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International award for NT aged care centre

COVER STORY P 6

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New FWPA data dashboard

The upgraded tool offers members comprehensive data for the forest and wood products industry.

FOREST & Wood Products Australia (FWPA) this week launched its new FWPA Data Dashboard, an essential tool designed to empower Australia's forest and wood products industry with access to crucial data, insights and forecasts. The platform is available as a complimentary benefit exclusively to full levy-paying FWPA members, providing a wealth of new information aimed at enhancing decision-making and driving business success across the industry.

"The new dashboard represents a significant upgrade, offering a more advanced platform that enhances usability and functionality," said Erick Hansnata, Statistics and Economics Program Manager at FWPA.

"With a wealth of new data series added, the new FWPA Data Dashboard is designed to empower our members and industry in their business planning and decision-making processes."



FWPA has a helpful tutorial for using the new dashboard on its website.

Key features include:

- macroeconomic indicators with insights into GDP and GVA trends, enabling informed economic strategies;
- ABARES Australian Forest and Wood Product Statistics;
- FWPA's softwood data series;
- international forest production and sustainability data;
- monthly trade activities data and forecast;
- building activities data and forecast;

- and detailed research and analysis provided by FWPA's Statistics and Economics team.

FWPA CEO Andrew Leighton said, "The FWPA Data Dashboard includes forecast data and comprehensive market analysis, equipping our members with the insights needed to navigate the dynamic landscape of the forest and wood products industry.

"The platform is designed with future growth in mind, ensuring that we can expand

its capabilities based on the evolving needs and interests of our members and the wider industry."

In addition to exclusive complimentary availability to full levy-paying members, FWPA will soon introduce a subscription feature, offering FWPA Associate members and other interested users access to the new dashboard for a reasonable annual fee.

FWPA's public data dashboard will continue to be publicly available via our website.

FWPA's commitment to enhancing industry competitiveness and sustainability through innovation, research, and reliable data remains at the core of this initiative. By equipping members with powerful data insights, the FWPA Data Dashboard ensures better decision-making, driving growth and productivity across the sector.

To learn more, click here.

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Forestry Industry Action Plan feedback distorts the story of native forestry

ACT NOW! Informed submissions to the plan are urgently needed as anti-forestry groups flood the feedback.

IN Enews #818 (August 29), we ran a story on the newly announced Forestry Industry Action Plan. Chaired by Peter Duncan AM, the Independent Forestry Panel is tasked with "consulting with a broad range of stakeholders and reporting to the Government on the best options to achieve the balance between sustainable supplies of timber and our environmental commitments".

Late last week, AAP released an article stating that the panel was pondering "the end of native forest logging in NSW".

This came in response to the panel reaching out to stakeholders with a series of options, one of which was an end to native forest logging within four years, with supply to be met through other sources.

AAP spoke with WWF-Australia forests expert Dr Stuart Blanch, who said "I think this is the first time a NSW government process has seriously consulted stakeholders on ending native forest logging. I think this is showing there's enough people in government and parliament who think it's safe enough to articulate this as a real issue they need to explore.



A Forestry Corporation of NSW worker replanting trees in a harvested area. Image: courtesy FCNSW

"The experience from the shutdown of logging in Western Australia and Victoria is that once a government starts to canvass a full exit, the private sector stops investing and workers start finding new jobs."

However, James Jooste, the NSW chief executive of the Australian Forest Products Association, interpreted the option very differently. "It would be remiss, in the context of this conversation, to not ask that question," he said.

"We very much saw it on our end as the government saying we need to settle this debate, we want the case for why it would be disastrous to exit out of native forestry.

"The government clearly wants that case put forward. This is a government that has

never signalled that it will transition out of native forestry."

The transition out of native forestry in NSW featured in two of the recommendations floated by the previous NSW government's Inquiry into the long-term sustainability and future of the timber and forest products industry, tabled in 2021. The government at the time noted the two recommendations, saying "The inquiry found that there remains a place for sustainable

harvesting of timber from public native forests, in accordance with the stringent ruleset contained in Integrated Forestry Operations Approvals and other environmental requirements in the NSW Forest Management Framework."

Subsequently, the Minns government reaffirmed its commitment to the forestry sector after its victory in the 2023 state election, though at the same time promising exclusion areas for the Great Koala National Park and greater glider habitat. Which leads us to the new plan and panel.

Several hundred submissions have already been received by the panel. Like our readers, Enews

values responsible forestry management and its ability to provide vital housing materials as well as store carbon in a sustainable, renewable source. However, at the time of writing, responses are overwhelmingly anti-logging, with opinions ranging from local people reasonably preferring the mid-North Coast be prioritised for koala habitat, to screeds about the rapacious neoliberal greed that has levelled all the trees.

Informed commentary from those who are aware of the actual processes of NSW Forestry and the important role hardwood timbers play in areas such as pole production and fire-resistant construction timbers is at this time very thin on the ground.

The current submission template went live on Tuesday and contains six topic areas for submitters to address, including sustainability, economics and cultural values.

Contributors can write as much or as little as they like, and names can be redacted from the public record (currently over a quarter of responses are Name Redacted), though names may later be included in official reports.

Submissions are currently open and close at 11.59pm on Sunday 13 October. Click [here](#) for the website with further information as well as links to submission forms and received submissions.

To read the full AAP article in the *Illawarra Mercury*, click [here](#).

Safety first this October

THERE'S a good reason that October is National Safe Work Month in Australia: orders are pouring in before the Christmas period, temperatures are heating up and, depending on where you live, you could already be in storm, fire or flood.

So each week this month is dedicated to considering one element of safety in the workplace. This week it's WHA Fundamentals; next is Psychosocial Hazards; the third week is Risk Management Fundamentals; and finally Musculoskeletal Injuries – something people in the timber industry know far too much about.

There are events happening around the country and businesses are encouraged to hold a SafeTea event to talk about what's happening in

their workplace.

Check out Safe Work Australia's resources and links for National Safe Work Month by clicking here.

October also marks the start of the bushfire season in many Australian states. Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) CEO Diana Hallam has said that our forest industries are well prepared for any potential threat to forestry assets, neighbouring farming areas, nature reserves and most importantly regional communities.

"AFPA acknowledges the leadership shown by forest industry companies



Gerard Bennett, general manager operations and safety at TP Bennett and Sons, has benefitted from safety programs instituted by Sustainable Timber Tasmania. Photo: courtesy Sustainable Timber Tasmania

in investing in firefighting resources and strengthening their tactical relationships with emergency services and volunteers in local communities to combat bushfire threats" Hallam said.

Across the country, the smell of hazard reduction burns has fragranced the cooler months. Forest

industries are vital in the often under-appreciated roles they play in preventing major fires in normal years and helping to fight them in the worst years, such as Black Summer.

"Uncontrolled bushfires not only negatively impact the livelihoods of regional towns, but also the health of

the environment particularly through the release of additional carbon emissions. It has been calculated that the 2019/20 black summer fires released a total of 900 million tonnes of carbon dioxide, equivalent to the annual emissions from worldwide air travel in one year," said Hallam.

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Hyne heads west

THE Hyne Group has acquired Pinetec, a pallet and packaging business based in Perth, Western Australia. This is the Hyne Group's first manufacturing presence in the West in its 142-year history.

Earlier this year, the Hyne Group announced its expansion into pallet manufacturing following the acquisition of Rodpak Pallets & Packaging in Melbourne and Express Pallets & Crates in Brisbane.

The Pinetec business has operated for over 30 years (15 years with the current owners).

Hyne Group CEO, Jim Bindon said Pinetec will continue to operate as usual but with the benefit of being part of a global network. "This expansion of our pallet division into the West is exciting times for both the Hyne Group and Pinetec," said Bindon.

"I am also really pleased to advise that the two previous shareholders of the Pinetec business will remain involved in the Hyne Pallets division, as will all the existing staff. One of those shareholders, Ian Smith, is the Pinetec General Manager, and I welcome his continued expertise and support in this role.



WA's Pinetec is the latest pallet and packaging business to join the Hyne Group.

Photo: courtesy Hyne

"With the broader support of the Hyne and James Jones Groups, Pinetec's capability and credentials as a business partner to their many customers, will only be enhanced."

The acquisition of Pinetec will finalise on 1 November 2024, subject to all Completion Precedents being met.

WA Heritage timber shortages

The Heritage Council of WA is struggling to find alternative hardwoods to repair heritage-listed buildings and structures as supplies of jarrah and marri dwindle following the ban on native timber forestry that came into place this year.

WA Today reports that projects such as the repair of Carnarvon One Mile Jetty have had to turn to merbau



One Mile Jetty was badly damaged during Cyclone Seroj in 2021. A lack of jarrah means repairs are being made with imported merbau. Photo: Government of Western Australia Department of Transport

imported from Southeast Asia as it was simply not

viable to source the amount of jarrah decking required.

Timber specialist John Clarke told the publication the situation was perverse. "You go into Parliament House, it's lined with beautiful jarrah," he said.

"One day that might need to be upgraded and repaired and replaced. Can you imagine Parliament being lined with merbau?"

To read the full story, click here.

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Top award for NT aged care centre

Yutjuwala Djiwarr has a winning mix of beauty and client-focused design.

ARCHITECTURE is part art, part science and a whole lot of competing needs in every project. Each firm finds its own place to begin a journey through those needs from brief to completed design; for Sydney-based Kaunitz Yeung Architecture, that place is with the participation of the people who will be the end users.

A recent project, Yutjuwala Djiwarr – Nhulunbuy Flexible Aged Care Facility, is located on Yolŋu Country in North East Arnhem Land. It is the first aged care centre in East Arnhem Land, contains 32 aged-care beds, one palliative care bed and a four-chair dialysis unit and was designed in a three-year process of deep collaboration with prospective residents, Yolŋu Elders, families and organisations.

Out of this participatory design process has come a genuinely different and effective building. This began with the site selection – close enough to town for families to visit easily, but far enough away for residents to not be disturbed. The centre is bordered by Banyan trees and the local football oval, which remains a central place of community connection.

The building itself is not a sterile block, instead, residential dwellings radiate off a central hub with covered external walkways for socialising while protected from the elements. Architects David Kaunitz and Ka Wei Yeung describe it as a “palm frond” approach, saying “the ambition was to favour the residents’ experience over the operational and regulatory requirements as much as possible.”

Accordingly, each room is surrounded on three sides by



1/ Deep verandahs screened by Darwin Stringybark battens protect residents and visitors socialising or sleeping outside.

2/ The rooms meet all regulatory requirements while allowing for adaptation and a close connection to the environment.

3/ Ceremonial areas including this fire pit and cultural facilities such as the arts centre are important parts of the design. All photos: courtesy Kaunitz Yeung Architecture

views to the outside world, allowing cross-ventilation, natural light and a visual connection to Country, even from bed, along with deep verandahs for outdoor sleeping for visitors and residents in

any weather and direct access to indoor communal spaces without corridors, all while complying with regulations.

The room designs are adaptable from twin to single and Cultural protocols

regarding different skin groups, family units and genders can be accommodated by the design.

In late September, Yutjuwala Djiwarr was awarded in the Community Centre category of the Chicago Athenaeum and European Centre for Architecture’s 2024 International Architecture Awards.

The award recognises not just the impressive physicality of the design (its timber and Colorbond structure evokes classic vernacular design from the Territory and the shape of the building in its environment is as striking as it is functional) but also the profound difference it is making for its community.

Prior to Yutjuwala Djiwarr, Elders needing aged care were forced to move off Country to accommodation in Darwin, which separated them from family and community.

In an interview for CRANaplus, the peak professional body for the remote and isolated health workforce, Registered Nurse Rosie Breen, service manager at Yutjuwala Djiwarr described the difference the centre is already making, talking about the joy of one resident who had previously been forced to stay in Darwin for two years.

“It’s best for old folk to be in the community,” said Breen. “Easier for the family to visit and take them around in the bus, and to be around family. You should see the smiles on their faces when they can go on the bus for an outing.

“And at the centre, there is an open door for family to come and spend time with their

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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 QLD State Awards – Brisbane City Hall, Brisbane. Join us in celebrating the QLD Timber and Hardware Industry. Contact Tahlia at events@ntha.com.au

MAY 30: 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

From P 6

elderly family members.” (To read the full story, click here.)

Timber is an important part of the centre’s design, particularly its cladding: the Darwin Stringybark battens were milled locally by the Gumatj Corporation mill, which is Aboriginal-owned and -operated. This timber was salvaged from the local mine site in the process of clearing and 20 linear km was used for the project. The timber battens serve as a ventilated façade, shading the buildings and facilitating natural ventilation.

The choice of materials was partially influenced by the remoteness of the location. The nearest city, Darwin, is 1042km away by road, most of which is dirt and cut off six months of the year by wet season flooding, leaving the only access to Nhulunbuy via a one-hour flight or a two-day barge

from Darwin. As a result, the building needed to be robust and low maintenance. Solar arrays for power contribute to its self-sufficiency.

The name Yutjuwala Djiwarr translates roughly to “Little Heaven”. Centre cultural advisor Robyn Mununggurr described it as a place of harmony and comfort, a home, where clients can spend their final time on Earth before heading to what she described as “Big Heaven”.

Keeping Elders in Community has multiple benefits: they can carry out their important roles in transmitting and leading Culture and they can spend their last years on their own Country.

Yolju people form mainstays of the nursing staff and are also responsible for the garden surrounding the centre, where most of the plants have been propagated in the



Service manager Rosie Breen and Aboriginal Health Care Worker Ruth Mununggurr of Yutjuwala Djiwarr featured on the cover of CRANAplus Magazine in April 2024. Image: supplied

local community nursery from seeds collected from Country, including traditional food and bush medicine crops. Some of the gardeners also provide locally caught fish and shellfish for residents. As the gardens mature, even more resident

activity will be able to move outside. Other elements, such as a popular arts centre and men’s and women’s bungal grounds (ceremonial grounds), have also been integrated into the design.

This award joins a 2024 Good Design Award gold, a European Healthcare Design award, an honourable mention at the INDE Awards and more. Most importantly, Yutjuwala Djiwarr represents a changed approach.

As Kaunitz and Yeung have said, “This project has blazed a trail for an approach and outcome that is needed across the country – caring for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on Country, by community, and in a culturally appropriate way, as determined by them.”

To learn more about Yutjuwala Djiwarr and Kaunitz Yeung Architecture, click here.

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Meet your certified supplier: New Age Veneers (NAV)

In this occasional series, Responsible Wood visits another of its certified suppliers.

By **MATT DE JONGH**

At Responsible Wood, our mission is to develop and promote globally recognised standards for sustainable forest management and responsible sourcing of forest products through independent, third-party certification. Recently, I visited New Age Veneers (NAV) at its Sydney site to catch-up with its team and see first-hand their approach to sustainability.

New Age Veneers (NAV) is a leader in the interior surfaces industry, delivering designer surfaces crafted from premium materials for both commercial and residential projects. Australian-owned and -operated since 1962, NAV has a longstanding commitment to innovating the way Australians design functional and beautiful spaces in the workplace, community, and home.

Under CEO Kevin Kelly, whose passion for timber veneers has driven the company's success, NAV has transitioned from traditional veneer manufacturing methods to technologically advanced, pre-finished wood grain effect veneers. This evolution has allowed NAV to offer products that combine durability, longevity, and design flexibility, all while maintaining the tactile beauty of real timber.

Environmental responsibility is at the core of NAV's operations. The company has always sourced its raw timber materials from sustainably managed forests,



1/ Responsible Wood's Matt de Jongh with New Age Veneers team members Amarni Story and Joanna Hanby.



2/ NAVURBAN veneer in Sherwood creates a warmly dramatic interior in this residential build by Orr Made. Photo: Lillie Thompson, courtesy NAV

a practice that reflects its deep commitment to environmental stewardship. NAV's expertise lies in engineering real timber into cutting-edge veneer products that not only meet high aesthetic standards but also adhere to stringent sustainability criteria.

NAV has achieved GreenTagCert™ certification for its NAVURBAN™, NAVURBAN™ Laminate, NAVURBAN Diamond™, NAVURBAN Diamond™ Laminate, NAVURBAN

Elements™, and Navcompact™ ranges. These certifications contribute to Green Star Credits, offering clients the added satisfaction and peace of mind that these products also meet the newly launched Product Health Declaration (PHD) standards from Global GreenTag.

Kevin Kelly emphasises the company's dedication to sustainability, saying: "Our mission is to lead the industry in developing surfaces that not only meet but exceed the highest

environmental standards. We are committed to continuous innovation in our product ranges to achieve sustainable gains."

THE ROLE OF CERTIFICATION

Responsible Wood, as Australia's national governing body for PEFC International, plays a crucial role in promoting sustainable forest management through certification. NAV's products are PEFC and Responsible

Cont P 9



3/ Byron blackbutt veneer creates a naturally warm interior at Nepenthe Winery in the Adelaide Hills.



4/ The same veneer is repeated in the ceiling of the winery's Barrel Room, echoing the French oak barrels below.

Photos: Kelsey Zafriidis Photography, courtesy NAV

From P 8

Wood chain of custody certified, with trademark licence codes PEFC/21-31-251 and RW/1-31-251, ensuring that their timber products are sourced from responsibly managed forests. This certification supports NAV's commitment to maintaining a chain of custody system that complies with the PEFC and Responsible Wood CoC Standards (PEFC ST 2002:2020 and AS-NZS 4707:2021).

By using PEFC and Responsible Wood certified products, NAV not only supports green building initiatives but also provides assurance to their clients that their products contribute to achieving Green Star® points. These certifications underscore NAV's dedication to producing environmentally responsible products that meet the highest standards of sustainability.

Kelly said, "We strive to be ahead of the curve in premium surface engineering and design. Our partnership with Responsible Wood enhances our ability to offer products that are both cutting-edge and sustainable, aligning with the growing global awareness of the impact building materials have on our environment."

Certification systems like Responsible Wood and PEFC provide consumers with the confidence that the products they choose are sourced responsibly. NAV's adherence to these standards ensures that its customers have access to surfaces that contribute to sustainable building practices, supporting broader environmental conservation efforts and promoting safe and fair working environments.

The visit to NAV also strengthened the partnership between Responsible Wood and its certificate holders. By working closely with certified organisations, we can further promote the adoption of sustainable sourcing practices and deliver relevant certification standards across the region. This collaboration is vital in driving positive change and ensuring that all stakeholders, from forest managers to consumers, benefit from sustainable forestry.

As an Australian not-for-profit organisation accredited to develop standards by Standards Australia, Responsible Wood manages the PEFC certification standards and brand in Australia and New Zealand. Our standards are developed in line with international best practices, ensuring that certified products meet the highest levels of sustainability. Through third-party certification, the Responsible Wood Certification Scheme offers credible assurance that forest products are sourced

responsibly, supporting environmental conservation and the principles of sustainable development.

New Age Veneers exemplifies the successful integration of innovation and sustainability in the interior surfaces industry. Through its partnership with Responsible Wood and adherence to global standards, NAV sets a benchmark for environmental responsibility, ensuring that its products are recognised as some of the most sustainable in Australia. As Kelly said, "At NAV, we wholeheartedly welcome the growing awareness of the impact building materials have on our environment."

For more information about New Age Veneers and their environmental practices, visit their website at <https://www.newageveneers.com.au/>

Publisher's note

IN issue #821, on page 6, we included an editorial on the benefits of including the brand 'Australian Made'. Not only does Timber Media Australasia Pty Ltd believe in the merits of the iconic Australian Made brand, our two publications (*Timber and Forestry Enews* and *Timber Trader News*) are also licensed to use it. The application process is easy and straightforward and for most small to medium enterprises (SME), the investment required is small. The iconic Australian made brand is for all Australian businesses making products locally.

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Vietnam combats illegal imports

INTERNATIONAL NGO TRAFFIC works to ensure global trade in wild plant and animal products is legal and sustainable (click here for its website). Recently, the organisation partnered with Vietnam's Department of Forestry and Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to run a series of training courses in Quang Tri, Ba Ria Vung Tau, Dong Nai and Gia Lai, reaching 123 officials from Vietnam Customs, Forest Protection Department and Environmental Police, across 21 provinces.

The curriculum focused on enhancing skills in assessing and verifying legal compliance related to imported timber, a field the Vietnamese government has focused on this year as the country's timber sector has struggled to meet the conditions of



Trainers from TRAFFIC and officials from Vietnam Customs, Forest Protection Department and Environmental Police.
Image: supplied

the Voluntary Partnership Agreement it signed in 2018 with the EU to eliminate illegal timber from the country's supply chains and boost access to the strictly regulated European markets.

Linh Nguyen, project manager at TRAFFIC, said, "The high pass rate and positive feedback from participants indicate that we have made substantial progress in equipping our officials with the necessary tools to combat illegal timber trade. It represents a crucial

step in Vietnam's ongoing efforts to promote sustainable forest management."

Vietnam is a major importer and exporter of timber products. Much of the imported timber is sourced via cargo shipment from Africa, particularly from the Congo Basin, where uncontrolled deforestation is a major problem.

Wood-product exports from Vietnam have risen significantly in the first nine months of 2024, with raw

timber exports, valued at US\$3.53 billion, up 13.1% compared to the same period in 2023. Major importers from Vietnam include China, the US and the EU, so it is vital that supply chains are transparent and trusted. After the damage caused by record-breaking Typhoon Yagi in September, it's feared the damage will cause a yearly shortfall of 3.5 million m³ of timber for the next five to seven years, requiring improvements in production methods to maintain growth in compliant timber products.

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Image: Shutterstock

FSC International names new director general

ON Monday, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) International Board of Directors announced the appointment of Dr Subhra Bhattacharjee as the new director general, effective 1 October 2024.

Subhra Bhattacharjee brings over 20 years of experience in public policy and programming in climate change and sustainable development, having worked closely with governments, NGOs, academia, and the private sector worldwide. She has worked for the United Nations and prior to that for the Reserve Bank of India, with a brief stint in academia.

Bhattacharjee holds a Master of Philosophy in economics from Jawaharlal Nehru University, and a PhD

in economics from Iowa State University.

Stuart Valintine, Chair of the FSC International Board of Directors said, "Subhra's expertise and experience in international development and leadership will serve her well as she steps in at this critical juncture in FSC's organisational growth."

Bhattacharjee's ambitious vision aligns with FSC's mission and future goals, aiming to leverage its membership, network and collaborative partnerships to strengthen global forest stewardship for protection and sustainable management of the world's forests.

Bhattacharjee said, "It is an honour and a privilege to join FSC as Director General.



Dr Subhra Bhattacharjee is the new FSC director general. Image: supplied

We must act urgently to mitigate the ongoing global climate and biodiversity crises, and the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of forests with respect for forest-dependent communities is critical for

this. In this context, today FSC's mission and role are more relevant than ever. I look forward to working with the whole FSC community and partners to maximise the contribution of forests to sustainable development."

Outgoing Director General, Kim Carstensen said, "Guided by our global vision to meet the world's need for forest products while protecting forests, FSC has contributed immensely towards a sustainable planet over the last 12 years, and I wish Subhra every success in this vital role. Her expertise and vision are exactly what FSC needs to continue to provide solutions to some of the most pressing challenges of our time."

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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/

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

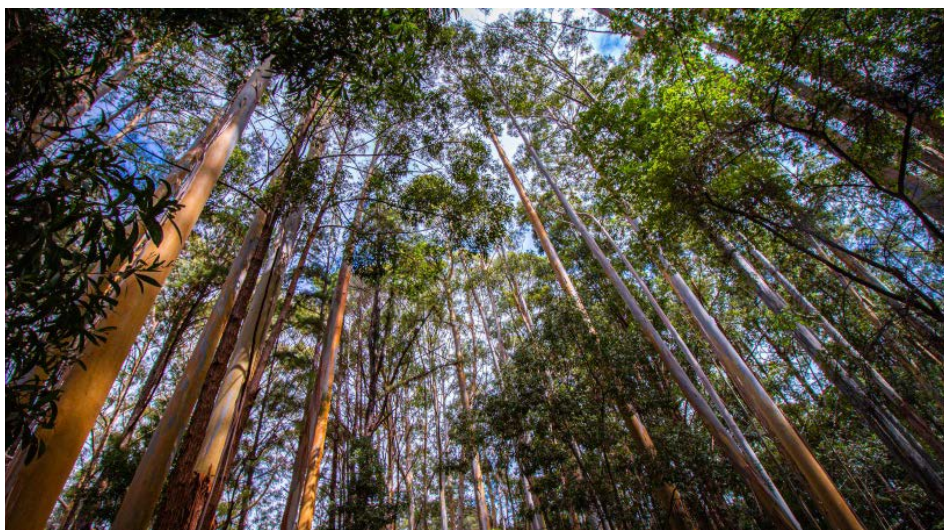
WA Native Forest Transition Programs

THE WA Government's \$80 million Native Forestry Transition Plan provides support to native forest workers, businesses and communities as part of the state's transition away from commercial native tree logging.

The WA Government recognises the significant contribution that the native forestry industry has on the State and the livelihoods of skilled workers in regional communities and their families.

The Workforce Transition Programs (WTP) provides financial assistance through payments to support workers who have left the industry voluntarily or have been made redundant and assistance in transitioning to a new industry through re-skilling and new employment support.

Workers in the native forest industry (sawmill, haulage or harvesting) who were employed by a business with a native forest contract



Karri Forest Warren National Park, Pemberton. Image: WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

with the Forest Products Commission (FPC) on 8 September 2021 and who have been made redundant or have left voluntarily, are invited to apply. Note this eligibility requires work primarily (75%+) on native forest timber activities within their employment.

This includes casual workers registered with a business that have been provided regular ongoing work by that business for at least one year prior to 8 September 2021.

Those employed after this date may be eligible for inclusion in the training support program.

The purpose of the

Workforce Transition Programs (WTP) is to support workers who are transitioning out of native forestry. The WTP is only available to workers employed by a business with a current native timber production contract with the Forest Products Commission (FPC) and that otherwise meets the Eligibility Criteria.

Payments for eligible people range from \$10,000 through to \$45,000 depending on length of employment plus up to an additional \$8000 for training support, job matching and resume preparation plus training in a new job.

Eligible persons include

those previously employed by a sawmill, haulage or harvesting business based in Western Australia which were party to a native forest timber production contract. Percentages apply for businesses engaged in native and private forest contracts.

Click here for further information, or to download a full FAQ about the program and eligibility, click here.

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Amount: Unspecified

Round 1 Closes: 31 Dec 2024

Location: NSW

Who Can Apply:

- Individual

Co-Contribution Required:

Unspecified by Provider

<https://www.wa.gov.au/government/document-collections/workforce-transition-programs>

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Lasting strength

TerraFrame from Woodhouse is an affordable H4-treated option for deck frames, stairs, ramps and any application where a low to ground option is required.

By **DONYALE HARRISON**

BRENDAN King, product manager at Woodhouse Timber Company, thought he was just doing a spot of home improvement at his new-build Queensland home.

“I was installing a 25m² deck at my house and I planned to use a composite decking product,” King says. “That decking has a really long warranty period of 50 years. I wanted a timber subframe, but we’re on a concrete slab, so the deck was very low to ground. I realised that most of the products on the market were either unsuitable for that application or had nothing like the warranted lifespan of the decking product.”

Market options focused on steel and aluminium subframes, which – aside from being significantly more awkward to install – did not fit with King’s sustainable goals for the project.

With help from the team at A Wood Shed in nearby Darra, King sourced H4-treated spotted gum for his job, but the seed of a new Woodhouse product had been sown.

King says, “Talking with the team at A Wood Shed, most outdoor timbers were H3. They’re suitable for above-ground applications, but above-ground in this case is really above 150mm; there was very little available for me to install directly on top of the slab and less again at a good price point.

“I raised it with the team at work and said ‘we should pursue an H4-treated softwood product’ – three years later, we’ve brought TerraFrame to the market.”



1/ TerraFrame from Woodhouse is a new H4 outdoor timber product suitable for a wide range of structural applications.

2/ With an H4 treatment that extends its useful service life in damp conditions, TerraFrame is particularly well suited to low-to-ground applications.

3/ Decks should always be considered as a whole system. Here, steel stirrups sunk into concrete help to ensure good drying periods for the timber above, regardless of how wet the summer is. Photos: courtesy Woodhouse

FROM PLAN TO PRODUCT

The Woodhouse team didn’t need much convincing: Australians are avid deck builders and the concrete slab/close-to-ground style has dominated recent builds across much of the country, so there was an obvious product gap ready to be filled.

“We set about researching the best options for a high high-quality durable pine product at an accessible price point,” says King. “We wanted to really fine-tune the specification to make sure what we delivered would be the best option for the market here.

TerraFrame is treated

with H4 Koppers MicroPro micronised copper azole (MCA) preservative to protect it against fungal decay as well as termite and borer attack.

“We wanted to choose a preservative treatment that would give a similar service life to composite decking boards,” says King. “The MCA option means that we can offer a 50-year guarantee in-ground contact, but also, because the treatment itself is water-borne, it has a range of other benefits.

“These include the fact it’s an environmentally friendly, low-impact treatment. Because there are no solvents, there aren’t VOCs, so the odour is much lower. Plus it’s very

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neutral in its colour, meaning there is no need to top coat.

An H4 treatment level is officially rated for 'outside, in-ground' use. In practice, balancing all the applicable Australian standards and building codes, this means H4-treated timbers are typically required for low-to-ground applications with protections from constant water contact, and in-ground non-critical structural applications such as fence posts and landscaping applications.

The MCA treatment doesn't carry risks for animals or children playing on the timbers and is suitable for use with all galvanised and stainless-steel fasteners.

"We know that legislation has changed in the past based on concerns about preservatives like chromium and arsenic," says King, "so being able to specify MCA opens up the pathway for specification into more sensitive installations and is suitable for use in schools, playgrounds and commercial or residential deck builds."

TerraFrame is currently supplied in common decking sizes, from 45mm x 45mm for battens to 70, 90 and 140 x 45 sizes for common bearer and joist sizes, but that is set to expand in the near future. All sizes are supplied pre-coated.

King says, "Due to the proximity of TerraFrame products to ground level, we wanted to apply a coating to the timber to inhibit moisture uptake and keep it dimensionally stable in service.

"We've chosen a water-based penetrating oil that can be easily overcoated with solid paints or translucent films, depending on the look the installer desires, but that also protects the product while it's exposed on site before and during the installation."



Being timber, TerraFrame is easy for installers to use on site. Adding joist tape can help to move water away from the top of the subframe.

Photo: courtesy Woodhouse

This ready-to-go aspect of TerraFrame has been welcomed by the Woodhouse customers who've trialled TerraFrame.

"Very quickly, we realised there was a broader application for TerraFrame outside of only decks," says King.

"During our testing period, we had a meeting with an installer to test concepts. Almost immediately, he indicated to us that he wanted to specify this product for other applications, because his team could see the cost benefit in not having to paint TerraFrame in outdoor structural uses. Painting is usually recommended for H3 outdoor structural, whereas TerraFrame comes with the coating already added.

"When we looked at it, we realised it was every bit as suitable for pergolas, stairs, ramps, posts and more. As a result, we're starting to add even more products into the portfolio."

ALL SYSTEMS GO

TerraFrame's testing period included a comprehensive look at the various popular deck fixings and fittings on the market, including clip systems.

"We're based in Queensland, so we get some very wet weather," King says. "We've tested TerraFrame over

multiple summers with several popular clip and other fastening types and they've all worked extremely well. In every case, we looked at the deck as a whole system and made the best decisions for that specific location."

While timber merchants and installers are used to thinking of decking as a site-specific whole-system product, clients don't always understand the various issues.

"We've had very little in the way of rectifications and failures with our product range at Woodhouse," says King, "because we work so closely with the people who are buying them. But we have an album of photos of failures that we have collected over the years.

"Some of these are using the wrong fittings: gal used in coastal settings where the salt corrodes it, for example. Others are failures due to using the wrong timbers and seeing insect attack or water collecting in various locations and being trapped against the timber."

Accordingly, steel stirrups have been used in locations such as the one photographed to lift the timber subframe from direct ground contact in cases where drainage can't always be guaranteed. Aids to sub-floor ventilation, like plastic

membrane covered in gravel to prevent vegetation growing beneath the deck, are also covered in the comprehensive installation guide, along with recommendations for coatings, fittings and deck design.

"We used VapourSeal joist tape to protect the top of the joist," King says. "We like adhesive-backed tapes that form a strong bond with the joist because it's another layer of protection that doesn't trap moisture. All these things work together.

"The H4 treatment on the TerraFrame gives you a higher level of protection, especially in high-risk applications, but nothing substitutes for best practice during design and construction. We recommend installers talk with us if there are any questions about the project and we can come up with the best system to effectively and efficiently build a long-lasting deck."

Recommendations include the types of decking timbers used on top: "Our merchant clients spend a lot of time educating their customers on different levels of treatment and the importance of making choices based on expected lifespan and application rather than just price," says King. "There's a good fit between TerraFrame subframes and composite decks on top, but for timber decking, there are also multiple options that will deliver you a similar service life."

As part of best practice, a remedial sealing treatment using a recommended paint-on preservative is recommended for cut ends, notches and major penetrations.

"The thing to remember about deck failures is that they typically happen due to incorrect choices," King says. "The failures we've seen are not in applications that any good timber supplier or merchant

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would have recommended for those products.”

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Woodhouse has taken a three-year journey with TerraFrame, from plan, through testing and soft launch, to the current full market release. The product is manufactured by a trusted FSC-certified supplier that has worked with the company for years.

“We know their product is reliable and their production is transparent,” says King. “And we’ve had a great relationship with Koppers Performance Chemicals for many years, too.”

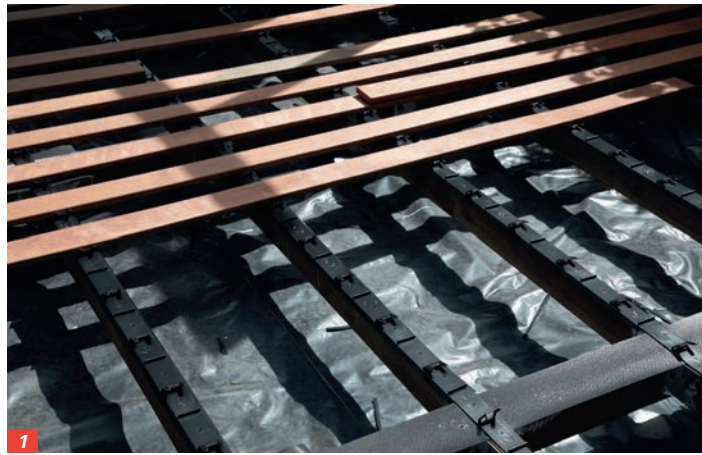
The treatment application is independently tested in Australia at RTH Scientific Services in Brendale and it’s regularly outperformed the minimum retention requirements for H4 by a good margin.

“We targeted that,” King says. “Although we were designing an H4 product, we aimed for a treatment level that surpassed the minimum H4 requirements for penetration and retention. We wanted to make sure we had a product that was fit for purpose.”

Those purposes will only expand in coming years. “We’ve got people already wanting to use TerraFrame in more elevated joist systems,” King says, “which makes sense as it’s graded to MGP10, so suitable for structural end uses, like any other stable, kiln-dried softwood, but with the added protection of the MCA H4 treatment.

“Already we’re seeing elevated decks and platforms, and we’re exploring the launch of post products for supporting roof structures.”

TerraFrame has also been popular for its use in landscaping and outdoor access features. “Things like raised garden beds are an obvious application,” says



1/ Woodhouse has tested the product with a range of proprietary decking clip systems and found all worked well. Here, a side-fastening system will deliver a smooth completed deck when finished.

2/ TerraFrame has a light and attractive colour that can be left as is or will take a stain or coating without the need for an additional primer.

Photos: courtesy Woodhouse

King, “but add to that stairs and ramps. Changes to accessibility requirements in the Livable Housing Design Standard will see more ramps in future and this sort of product makes them more affordable and achievable in retrofits as well as new builds.”

While the early marketing for TerraFrame was designed to target builders and decking specialists, there is already interest coming from the DIY sector as well. Accordingly, the installation guides and other educational materials for TerraFrame have been written in clear and accessible language and the Woodhouse team are available to answer all questions any would-be users might have.

“The reception from timber merchants for TerraFrame has been very strong, because

they see the same big set of opportunities we do,” King says.

“The prevailing form of new home construction in this country is slab on ground and this meets so many needs for those homes. We’ve been able to come in and say, ‘here are the opportunities that you can offer with this product.’

“Part of the excitement in that reception has come from relieving their frustration in not being able to source these products in the past. Moving forward, though, TerraFrame is just going to keep expanding their opportunities to sell timber into outdoor construction, and that’s a win for everybody.”

For more, visit www.woodhouse.com.au/terraframe/

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