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ActivAcre marks 1 million trees planted

A TASMANIAN carbon forestry initiative has marked a major milestone, with more than one million trees planted on almost 1,000 hectares of land across the state, estimated to sequester more than 300,000 tonnes of CO2 from the atmosphere.

The ActivAcre program, delivered by Tasmanian plantation and natural asset management company SFM, collaborates with farmers to identify opportunities for them to lease land for tree planting.

SFM Managing Director Andrew Morgan said the local initiative allowed farmers to optimise their land and diversify their on-farm revenue, providing them with a reliable source of income.

"But of course the benefits of ActivAcre flow well beyond the farmer – plantation forestry is recognised globally as a key tool to mitigate climate change, capturing carbon in soil and vegetation," Mr Morgan said.

"Further to this, Australia currently has a \$4 billion trade deficit in wood products, yet we have a skilled workforce with world-class infrastructure and high-quality governance, so we have a real opportunity to turn the situation around."

Mr Morgan said across





- 1/ Attendees of ActivAcre Field Day at Bloomfield, Gretna.
- / Andrew Morgan, Managing Director of SFM presenting at the Field Day.
- Michael and Susie Parsons of Bloomfield, Gretna. All photos: Josh Gee

Australia, sourcing larger parcels of suitable land was becoming harder, making aggregation essential, where multiple smaller land holdings are classed together to make one asset.

"With the successful completion of our first full year of planting and our 2025 program nearing capacity, we are now seeking expressions of interest from landowners for our 2026 planting" he said.

"We held an open 'field' day on the Bloomfield property in Gretna for interested landowners and farmers to learn more, ask questions and see a plantation carbon project first-hand."

Bloomfield owners Susie and Michael Parsons signed up to the ActivAcre program earlier this year. Susie Parsons said the seven-generation farming family was already benefiting from the financial return of leasing their land and could see the future opportunities it presented, both for their own property and for the environment.

"The additional value proposition of planting trees is the creation of shade and shelter belts, which can increase pasture production as well as improving water efficiency, soil quality and reducing salinity, waterlogging and erosion," Mrs Parsons said.

Mr Morgan said the futurefocused land management program worked closely with farmers to create unique and flexible agreements to maximises their land's potential and ensure an ongoing, reliable



income every year from planting to harvesting.

"ActivAcre is unique in that every aspect of the project, from initial enquiry to carbon project registration to final plantation harvesting, is managed by SFM's local team of highly experienced foresters, land management professionals and carbon project experts, all of whom have a deep understanding of the Tasmanian agricultural landscape," he said.

Tasmanian farmers and landowners can find out more here.





ON behalf of the team at Timber and Forestry Enews, we would like to wish you a joyful Christmas filled with some terrific moments that create those long-lasting memories. May the transition into 2025 be filled with a great time of celebration and hope for the New Year, as we all wish for a world filled with peace.

For those taking annual leave, we hope you enjoy your holiday and spend some quality time with family and or friends and enjoy some rest and recharge for an exciting 2025.

Thank you to all our regulars, and a special welcome to our new partners and advertisers throughout 2024. You are all greatly appreciated and without you, Enews could not do what Enews does best.

We would like to acknowledge the efforts of our 3 editors, Nicky, Donyale and Jess who work hard to track down, fact check and bring the stories to you each week. Working hard to set the layout and juggling items last minute when an important breaking story hits. Of course, the magazine would not be presented in the professional, easy to read format with links and in the various formats for PDF, Computer, Tablet and Mobile phone viewing, without the hard work of Zonya. Enews is further supported by our professional writers and contributors, including Michael Smith based in New Zealand, bringing us stories and great interest pieces from across the ditch. Thank you all, for your hard work and dedication, you are all appreciated.

During the year we have endeavoured to bring you the articles which matter. We have celebrated some victories and lamented over previous losses, particularly the closure of native forest operations in Victoria and Western Australia, looking at

the impacts to the direct and indirect businesses, families, and communities in these impacted regions. A number of these great people are the volunteer bush firefighters, SES teams supporting their communities and now fighting for their own survival.

Enews has been working closely with forestry authorities, private growers, chain of custody certification, and industry associations like FSC, Responsible Wood, NTHA, FWPA and AFPA, just to name a few, to bring you accurate and factual information, which impacts our industry, environment and communities. We are fortunate to work in an industry that has such a precious resource, as FWPA say - "Wood - the ultimate renewable". With the ability to capture and store carbon and then be used in our homes, building, furniture, and the like, why wouldn't people want to use timber?

During 2024 we partnered with a professional grant writing business and have brought a significant number of grants to your attention. Grants are either State or Federal based and we appreciate they will be of value to different businesses in our industry and in different locations. Keep a watchful eye on your Enews publication, as some grants often close very quickly.

As we look ahead to 2025, we're excited about some new strategic partnerships we are working hard on to bring to you, in the near future. Our Enews magazine will return with the first edition for the year on Thursday, 23 January. In the meantime, we wish you all a joyful and safe Christmas and New Year, filled with memorable celebrations

Chris & Campbell

On the cover: Wishing subscribers, partners and advertisers a merry Christmas and a happy New Year! Image: Shutterstock.

Australia's forest industries are the solution

Message from the Federal Government Forest Industry Roundtable.

THE Strategic Forest and Renewable Materials Partnership's Forest Industry Roundtable in Hobart highlighted the need for a coordinated Federal Government approach to support the forestry and forest products supply chain so it can deliver

the best possible economic, climate and social outcomes for Australia and the world, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Forest Products





1/ Growing production trees is key to supporting the entire processing and manufacturing supply chain.
 2/ Trees take a long time to grow, so it is even more urgent that we make strides today to prepare for future timber needs.

Images: Shutterstock

Association (AFPA), Diana Hallam said.

"Growing production trees is the foundation that supports our entire processing and manufacturing supply chain and [the] Roundtable positively reinforced the need for public policy coordination across government departments and agencies so our sector can reach its full potential – whether it's for construction and furnishing timber, biomass, pulp and paper or any of our other great products. Bottom line – we need policy geared in the one direction to help our sector thrive – and when we thrive, the country thrives," Diana Hallam said.

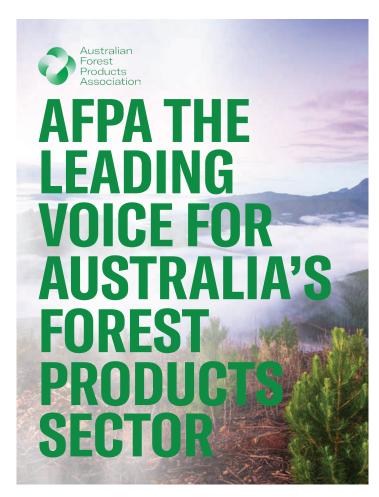
GROWING
PRODUCTION
TREES IS THE
FOUNDATION

"I particularly thank Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, The Hon. Julie Collins MP for her enthusiastic participation in the Roundtable and for allowing a free canvassing of ideas and strategies for how forestry and forest products can provide solutions on a number of fronts.

"A key role of the Strategic Forest and Renewable Materials Partnership is to inform the development of a new Timber Fibre Strategy and the Roundtable provided the opportunity for participants to discuss challenges and have their say on policy solutions for the Strategy.

"As a sector we employ 180,000 Australians directly and indirectly, many in rural and regional communities that rely solely on the sector, all while providing a range of job opportunities. We contribute \$24 billion to the national economy annually, we create essential products we need every day, all while helping Australia reduce emissions and fight climate change, helping the Government work towards its net-zero goals.

"Finally, it was great to see so many AFPA members involved in the Roundtable just months away from the next Federal Election – that will be very important in setting a future agenda for the sector," Diana Hallam concluded.



On the road to growing timber careers

Canopy Hub launches next round of cutting-edge training.

A RECENT trip to the Wide Bay-Burnett region saw the team from Canopy, Queensland's forest and timber industry training and careers hub, lay groundwork for delivering the next generation of forest and timber workers though the Cutting Edge Program, a workforce initiative designed to address skilled labour shortages.

A two-week preemployment training and work placement program, Cutting Edge equips jobseekers with meaningful skills while giving employers the chance to assess potential hires through work experience placements. This program bridges the gap between jobseekers and employers, fostering lasting workforce connections while addressing a critical need within the industry.

During the road trip, which included hosting promotion events in Gympie and Maryborough, the team engaged key stakeholders to attract a strong talent pool for the next intake of the program, with Canopy Hub Project Lead Steve Worley noting the particularly



Representatives from employment agencies and employers in Maryborough and surrounds coming together to sow the seeds for welcoming fresh talent into the forest and timber industry via Canopy's 'Cutting Edge' initiative.

Photo: Timber Queensland

strong engagement from local employment agencies recognising the value of the program's capacity for creating job-ready skills.

"Every industry is facing a competitive employment market at the moment, so the trip created a valuable opportunity for raising the profile of roles in the forest and timber sector. It also facilitated crucial connections with organisations uniquely positioned to identify and channel new talent into our industry," said Mr Worley.

"This collaborative approach

is setting a benchmark for addressing workforce challenges in a highly competitive labour market."

The trip builds on the program's proven past successes, which has seen a number of program graduates secure long-term employment within the industry. Andrew Davies from DTM Timber,



a host of past cohorts, has found the initiative a valuable opportunity for employers and program participants alike.

"It's 'try before you buy', you get to have a good look at your potential employees, and insight from the program trainer into what they'll be like as an employee, and where their skills and natural abilities will be best suited within your business," said Mr Davies.

"It's been a worthwhile enterprise - we've gotten good people out of it and it's in our best interests to keep the whole industry strong."

The next round of Cutting Edge will be delivered in early 2025, with local employers in the Gympie and Maryborough regions invited to reach out for more information on participating in this and future rounds.

The Canopy Hub initiative is delivered by Timber Queensland with the support of the Workforce Connect Fund, powered by the Queensland Government's Good people. Good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2032.



A partnership built on excellence

Wesbeam wins prestigious Bowens Supplier Awards for 2024!

THE Bowens Supplier Awards held recently in Melbourne, shone a spotlight on outstanding partnerships within the industry. Among the elite, Wesbeam proudly emerged as the winner of the Structural Building Products category and as overall Supplier of the Year, a recognition that underscores the strength and value of this collaborative relationship.

These prestigious awards celebrate not just exceptional



From left to right... Donovan Short (Bowens DC Inventory & Product Category Manager), Matthew Weijers (Wesbeam Senior Account Manager), Peter Board (Wesbeam General Manager Sales & Marketing), Jon Goudswaard (Bowens Head of Merchandising) and Keith Coady (Bowens Product Category Manager). Photo: Westbeam

performance but also the dynamic partnership cultivated since 2017. Since this time, Wesbeam has worked tirelessly alongside the Bowens team, and by

2019 this strategic alliance saw Wesbeam honoured as Bowens Most Improved Supplier, laying the foundation for a thriving partnership.

In early 2020, as the building industry faced unprecedented challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Wesbeam stood shoulder-to-shoulder with Bowens. Together, navigating turbulent times, ensuring operational resilience and market growth. This pivotal collaboration led to Wesbeam being named the preferred supplier for Bowens entire network in July 2020, firmly establishing Wesbeam as a market leader in Victoria.

Cont P 7



2025 DANA - GINGKO

THE FUTURE OF AUSTRALIAN EUCALYPTUS PLANTATIONS AND AUSTRALIAN LOG EXPORTS TO CHINA AND INDIA





MELBOURNE SEMINAR - 13 FEBRUARY 2025 AT JASPER HOTEL

Presentations on:

- · China softwood (SW) forests, harvest and 5 & 10 year log and timber demand projections
- China SW log and sawn timber 5 & 10 year supplier predictions
- China domestic hardwood forests, harvest overview
- · China pulp industry and imported woodchip demand trends
- · 2024 imported woodchip suppliers to China

- · Opportunity for/threat of South China eucalyptus plantations harvest impact on future China woodchip import demand
- Future harvest predictions for Australian hardwood plantations
- Alternative markets for Australian eucalyptus pulpwood
- The role that tree carbon is playing/could play in Australia
- India -- A market for Australian SW and HW logs

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CLICK HERE

SAVE THE DATE 2025

FEBRUARY 13: DANA
The Future of Australian
Eucalyptus Plantations and
of Australian log exports to
China and India Seminar –
Jasper Hotel, Melbourne.

Visit https://www.danaevents.co.nz/2025melbourne/home for more information. Contact admin@dana.co.nz

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

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

APRIL 10-11: Forestry
Australia 2025 Forest Carbon
Summit – National Press
Club, Canberra. For full details
and to register, visit https://
www.forestry.org.au/2025forest-carbon-summit/

MAY 7-8: Sydney Build 25 – ICC, Sydney. Australia's largest construction and design show. Enews is a media partner for Sydney Build 2025. For more details visit https://www.sydneybuildexpo.com

MAY 26-30: LIGNA 25 – Hannover, Germany. The world's leading trade fair for woodworking and wood processing plant, machinery and tools. For more details visit https://www.ligna.de/en/ for-visitors

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

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.

JUNE 29-JULY 2: 5th International Conference on

Timber Bridges – Rotorua, New Zealand. The focus is on timber bridges and the current need for resilient infrastructure to support thriving communities. For more information and to register your interest, visit https://ictb-conference.org/2025/

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

OCTOBER 22-23: Melbourne Build 25 – MCEC. Melbourne.

Victoria's largest construction and design show. For more details visit https:// melbournebuildexpo.com

OCTOBER 23-24: Field Trip - Vietnam.

From P 6

Today, the relationship between Wesbeam and Bowens is a testament to the power of mutual growth and shared goals. Over the past four years, this partnership has continued to flourish, driven by a deep commitment to innovation, customer service, and operational excellence.

"We are immensely proud to receive both awards in the Structural Building Products category, and Bowens overall Supplier of the Year," said Peter Board, General Manager Sales and Marketing for Wesbeam.

"This achievement is a reflection of the dedication and hard work of our Victorian team, supported by an outstanding network of

IMMENSELY PROUD
TO RECEIVE BOTH
AWARDS

Wesbeam colleagues across the country from customer service, logistics, engineering and manufacturing. It's an honour to partner with Bowens to achieve shared success."

Bowens also acknowledged the outstanding contributions of their partners, stating: "A special thank you to all the suppliers for attending the 2024 Supplier Awards at QT Melbourne! These awards celebrate excellence and

innovation among our supplier partners. Congratulations to our Supplier of the Year, Wesbeam!"

This award is not only a significant milestone for Wesbeam but also a reminder of the impact of strong, strategic partnerships in driving business success.

For more information on Wesbeam click here.

For more information on Bowens click here.



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A CUT ABOVE Do you crosscut timber packs at ±1 mm accuracy? Or cut structural timber, panel products (MDF & LVL), paper rolls? Or produce pallet dimensions or studs on fixed lengths? **HOLTEC** has a solution for you! For more information contact: Our scope of supply: Mechanisation • Mobile and stationary chainsaws Sorting lines YOUR PARTNER FOR THE PERFECT CUT • Timber crosscut stations Scanning and Log cutting stations optimising systems Ph: +64 9 416 8294 // Fax: +64 9 416 8296 Circular saws Special systems Email: sales@holtec.org // Web: www.holtec.org



Business Grants

Access state and/or federal funding to grow your business!

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

Looking back but moving forward

AS we reminisce on 2024 and all the progress that's been made, we would like to give you a summary of the business grant opportunities we have been able to bring you since we launched this new section back in August.

- 1) WA Timber region grant now closed (Issue #818)
- 2) Australia wide tree planting grant – now closed (Issue #819)
- 3) Export Marketing
 Development Grant
 (EMDG) now closed
 (Issue #820)
- **4) NSW living Carbon Grant** now closed (Issue #822)
- 5) SA Small business energy efficiency grant – now closed (Issue #826)

These grants will all greatly help those who were successful in applying, the EMDG was so popular that Tier 2 closed the same day it opened! As we look towards 2025, we would like to remind you of the grants that are still open.

6) WA Forest transition program to help workers – round 1 closing Dec 31

 If you worked on native logging and were made redundant or voluntarily left, this grant is worth looking at. It is aimed at helping people to reskill and join new



With so many grants available, make sure to take opportunities presented to help your business. Image: Shutterstock

industries. For more info check out Issue #823 on page 12 (click here).

7) WA Native Forest transition closure of impacted businesses – closing Dec 31

- The grant is a \$1 million noncompetitive grant program that aims to help any business reliant on native timber to exit the industry. It offers eligible businesses up to \$50,000 in financial assistance to help with expenses associated with closing their business. For more information see Issue #825 on page 12 (click here).
- **8) Made in Qld** closing 24 Jan 2025
- MIQ supports traditional

manufacturers to adopt industry-leading equipment, technologies, systems and processes. The amount available ranges from \$50,000 to \$2,500,000. For more information check out Issue #824 on page 12 (click here).

9) QLD Energy grant – open till June 2025

• The MEEG Program will support eligible Queensland-based manufacturing SMEs by reimbursing up to 100 per cent of Eligible Project costs for lighting projects and/or up to 75 per cent of Eligible Project costs for other eligible projects undertaken by an SME manufacturer. For more information see Issue #830 on page 12 (click here).

10) VIC Timber innovation grant R3 – open until June 2025

• The Victorian Timber Innovation Grant Program aims to support impacted first three businesses to explore, invest, and implement new business opportunities. The grant can be up to \$1million with a 1:1 cash contribution only required for the portion of grants that amount to over \$250,000. For more information check out Issue #832 on page 10 (click here).

11) NT Advanced Manufacturing Ecosystem Fund – open till June 2026

• The Fund is seeking to build the advanced manufacturing ecosystem of the NT. Funding for businesses will be up to 50% of eligible project costs for grant funding of \$25,000-\$500,000. For more information see Issue 828 on page 6 (click here).

There have been so many grant opportunities since August, and we are looking forward to bringing you many more opportunities in 2025. Make sure to take advantage of the grant writing service to give yourself and your business the best shot at securing your spot!

Vida – Sweden's largest sawmill group celebrates 10yrs in Australia

VIDA stands as the premier player in Sweden's wood industry, boasting a strong global presence and a sawing capacity of 3 million m3. The company specialises in producing high-quality, sustainable wood products sourced from responsibly managed forests. With 24 production facilities, including 12 technologically advanced sawmills. Vida processes and exports 88% of its output internationally. Key offerings range from processed timber, packaging, and biofuel to construction solutions and animal bedding.

A significant development in Vida's growth trajectory occurred when Canfor Corporation, a leading North American integrated forest products company, acquired Vida in February 2019. This partnership has enhanced Vida's capabilities, leveraging Canfor's extensive resources and expertise to drive innovation and efficiency within the organisation. The acquisition positions Vida to further expand its global reach while maintaining its commitment to sustainability and high-quality products.

One of Vida's key competitive advantages is its dedication to innovation in logistics and supply chain management. By investing in proprietary rail solutions and advanced distribution networks, Vida has streamlined its global operations, ensuring efficient delivery to international markets. This focus has facilitated continuous expansion into Europe, North America, Asia, and beyond.

Founded in 1867, Vida's rich history reflects over 150 years







 $1/\;$ By investing in proprietary rail solutions and advanced distribution networks, Vida Wood has streamlined its global operations.

- 2/ Vida Alvesta sawmill and head office in Sweden.
- 3/ Vida Australia provides a complete logistic support to Brisbane, Sydney & Melbourne; we can also arrange deliveries to all other capital cities in Australia.
 Images: Vida Wood

of expertise, where traditional craftsmanship meets modern technology. Originally a small family-owned business, Vida has evolved into a market leader, consistently adapting to changing market needs and industry advancements. This adaptability is underscored by the company's commitment to sustainability, where ecological considerations guide its production processes.

Recent milestones for

Vida include the celebration of their long-standing legacy, strategic partnerships, and initiatives that solidify their leadership position in the wood industry. The company has also received accolades for its workplace culture and safety standards, ensuring a productive environment for its 1,600 employees.

As of December 2024, Vida Wood Australia celebrates a decade of operations within the Australian market. Established in 2014, the company has developed a reputation based on principles of transparency and trust, key factors in their business model. Over the past ten years, Vida Wood has focused on providing highquality timber products while maintaining a commitment to sustainable practices. Their operations prioritise environmental responsibility, sourcing materials from managed forests to ensure long-term ecological balance. The company has also engaged in partnerships with local businesses, contributing to economic growth and employment in the regions they operate. Vida Wood's emphasis on customer service and transparency in pricing has fostered strong relationships with clients and stakeholders. The milestone anniversary highlights Vida Wood's significant contributions to the Australian timber industry and their ongoing commitment to integrity in business practices.

In addition to its focus on quality and sustainability, Vida is also committed to community engagement and corporate social responsibility. The company actively participates in local initiatives, supporting educational programs and environmental conservation efforts in the regions where it operates. At Vida, the mission is clear: to provide sustainable, highquality wood products while driving innovation in timber processing, logistics, and environmental responsibility. This focus on both heritage and future growth positions Vida as a trusted partner in the global market, dedicated to shaping a sustainable future for the wood industry.

Graduate Certificate of Forestry Scholarship

FORESTRY Australia is delighted to call for applications for the Graduate Certificate of Forestry Scholarship.

WHAT IS ON OFFER?

Forestry Australia and the Forestry Scholarship Fund are offering one (1) scholarship to participate in the Graduate Certificate of Forestry, Australia program in 2025/2026. The total scholarship is valued at \$24,000, which includes tuition for four units and \$2,000 per unit to cover travel and participation.

Applications close: 5.00 pm (AEDT) Wednesday 15 January

About the Graduate Certificate of Forestry Scholarship

The Graduate Certificate of Forestry, Australia is being developed collaboratively with the University of Tasmania,



Climb up the ladder of your career with a scholarship for the Graduate Certificate of Forestry. Image: Shutterstock

the Australian National University, The University of Melbourne, the University of South Australia and the University of the Sunshine Coast. This development is an outcome from the work of the Committee for the Future of Forestry Education (COFFE) that commenced meeting in June 2023.

The Graduate Certificate of Forestry, Australia will be delivered both online and in person and will consist of four units that can be undertaken over one or two years. Online classes will commence mid-February 2025.

The successful scholarship recipient would need to participate in each residential

school and dedicate approximately 8 - 10 hours a week per unit (excluding residential school attendance). The Graduate Certificate requires participants to successfully complete subject assessments for each unit.

FI IGIBII ITY

The scholarship is available to university graduates who have subsequently worked for at least two years in a forestry or forest managementrelated field, Forestry Australia members, and Australian citizens or permanent residents.

For more information about the graduate certificate contact Prof. Mark Hunt at: M.Hunt@ utas.edu.au

For more information about the scholarship contact Forestry Australia at: admin@ forestry.org.au



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Forestry Australia's 2025 Mentoring Program

A MENTORING relationship is a powerful development experience that can deliver personal and professional benefits for both mentors and mentees.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Now in its 4th year, Forestry Australia's mentoring program runs for 9 months and is designed to establish connections within the forestry sector by pairing experienced forestry professionals with those who are seeking professional development, opportunities for knowledge sharing and career growth.

Mentors and Mentees are encouraged to invest one hour a month at minimum to meet. It is also recommended that mentees additionally dedicate approximately 8 hours per month to prepare for each meeting – including goal

setting, pre-reading, planning & pursuing development opportunities, and reflection activities.

Engagement can be in person or online, whatever works for you.

The program has been developed around a framework and tool kit of resources which will support participants to ensure effective and sustainable knowledge transfer, skill acquisition and maintaining momentum.

Some of the key themes we explore each month include:

- Establishing your career and learning goals
- Time management for life
- Building networks and professional connections
- · Values and ethics in business
- · and much more...

The program is exclusive and FREE for Forestry Australia members.

Applications close: Midnight Monday 3 February 2025

Not a member? Not a problem! Join today by clicking here.

KEY DATES

- Applications Close: Monday 3 February 2025
- Mentoring partners e-Introductions: Friday 28 February 2025
- Mentor & Mentee Information Sessions: Thursday 20 & Friday 21 March 2025
- Program Close | 'It's a Wrap' Zoom: Thursday 4 December 2025

QUERIES

If you have any enquiries regarding your application, or would like to know more for

the Mentoring Program, please contact admin@forestry.org.au

We are delighted to offer the Forestry Australia Mentoring Program again in 2025 and look forward to receiving applications.

Thank you...

Mentoring is an amazing way to develop yourself and others. I am grateful for mentors in my life and thankful that I can contribute to the development of others through the Forestry Australia Mentoring Program, which has provided me with a new network and sense of belonging in the forestry profession.

2024 Mentee



FWPA Standards Development Program

Driving growth and adoption of wood-based products

FOREST & Wood Products Australia (FWPA) is making significant strides in advancing timber industry practices through its Standards Development Program (view here). Anchored in FWPA's Strategic Plan for 2023-2028 (view here), this initiative is shaping the future of the industry by establishing robust and practical standards for applications of wood products. The program is managed by FWPA with the expert guidance of the FWPA Standards Reference Panel (SRP), whose diverse membership represents academia, industry associations, manufacturers, and product users.

Forming a FWPA Standards **Reference Panel**

The inaugural Standards Reference Panel (SRP) comprises leading experts from various sectors, including:

- · Prof. Keith Crews (Chair, Advance Timber Hub, University of Queensland): Academia
- Andrew Dunn (Timber Development Association -NSW): Industry Associations
- Craig Kay (Tilling Timber): **Importers**
- Gavin Matthew (Engineered Wood products Association of Australasia - EWPAA):
- Tom Rickerby (Wesbeam): LVL and I-joists
- Peter Robson (Pentarch): Hardwood

- Tim Rossiter (MiTek): Frame & Truss Users
- · Dave Belfield (Wespine): Softwood and **Treated Products**

This crosssectoral representation ensures the proposed standards address the diverse needs of the industry, balancing innovation with practical applicability.



FWPA has identified several key standards for development through the endorsed "Procedures for the Development and Maintenance of Timber Product and Related Standards", inspired by best practices from Standards **Development Organisations** like Standards Australia and Responsible Wood. To foster transparency and collaboration, FWPA has also introduced an online public comment portal. This portal allows industry stakeholders, building professionals, and the public to review and provide feedback on the draft standards.

New FWPA Draft Industry

undergone public review in late 2024 and are now in the final stages of evaluation.



FWPA's Standards Development Program exists to help the industry meet evolving market demands whilst keeping sustainability, responsibility and product innovation as core pillars. Image: FWPA

- FWPA Standard G01: Recycled Timber - Visually Stress Graded for Structural **Purposes**
- FWPA Standard G02: Recycled Timber - Visually **Graded Decorative Products**

These standards are expected to be published in early 2025, setting a strong precedent for future initiatives.

The next milestone is the development of the Exterior Timber Cladding Design and Installation Standard (view here) and is currently out for public comment. This comprehensive guide addresses best practices for designing and installing exterior wall cladding across Australia's diverse climate zones. Crucially, the draft standard aligns with the performance requirements of the National Construction Code (NCC), ensuring its relevance for both domestic and low-rise commercial buildings.

In a significant endorsement of this effort, the Australian Building Codes Board has expressed inprincipal support and appointed a representative to assist in guiding the development of the standard. This collaboration highlights the program's importance in aligning timber

industry practices with national construction standards.

Supporting Wood in the Built **Environment**

FWPA's commitment to developing industry standards is driven by a clear mission: to enhance the demand for and the value of wood products in the built environment. Through its active involvement in Australian and international standards development, FWPA is equipping the timber industry with the tools to meet evolving market demands, whilst keeping sustainability and product innovation in focus.

Get Involved

Stakeholders interested in staying informed about FWPA's standards development activities or contributing ideas for future standards are encouraged to register their interest here.

Standards

Two inaugural standards have



Driving industry advancement through strategic research & market development initiatives

New research enhances wood quality assessment

FOREST & Wood Products Australia (FWPA) is pleased to share innovative research which has significantly improved the accessibility and accuracy of wood quality information, providing softwood growers and processors across Australia with critical data to enhance their operations. The research utilises Resi technology for early selection of harvestage density and modulus of elasticity (MoE), allowing for precise predictions of wood properties and yield.

The Resi technology, as discussed in the research, refers to a resistance drilling method used to assess wood properties, particularly in softwood plantations. It rapidly measures the resistance encountered when a drill bit penetrates the wood, which correlates with the wood's density and stiffness of trees. logs and forest plots. The Resi tool is noted for its efficiency, being three times faster than other methods like the ST300 acoustic velocity measures, and it has been standardised for operational use across the industry to improve the accuracy and reliability of wood quality assessments.

This project has underpinned a transformation in the easy access to information about wood quality for softwood growers and processors. Resi data from pre-harvest assessments has accurately predicted mill sitemean board stiffness in sawing studies across multiple sites in Australia. It's now a routine tool for many companies. The project is strongly aligned with the FWPA Strategic Plan and the focus on improving the resource base, as well as increasing productivity and





1/ The Resi tool uses resistance measuring to rapidly assess wood properties such as density and stiffness.

2/ The research has successfully predicted the mill site-mean board stiffness across multiple locations. Images: Shutterstock

utilisation along the value chain.

"I'm proud to have led a project that directly connects field-based log quality with the experiences of processors, delivering tangible benefits to the forest industry." said Associate Professor David Lee from the University of the Sunshine Coast.

The research showed that simulated mid-rotation Resi measurements can reliably estimate harvest age quality, aiding in informed decisions regarding rotation lengths. The study also addressed various sources of error between Resi instruments and techniques, establishing that these variances are negligible at a commercial scale,

thereby fostering confidence in the consistency of Resi measurements.

"This research can help us enhance our operations and planning. With improved predictive modelling, we can make informed decisions about longer term resource planning and better understand timber production outputs." said Rebecca Cherry, Wood Quality Engineer at Hyne Timber.

The key benefits for the industry include:

 Successful predictions of mill site-mean board stiffness across multiple locations, has improved wood flow between growers and processors and has the potential to inform favourable log pricing structures.

- Enhanced decision-making capabilities regarding rotation lengths, stocking, breeding objectives, and overall wood quality through predictive modelling.
- Adoption of over thirty Resi instruments by growers and processors for routine inventory and log supply management.
- Integration of wood quality predictions with yield estimates in YTGen software and enhancements to the Resi Processor software for better prediction of stiffness and density.

Key findings from the project include:

- A confirmed relationship between pre-harvest measurements and mill production quality, demonstrating that Resi data can predict mill output at a compartment level.
- Enhanced understanding of radial and longitudinal variation in wood quality, allowing for tailored silvicultural practices.
- Development of improved algorithms incorporated into the new version of the Resi web trace processor, ensuring ongoing access to cuttingedge predictive models.

Looking ahead, the project recommends that Resi technology be further utilised to strengthen grower-processor communication, optimising wood flow and enhancing the value of plantations. A deeper understanding of how site, climate, management, and genetics affect MoE and structural grade percentages will be pursued using extensive, estate-wide datasets.

For more information and to download the project report, click here.

Master Builders reveal negative consequences of recent IR legislation

RELEASING its submission to the Albanese Government's review of the Secure Jobs, Better Pay and Closing Loopholes legislation, Master Builders Australia has highlighted the cumulative impact of certain changes on the building and construction industry.

The abolition of the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC) and the repeal of the Building and Construction Industry (Improving Productivity) Act have caused significant adverse outcomes for the industry.

The submission also focused on changes to enterprise bargaining and union right of entry provisions.

The first 18 months following these changes have seen a rapid re-emergence of a range of industry-specific practices, unlawful conduct and unproductive workplace restrictions.

The building and construction industry has a long history of being plagued by a range of illegal and unlawful behaviour by certain people and organisations which, as one Royal Commission found, has created a "culture of systematic corruption and unlawful conduct, including corrupt payments, physical and verbal violence, threats and intimidation".





 $1/\;$ Building sites already carry inherent risks. It is important to ensure that the culture helps to make sites safer not more dangerous.

2/ The building industry is already seeing the adverse effects of the Albanese Government's legislation after only 18 months. Images: Shutterstock

To address this, Master Builders has produced a document entitled *Breaking 'Building Bad'* which outlines a range of proposals for law reform to ensure positive industry cultural change is achieved and remains lasting.

"You only need to look at the multitude of media reports focusing on the building and construction industry, in particular the CFMEU, to know the Albanese Government has made a mistake," said Master Builders Australia's CEO Denita Wawn.

"We have a housing crisis in Australia and some of these laws undermine industry efforts to build the homes and supporting infrastructure communities are crying out for.

"Despite pleas and warnings from the industry, regulatory agencies did not tackle these problems given the limitations in their remit and resources.

"It was only after media broke stories around the CFMEU that the Government sought to act, including placing the union into administration, but there's still a long way to go to have lasting, positive and tangible change.

"We have seen the union right of entry provision exploited for industry purposes while undermining the importance of safety on worksites.

"Master Builders remains highly critical of these aspects of the legislation and calls for industry-specific laws, rules and oversight that are fit for purpose and help achieve the desired outcome of more productive and safe workplaces.

"This review should give the Government an opportunity to reflect and hit the reset button on legislative overreach with severe unintended consequences," Wawn concluded.

For more information on the Master Builders *Breaking 'Building Bad'* document, click here.

Have some news to share?

Send media releases, news stories, events, any timber and forestry news related information with us anytime to Nicky, Donyale and Jess -

editors@timberandforestryenews.com



Contact Nicky, Donyale or Jess today...

New core skills occupation list delivers a flawed outcome

THE Australian Forest
Products Association (AFPA)
has raised concerns about
changes to the Government's
new skilled visa program.
While AFPA welcomes the
addition of some forest sector
roles to the Skills in Demand
Visa list, the decision to leave
critical industry occupations
including Forest Science/
Forester off the Core Skills
Occupation List (CSOL), is
baffling, Chief Executive
Officer, Diana Hallam said.

"Like many Australian industries, the supply chain for forestry and forest products is experiencing skills shortages across numerous jobs and occupations that are critical for us. Therefore, importing those skills from overseas is essential to keep our operations functioning properly," Diana Hallam said.

"The Federal Government's Jobs and Skills Council has released an updated CSOL which informs access for temporary skilled migration. Unfortunately, several roles that AFPA advocated for and are necessary to fill skills gaps haven't been included



With no undergraduate forest science degree currently on offer anywhere in Australia there is no way to train up the next generation of forest science/foresters. Image: Shutterstock

Forest Science/Forester,
 Saw Maker and Repairer, Saw
 Technician and Aquaculture,
 crop and forestry worker.

"Of greatest concern is the removal of Forest Science/ Forester from the list. With no undergraduate forest science degree currently on offer anywhere in Australia, the decision to remove this occupation from the CSOL is particularly confusing. Without foresters, there is no forestry and if Australia's tertiary institutions are not

producing the next generation of forest scientists, then we have no option but to source them from overseas. Any model that suggested it was appropriate to exclude skill 234113 from the CSOL is clearly broken.

"We know there are genuine shortages of these critical skills in the local workforce and many forest sector operations need these gaps filled through migrant visa holders. Saw Makers and Repairers for example are critically important to processing facilities ensuring equipment runs efficiently. Furthermore, many of these in demand jobs are located in regional areas which adds to the difficulty in filling them.

"While we were pleased that Production Manager (Forestry) and Other Spatial Scientist are on the list, and Wood Machinist

has been added to the list, the exclusion of the other professions will mean adverse impacts for industry.

"AFPA will continue to work with the Albanese Government to highlight the problem these shortages create for a sector so important to the Australian economy and environment and will advocate to get more critical roles included on the visa list for skilled migrants," Diana Hallam concluded.

Boost for new homes for South Australia

"The Housing Industry Association (HIA) welcomes the Federal Government's investment of \$70 million to bring forward 3,641 new private and social housing in key growth areas across South Australia," HIA Chief Executive Industry and Policy, Simon Croft said.

"This investment in enabling civil works, including roads, sewerage, water and power is an important initiative to fast-track new dwellings delivery and boost housing supply.

"Part of the total spend includes, \$35 million being provided to establish sewerage and water connects at the former West End brewery site. This will pave the way for around 1,000 new dwellings in Thebarton.

"Also, a joint contribution between the Federal and the South Australian State Government of more than \$30 million will facilitate the delivery of 700 affordable homes in the City of Playford.

"This investment is vital to build both social and private homes faster, as builders often tell us that getting this key 'last mile' infrastructure is what holds many projects back from being delivered in a more-timely fashion.

"HIA advocated for a boost in enabling infrastructure

funding as part of this year's Federal Budget to support states, territories and local governments to unlock new homes.

"It is therefore encouraging to see this funding being rolled out to support key housing projects, that will enable projects to be shovel ready faster and in turn boost housing supply across the country," concluded Mr Croft.

NZ totara

Framework still needed to support development of a regional industry.

PART TWO. By MICHAEL SMITH

IN this follow-up to last week's report on a successful small-scale harvest of farm tōtara, we invited Paul Quinlan (spokesperson for the Northland Tōtara Working Group) to comment on the wood's versatility – and explain recent developments regarding Sustainable Forest Management Plans and Permits.

In his comprehensive book *Tōtara, A Natural and Cultural History*, botanist and author Philip Simpson talks of how "Māori came to revere the wonderful timber for carving and building; and described the forest giants as rākau rangatira – 'chiefly trees'".

European settlers appreciated tōtara for its versatility, making use of the timber for everything from houses and jettles to farm posts and gates. These days farm tōtara is used for furniture, interior linings, flooring and joinery – although not on any significant commercial scale.

CARVERS CREATE NEW WAHAROA

It comes as no surprise that some of the timber from the recent small-scale harvest went to various carving projects – including one at Mātihetihe Marae, Mitimiti (Northland).

Mr Quinlan says multidisciplinary artist Tristan Marler (kaiwhakairo) and a strong contingent from the marae trust were present to see the trees being felled. Project lead Kyla Campbell-Kamariera blessed a selected tree with karakia, adding



Lani Apiata leads the carving work for a new entranceway to the wharenui at Te Tii Marae, Waitangi. Photo: Paul Quinlan

great dignity to the day.

Mr Marler says the harvest was incredibly meaningful. "I think it made all of us feel so much more connected to the material knowing where it had come from – and that it had been harvested respectfully, sustainably and with the intent to create a legacy for our mokopuna."

The project involved replacing a carved waharoa (entranceway) that had weathered beyond repair.

Mr Marler notes that the old waharoa "contained the kōrero [narrative] of our marae and hapū, and it was important to include some of this kōrero in the new waharoa".

He wanted to use tōtara for its durable qualities and its ability to hold carved details well. However, sourcing the wood was not easy. Salvage timber from other regions, including the cost of transportation, was

prohibitively expensive.

The option of a sustainably harvested tōtara from Northland appealed to him – although time constraints meant having to use the timber before it could properly season. He expects it will check and crack as it dries.

WAITANGI MARAE

Tohunga whakairo (master carver) Lani Apiata is in no doubt that tōtara is his favourite wood for carving.

In leading the carving renovations for a new entranceway to the wharenui at Te Tii Marae, Waitangi (Bay of Islands), Mr Apiata was pleased to be able to source tōtara timber for

IT CARVES
BEAUTIFULLY. IT
WILL CHECK, BUT
TŌTARA IS VERY
FORGIVING

the work. The extensive carvings will be a high-profile part of the project on what is a nationally important marae.

Although the carved panels will be outside, they will be under the cover of a roof, so he is comfortable using totara that may still have some sapwood. The timber was only harvested earlier this year, so remains 'green' (unseasoned) –

but Mr Apiata says, "It carves beautifully. It will check, but tōtara is very forgiving."

The boards are 400mm wide and 4 metres long, and inevitably have a few knots. However, he adds, "You've got to learn to read your wood. I don't mind knots. I try to use the rākau [tree] to the best of its ability."

That the timber was legally and sustainably harvested was also important to Mr Apiata. He believes it is part of respecting the forest and looking after the resource for future generations.

FUTURE SUSTAINABLE HARVESTS

Previously, Mr Quinlan reported some good news about the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity (NPSIB) – which specifically addresses harvesting with Ministry

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From P 16

of Primary Industriesapproved Sustainable Forest Management Permits & Plans under the Forests Act.

"While the relevant clause is hard to understand, the supporting summary document explaining the implications for the forestry sector explicitly acknowledged to the relevant to the support of the suppo

acknowledged that 'SFMPs can restore or enhance indigenous biodiversity' – even within Significant Natural Areas (SNAs)."

Buoyed by that, Mr Quinlan initially expected that would lead to harvesting with



Well-established and talented carvers Michael Dunn and Tristan Marler with the new waharoa. Photo: Tristan Marler

SFMPs having "Permitted Activity" status in all district plans. "This would have helped reduce the regulatory disincentives and insecurity for landowners interested in sustainably managing native forest areas on their land.

"Unfortunately, that

status is not automatically guaranteed. So, while district planners may interpret it that way, others may submit against that.

"Therefore, it is imperative that everyone with an interest in potentially harvesting under MPI-approved SFMPs carefully checks the relevant rules of their respective district plans (e.g., rules on indigenous vegetation clearance, etc.) and makes submissions to ensure no additional resource consent process would be required. That would be an unnecessary duplication and cost on top of the MPI-controlled SFMP.

"Although sustainable harvests are legally possible, a more conducive legislative and regulatory framework is still needed to encourage and support the development of a regional totara industry."



Hardwood plantations flourish under recycled water

A RECYCLED water program by the Fraser Coast Regional Council is maximising the reuse of treated effluent water in the Fraser Coast region by irrigating native hardwood plantations with recycled water.

Based 250
kilometres north
of Brisbane, Fraser
Coast Regional
Council now has
several hardwood
plantations irrigated
by effluent water
which diverts 2.5
billion litres of
effluent wastewater
into Fraser Coast
Regional Council managed
agroforestry every year.

Most importantly when the treated wastewater is diverted into plantations it is redirected away from nearby oceans, protecting the surrounding sea from 95 tonnes of nutrients and 21 tonnes of suspended solids being released each year.

With around 500 hectares under drip irrigation, the scheme is the largest local government owned plantation for recycled water reuse in Australia. The Fraser Coast Regional Council has also now created a valuable community asset which is projected to produce over 100,000 cubic meters of harvest volume.

National Timber and Hardware Association (NTHA) Senior Trainer, Doug Mackenzie recently visited the uniquely grown plantations and met up with two Fraser Coast Regional Council workers who look after the plantations while also



1/ Steven Lapthorn and Brett Walsh not only look after the plantations but are also water reuse officers.
2/ The hardwood plantations are beautifully and sustainably managed to create a very nurturing space for the trees to grow. Photos: NTHA

completing their Certificate III in Forest Operations through NTHA Training (RTO Code: 5343)

Initially Doug thought he was simply visiting Steven Lapthorn and Brett Walsh to assess their practical skills and progress their training, but instead he found that the workers were water reuse officers as well.

"The setup of the Australian hardwood plantations are absolutely stunning with rows and rows of beautifully kept trees. The council have quite a few blocks of forestry around Hervey Bay and Maryborough that are irrigated with partially treated sewerage water."

"Not only do the workers undertake all the weed control along with the slashing and the thinning of the plantations, but they also conduct a lot of water and soil sampling. This is to make sure the activity remains sustainable," Doug said.

When it comes to filtering the effluent water, the trees do

most of the filtering naturally. This means that the workers simply need to limit the amount of water use within the plantations so there is no surface water running off into the waterways.

"This is such an incredibly interesting set up and is very unusual from my perspective. I have never come across irrigated native hardwood timber, but I have heard of effluent solids being a viable fertiliser source while using this method of managing nonpotable water," Doug said.

The wastewater irrigation system is not only an environmentally friendly option for the native hardwood plantations but could potentially be a viable solution to global timber shortages.

"Depending on the species it can take anywhere from 50 or 60 years to 120 years to have a usable log from a native hardwood plantation, which is huge when you consider workers are planting trees now for their grandchildren to harvest."

"This is why the Hervey Bay plantation is so interesting because there is potential to rotate these hardwoods at 25 to 30 years, which is mind-blowing. This is because they are so well looked after, the weeds are controlled and they have a constant supply of water," he said.

The plantations also remove greenhouse gas (carbon dioxide) from the

atmosphere which is estimated to be up to five hundred tonnes of carbon dioxide per hectare by the time the plantation is harvested after 26 years.

Just some of the native hardwood timber species planted in the Fraser Coast Council plantations include:

Casuarina, Clone #1,
Corymbia Hybrid, Dunns White
Gum, Flooded Gum, Forest
Red Gum, Grey Box, Grey
Gum, Grey Iron Bark, Gympie
Messmate, Hybrid Flooded
Gum x River Red Gum, Lemon
Scented Gum, Mixed Species,
Rainforest, Red Mahogany,
Spotted Gum, Swamp
Mahogany, Tallowwood and
Turpentine.

Initially transferred to several storage lagoons within the Fraser Coast Regional Council, today the recycled water not only irrigates hardwood plantations, but also privately owned farms, pastures, golf courses and turf farms within the area as well.

Celebrating a year of networking, support, and making a difference.

THE Women in Forestry and Timber Network (WFTN) is a forum for women in the industry to meet, exchange ideas and ensure their voices are heard. WFTN aims to recognise the contributions of the women in the timber and forestry industries, to celebrate their achievements and to support their access to skills and professional development opportunities.

WFTN recently wrapped up a successful year with a well-attended breakfast event proudly sponsored by Finlayson Timber & Hardware.

Over 40 industry professionals came together to celebrate the achievements of 2024 and support a Christmas Drive for RizeUp Australia. The initiative collected gifts for teens affected by domestic violence, reflecting the industry's compassion and commitment to making a difference.







- 1/ This Christmas drive event collected gifts for teens affected by domestic violence, supporting the incredible work of RizeUp Australia.
- $2/\,$ Thank you to our breakfast sponsor, Finlayson's Timber and Hardware.
- 3/ Thank you to everyone who joined us and contributed to making a difference, especially our annual partner, Woodhouse Timber Company. Photos: WFTN

WFTN IS LOOKING FORWARD TO CONTINUING ITS MISSION OF FOSTERING COMMUNITY

The WFTN annual partner, Woodhouse Timber, was recognised for its generous support throughout the year, which has been instrumental in making the WFTN events possible.

A standout highlight of the year was WFTN's Cocktails for Charity fundraiser that raised over \$21,000 for Rizeup.

Special thanks were extended to Jenni Day (Versace Timbers), Jacinta Colley (Vida Wood), Alicia Langfield (NTHA) and Tahlia Bellotti (NTHA) for their pivotal roles in shaping the network's initiatives and NTHA for backend support.

With plans for more engaging events in 2025, WFTN looks forward to continuing its mission of fostering community and supporting meaningful causes.



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