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ISSUE 820 // September 12 2024

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Richard Stanton Awards celebrates another remarkable winner

COVER STORY P 3

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Wesbeam awarded 2024 supplier of the year by Big River Group

WESBEAM is proud to announce that on September 3, 2024, we were honored to receive the prestigious 2024 Supplier of the Year Award from Big River Group (BRG), recognising our commitment to excellence and partnership.

Big River Group has been a strategic customer partner of Wesbeam for many years. This award is a testament to the strength of that relationship, as we stood alongside many other outstanding companies vying for this honour. Receiving this recognition drives our determination to continue building a strong, collaborative future with Big River Group.

The Big River Group presented Wesbeam with the following commendation:

"Overall, this supplier has shown a commitment to supporting Big River Group through our Construction

“SELECTED AS SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR”

and Formwork & Commercial businesses that is unequalled. They have responded to all our requests for support in what is a very difficult market. They have engaged with our branches to ensure Big River Group is in the best possible position to win every opportunity."

Big River Group holds a national conference every two years, where Supplier of the Year and other internal awards are presented. This year's event took place in Brisbane with the awards night held on Tuesday, September 3rd. Wesbeam was one of the key suppliers invited to the event, and we are humbled to be selected as Supplier of the Year from a pool of over 100 suppliers.

Ray Ferretti, Executive General Manager – Construction of Big River



Wesbeam has won the BRG Supplier of the Year 2024 Image: Wesbeam

their expectations, ensuring that the partnership continues to flourish.

For over 20 years, Wesbeam has been delivering worldclass laminated veneer lumber (LVL) and LVL I-joint products to the Australian building industry. Our national network enables us to deliver superior products and services while fostering strong relationships.

Group, expressed his appreciation for Wesbeam's contribution:

"We aim to exceed the expectations of our customers, and having suppliers such as Wesbeam partner with us, allows us to continue to grow our teams and businesses across Australia."

As we move forward, Wesbeam remains committed to supporting Big River Group and exceeding

We're Australian owned and our \$115 million state-of-the-art facility located in Neerabup, Perth produces LVL and LVL I-joists that are distributed to every Australian state and territory through our fully equipped distribution centres located in each mainland State.

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Monique Blason honoured

The winner of the Richard Stanton Memorial Leadership Award.

MONIQUE Blason, the General Manager of Community Services at ForestrySA, was presented with the prestigious Richard Stanton Memorial Leadership Award. The award, which recognises excellence in sustainable forest management and chain of custody for forest products, was announced at the Australian Forest Products Association Members Dinner in Melbourne.

The award honours the legacy of Richard Stanton, former Australian Forestry Standard CEO and passionate advocate for sustainable forestry, whose dedication and commitment to the responsible management of forest resources continues through the Responsible Wood Certification Scheme (RWCS). The award celebrates individuals who demonstrate excellence and leadership in the principles of sustainable forest management and the promotion of the RWCS, ensuring that Australia's forests remain healthy and productive for future generations.

A leader in sustainable forest management

Monique Blason was recognised for her leadership in her role with ForestrySA, who manages over 16,000 hectares of Proclaimed Native Forest Reserves and supports conservation and recreational activities across 10,000 hectares of commercial pine plantations in South Australia's Adelaide Hills. ForestrySA has become an exemplary model of sustainable forest management, balancing the ecological, social, and economic values of the forests her team manages.

One of Monique's most notable achievements is her role in developing the Ramseys/



Simon Dorries (middle), CEO of Responsible Wood and Dr Tony Bartlett (right), Chairman of Responsible Wood, present Monique Blason with the Richard Stanton award and gift for her outstanding work in sustainable forestry.
Image: AFPA

Fox Creek, Mt Crawford mountain bike park. The park has earned widespread acclaim not only for its recreational value but also for its innovative integration of biodiversity conservation measures. Through careful planning and planting of native species, the park provides vital habitat for wildlife while offering a premier destination for mountain biking enthusiasts. This dual focus, on conservation and recreation, highlights Monique and her team's forward-thinking approach to forest management, where public use and environmental protection work hand in hand.

Promoting the Responsible Wood Certification Scheme

Monique's commitment to sustainable forest management extends to her advocacy for Responsible Wood certification. ForestrySA's forests are not just managed for timber production or conservation; they are managed with a focus on public engagement and education. Visitors to sites like the Wilampa Trail in the Second Valley Forest Reserve are greeted with clear, informative signage that promotes Responsible Wood

certification and the role it plays in ensuring sustainable forestry practices. This effort to communicate the importance of certified sustainable forests to the broader public is a testament to Monique's dedication to transparency and environmental management.

In presenting the award, the CEO of Responsible Wood, Simon Dorries, praised Monique's contributions, stating, "Monique and her team set a new standard for sustainable forest management in Australia. Her leadership safeguards the natural environment and enhances the benefits forests provide to the communities around them."

Cultural heritage and community engagement

In addition to her work in conservation and recreation, Monique has demonstrated a deep respect for cultural heritage, particularly in her collaboration with local First Nations groups. ForestrySA actively engages with these communities, providing access to native trees for traditional uses such as making canoes, shields, and other cultural artefacts. This initiative showcases Monique's

recognition of the cultural and historical significance of forests, and her commitment to preserving these values through sustainable forest management.

Her work highlights the multifaceted role forests play in society, serving as a resource for economic development and recreation and as a living connection to cultural heritage. These efforts have been instrumental in building bridges between ForestrySA and the local communities, reinforcing the idea that sustainable forest management goes beyond environmental conservation — it is about nurturing social and cultural ties as well.

A well-deserved honour

As Monique Blason received her certificate and gift, she was applauded for her contributions to sustainable forestry. The gift, from Darryl Freestone, a certified chain of custody member of Wood Connect, represented the very principles Monique has championed — products derived from sustainably managed forests through a certified supply chain.

"Monique's work is an inspiring example of how sustainable forest management can benefit both the environment and the community," Chair Dr Tony Bartlett remarked. "Your dedication to Responsible Wood's principles is commendable, and we look forward to seeing the continued impact of your leadership."

On the cover: Responsible Wood CEO and Sustainability Manager, and Board Directors with Monique Blason. Left to right: Simon Dorries, Mark Thomson, Dr Tony Bartlett, Monique Blason, Michael O'Connor, Matt de Jongh, Katie Fowden, David Little. Image: Matt de Jongh/Responsible Wood

Turning waste into value

Circularity at OneFortyOne's Glencoe Nursery.

ONEFORTYONE is pleased to share a new video, showcasing how the redeveloped Glencoe Nursery is repurposing waste products to protect precious resources. The Glencoe Nursery is a crucial link in the supply chain for growers across the Green Triangle.

Officially opened in April 2024 by the Hon. Clare Scriven, South Australian Minister for Forest Industries, OneFortyOne's \$8million investment in the redevelopment enables production of an additional 4 million seedlings each season,

while reducing water and chemical usage.

This significant private investment underscores OneFortyOne's commitment to a sustainable future for the region's thriving forestry

sector – and the thousands of jobs it supports.

The team at Glencoe have focussed on circular practices, repurposing waste products from across the industry as valuable materials to raise the next generation of trees. The Nursery's growing medium is made from waste bark recovered from OneFortyOne's Jubilee Sawmill in Mount Gambier, transformed into a valuable product by local business Van Schaik's Bio Gro.

Belinda Williamson, the Environmental Engineer for wood products shared that finding ways to find waste and work out a new way to utilise it, is one of the joys of her job.

"...we dry our timber at the sawmill and when the timber is dried then there's a certain amount of moisture or water comes out of the timber and it's quite a low PH product. The nursery gets water out of the ground to use on their

seedlings, that water is a higher PH than they need... so the idea was put that we could use some of our water, which is a lower PH water, in the nursery."

The team is now trialling the use of nutrient-rich wastewater from the sawmill's Continuous Drying Kilns to irrigate and fertilise seedlings. Early indicators suggest the water's natural acidity could be ideal for pine seedlings, potentially reducing the need for water additives at the Nursery.

The staff at OneFortyOne are passionate about making use of every part of the product and all the byproducts. It is not only a smart business move but also carries great benefits for the environment.

OneFortyOne has created a short video to showcase more about these key circularity initiatives and their contribution to reducing the Nursery's environmental impact: Turning Waste into Value: Circularity at the Glencoe Nursery - OneFortyOne. To find out more and watch the video, click here.



1/ The recently redeveloped OneFortyOne nursery in Glencoe now produces an additional 4 million seedlings per season.
2/ The sprinklers at the OneFortyOne Glencoe nursery will soon be using the repurposed water from the timber drying kilns
Images: supplied OneFortyOne

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REPURPOSING WASTE PRODUCTS TO PROTECT PRECIOUS RESOURCES

CCA report backs forestry for carbon mitigation

Forest industries note that startup costs highlight the need for policy reform.

THE Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) welcomes the Sector Pathways Review released by the Climate Change Authority (CCA). The Review which considers decarbonisation pathways for a range of sectors, suggests forestry as a key means to increase removal of carbon, AFPA Chief Executive Officer, Diana Hallam said.

The Review states with regards to carbon:

Increased land-based removals, including through reforestation, will be needed if emissions do not reduce significantly in energy intensive sectors elsewhere in the economy. There is an opportunity to increase these removals by:

Establishing new forests for timber, carbon sequestration,

“SUSTAINABLY GROWN PRODUCTION TREES IS A MAJOR SOLUTION TO TACKLING CARBON

agroforestry ... and Protecting existing forests and other native vegetation from deforestation and degradation.

Diana Hallam said, “This is excellent recognition from the CCA about what forest industries have known for a long time – that growing and managing sustainable production trees is a major solution to tackling carbon, fighting climate change and helping Australia meet its emissions reduction targets. We create these benefits while producing essential products.

The Review however highlights the barriers to new tree plantings.

Establishment of new tree

plantings can have high upfront costs and opportunity costs associated with shifting from agricultural production to timber, carbon or environmental plantings (CSIRO, 2022a).

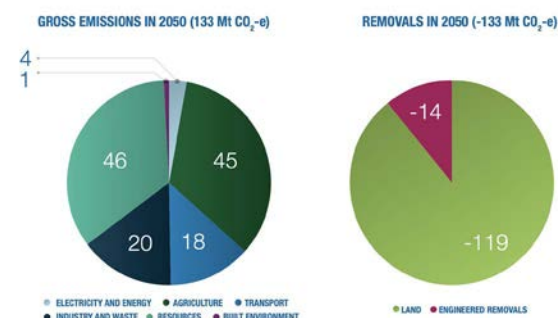
High land prices in productive agricultural areas and relatively low carbon prices are a barrier to landholders from establishing forest projects (CSIRO, 2022a), due to the potential opportunity cost of switching from one type of production to another.

“These are real challenges in realising the potential of forest industries and AFPA will continue working with the Albanese Government and Opposition on how best we can make

our contribution to the climate, economy and communities,” Diana Hallam concluded.

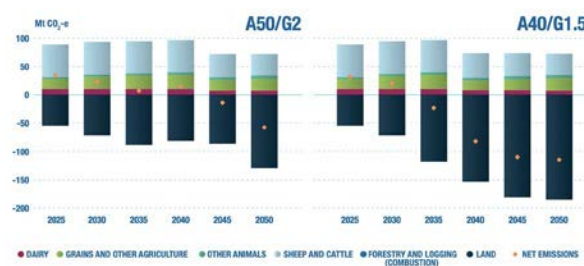
To read the review, click here.

Figure S.2: Sectoral composition of net zero in 2050 (Mt CO₂-e) – ground-up analysis



Sources: CCA analysis.

Figure AL.2: CSIRO's modelling projections of sources and sinks for agriculture and land sector for A50/G2 and A40/G1.5 scenarios



Source: CSIRO modelling in AusTIMES commissioned by the Climate Change Authority

The Sector Pathways Review highlights how important the land will be in the removal of carbon. Forestry is a major part of the land section. Image: Commonwealth of Australia (Climate Change Authority) 2024

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WFTN RizeUp to the challenge



The WFTN power team (L-R): Jenni Day, Versace Timbers; Alicia Langfield, NTHA; Tahlia Bellotti NTHA; and Jacinta Colley of Vida Wood. Image: supplied WFTN

On behalf of the Women in Forests and Timber Network Queensland (WFTN Qld) we would like to extend our deepest gratitude to our sector for their incredible support of RizeUp Australia who we supported for this year's Annual Cocktail for Charity event.

It's wonderful to see so many guests, each wearing different hats, come together to create a successful event. Thanks to the generosity and unwavering commitment, WFTN Qld were able to raise over \$20,000 in just one afternoon for RizeUp Australia. This total was beyond expectations and will cover the costs of furnishing and outfitting at least three homes. The day was filled with kindness, support, and wonderful connections and a lot of fun as we came together for a cause that truly matters. The raffle prizes, auctions, and networking were a true testament to the strength and spirit of our sector. In our 11th year as WFTN Qld

Alicia Langfield (NTHA), Tahlia Bellotti (NTHA), Jenni Day (Versace Timbers) & our MC Jacinta Colley (Vida Wood) stated this achievement would not have been possible without our Sponsors, and the contributions are a testimony to the incredible impact we can make together.

A huge thank you to our Sponsors:

Annual Partner: Woodhouse Timber Company

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 - **Silver Sponsors:** Weathertex, Vida Wood Australia, Wilson Timbers, and Parkside Timber.
 - **Bronze Sponsors:** Carbon Warrior, ITI Australia, Big River Industries Ltd, and NGU Real Estate Southside.
- Auctions:** Allied Seafreight Logistics and Sacha Drake Pty Ltd.

Lucky Door prize: Multinail Australia

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SEPTEMBER

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

19: Forestry Australia Networking & Discussion - Current and emerging opportunities supporting private sector investment in biodiversity – Melbourne, 5.30pm-7.30pm (AEST).

For more details and to register, visit <https://www.forestry.org.au/vic-events/>

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.

26: Forestry Australia Frame & Truss Tour – Fairfiled NSW, 2.30pm-4.30pm (AEST). For more details and to register, visit <https://www.forestry.org.au/nsw-events/>

OCTOBER

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

29-31: Forestry Australia 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 QLD 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.

From P 6

Raffle Prizes: Versace Timbers, Stairway Solutions, Vida Wood Australia, Dindas Australia Pty Ltd, Woodhouse Timber Company, Wesbeam, MiTek Australia, Sarah Porter Dix, Stef Goddard, Special FX Hair Studio, and Vivente Skincare.

For more information on RizeUP click here.

For more information on WFTN Qld click here.



Jane Pennisi, RizeUp (right) presents Jacinta Colley, Vidawood with the major raffle prize (Tangalooma Resort voucher) donated by Woodhouse Timber. Image: T25 Images



Trent Bucholz from Multinail presents their donation of the lucky door prize to Alicia Langfield NTHA. Image: T25 Images



Tracey from BDVS (left) presents Shelby McFaul from CMTP with her winning raffle prize. Image: T25 Images

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Business Grants

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Enews has partnered with a professional grant writing business. Watch this space as not all grants are made public. We will publish grants for various states/

territories for our industry here in Enews. Our connection might be available to assist you with eligibility criteria, grant writing, application process and

lodgement. They have a high success rate, so contact us if you would like to make an appointment. Contact: editors@timberandforestryenews.com

Export Marketing Development Grant (EMDG)

IN 2021-22, the EMDG program shifted from a reimbursement scheme to an eligibility-based, demand-driven program.

The shift created higher demand and lower grant amounts. This was because all eligible applicants received a grant and there was significant interest in the program.

Improved eligibility criteria for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs)

- Eligibility criteria better reflect characteristics of successful exporters.
- Minimum annual business turnover requirements per grant tier.
- Capacity to spend at least \$20,000 on marketing and promotional activities. This must be exclusive of the grant amount. It must be the applicant's own money.
- Minimum 2 years in business with the same Australian Business Number (ABN).
- Tier 1 applicants need to show they are ready to export and demonstrate they have the required skills. They can do this by completing approved export training and/or our test.
- Businesses can continue to receive EMDG grants for 8 financial years. There are new limits for how many years

businesses can have specific tier grants. These limits are:

- Tier 1 for 2 years
- Tier 2 for 4 years
- Tier 3 for 4 years
- Calculations towards the 8 financial years will now be based on:
 - entering into a grant agreement (whether or not you spend each year) or
 - the number of grants paid in the previous reimbursement scheme.

Benefits:

- New eligibility requirements are designed to help exporters who are most likely to succeed.
- Tier 1 businesses will be ready to export and can best use the grant.
- Grants will support businesses across different stages of their export journey. This is to help them get them into, and become, more confident with exporting.

Better support for businesses to diversify into new markets:

- Promotional and training activities must have a clear link to export and must support members that are SMEs. For EMDG, this is defined as businesses with less than \$20 million turnover.

- Representative bodies must be undertaking export training and/or new marketing and promotional projects that support their members.
- Representative bodies must outline in a high-quality plan to market how their proposed activities are new and how they will benefit SME members.
- For representative bodies proposing to provide export training, they must now provide a plan for proposed training activities. This will outline:
 - training outcomes
 - how the representative body will deliver the training
 - how the training will benefit SME members.

Benefits:

- More deliberate planning, transparency and accountability for representative bodies' use of funds. This includes the requirement to consider new opportunities and demonstrate how their proposed activities will be useful.
- New marketing, promotional and training activities will benefit more SME member businesses in the industry.

Improved compliance

measures:

- Increased probity requirements including:
 - tax compliance
 - conducting business in a professional and ethical way that would not risk Australia's trade reputation.
- Amendments to the definition of 'eligible export product' to ensure that goods are both:
 - of substantially Australian origin.
 - bring significant net benefit to Australia.

What the changes mean:

- New changes mean bigger grants, but not every applicant will receive a grant.
- EMDG funding is limited. We expect to receive a large volume of applications.

Due to the program changes:

- Some businesses and representative bodies who previously received EMDG grants will no longer be eligible.
- Some applicants who are eligible and apply will not receive grants. This is because funds may be fully allocated before we receive their application or before we assess it. This could be the outcome even if they submitted before applications closed.

AFPA welcomes new Illegal Logging laws

THE Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) welcomes the passage through the Senate of the Albanese Government's new national illegal logging laws, AFPA Chief Executive Officer, Diana Hallam said this week.

"Illegal timber not only undermines the environmental sustainability of the forest products industry, but also undermines our domestic biosecurity protections that safeguard Australia's environment," Ms Hallam said.

"AFPA supports the strengthening of the illegal logging laws to ensure Australia has a robust regime that requires importing businesses to source timber harvested from legal sources using sustainable practices.

"We thank the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, the Hon Julie

Collins MP, and the Assistant Minister, Senator the Hon Anthony Chisholm for the work they have undertaken to give effect to the new laws. We also thank Opposition Spokesman Senator the Hon Jono Duniam for listening to industry concerns and working with the government in a constructive, bipartisan approach.

"These reforms are particularly timely. Off the back of the unfortunate native forestry industry closures in Victoria and Western Australia, Australia has seen a considerable increase in the volume of imported hardwoods and it's critical the proper enforcement regime and penalties are in place if there's



It is essential to prioritise the protection of sustainable forestry and take all necessary measures to prevent illegal logging. Image: Shutterstock

any doubt as to the source," Ms Hallam said.

"To further strengthen the laws, we believe Country of Origin labelling must be introduced for timber, in line with the Australian Government's due diligence importing processes. The labelling should indicate the country where the timber was grown so Australian consumers can be better informed and aware when purchasing timber

products.

"Applying Country of Origin labelling for timber and timber products would:

- increase transparency of supply,
 - strengthen the effectiveness of illegal logging laws,
 - halt trade from conflict countries and
 - ensure Australian consumers are not supporting deforestation.
- "The integrity of our timber and fibre products is paramount. When grown, harvested and processed properly, as we do in Australia, these products represent the height of sustainability, but when corners are cut, it can be environmentally damaging and undermine Australian jobs," Diana Hallam concluded.

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Australia moves further away from National Housing Accord target

NEW industry forecasts released by Master Builders Australia show the country has moved further away from achieving the National Housing Accord target of 1.2 million new homes.

Five months after the first forecasts covering the full five-year Accord period, Australia is projected to increase its housing shortfall from 112,000 to over 166,000 homes.

From 1 July 2024 until 30 June 2029, Master Builders forecasts 1,034,000 new home starts, 13.8 per cent lower than the Accord target.

CEO Denita Wawn said new home building started the Accord period from its weakest position in a decade.

"The downgrade in our



Higher density buildings will be essential to meeting the National Housing Accord target. Image: Shutterstock

April forecasts is off the back of a prolonged battle to curb inflation, persistently high interest rates and continued constraints on the supply side of the residential building market.

"We are expecting the market to gradually recover over the next few years as the macroeconomic conditions improve, but more work is needed to address the housing shortfall.

"Federal, state and territory governments have acknowledged the challenges around planning, workforce and productivity, but we aren't seeing enough flow through on the ground.

"Productivity in the industry has fallen 18 per cent over the last decade. It's clear that state governments need to expedite the rollout of planning reforms to reduce the high costs and time it takes to build.

"Workforce shortages continue to be the biggest challenge for the industry across all sectors.

"At the Federal level, the Government's priority should be growing the building and construction workforce. This

Cont P 17

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FSC opens up ANZ Risk Assessments

FSC is looking for proposals from consultants to draft the new Risk Assessments

TO align with the European Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), FSC is introducing a new generation of Risk Assessments that will replace the existing FSC National Risk Assessments. This enhanced approach will not only support the production of FSC MIX products under the FSC Controlled Wood system, but it will also be a

critical tool for evaluating risk in compliance with new legal requirements, including the EUDR. These next-generation Risk Assessments will provide companies with an invaluable resource for efficiently assessing and mitigating risks and streamlining compliance. The Risk Assessments can be developed through two different processes: centralised or comprehensive processes. In essence, a centralised process means that FSC International oversees the revision process, with a consultant appointed jointly by FSC International and FSC ANZ drafting the Risk Assessment. This is how the New Zealand Centralised Risk Assessment was developed. This differs from a so-called 'major process' where FSC ANZ would be the process lead, and the Risk Assessment would be drafted by a chamber-balanced working group, which is how



The new risk assessments will cover the risk compliance for companies managing forests who will need to comply with the EUDR. Image: FSC

the Australian National Risk Assessment was developed.

FSC International's accelerated process for developing approximately 90 Risk Assessments globally includes strict timelines and milestones. If a milestone is missed, the process will automatically revert to a centralised approach. Given that the established milestones were deemed unachievable by the Board, a centralised process for Risk Assessments in Australia and New Zealand was requested. Of the 20 countries currently developing their Risk Assessments, 19 have chosen a centralised approach. Therefore, the FSC ANZ Board's decision aligns with the common practice observed internationally.

The draft Risk Assessments will go through 30 days of consultation, providing an opportunity for future users

of the Risk Assessments and other stakeholders to provide feedback on the draft documents.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS TO DEVELOP THE NEW RISK ASSESSMENTS

On 30 August, FSC International published a call for proposals from consultants interested in drafting the Risk Assessments for Australia and New Zealand. All the relevant materials can be accessed here.

The consultants will review the existing (Centralised) National Risk Assessments for Australia and/or New Zealand against the FSC-PRO-60-006b Risk Assessment Framework, identify gaps and discrepancies and revise the respective assessment in conformance with the Framework.

Applications are open until 19 October 2024.

EUDR ALIGNMENT UNTIL THE RISK ASSESSMENT COMES INTO EFFECT

Until the Risk Assessments come into effect, certificate holders relying on the FSC system to comply with the EUDR will have to undertake an extended company risk assessment using either a simplified or a main risk assessment template provided by FSC International.

The simplified template is required for FSC Forest Management and Chain of Custody (FSC 100%) certificate holders seeking to demonstrate conformity with FSC-STD-01-004 FSC Regulatory Module to use their FSC Certification to support compliance with the EUDR. This template provides a largely pre-filled assessment of risk based on certification status.

The main risk assessment template is relevant for certificate holders undertaking an extended company risk assessment to conform with FSC-STD-40-005 Requirements for Sourcing Controlled Wood (click here) and FSC-STD-01-004 FSC Regulatory Module (click here).

More information about the templates, the templates themselves, guidance and a tutorial can be accessed here.

Certificate holders who do not need to comply with the EUDR do not need to use the templates.



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Electric forklifts and battery recycling

As Australia develops the infrastructure required for electrification, Combilift is ready to deliver powerful improvements to Aussie warehouses.

By **MARTIN McVICAR, CEO**

COMBILIFT Founder and CEO, Martin McVicar, says it is vitally important for his company to make a positive impact on the environment and its customers' health. "For Combilift as a company, we're very focused on how we make our vehicles more environmentally friendly for our customers," Martin says. "In the last five years, roughly 90 percent of our R&D investment has gone into electric power equipment". Some of the new electric Combilift models have included the Combi-CB70E and the Combi-CUBE, both of which address their own unique needs. The former is



Combilift has focused in on electrifying their machinery over the past 5 years and have developed some amazing and environmentally friendly products.

Image: Combilift

the market's shortest 7-ton capacity counterbalance forklift, with the ability to handle heavier loads while

taking up less space. The latter has also been designed to allow for narrower aisles, but comes with an optional

Dynamic 360 steering system, for seamless change of direction.

Combilift Country Manager for Australia, Chris Littlewood, says the company's research and that of industry experts point to Australia's desire for accelerated electrification. "The country has been building in readiness for this next wave of technological innovation. The infrastructure is being put in place and most businesses are trying hard to reduce their emissions," Chris says. A 2023 report from commercial real estate company, JLL, revealed

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Two new industry-owned standards

A public comment period has been opened by FWPA on the new standards.

FOREST & Wood Products Australia (FWPA) is pleased to announce that two of its draft standards are now open for public comment. The standards, FWPA Standard G01 Recycled Structural Timber and FWPA Standard G02 Recycled Decorative Timber, focus on the visual grading of recycled hardwood timber used in structural and decorative applications.

In response to feedback from FWPA members, the organisation will take on a coordination and facilitation role in the creation and revision of industry standards. FWPA emphasises the potential of industry-developed and owned standards for increased efficiencies by addressing members' concerns and aligning with industry business needs.

FWPA understands the broader benefits and accessibility of industry-owned standards, which can be effectively managed and maintained as intellectual property by the organisation. The work on these standards is also supported by FWPA's WoodSolutions program.

An expert, industry representative panel and formal procedures have been established by FWPA to formalise the publication process. FWPA has also appointed Jacqui Bates, Director of Dynamic Impact Group, to lead the development of FWPA's inaugural Industry Standards.

"This landmark project will set new benchmarks for the industry and serve as a valuable resource for all stakeholders," said Jacqui.



FWPA Standard G02 focuses in on Recycled Decorative Timber. Image: FWPA

"I am eager to contribute to their successful publication later this year."

The aim of these draft standards is to establish clear, consistent requirements to ensure the safety and quality of recycled timber products. By providing manufacturers, suppliers, and users with definitive guidelines, these standards aim to enhance consumer and industry confidence, promote the use of recycled timber, and support environmental sustainability through material reuse.

The standards offer a unified framework for grading recycled timber, which can help reduce variability in product quality and foster better communication between suppliers and purchasers. FWPA Standards G01 and G02 offer valuable information for stakeholders in the recycled timber industry and facilitate better communication and understanding of product specifications.

Although these standards have served as interim guidelines for some time, this public comment period marks the formal process of review and publication for FWPA-developed standards. The

6-week public comment period for these two draft standards commences on Tuesday 3 September and closes on 15 October 2024.

This initiative represents the first time FWPA standards will undergo a structured comment and publication process, reflecting the organisation's commitment to industry ownership and intellectual property. Industry-owned standards also provide cost savings for FWPA members by eliminating the need to purchase standards from external organisations in the future.

These FWPA Standards will exist in addition to established Australian Standards and FWPA acknowledges that the industry is well-served by Standards Australia. The FWPA team will continue to contribute to the development of Australian Standards and participate in timber and built environment committees.

Boris Iskra, Codes and Standards Manager at FWPA, stated, "We are advancing these draft documents through our newly established procedures and collaborating with our reference panel to publish these standards

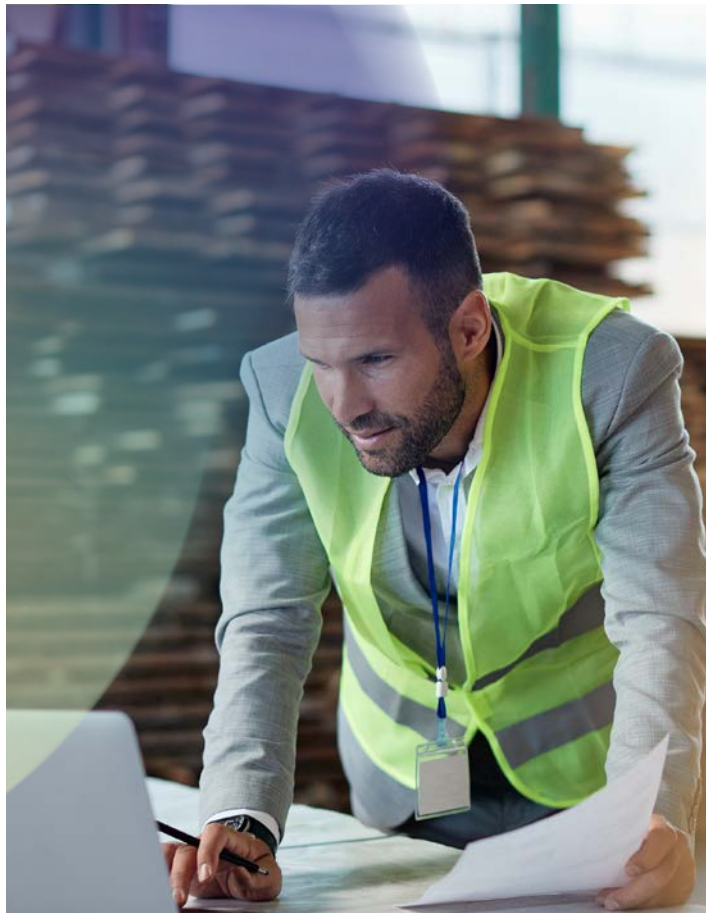
for industry ownership." He added, "Our goal is to have future industry standards incorporated into the Building Code of Australia and to influence how timber can be utilised in the built environment."

The development and revision of these standards aim to encourage industry innovation and adapt to evolving technologies and practices. FWPA is committed to fostering collaboration and creating standards that effectively meet and reflect the needs of the industry. The FWPA Codes & Standards Program aims to publish a minimum of two standards per year as outlined in FWPA's Strategic Plan 2023-2028. The process will see proposed industry standard suggestions submitted to FWPA's Standards Reference Panel, which consists of timber sector representatives, for consideration and are then prioritised for the benefit of the wider forest and wood products industry.

Through innovation, research, and marketing, FWPA strives to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of the Australian forest and wood products industry.

"Our organisation is committed to addressing industry needs concerning the standards development process and is looking forward to this first round of consultation to support our industry effectively," said FWPA's CEO, Andrew Leighton.

For more information and to provide feedback on the two draft standards, please click here.



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that 53% of Australia's top 100 industrial and logistics companies have net-zero targets. With Combilift's help, it's hoped that every one of these businesses can achieve their targets, according to Martin. "[Electrification] has been our focus for the last five years, as well as how to measure the efficiency of those trucks," Martin says. "As a company, we're inherently focussed on sustainable solutions. And by that, I mean we're focussed on making vehicles that are more environmentally friendly to use, as well as vehicles that enable our customers to make their warehouse utilisation more environmentally friendly."

THE GREAT BATTERY DEBATE

To power Combilift's electrification, Martin has remained a strong voice in favour of lead-acid batteries, despite the automotive industry opting for lithium. This is due to a range of factors, he explains. "In the car industry, the lithium battery has become the norm for electric vehicles, but no one has really figured out how to recycle them effectively," Martin says. "In seven to 10 years, recycling these lithium batteries could become a challenge if there's no solutions found. "On the other hand, lead-acid batteries last for much longer and they're 80% recyclable. So, while we wait for more environmentally friendly alternatives, we feel lead-acid batteries are best."

Never one to let down a customer, Combilift will satisfy those who request a lithium battery. However, there is one more reason the company opts for lead-acid over lithium. "Lithium batteries are lighter, which is why the automotive business tends to use lithium - they want the vehicle to be as light and aerodynamic as possible," Martin says.

"But in the forklift industry, no matter what the model is, our vehicles need counterweight to lift the load. So, lead-acid batteries act as that load, instead of adding more steel."

REBUILD IT AND THEY WILL COME

As Combilift continues to innovate and improve its sustainability, it intends on recycling more than batteries. Martin revealed that the lead-acid batteries won't be the only components being rebuilt in the near future. "Our old premise is only four kilometres away, and we still own them. So, our intention over the coming years is to set that up as a rebuild centre," he says. As a proud Monaghan local, this development is sure to bring further jobs and revenue to the community - a value that Martin has maintained throughout Combilift's proud 25-year tenure in Ireland. "I grew up in this area, and I've always desired to stay here."

So, to set up a manufacturing company or a business in your hometown gives you great satisfaction," he says. To Martin, it seems, there could be no more noble cause than to maintain the sustainability of his local community as well as the environment.

For more information click here.

Source: Timber Trader News

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must include a mix of domestic and skilled migration workers.

“Domestically, we cannot fill this gap. We need to think outside of the box with better apprenticeship incentives, reskilling migrants already in Australia, and a targeted international campaign to bring in skilled tradies.

“The performance of higher density building will be crucial to meeting the target and combating the housing and rental crisis.

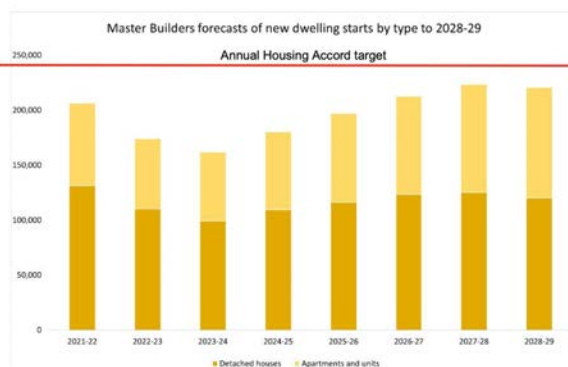
“Build times for these projects have blown out since the pandemic by around 20 per cent from approval to completion and costs have risen by around 40 per cent.

“Inflation is a capacity killer. Governments must speed up efforts to address these supply bottlenecks,” Ms Wawn said.

In some good news, the non-residential and civil sectors of the industry continue to expand and are helping to keep economic

2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
206,127	173,967	161,672	180,252	197,055	212,654	223,437	220,564
-3.4%	-15.6%	-7.1%	+11.5%	+9.3%	+7.9%	+5.1%	-1.3%

Source: Master Builders Australia-produced forecasts and analysis of ABS Building Activity (8752.0)



Master Builders Australia forecasts of total new dwelling starts for Australia to 2028-29. Image: Master Builders

growth in positive territory.

Non-residential building activity should fair quite well over the next five years, increasing by 7.3 per cent over the five years to June 2024.

The civil construction sector is forecast to expand by 8.5 per cent, largely driven by transport and utilities construction activity.

Ms Wawn added: “Continued investment and

support in the whole built environment is important.

“We can’t build the homes we need without the appropriate commercial and civil infrastructure to support it. This includes critical infrastructure such as utilities.

“Builders are up to the challenge to reach these targets but the barriers on the road need to be cleared to get the job done,” Ms Wawn concluded.

Over one-third of loans to first home buyers

“THE number of housing loans issued to first-time home buyers has been steadily increasing in recent months, pointing to strong demand for homes among aspiring homeowners,” stated HIA Economist, Maurice Tapang.

The ABS released the Lending Indicators data for the month of July 2024 today, which provides the latest statistics on housing finance commitments.

“It has been ten months since the last rate increase, and home buying confidence is picking up across different borrower types,” added Mr Tapang.

“First home buyers have been resilient in this cycle, with the number of loans issued

to this group increasing by a further 0.8 per cent in the month of July to 9,990.

“This leaves the number of loans issued in the three months to July 2024 to first home buyers 6.4 per cent higher compared to the same time in the previous year.

“Loans issued to first home buyers made up 35.4 per cent of the overall home buying market in the month of July, which is above the historical average of 30 per cent.

“There is this misconception that investors compete with first home buyers. This data shows that the two can both be very active in the market.

“Investors in the market have been important in adding

to housing supply, particularly in this cycle, amid higher rents and low vacancy rates.

“The number of loans issued to investors building new homes in the three months to July 2024 rose by 26.7 per cent compared to the same time in the previous year.

“There were 24,630 loans issued for the purchase or construction of a new home in the three months to July 2024. This is 16.8 per cent higher compared to the same time in the previous year.

“As is expected, investors are the first segment of the market to return as they see through the macro-dynamics of house price growth and rising rents.



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