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ISSUE 839 // February 27 2025

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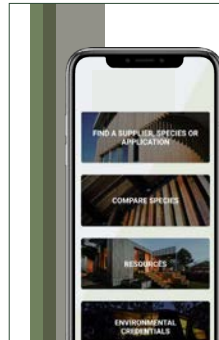
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COVER STORY P 8



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Ian Blanden appointed FWPA's new Head of RD&E

FOREST & Wood Products Australia (FWPA) is pleased to announce Ian Blanden as the new Head of Research, Development & Extension (RD&E). Ian brings more than 30 years of experience in plantation forestry and natural forest management, with a strong background in commercial forestry businesses. His expertise spans the entire supply chain, including R&D, sales and marketing, logistics, community engagement, external relations, and operations, especially plantation silviculture and harvesting systems.

Ian's extensive career encompasses executive roles in both Australia and internationally, including serving as General Manager of Stora Enso Guangxi, where he was a key driver in downstream product and market development, and spearheaded the growth of wood sales, as well as establishing the supply chain for Stora Enso's Beihai Mill. He led significant cultural and leadership transformations, as well as extensive

experience with Gunns Plantations Ltd and North Forest Products in Tasmania, Australia.

"I'm excited to be joining FWPA and contributing to the important work of driving innovation and progress in the forestry sector," he said.

"I share FWPA's vision to grow the value of the entire industry, to deliver transformative RD&E initiatives and market development programs that drive growth in the Australian forest and wood products industry.

"This role provides me with an opportunity to give back to the industry which has served me so well over the last 35 years. I look forward to supporting FWPA to be recognised as the industry's leading service provider."

Ian is driven by continuous improvement and keen



Ian Blanden... appointed as FWPA's new Head of RD&E. Photo: Ian Blanden Consulting Forester

to raise the profile of the forest and wood products industry in Australia. He is also motivated by fostering emerging talent and sharing this vast knowledge of the industry.

Andrew Leighton, CEO of FWPA, expressed his enthusiasm for Ian's appointment. "Ian's background and leadership in sustainable forestry practices align with FWPA's goals to advance research

and development across the forest and wood products value chain," he said.

"His commercial experience and commitment to stakeholder engagement will greatly support our work in developing and supporting research, development and extension activities with tangible outcomes and benefits for

our members and the wider industry, including new tools and information to improve productivity and mitigate risk."

Ian will commence in the role on April 22, 2025, allowing a thorough period of handover with outgoing Head of R&D, Dr Chris Lafferty. After an impressive 23 years, Chris will retire from this role at the end of June but will remain as FWPA's company secretary.

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Nominations now open for 2025 Green Triangle Timber Industry Awards

THE 2025 Green Triangle Timber Industry Awards (GTTIA) Nominations Launch was held last Friday night in Portland, marking the official opening of nominations for this year's much anticipated awards. The event brought together industry leaders, government representatives, local businesses, and sponsors to celebrate excellence within the timber sector and to unveil the new online nominations portal, designed to make the process easier and more accessible than ever before.

The evening was proudly sponsored by Porthaul and featured an impressive lineup of guests and speakers, including:

- The Hon. Dan Tehan MP, Member for Wannon
- Ms. Jacinta Ermacora, Local Member for Western Victoria



GTTIA not only brings together the timber industry and key external stakeholders but it honours and celebrates those who are leading in excellence, innovation and inspiration.. Photo: GTTIA

- Tim Woods, Industry Analyst from IndustryEdge
- Edwina Vultz, Warnambool Timber Industries

OPENING OF NOMINATIONS & NEW ONLINE PORTAL

GTTIA Chair, Adrian Flowers, officially opened

the night, announcing the commencement of nominations for the 2025 awards. He highlighted the importance of recognising and celebrating those within the industry who are driving innovation, safety, sustainability, and leadership.

A key feature of this year's launch was the unveiling of the new online nominations platform, developed in response to industry feedback and designed to make nominating simpler, faster, and more user-friendly.

The key features of the new online nominations portal include: an independent industry mentor for each award category, save and resume function, no word limits, unlimited attachments, an extended nomination period, and the platform is now easier, mobile-friendly and intuitive.

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS & KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM GUEST SPEAKERS

Attendees heard from The Hon. Dan Tehan MP and Ms. Jacinta Ermacora, Member

for Western Victoria, both of whom reinforced the timber industry's vital role in the region's economy, employment, and sustainable development.

A major highlight of the night was the conversation with Tim Woods and Edwina Vultz, who shared the remarkable journey behind their locally produced Glulam product, showcasing how innovative, high-quality timber solutions can transform both commercial and domestic markets. Their story was a powerful reminder that when the right people come together with a shared vision, the possibilities are endless.

A CALL TO NOMINATE: RECOGNISING INDUSTRY EXCELLENCE

As the night wrapped up, Adrian Flowers urged all attendees to consider those in their workplaces who stand out as leaders, innovators, and role models.

"These awards exist to celebrate the people in our businesses who are achieving great things, driving change, and inspiring those around them. We all know someone in this industry we look up to—that's the person who needs to be nominated for the 2025 awards. It's time to shine a spotlight on the exceptional talent that makes the timber industry what it is today."

Nominations are now officially open, and all industry members are encouraged to take advantage of the new, improved online platform to submit their entries by clicking here.

A note from the Publisher

Enews is preparing to launch a strategic partnership in the **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** space for the benefit of *Enews* readers. Our industry PPE provider will allow an additional 10% discount, off their competitive prices, provide free delivery on orders over \$99 and can also deliver to multiple locations saving you time, effort and money. They also have a dedicated manager and team to provide you with any assistance and businesses can apply to open a trading account. More information will be provided at the time of the launch next week!

On the back page check out the new **Weinig Hydromat 3000 Planer Line** offered for sale which includes model and specifications. More information is available directly from Andrew e: andrew@klc.co.nz

Just in case you missed last week (Issue #838) we featured **Specialty Doors: Opening doors to excellence**. Specialty Doors have an extensive commercial and residential range, manufacture around 1000 doors a week and offer unique and custom solutions and have a commitment to sustainability.

Australian Timber Design Competition 2025 now open for entries

WOODSOLUTIONS is pleased to announce the launch of the Australian Timber Design Competition 2025. This national competition invites students to conceptualise a hypothetical Athletes Village for the Brisbane 2032 Games, utilising timber products as the primary construction material. Finalists will receive sponsorship to attend the World Conference on Timber Engineering 2025 in Brisbane. This exposure offers entrants the chance to showcase their skills on the world stage and the potential to win a cash prize.

As global construction trends shift toward low-carbon, resource-efficient materials, timber is recognised for its

sustainability, structural performance, and design flexibility. This competition offers a platform for future students to showcase solutions that align with circular economy principles and sustainable urban development.

In line with WoodSolutions' mission to educate and empower timber professionals, it provides a valuable learning experience that bridges knowledge gaps, fosters industry connections, and equips students with the practical skills needed to



WoodSolutions wants to highlight the key role of timber in the future of design and construction - Beijing National Stadium by night - The Bird's Nest Image: iStock

Australia. "We aim to showcase timber's pivotal role in the future of design and construction."

"This competition challenges students to explore forward-thinking design strategies that integrate sustainability, adaptability, and cultural heritage. WoodSolutions

confidently design and build with timber.

"This competition is more than just a design challenge; it's an opportunity for students to solve real-world sustainability challenges," says Kevin Peachey, Head of Built Environment Programs at Forest & Wood Products

has a rare opportunity to showcase the future of timber innovation," said Kevin Peachey.

For key competition details and to submit an expression of interest, visit the WoodSolutions website.

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Support for new timber plantations

AFPA welcomes Albanese Government's support.

THE Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) welcomes and thanks the Australian Government for its latest round of funding announced for the Support Plantation Establishment Program (SPEP) that will bolster our national stocks of local timber and wood-fibre for the decades ahead, Chief Executive Officer of AFPA, Diana Hallam said.

Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry the Hon Julie Collins MP has announced \$10.4 million for 14 new softwood and hardwood plantation projects through Round 3 of the SPEP. The projects range from 21 to 1,928 hectares – the total area around 5,500 hectares across NSW, Victoria, WA, SA and Tasmania.

“While we have a surplus of building construction timber right now, we are actually forecasting shortages in the plantation timber that we’ll need in decades to come to build new homes and manufacture a range of essential everyday products. That’s why it’s



New timber plantations are key to ensuring the ongoing availability of Australian grown timber for the Australian building industry. Image: Shutterstock

important we get more timber production trees in the ground right now, to fend off those future shortages,” Diana Hallam said.

“This announcement is the latest in a reform program agenda carried out by the Federal Government over the past three years to help Australia’s forestry sector and the supply chain. In addition to funding for plantation expansion, further funding has been delivered during

this term of government to enhance timber and wood-fibre manufacturing as well as establish the new Australian Forest and Wood Innovations (AFWI) – all

“**\$10.4 MILLION FOR 14 NEW SOFTWOOD AND HARDWOOD PLANTATION PROJECTS**”

of which was advocated for by AFPA ahead of the 2022 Federal Election.

“Getting more timber production trees in the ground is critical, which is why ahead of the 2025 Federal Election, AFPA is calling for a \$200 million extension to the SPEP as part of our broader *Australian Timber. Australia’s Future* platform to help our sector realise its potential.

“AFPA again thanks the Albanese Government for [the] announcement and will continue to work with the Government and Opposition ahead of the Federal Election to secure the best national outcomes for Australia’s forestry and timber sector – that is important for local employment, products, forest management and fighting climate change,” Diana Hallam concluded.

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Business Grants

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

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

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

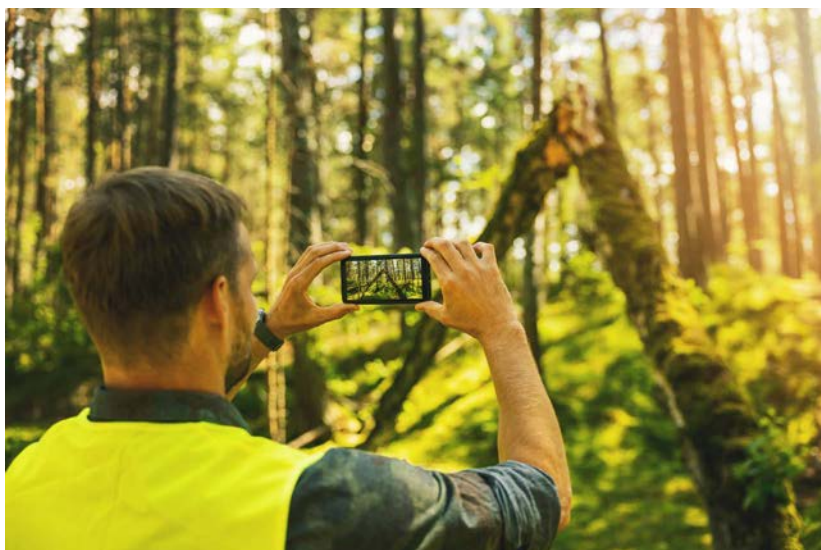
Forestry Transition Fund

THE Forestry Transition Fund offers grants to businesses and industry groups looking to expand, diversify, or establish new ventures. Designed to drive job creation and business growth, the fund supports communities affected by the end of native timber harvesting in Victoria.

Round 2 grants are available to generate new employment opportunities, including positions for displaced timber workers, in towns and regions significantly impacted by the forestry transition.

The fund will support:

- The creation or maintenance of jobs and economic growth with a focus on permanent jobs for displaced native timber workers through expanding existing



The Forestry Transition Fund has another round of grants available to help support the creation of new jobs for ex-native forestry workers. Image: Shutterstock

operations, establishing new operations, or diversifying operations

- Business, industry, community groups, local government authorities, or other organisations to provide enabling infrastructure to activate job-creating projects in the affected towns or communities.

Grants of \$10,000 up to \$1 million and a Transitioning

Timber Worker Employment Incentive Payment of \$20,000 per ex-native timber worker employed are available.

\$12 million of funding is available through Round 2. The types of things that can be funded include:

- The expansion of existing facilities or development of new facilities, such as factories, offices, or shops
- The introduction of new

GRANT DETAILS

Provider: VIC Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action

Amount: \$10,000 - \$1,000,000

Round 2 Closes: 29 August 2025

Location: VIC

Who Can Apply:

- Non-Government
- Community Groups
- Businesses
- Other
- Government

Co-Contribution Required: Unspecified by Provider

<https://www.deeca.vic.gov.au/forestry/grants/forestry-transition-fund>

technologies, innovations, plant and equipment, systems, and processes to improve business growth.

Who can apply:

- Private sector businesses
- Business and industry groups
- Incorporated not-for-profit organisations that operate as a business
- Local Government Authorities

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@timberandforestrynews.com

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& FORESTRY *eNEWS*

Contact Nicky,
Donyale or Jess today...

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

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/2025-forest-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>

14: AFCA National Forum & Dinner – Gold Coast, QLD. SAVE THE DATE. More details to follow.

11-17: Japanese Wood Architecture Tour – Japan. Tour the world's oldest and most impressive wooden buildings. From Hōryū-ji, the world's oldest wooden building to the World Expo in Osaka - home to the world's largest wooden ring building. For more information and view the program, visit <https://www.woodsolutions.com.au/events/woodsolutions-sponsors-tda-japan-study-tour?>

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>

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. For more information visit <https://www.wcte2025.org/event/df0d5655-c16d-47df-b4a6-457a7dc63d96/wcte-2025>

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/>

SEPTEMBER

2-3: Timber Queensland Biennial Conference "Doing Timber Business in Queensland" – Brisbane. For more information, email admin@timberqueensland.com.au

OCTOBER

13-14: Timber Construct 2025 – Melbourne. To register your interest, visit <https://timberconstruct.org/>

20-22: International Woodchip and Biomass Seminar and Networking Event – Singapore. For more information visit <https://danaevents.co.nz/2024singapore/home>

20-23: Forestry Australia 2025 Conference – Adelaide Convention Centre, Adelaide. The conference theme is 'Restoring forests and landscapes to secure Australia's future' and aims to develop both local and national collaboration. For more details visit <https://www.forestry.org.au/2025-conference/>

22-23: Melbourne Build 25 – MCEC, Melbourne. Victoria's largest construction and design show. For more details visit <https://melbournebuildexpo.com>

23-24: Field Trip – Vietnam. (Follows on from the woodchip and biomass seminar in Singapore.) For more information visit <https://danaevents.co.nz/2024singapore/fieldtrip>

24: GTTIA – The Barn, Mt Gambier, SA. Nominations are now open for 2025 Green Triangle Timber Industry Awards. Nominate online: <https://gttia.com/nomination-form/> For full details on award categories and submission guidelines, visit: <https://gttia.com/2025-award-categories/>



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FSC® forest walk hosted by HVP Plantations

Leading Australian businesses gain firsthand FSC® insight.

SOME of Australia's largest retailers and manufacturers recently gathered at HVP Plantations in Victoria for the FSC® Forest Walk event, gaining firsthand experience of FSC-certified forestry in action. The event provided a unique opportunity to see firsthand the sustainable forestry requirements under which FSC-certified products are sourced and engage with those who uphold these standards. With over 1.1 million hectares of FSC-certified forest and more than 260 FSC-certified organisations across Australia, the commitment to responsible forestry continues to grow.

WHY FSC CERTIFICATION



1/ Exploring a plantation thinning site – attendees gain insights into responsible forest management at HVP Plantations.
 2/ Attendees observe the forwarder and harvester in action, demonstrating forestry operations at HVP Plantations.
 3/ Learning in the field – attendees engage with HVP Plantations' team as they present their approach to responsible forest management. All photos: © FSC® / Forest Walk 2025



1/ Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony marking the beginning of the FSC® Forest Walk event.
 2/ The FSC ANZ team (left to right) – Melanie Robertson (CEO), Jennifer Nicita (Trademarks and Partnerships Manager), Stefan Jensen (Senior Policy Manager), and Sarah Day (Communications and Engagement Manager). All photos: © FSC® / Forest Walk 2025



MATTERS

Forests are vital to Australia's environment, economy, and communities, providing critical ecosystem services, livelihoods, and resources. FSC certification upholds

the highest standards of responsible forest management—safeguarding biodiversity, respecting the rights of First Nations Peoples, workers, and local communities, and ensuring forests can continue to provide

Woolworths Group, Coles Group, Bunnings, Visy, Essity, Kimberly-Clark, Australia Post, and more, attended the event to deepen their understanding of how FSC certification

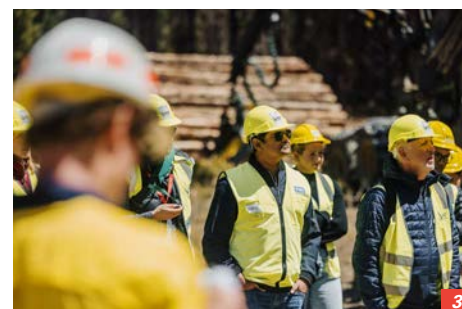
essential materials and services for generations to come. The FSC Forest Walk provided a unique, firsthand experience of FSC's standards in action, demonstrating why FSC-certified products are the most trusted choice for businesses and consumers committed to sustainable forestry.

INDUSTRY LEADERS GAINING FIRSTHAND KNOWLEDGE

Leading Australian companies, including

supports sustainable supply chains. These organisations source FSC-certified materials for packaging, furniture, and household products, ensuring that forest resources are managed in line with their ambitious responsible sourcing commitments.

Kimberly-Clark Professional,



From P 8

an FSC chain of custody certificate holder, reflected on the value of seeing FSC-certified forestry in practice. "Understanding the FSC system in a real-world setting was an invaluable experience," said Julian Westcott, Account Manager at Kimberley-Clark Professional "Seeing firsthand the commitment of forest managers to responsible practices gives us even greater confidence in the materials we source. It strengthens our ability to make informed decisions and communicate the importance of FSC certification internally and to our customers."

For Coles Group, an FSC promotional licence holder, the event reinforced the significance of responsible sourcing. "Being on the ground and speaking directly with the HVP Plantations team managing these forests gave us a much deeper appreciation for the rigorous work behind FSC certification," said Coles Own Brand Lead Sustainable Packaging Manager Emma Buchanan. "It's one thing to read about sustainability standards but witnessing them in action drives home why FSC certification is so important to our business and the products we offer consumers."

A MILESTONE FOR RESPONSIBLE FORESTRY

HVP Plantations, the first-ever FSC-certified forestry organisation in Australia, celebrated 20 years of FSC certification in 2024. As the event's host, HVP showcased the robust environmental stewardship practices that underpin FSC certification, including fire management,



1/ Attendees hear firsthand from HVP Plantations about sustainable forestry practices and environmental stewardship.
 2/ Engaged and attentive – attendees listen to HVP Plantations' insights on responsible forest management during the FSC Forest Walk.
 3/ Attendees from Visy, Woolworths Group, Coles Group, and Essity engage in Q&A, hosted by HVP Plantations at the FSC Forest Walk.
 All photos: © FSC® / Forest Walk 2025

native forest care, and plantation thinning operations designed to maintain forest health.

HVP's Environment and Certification Manager shared insights on how two decades of FSC certification have shaped their approach to sustainable forestry,

contributing to the protection of waterways, cultural heritage sites, and threatened species habitats.

Mick Evans, HVP Plantations Northern Region General Manager noted that "HVP was delighted to take part in the FSC Forest Walk – a great opportunity

to engage with others in our value chain and share how we grow and harvest our products responsibly. Our 20 years of certification reflects our enduring commitment to stewardship and sustainable plantation forestry."

AUSTRALIA'S GROWING FSC NETWORK

The FSC system continues to expand in Australia, with businesses across industries recognising the importance of responsible forestry. FSC ANZ CEO Melanie Robertson addressed attendees, marking 30 years of FSC's global impact and outlining the organisation's strategic priorities for the future.

"As the demand for forest-friendly products grows, FSC-certified forests provide a solution that balances environmental conservation, social responsibility, and economic viability," said Robertson. "The presence of so many leading organisations today highlights the critical role businesses play in supporting responsible forestry."

STRENGTHENING COMMITMENTS TO SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY

With the combined efforts of forestry organisations, manufacturers, and retailers, FSC certification is helping to ensure Australia's forests remain healthy and productive for generations to come. Events like the FSC Forest Walk are key to bridging the gap between sustainable forest management and the businesses that rely on forest resources, driving informed decisions across supply chains.

On the cover: The FSC ANZ and HVP Plantations teams, along with attendees, gather for a group shot to close the event. Image: © FSC® / Forest Walk 2025



Voters in Gilmore back native forestry

Support local forestry to keep economy strong and label timber with its country of origin.

NEW polling conducted for the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) in the NSW federal electorate of Gilmore, shows voters overwhelmingly back the electorate's critical native forestry industries, while also expressing strong support for the sector's contribution to the economy and environment, Chief Executive Officer of AFPA, Diana Hallam said.

"These polling results fly in the face of disinformation being spread about Australia's sustainable native forestry by activists who live far from the forestry underpinned communities in the seat of Gilmore – and clearly show that the vast majority of



Gilmore residents witness firsthand the world-class care in forestry as harvested trees are replanted and regrown. Image: Shutterstock

voters in electorate regard local forestry and timber operations as critical to support the local economy, local communities and the environment on the NSW

South Coast," Diana Hallam said.

Key findings from the UComms polling of 684 Gilmore residents conducted from February 17

to 20, include:

- 95 per cent of respondents either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that timber and timber products sold in Australia should be labelled with their country of origin, whether it's Australian or from overseas.
- 8 in 10 respondents, including more than half of those who said they'd vote for the Greens this election, either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the NSW South Coast should maintain a sustainable native timber industry to produce world class products like home furnishings, furniture and decking.

Cont P 11



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From P 10

- 3 in 4 respondents 'strongly agreed' that Australia should grow more timber production trees to fight climate change and secure Australia's future national timber supply.
- More than 80 per cent believed local forestry and timber industries were important for local jobs and Australia's economy, while more than 64 per cent said they'd be more likely to vote for a political party or candidate with strong policies to strengthen Australia's forestry and timber industries.

The polling also suggests that Liberal candidate Andrew Constance will win the electorate from Labor's Fiona Phillips with a 52.8 (Liberal) to 47.2 per cent (Labor) two party preferred result returned in the poll.

"Gilmore is just one of



Forestry is a critical industry for the Gilmore electorate, with harvested trees forming a strongly supported part of the economy and environment.

Image: Shutterstock

many federal electorates where forestry and its supply chain is critical to the local economy and local forest management. The residents who live in Gilmore understand the value of forestry and not only the good it's doing for the economy, but also the environment. They can see harvested areas regrowing and they can see that the practices

are world leading. At this Federal Election its essential all sides of politics back local forestry. Not only is it what people want, it's critical for the environment, jobs and the

RESIDENTS OF GILMORE UNDERSTAND THE VALUE OF FORESTRY

economy," Diana Hallam said.

"The fact that more than half of residents polled who said they'd vote for the Greens said they wanted a sustainable native industry to be maintained, should give the minor party some cause for thought about their strident opposition to the practice.

"The overwhelmingly positive response to country of origin labelling also demonstrates the commonsense nature of such a reform that AFPA will continue to advocate for along with our broader Federal Election Platform *Australian Timber. Australia's Future*, which outlines what our national forestry sector and supply chain requires to realise its potential for our national economy, consumers, jobs, the environment and fighting climate change," Diana Hallam concluded.

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100 Australians tackle housing reform

A bold, nation-first move to resolve the housing crisis and challenge leaders to act.

AUSTRALIA'S housing crisis is reaching a breaking point. While house prices might have levelled in some areas, and owners finally benefit from a rate cut, the effect of a long-term housing crisis continues to tear the social fabric of the country.

Last weekend (22nd-23rd February), in a nation-first move, a group of 100 representative Australians took charge of the long-standing housing crisis; putting 13 reforms from leading experts to the test in a radical push for action.

The bold approach by AMPLIFY, a non-partisan and independent community-led organisation, saw 100 Australians from all backgrounds come together to tackle the country's biggest challenge with experts, demanding urgent action from leaders to reshape policy, rise above the politics, and make housing affordable for everyone.

Georgina Harrison, CEO of AMPLIFY, explained that the housing crisis is too important for political point scoring, "The housing crisis is impacting millions of people across the country. With an election on the horizon, those who have the ability to create real change are too busy tearing each other down. That won't solve anything. A crisis



The housing crisis has been a long-standing topic with HIA, Master Builders, and AFPA pushing for reforms on the building front. AMPLIFY brought together 100 Australians to have their say on what policies are most important. Image: Shutterstock

that has been decades in the making demands long-term, cross-party action. It demands true leadership and that is exactly what you [saw from these] 100 Australians.'

"The housing crisis is creating serious fault lines in the community, deeply affecting mental well-being, livelihoods, and destroying the social contract for future generations. An issue this significant demands better, and this is why we're putting the power back where it belongs - in the hands of the people. [Last] weekend the Australian public [showed] our politicians that coming together to solve a problem is far more powerful than

tearing the other side down. The public has a say, their voice needs to be heard, and we'll be taking the results to parliament to demand urgent action."

Research shows 95% of Australians believe housing is the biggest issue facing Australians right now. With soaring prices and shrinking options, the dream of a secure home is slipping out of reach for far too many. What's more, 75% trust each other more than the government to make the right decisions about the housing policy reform we need.

With trust in politics, government, and institutions at an all-time low, the vast majority (84%) of Australians want community at the heart of policy decisions. That is why AMPLIFY is taking a fearless approach to policy reform. The national-first Housing Deliberation is designed to give Australians

a greater voice in the policy decisions that directly affect them.

NATION-FIRST HOUSING DELIBERATION:

In a bold, community-driven first for Australia, 100 randomly selected Australians from all backgrounds and states - homeowners, renters, young people, retirees, single parents, liberal, labor, green and independent voters - came together to weigh up 13 expert-developed housing reforms and decide which should be prioritised.

The 13-shortlisted reforms were selected from more than 50 submissions by a group of Community Heroes from across the country, including Prof. Frank Oberklaid AM (2024 VIC Senior Aust of the Year), Nick Hudson (2024 WA Local Hero), Melissa Redsell OAM (2023 QLD Local Hero) and Selina Walker (2024 ACT Local Hero).

The reforms set to be debated have been curated by some of Australia's most prolific housing and policy experts. This includes Brendan Coates from the Grattan Institute, Robert Pradolin from Housing All Australians, Liana Downey from the Blueprint Institute and Andrew Barker from the Committee for Economic Development Australia (Build to rent), among others.

Over two days, participants examined evidence, debated solutions, and decided what needs to change. Their decisions will shape a national

“RESEARCH SHOWS 95% OF AUSTRALIANS BELIEVE HOUSING THE BIGGEST ISSUE

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advocacy campaign, turning public frustration into political action.

The historic event saw the community working together to uncover unexpected solutions to one of Australia's biggest challenges, finding the uncommon ground that is key to unlocking change.

As part of the deliberation, the experts made the case for their reforms, while challengers presented the alternative perspectives.

A deliberative polling technique was used, involving participants being polled on their views of the reforms prior to the event, and afterwards, once they had heard evidence for and against each reform. The results of the polling, and work to find consensus over the weekend, indicated which reforms the community wants to prioritise, which are widely accepted, and where people's opinions changed based on new information.

Housing is reaching a crucial point across the country; however these dynamics vary according to each state. No matter where people are based though - strong reform, driven by community, is required.

- In WA, there is a unique problem with house prices rising faster than anywhere else in Australia. Political disagreements will not lead to a solution.
- In NSW, there is a unique opportunity with a commitment to bipartisan solutioning.
- QLD has experienced a critical shortage of homes, and soaring demand, which has pushed up rent prices and forced many vulnerable people into homelessness.

The 13-shortlisted reforms deliberated on by the



AMPLIFY recognises that Australians are frustrated with the lack of action, and many young people have given up on the idea of ever owning a home. Image: Shutterstock

community included:

MAKING HOUSING MORE AFFORDABLE

1. Stamp Out Stamp Duty
2. Housing Tax
3. Boost Rent Assistance
4. Homes for Everyday Heroes

EXPANDING HOUSING CHOICE

1. Commuter Communities
2. More Bang for Your Block
3. Fab Prefab
4. Faster Visas for Faster Homes

INCREASING HOUSING SECURITY

1. Renters' Rights
2. 'Build to Rent' Booster
3. Affordable Homes Guarantee
4. Target 10%

Harrison added, "The housing crisis isn't just a policy issue - it affects real people, including young professionals struggling to rent, new families seeking stability, domestic violence survivors in need of secure housing, and ageing Australians wanting to stay in their homes. Real lives are at stake."

"At its worst, the crisis

leads to homelessness which can worsen chronic health issues, create long-term unemployment, and cause deeper societal withdrawal; at its 'best,' it results in housing-related stress, financial strain, and lost opportunities for prosperity. For too long, housing has been sidelined by political point scoring, turning it into an electoral tactic rather than an issue of public welfare. Bold, long-term bipartisan problem-solving is needed to prevent the housing crisis from becoming a catastrophe. By making community voices louder, AMPLIFY exists to challenge policymakers to take action and create real, long-lasting change. We believe in the power and wisdom of everyday Australians to drive real change that works for everyone."

Dr Rory Gallagher, Chief Policy and Research Officer at AMPLIFY, says Australians are demanding real solutions, not spin, "Australians are

“HOUSING HAS BEEN SIDELINED BY POLITICAL POINT SCORING”

frustrated. They see politicians talking in circles while the crisis deepens," Gallagher said. "But when you bring everyday people together, incredible outcomes occur; they find uncommon ground and make the bold decisions required to solve this crisis."

The deliberation followed successful global models, including the 'America in One Room' initiative, which found

unexpected common ground on polarising political issues. Participants took part in pre- and post-deliberation polling, revealing how community perspectives evolve when given balanced evidence and a real voice in decision-making.

Harrison says the urgency cannot be overstated, "There's real frustration building across Australia—people are being deeply affected in a myriad of ways when it comes to housing,"

"This isn't just about homes. It's about people. Families forced to move every 12 months, young Australians giving up on ever owning a home, and entire communities locked out of stability and security. Australians refuse to wait any longer for change."

The deliberation concluded with a community-driven mandate for change, a set of reforms shaped by informed discussion and collective decision-making. These findings will be presented directly to policymakers, creating a powerful public demand for action.

For more information on AMPLIFY click here.

Upcycled rubber – a sustainable opportunity for the timber industry

THE push for sustainable materials and responsible resource management is gaining momentum, and the timber industry stands to benefit from innovative recycling initiatives such as upcycled rubber. A recent development in Queensland has highlighted how rubber from discarded tyres can be transformed into valuable materials, reducing waste while providing new opportunities for industries reliant on natural resources.

THE ROLE OF RUBBER IN INDUSTRY

Tyres are made from a blend of natural and synthetic rubber, with their composition varying based on their intended use. Passenger car tyres generally contain a higher percentage of synthetic rubber, whereas truck and heavy-duty vehicle tyres rely more on natural rubber. Additionally, tyres incorporate metal, fillers, curing agents, and other compounds that contribute to their durability and function.

While synthetic rubber is more durable and resistant to environmental stressors like chemicals, extreme temperatures, and UV radiation; its production relies heavily on fossil fuels. Natural rubber, on the other hand, is sourced from the rubber tree (*Hevea brasiliensis*), primarily cultivated in Southeast Asia. The rubber tree was featured in *Talking Trees* with the late



Natural rubber is extracted from the rubber tree which mainly grows in Southeast Asia Image: Shutterstock

John Halkett on page 12 of Issue #791 of *Timber&Forestry eNews*. [Click here to learn more.](#)

ENVIRONMENTAL AND INDUSTRY BENEFITS

Discarded tyres present a major waste problem, with millions ending up in landfills each year. Tyres are currently upcycled into things such as playground surfaces, rubber mats, and athletics tracks. Upcycling rubber into new products offers a solution to the waste challenges, providing a second life for materials that would otherwise contribute to pollution. However, there are more tyres being discarded than there is need through the current upcycling options.

For the timber industry, upcycled rubber presents an opportunity to enhance sustainability efforts and explore innovative product applications. Timber products often require adhesives, coatings, and protective materials that could incorporate upcycled rubber to improve performance and durability. Moreover, using rubber-based composites in

timber-related construction, flooring, or panelling could extend the lifespan of wood products and reduce the reliance on virgin materials.

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN QUEENSLAND

Queensland is at the forefront of research into upcycled rubber applications, with the testing facility and research centre in Salisbury playing a crucial role in developing new materials and processes. Scientists and engineers at the facility are conducting rigorous testing to ensure that upcycled rubber can be effectively integrated into timber and other construction materials. Their research focuses on durability, performance, and sustainability, helping to bridge the gap between recycled materials and industry applications.

One of the key developments at the Salisbury facility is the creation of rubber-infused particle board. This innovative product combines recycled rubber with traditional wood fibres to produce a durable, versatile material suitable for a range of applications.

“We calculated that if even 50% of the particle board consumed in Australia included 20% rubber, the wood panel industry would demand an estimated 82,500 tonnes of crumb rubber a year. That’s a huge sustainability win for both industries,” said Chandan Kumar, of the Forest Product Innovation Team at Salisbury Research Facility.

The incorporation of rubber enhances the board’s strength, flexibility, and resistance to environmental stressors, making it an attractive option for flooring, furniture, and structural components in construction. This breakthrough represents a significant step toward reducing rubber waste and increasing sustainability in the timber industry.

A CIRCULAR ECONOMY APPROACH

Embracing upcycled rubber within the timber industry aligns with the principles of a circular economy, where waste materials are repurposed into new, valuable products rather than discarded. By supporting initiatives that promote rubber recycling, timber businesses can reduce their environmental footprint while expanding their market potential.

Collaboration between the forestry sector, rubber recycling programs, and researchers could lead to innovative solutions that benefit both industries. As sustainability continues to drive industry evolution, integrating upcycled rubber into timber applications presents an interesting opportunity.

“**INTEGRATING UPCYCLED RUBBER INTO TIMBER PRODUCTS CREATES NEW OPPORTUNITIES**”

LIGNA 2025

Woodworking community sees LIGNA 2025 as the most important milestone of the year.

LIGNA will be held in Hanover, Germany from May 26 to 30, 2025. LIGNA 2025 will be one of the most important milestones for the woodworking and wood processing industry on the way to the hoped-for industry turnaround. It is only three months until the trade show opens its gates for its 50th anniversary year. There will be more than 1,200 exhibitors from all over the world occupying around 112,000 square meters of exhibition space, sending a strong signal in a challenging industry situation.

“LIGNA is currently almost at the same level as the previous event,” says Dr. Jochen Köckler, Chairman of the Executive Board, Deutsche Messe AG. “In view of the economic conditions, we are very grateful to everyone involved for their confidence in LIGNA. We are convinced that the world’s leading trade fair for the industry will ensure greater productivity and sustainability through fantastic innovations and thus provide the much-needed motivation and confidence for investments.”

“Hardly any exhibitor skips LIGNA – and for good reason. Especially in challenging times, direct dialogue with customers is crucial to generating new investment momentum through innovative solutions. LIGNA is the platform where pioneering technologies are presented to an international audience of experts. And it’s not just manufacturers who cannot afford to miss this opportunity – customers, too, must be



LIGNA, the world’s leading trade fair, is preparing to celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2025.
Photos: Deutsche Messe



there, as the future course of the industry is set right here in Hanover,” says Dr. Bernhard Dirr, Managing Director of the VDMA Woodworking Machinery Association, Frankfurt am Main.

MOTIVATION FOR EMERGING FROM THE DOWNTURN

Stephanie Wagner, Head of LIGNA at Deutsche Messe AG, sees the strong industry response to LIGNA as a clear vote of confidence, “We are looking forward to a powerful LIGNA anniversary edition

and are convinced that the trade fair, together with its exhibitors and visitors, has the potential to inspire renewed confidence in the market. It wouldn’t be the first time that LIGNA has served as the decisive catalyst for restarting the economic engine.”

The significance of LIGNA as the world’s leading trade fair remains strong. Constructive dialogue at LIGNA 2025 is more crucial than ever. Samiron Mondal, CEO of Siempelkamp Business Unit Capital,

emphasises, “LIGNA is the ideal forum for us to meet global customers, showcase our innovations, and bring the trade fair’s motto – ‘Linking people, driving innovation’ – to life. Moreover, we greatly benefit from the exchange of ideas at the event.”

Like Mondal,

whose company has been exhibiting at LIGNA since its inception, Rudolf Eickhoff, Technical Managing Director of Venjakob, also underscores the importance of LIGNA 2025, “We are currently facing intense competition in the industry, with declining sales in some areas. This makes it all the more important to discuss the latest sustainable production methods to ensure our customers can remain competitive in the long run. We firmly believe that direct contact at the trade fair not only fosters trust but also lays the foundation for successful projects.”

LIGNA CAUGHT BETWEEN TWO SCENARIOS

Industry experts and market observers believe that the woodworking and wood processing industry – under pressure in recent months, particularly in Europe – could see a recovery in the second half of the year. However, ongoing economic challenges are fueling uncertainty and

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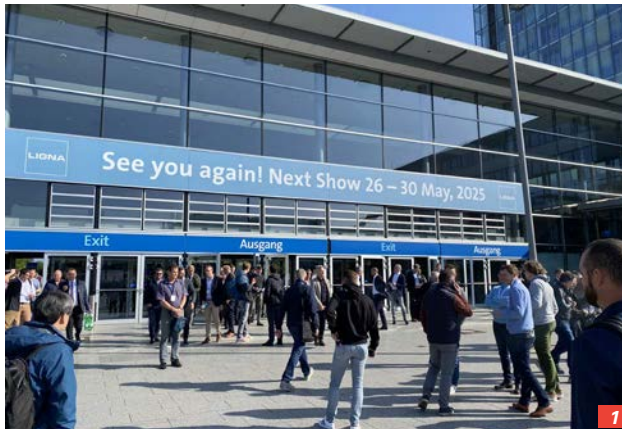
eroding business confidence. Unclear political developments and their economic impact have also led to delays in crucial investment decisions.

Dr. Jochen Köckler remarks, "We are navigating politically tense times concerning tariffs and exchange rates – something many of us have never experienced before. The German federal elections and the outcome of the U.S. presidency will bring clarity. Regardless of broader economic conditions, the woodworking and wood processing industry remains indispensable. Wood, as a raw material, is the ultimate symbol of CO₂ storage and sustainability."

INDUSTRY, TRADE, AND FORESTRY: SHAPING THE FUTURE TOGETHER

The three key themes of LIGNA 2025 – CONNECTIVITY, SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION, and ENGINEERED WOOD – are specifically designed to engage stakeholders across the woodworking community, including industry, trade, and forestry.

"Digital connectivity for a sustainable wood industry along the entire value chain, with wood and wood-based materials as the materials of the future – this summarises in one sentence what industry, craftsmanship, and forestry want to stand for together in the future," says Stephanie Wager. She adds, "Connectivity, sustainability, and future materials, [are] the focus topics [highlighting] the



1/ LIGNA is a highly anticipated bi-annual trade show with LIGNA 2025 kicking off in only three months.

2/ LIGNA is attended by companies from around the world, including some of our TMA partners. Photos: Campbell McInnes



three core elements of this transformation and will be prominently featured across all seven exhibition areas."

NEW AND PROVEN FORMATS AT LIGNA 2025

With LIGNA.Circular in Hall 12 and LIGNA.TruckStop in the open-air-site, two new formats will make their debut at LIGNA's anniversary edition in May. "Thinking in circles" is the guiding principle of the new LIGNA.Circular format, which will be integrated into the LIGNA.Stage program. It will specifically focus on various aspects of circular value creation. Through presentations and panel discussions, CADEMI, the official LIGNA.Circular partner, will showcase sustainable innovations in processes, materials, and products. Key topics will include the necessary changes in collaboration among stakeholders and the transformation of business models, with a focus on cooperation, innovation, servitisation, and transformation. The LIGNA.Circular program will also feature practical approaches and best-case studies, covering topics such as machinery and processes, raw materials and wood-based materials, product design, and recycling. The

media partner for LIGNA. Circular is HK – Holz- und Kunststoffverarbeitung from DRW-Verlag.

LIGNA.TruckStop is the ultimate destination for joiners and carpenters eager to experience the latest advancements in power tools, fittings, and fastening technology. Show trucks, transporters, and vans packed with practical solutions from brands like Festool, Hettich, SawStop and Swiss Krono will be on-site in the open-air site near the wooden Expo roof. In addition, a stage tailored to the trade will host live presentations, expert interviews, and hands-on demonstrations throughout the event. The media partners for LIGNA.TruckStop are the trade publications BM and dds from the Konradin Media Group.

The central LIGNA forum will once again be the LIGNA.Stage in Hall 12, featuring solution- and user-oriented presentations aligned with LIGNA's key themes, as well as discussions on major market and industry trends. Meanwhile, the LIGNA.Campus in Hall 11 will provide technical colleges, universities of applied sciences, and universities with a platform to present their educational programs.

For the first-time VDMA exhibitors and start-ups,

LIGNA.FutureSquare – located in Hall 12 alongside the Stage and Circular – will showcase innovative products and services. And for those seeking career opportunities, LIGNA.Recruiting is the place to be. This format offers direct access to the industry's leading companies, providing valuable insights into career paths and professional development opportunities.

For many years, the Carpenters' Day on Tuesday of the trade fair has been a key highlight of LIGNA's supporting program. On this day, carpenters from across Germany gather at the exhibition grounds in Hanover to experience a tailored program, including exclusive trade fair tours and networking events. At LIGNA 2025, the guild association Tischler Schreiner Deutschland (TSD) will once again be on-site, providing insights into the latest services and products from its professional associations. Additionally, two key initiatives will be featured: The national design competition "Die Gute Form 2025" and the new TSD-project "Ergonomie der Werkstatt", which aims to equip guild member companies with practical and recognised tools and workshop set-ups to create

Clean Up Australia Day

Calling for volunteers to help on the Mid North Coast.

VOLUNTEERS are being asked to pull on a pair of gloves to help clean up Taree's Kiwarrak State Forest and Wauchope's Cowarra State Forest. The Clean Up Australia Day events will be held in both forests on Sunday, March 2 from 8am.

Forestry Corporation Senior Field Ecologist Mark Drury said the events would target garbage that has been illegally dumped along forest fire trails and roads.

"The illegal dumping of rubbish remains a huge problem particularly in state forests that are close to towns," Mr Drury said.

"Unfortunately, not all visitors leave the forest how they found it and, disappointingly, a small number of people seem to see state forests as dumping grounds.

"Across NSW hundreds of tonnes of household and construction rubbish, scrap metal and dumped vehicles are removed from state forests each year at



This is how forest trails should look—unfortunately, some treat them as dumping grounds. Image: Shutterstock

considerable cost to the community.

"Fortunately, state forests that attract high visitation from the community don't tend to experience as much dumping, so we thank the custodians of the forests, the regular forest users, the bushwalkers, the local mountain bike clubs, the horse riders etc for their assistance.

"State forests are places for the whole community to enjoy nature and the great outdoors, but we come across everything from mattresses, couches and scrap metal to burnt-out cars in local forests.

"So, this Clean Up Australia Day we'd like to get as many hands-on deck as we can to help us clean up both Kiwarrak and Cowarra State forests. Whether you can spare an hour or a full day, we'd love to have your help," he said.

When: Sunday, March 2 from 8am

Where: Cowarra State Forest – meet in the car park outside Guulabaa – Place of Koala off Burrawan Forest Drive, Lake Innes.

Kiwarrak State Forest – meet in the car park of the Kiwarrak Mountain Bike Club, The Bucketts Way, Tinonee. Briefings will be held, and volunteers will receive equipment and maps.

Bring: Hat, sunscreen and lace-up boots. All other equipment will be provided on the day.

More information: Register online here.

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working spaces that promote efficiency, well-being, and job satisfaction. As part of this initiative, 18 model businesses are currently being developed in collaboration with workshop equipment manufacturers and suppliers.

AWARDS AND CHAMPIONSHIPS AT LIGNA 2025

LIGNA will once again host prestigious awards and competitions, including: The Forwarder Championships,

Die Gute Form, The Hans-Jürgen Narjes Prize and the German Timber Construction Prize, which has even garnered attention from the Federal Ministry of Housing, Urban Development and Construction. The German Timber Construction Prize winner will be honored on LIGNA Tuesday at 10 a.m. in Hall 12 on the LIGNA.Stage.

ABOUT LIGNA

The world's leading trade fair for the woodworking and wood processing industry is jointly organised by Deutsche Messe and VDMA

Woodworking Machinery in Hannover and is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2025. It showcases the entire range of products and services for the primary and secondary industries – tools, machines and systems for custom and mass production, surface technology, wood-based panel production, sawmill technology, energy from wood, machine components and automation technology, as well as machines and systems for forestry. Further information on LIGNA is available by clicking here.



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Model Hydromat 3000,

Spindle arrangement B, R, L, T, B, T, B.

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Spindle details -

Spindle 1, 1st Bottom, 15 kW (20 hp), Straight Jointer, Outboard Bearing -

Spindle 2, 1st Right, 11 kW (15 hp), Profile Jointer -

Spindle 3, 1st Left, 15 kW (20 hp), Profile Jointer -

Spindle 4, 1st Top, 22 kW (30 hp), Straight and Profile Jointer and Outboard Bearing -

Spindle 5, 2nd Bottom, 15 kW (20 hp), Straight and Profile Jointer, Outboard Bearing -

Spindle 6, 2nd Top, 22 kW (30 hp), Straight and Profile Jointer, Outboard Bearing -

Spindle 7, 3rd Bottom, 30 kW (40 hp), Straight and Profile Jointer, Outboard Bearing



The machine is prepared with 50 mm Hydro spindles, straight jointers on all spindles, and profile jointers on the left, right, both tops and last two bottoms. The first bottom is only fitted with a straight jointer at this time. The last bottom is also prepared for splitting, including special table plates for splitting and inserts plate for splitting. Because the machine is prepared for splitting it is also fitted with an anti-kick back device, which is moveable to the side when not splitting. This is to meet H&S requirements.

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