entitled to their usual pay when performing those functions. Both obligations are often easily addressed by allowing an HSR time during their usual shift or workday to perform HSR functions.

However, what happens if an HSR proposes to monitor compliance or conduct an investigation outside of their normal work hours? Does the business have any say?

Those questions were recently considered by the Industrial Relations Commission of NSW in *Arnott v SafeWork NSW* [2024] NSWIRComm 1039.

The following Q&A may help you understand how HSRs can operate in your business.



HSR officers monitor measures taken by businesses to be compliant with the WHS Act to help ensure the safety of those in the workplace. Image: Shutterstock

CAN I GIVE THE FOLLOWING DIRECTION TO A HSR: "YOU'RE NOT TO PERFORM YOUR HSR FUNCTIONS OUTSIDE OF YOUR NORMAL WORK HOURS"?

No, in accordance with the reasoning in *Arnott*, the exercise of an HSR's functions (so long as they are validly performed under the WHS Act) cannot be subject to the discretion of the employer.

But what if that direction is provided in response to an HSR's notice of a proposed out of hours site inspection? Or what if there was another HSR available to perform their functions during normal work hours? The answer remains the same.

Importantly, the requirement for an HSR to give the business "reasonable notice" of an inspection is distinct from a request for permission (or the duty to

consult). The requirement to provide notice does not create an opportunity for the business to direct that the inspection does not occur at the date and time proposed by the HSR.

A HSR IS EMPOWERED TO UNILATERALLY DECIDE WHEN TO CONDUCT INVESTIGATIONS.

Additionally, seeking to restrict an HSR's exercise of their rights would breach the requirement to allow HSRs to spend such time as is reasonably necessary to carry out their functions and powers. Non-compliance with

"A HSR IS ABLE TO INVESTIGATE COMPLAINTS FROM WORKERS RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY"

that requirement attracts financial penalties.

CAN I STILL CONSULT WITH HSRs ABOUT HOW MUCH TIME THEY REQUIRE TO PERFORM THEIR FUNCTIONS?

Yes, and this is best practice. The aim of this consultation is to agree, to the

extent possible, on how much time is needed to perform any anticipated task or functions as an HSR. This form of consultation is particularly useful for a business when seeking to support and accommodate the performance of HSR functions and powers during normal work hours.

CAN AN HSR CHOOSE TO PERFORM THEIR FUNCTIONS OUTSIDE OF NORMAL HOURS?

Yes, provided they are exercising a power or performing functions set out in the WHS Act. However, if they are doing so for an "improper purpose" they risk being disqualified as an HSR.

Although yet to be tested, an HSR that sought to deliberately schedule their hours with a view to maximise possible compensation (as opposed to properly

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exercising their powers and functions under the WHS Act), could provide grounds for disqualification.

CAN A HSR SIMPLY ASSERT THEY'RE PERFORMING THEIR FUNCTIONS IN ORDER TO GET PAID FOR ADDITIONAL HOURS?

There is no general obligation to pay an HSR on every occasion on which an HSR asserts they are exercising their rights and duties. An HSR is only entitled to payment for the time they actually spend for the purposes of exercising their powers or performing their functions under the WHS Act.

HOW CAN I BE SATISFIED THAT A HSR IS PERFORMING THEIR FUNCTIONS?

It will come down to an assessment of the facts of each particular exercise of the HSR's powers and functions under the WHS Act.

Understandably, being issued what amounts to an invoice by an HSR may

“ A HSR IS EMPOWERED TO UNILATERALLY DECIDE WHEN TO CONDUCT INVESTIGATIONS



HSR officers investigate complaints from workers relating to health and safety.
Image: Shutterstock

not satisfy the business. Prior to declining payment, the business should make reasonable enquiries to satisfy themselves that an HSR has (or has not) performed their functions as claimed.

For example, if an HSR asserts they spent three hours conducting an inspection on a worksite outside of their normal work hours, ask the following questions:

- What were the health and safety concerns giving rise to the inspection?
- If documents were produced as part of the inspection (e.g. notes or photographs), can copies be provided?

Both questions are also relevant to the business' primary duty of care – so should be asked in any event.

If that inquiry reveals an HSR is not performing their functions, the business may argue:

- there is no entitlement to payment; and/or
- the HSR should be disqualified from their position.

Should an argument arise that an HSR is not entitled to pay, businesses should seek legal advice before making a decision to deny payment. It will always be necessary to look at the specific circumstances to determine whether an HSR is merely making assertions (to obtain payment) vs actually performing their functions under the WHS Act.

CAN A HSR ISSUE A PIN IN RELATION TO THE NON-PAYMENT OF HSRs?

Yes.

WHAT SHOULD BUSINESSES DO?

Businesses need to ensure they are complying with their obligations under the WHS Act with respect to HSRs. In doing so, businesses must not conflate the requirement to consult with HSRs in relation to WHS issues, with a discretion to direct HSRs how and when to exercise their powers or perform their functions as an HSR.

For more information click here.



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