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NTHA honours outstanding achievements across Queensland

COVER STORY P 2

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Timber and Hardware Qld awards

Special night of nights.

By **CHRIS PARKER**

LAST Saturday evening close to 290 people gathered at the Brisbane town hall, with the building illuminated by stunning NTHA red, which continued through to the large ballroom for the night of nights, celebrating the absolute best throughout Queensland.

Predinner drinks in the forecourt allowed networking and the catching up of old friends, working colleagues from different branches with smiling faces, handshakes and many introductions across the wide spectrum of people.

The tables were packed as we acknowledged guests travelling large distances across Qld, a few from interstate but the winner had just flown in from New Zealand!

The NTHA team of David Little, Tahlia Bellotti and Christine Bannister brought together an amazing night from start to finish, it was efficient, free flowing and the food was terrific. No detail



The NTHA team L-R: Christine Bannister, David Little and Tahlia Bellotti.
All photos: Chris Parker

was overlooked, and each table was nothing short of elegant.

Industry came together to acknowledge exceptional service, dedication and of course individual and business achievements with some award recipients blanketed in loud cheers from the audience as they made their way to the stage. A common theme amongst acceptance speeches was the outstanding group of finalists [they] were part of

and how honoured or proud they felt personally to be selected.

The awards commenced with a graduation ceremony hosted by Louise Kinloch, General Manager NTHA training, who pointed out they were the next generation of leaders. It was exciting to watch graduates from both genders who successfully completed a range of Certificate III courses in: Timber Frame or Truss Manufacturing, Business,

Timber Design Systems, Timber and Wood Product Operations or in Retail.

Trainee/Apprentice of the Year was presented by MAS National and went to: Christopher Weston – The Truss Company.

The awards moved into the next phase and were presented by Peter Hutchinson – NTHA Chairman.

- **Host employer of the year:** ITI Australia
 - **Supplier of the year garden and outdoor:** AMES
 - **Safety culture award:** Hyne Timber
 - **Retail store of the year under 2,500sqm:** Beaudesert Mitre 10
 - **Individual with 30+ years industry service:** Mitch O'Mara of Tradeware Building Supplies
- Following dinner, the awards continued and were presented by David Little – CEO NTHA

Cont P 3

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From P 2

- **Student of the year:** Jacki Grundy of Parkside Timber
- **Best frame & truss operation:** Langs Building Supplies
- **Supplier sales rep of the year:** Wayne Barton of Hyne Timber
- **Supplier sales rep of the year (Hardware):** Layton Cliffe of AMES
- **Retail store of the year over 2,500sqm:** Hollimans Rural Mitre 10
- **Supplier of the year (Trade):** ITI Australia
- **Supplier of the year (Retail):** Bremick
- **Trade store of the year (presented by ITI):** Versace Timbers

The REAL difference award. This award recognises someone in the industry who is regarded highly by their peers, embraces their company values, achieves goals, shows loyalty to both their peers and their employer. **The real difference award:** Chris Shaw of Kevs Group.

Enews had the opportunity to interview several



L-R: David Little, NTHA CEO, Mitch O'Mara of Tradeware Building Supplies and Peter Hutchins, NTHA Chairman.

award recipients about their achievements and contributions to the industry.

Michael Branton of ITI (Supplier of the Year – Trade and Host Employer of the Year) shared his thoughts on both awards. "ITI hosts several trainees, and the team responsible for ITI training will be very pleased with this award." Reflecting on his career, he added, "I've been with ITI for just over 11 years, covering sales in Southeast Queensland and travel up to Rockhampton and Yeppoon." When asked about the key aspects of his role, he highlighted ITI's

growth. "Over the past 11 years, we've experienced phenomenal growth to be the market leader in Qld," he said. "Paul Shadbolt personally interviewed me... ITI is a great company to work for and they are really careful with product research and ensuring it is fit for purpose and will exceed expectations." As for his favorite products? "That is really hard, ITI has

so many, but if you are only going to allow me to list three it would be ITI Design Pine, Easy Trim Plus mouldings and ModWood, but I could say lots more."

Mitch O'Mara of Tradeware Building Supplies (Individual with 30+ Years Industry Service) received a particularly enthusiastic reception as he took the stage. Reflecting on his business, he said, "It all started with my wife, Leonie, 31 years ago." With a smile, he proudly added, "We have been married for 43 years." Leonie manages accounts and administration—keeping everything running smoothly. Based in Southeast Brisbane, Mitch's business was affected by Cyclone Alfred. "We were generally ok, we lost power and internet but no direct flooding, but glad we sent all our staff home at midday on Wednesday,

Cont P 4

A note from the Publisher

Forestry plantations of all types and sizes across Australia and New Zealand. Make sure you read the feature article on Descartes Underwriting. They specialise in insurance coverage for forestry plantations and the associated carbon credits. Their system is easy to follow and the team at Descartes are ready to assist you. A direct link is on the Enews home page of our website. Check it out. **Safety is of primary importance.** Take time to

read the feature article later in this issue. It is powerful, thought provoking and a real-world example of how little oversights can change so much in an instant. Do you have Australian made or grown products? You may also be Australian owned. Several of our contacts have taken the easy step to register with Australian Made. Check out the link on their advert to find more. Once registered you can display the Australian made logo.

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From P 3

and we did not reopen until the following Tuesday morning.” When asked what makes his business stand out, Mitch was quick to answer. “Loyalty to suppliers, customer service and quality of product.” He also emphasised the importance of adaptability. “Always reinventing our timber and offerings, being prepared and understanding when to move to meet market needs.” As for their most well-known product? “We are currently offering slabs of beautiful timber 1.1m wide and up to 7.2m long... we stock and sell Hardwood, including F17 Ironbark and F27 Spotted Gum and we make sure we always have plenty of stock available, reordering well before we run out.”

Wayne Barton of Hyne Timber (Sales Rep of the Year) has dedicated two decades to the company. “It will be 20 years this year and it has been a privilege to serve in this way.” Digging a little deeper, we discovered from Wayne, he really values “Quality of their product, service we provide to our

“ THE EVENT WAS A TRUE CELEBRATION OF EXCELLENCE



A full house at Brisbane Town Hall as nearly 290 guests gathered to celebrate Queensland's best, with NTHA red lighting up the night! All photos: Chris Parker

customers and years our customers have partnered with us.” Wayne values our industry, “Working with natural and renewable timber products.”

Alan Burton of Hollimans Rural Mitre 10 (Retail Store of the Year – Over 2,500sqm) proudly described his store’s operations. “We are located in Charters Towers, 130 kms west of Townsville and we have a staff of 22 in our Sapphire Mitre 10 store.” When asked about their core products, he listed “hardware, building materials and rural supplies.” Timber plays a crucial role in their sales, with framing timber, H2, and H3 sheeting being the top sellers. As for what makes the store special? “Our customers, staff and suppliers.”



Timber award as presented to Holmans Rural Mitre 10 (Retail store of the year over 2,500sqm).

Jordan Scanlan, who successfully completed a Certificate III in Timber and Wood Product Operations, also shared his journey. Jordan works for Slacks Hardwood Mill in Gayndah, west of Bundaberg. Remarkably, he finished his two-year course in just nine months. “My trainer and

host employer were really helpful and supported me to fast track all the work and assessments.” His trainer, Brad Cannell, praised his dedication, noting that Jordan “was in the top three of 52 students he had trained this past year.” When asked what he enjoys most about his role, Jordan said, “Everything really, because there was so much to learn, the work was constant, and the pay is good.”

As for his main tasks? “Grading timber, stacking timber and cutting timber to meet the orders.” He primarily works with hardwoods such as “spotted gum, blue gum and ironbark.” With a positive attitude and strong work ethic, Jordan has a bright future ahead in the industry.

The evening was a true celebration of excellence, highlighting the hard work, dedication, and passion of individuals and businesses that continue to drive Queensland’s timber and hardware industry forward.

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Forestry closure foretold...

THE hardwood forestry industry in New South Wales is reeling as the predicted consequences of the proposed Great Koala National Park unfold. As highlighted in the cover article of *Timber and Forestry Enews* magazine issue 838, "9000 Jobs Threatened by unnecessary "Great Koala National Park", pointed to reduced wood supply from koala hubs—8,500 hectares of state forest proposed for reclassified for protection—and rule changes stifling timber access. Operating at just 63% capacity, the Cool

Khan mill's fate was sealed. Yet, with over 5,000 north coast hardwood workers now fearing similar outcomes, the stakes are alarmingly high for this \$3 billion sector.

Timber & Forestry Enews issue #838, citing 2024 CSIRO data showing stable NSW koala populations at 748,000, questioned the park's necessity. With 88% of public forests already protected and only 0.2% selectively harvested, the industry argued for balance—sustaining jobs while safeguarding nature. The sawmill's closure validates those concerns,



Just weeks after warnings about the proposed Great Koala National Park's impact on businesses and jobs, the effects are already unfolding

proving the park's ripple effects threaten not just livelihoods but regional economies dependent on timber for infrastructure like power poles and wharves.

Forestry leaders are now urging immediate government action. Clarity on wood supply and a reconsideration of the park's scope could avert further losses. As the hardwood industry falters, the question looms: is this park worth sacrificing a sustainable, carbon-capturing resource and the communities it supports? The evidence suggests it's not.

United Nations International Day of Forests

LAST Friday, on the International Day of Forests, AFPA CEO Diana Hallam highlighted the vital role of Australia's forest products sector in combating climate change, supporting skilled regional jobs, producing essential goods, and making a significant economic impact.

The 2025 theme was "Forests and Food" which highlighted the important role the sector has for global food security. Forests are

critical for climate regulation, soil enrichment, as an energy source and for water, not to mention the critical and sustainable resource they provide for humankind. As global population grows, protecting the world's forests from threats like deforestation and fire risks is becoming more important.

"On this International Day of Forests, Australia's forest products sector is calling on all policy and political decision makers to better

recognise the potential of Australian forestry to provide for the nation, meet our emission reduction targets and fight climate change, as well as contribute to our sovereign capability and provide essential products," Diana Hallam said.

"Australia leads the way in global forest management whether they be native forests or plantations. It's something we must continue, not only to secure our own access to this sustainable

resource, but because it sets a high standard for the rest of the world in how production forests should be managed.

"AFPA's Federal Election Platform *Australian Timber. Australia's Future* outlines what our sector needs to reach its potential in the future, and we encourage all sides of politics to commit to the Platform in full ahead of the election," Diana Hallam concluded.

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Colin MacKenzie aka 'The Timber Expert'

A tribute from Timber Queensland.

AS the peak state body for the forest and timber industry, Timber Queensland has acknowledged the outstanding contribution Colin MacKenzie has made to the timber industry both nationally and in Queensland.

Timber Queensland CEO Mick Stephens said "It is with heavy hearts, we note the passing of Colin MacKenzie, a visionary in timber engineering, a dedicated contributor to the built environment, a legendary dry-humoured colleague and a friend to so many in our industry nationwide. His loss will be particularly felt by the many former and current Directors and staff of Timber Queensland who have known and worked with Colin over many decades, as well as the hundreds of member companies and technical bodies that relied and benefited from his advice."

"Timber Queensland, the broader timber and building industry and the community all owe a great debt to Colin MacKenzie. His tireless work and reputation to develop and educate the industry on relevant timber codes for structural integrity and safety is unquestionable."

Colin passed away on the morning of 24 March in Brisbane aged 75 following a period of illness and is survived by his loving wife Christine and



1



3

daughters Aleisha and Trina.

His influence on the timber and building industries will be felt for generations to come. Affectionately known as 'The Timber Expert' due to his skills and experience, his enthusiasm and commitment to timber product education will be hard to replicate.

Colin's journey in engineering began in Melbourne, where he graduated from the Caulfield Institute of Technology in 1974. With over 40 years of experience in all facets of timber and wood product design, use, and application, he became a leading authority in the field - particularly where timber was used in building and construction.

His expertise was built from his early days as a



2

1/ **Colin and Christine MacKenzie at the 30-year testimonial lunch.**

2/ **Colin MacKenzie was passionate about educating the industry and his expertise and enthusiasm will be missed.**

3/ **Colin MacKenzie's legacy will live on not only in the structural work he influenced but in all the many people he mentored and supported.** All photos: Timber Queensland

Technical Officer with CSIRO's Divisions of Forest Products and Building Research through to his leadership roles as Technical Director, TRADAC and later Manager of Timber Application and Use with Timber Queensland. Colin's contributions were instrumental in advancing timber construction standards, ensuring structural integrity, and promoting innovative applications for wood products.

Over the course of his career, he became a defining figure in timber engineering, working with the Timber Research and Development Advisory Council of Queensland (now Timber Queensland) before establishing MacKenzie Consulting. His work spanned durability design, domestic engineering, and the advancement of Australian Standards and Building Codes.

A leader in pioneering timber grading and in-grade testing programs, Colin's impact reached far beyond

Australia. He served on numerous Australian Standards Committees including the Timber Structures Committee, the Structural Timbers Committee and the Timber Framing Committee. Internationally, he represented Australia on the

ISO TC 165 Timber Structures Committee, ensuring that his expertise shaped the global timber industry.

His commitment to education and industry advancement was evident in his contribution to writing numerous technical publications, including the renowned Timber Queensland Technical Data Sheets, Queensland Timber Framing Manuals, Multi-Residential Timber Frame Construction publications, AS 1684, and the Handy Span Tables book. He played a key role in research projects such as Advanced Flooring Research, Recycled Timber Grading, and Durability Design, all aimed at strengthening the future of timber construction.

Beyond his professional achievements, Colin was recognised with the 'Stanley A. Clarke Medal' from the Institute of Wood Science in 1999 - an acknowledgment of his outstanding contributions to timber technology. He was also a Registered Professional Engineer in Queensland, a member of the Institute of Engineers, the Building Disputes Practitioners Society, and served on influential

Cont P 7

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.sydnebuildexpo.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](https://www.woodsolutions.com.au/events/woodsolutions-sponsors-tda-japan-study-tour?)

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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/>

From P 6

committees including the HIA Legal and Technical Committee and the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Industry Reference Group.

Colin's legacy is not only in the structures that stand strong today because of his work but in the numerous generations

of people he mentored, the standards he helped establish, and the industry he loved and gave so much to.

Though he is no longer with us, his work remains as a lasting testimony to the industry and the many builders and certifiers that have relied on his knowledge and expertise - solid, resilient, and built to

last, just like the timber he so passionately championed.

"Given his significant influence spanning decades we know there will be many in the industry who will want to pay their respects, and we are discussing with Colin's family their wishes for memorial arrangements. In addition, Timber Queensland will be

putting in place a lasting legacy to appropriately recognise Colin's contribution in the field of timber engineering in Australia. We are talking with other industry partners and will be able to make a further announcement at the appropriate time," Mr Stephens said.

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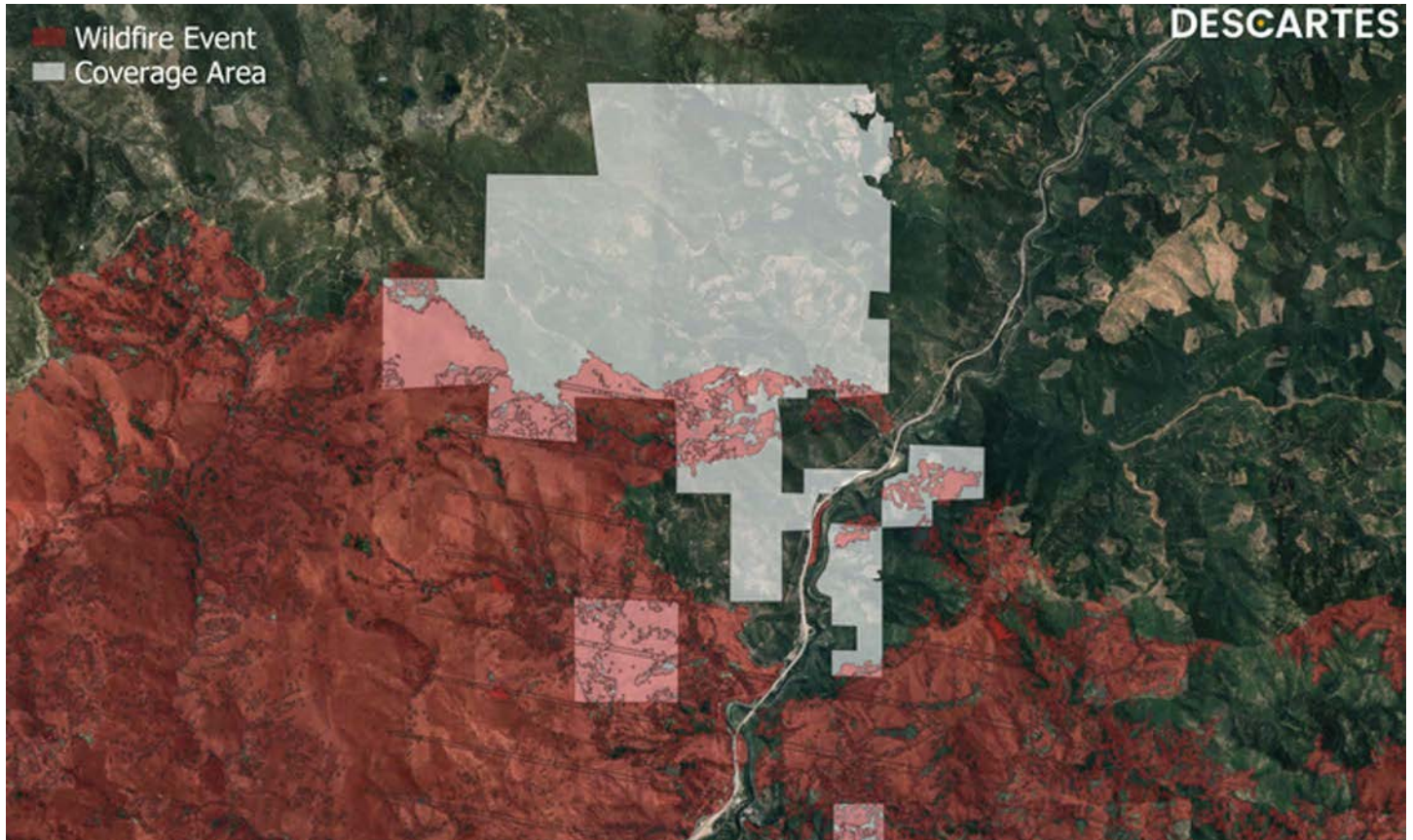


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Descartes

Bespoke parametric insurance protection against bushfire and loss of carbon credits.



An example visualisation of Descartes bushfire product live in action on a New South Wales plantation Image: Descartes

Bushfires are a regular occurrence in Australia, causing billions of dollars in damage and threatening the livelihoods of those in the forestry, pulp and paper, and agriculture industries.

Since Australia's 'Black Summer' of 2019-2020, which resulted in around \$1.8 billion claims from households and businesses, the forestry industry has faced insurability issues including wildfire exclusions and higher deductions.

Descartes' parametric solutions offer a new form of resilience to bushfire. Customised precisely to clients' exposure based on up-to-date plantation shapefile and valuation, Descartes

covers the entire risk season with a straight-forward, transparent satellite-based solution.

INNOVATIVE SOLUTION

Lynn Roehrig, Descartes Head of Business Development Australia and New Zealand said clients can be certain of what they will receive if impacted by bushfires throughout the risk period, with simple and transparent structures based solely on the number of hectares burnt.

"We're relying on quite granular imagery from satellites along with proprietary AI modelling to determine the equivalent burnt area and the number

of impacted hectares of the plantation, which leads to a quicker and more accurate claims settlement and better outcomes of the claim for a client," Lynn said.

"The benefits of using satellite technology as opposed to physically assessing a claim is that you're able to accurately capture the burnt area or the burn scar. As well, this method reduces the costs associated

with traditional physically adjusting of a claim because we're using technology for that process."

Clients simply provide a digital boundary map (or 'shape file') of their plantation using geospatial data, Descartes obtains an accurate read of the plantation and creates a digital map of the area to be monitored.

When notified of an event, satellite imagery of the area covered is obtained to determine the number of hectares lost or damaged and what this equates to in terms of their declared shape file and valuation.

“USING SATELLITE TECHNOLOGY REDUCES COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH PHYSICALLY ADJUSTING A CLAIM

Cont P 9

From P 8

ACCURACY ASSURED

Satellite technology enables Descartes to conduct continuous flyovers of the area to ensure the full extent of damage is captured to inform an accurate assessment and settlement.

“The first imagery when the satellite flies over the area that’s been impacted may not fully capture the full extent of damage (due to the unseen underlying health of the tree impacted from fire), so we give it time and then have a second or subsequent fly over to ensure that we’re capturing the

“**TECHNOLOGY ENABLES ACCURATE CAPTURE OF BURN SCARS AND DAMAGE**

DESCARTES

Descartes parametric solutions offer a new form of resilience to bushfire.

full area impacted,” Lynn said.

“When you just conduct a physical inspection, it’s a one-time inspection, whereas with ours you can do multiple flyovers of satellites to see if the actual damage has worsened or deteriorated.”

Full transparency is shared with the client regarding the number of hectares burnt during the policy period via an event report produced by an independent certification agent specified in the policy. Clients are provided with certainty of what they can expect to receive during the bushfires and throughout the season. The structures account for ‘small’ and ‘large’ fires to be captured, and all contribute to the claims settlement at the conclusion of the policy period.

When a triggering event occurs, the client notifies the insurer of their loss and swiftly receive compensation, often within a matter of days.

REAL WORLD APPLICATION

Descartes currently insures 800,000 hectares across Australia and New Zealand with two types of protection for the timber and forestry industry – Parametric Wildfire Insurance which covers plantations and Carbon Credit Insurance, which covers the loss of Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs).

In the case of a bushfire, the loss of timber value is only covered by traditional insurance. However, the financial loss of carbon credits or the replacement

value of timber is not. Timber Investment Management Organisations (TIMOs) issuing carbon credits are left incompletely insured. This might also be the case of the buyer of a carbon credit.

This was the challenge faced by a Descartes client in New South Wales, who struggled to find sufficient capacity in the traditional market. Having suffered major losses in previous years, they feared losing their carbon credit inventory all together.

Descartes parametric bushfire product secured their carbon credit inventory against all forms of physical and financial loss that result from a triggering wildfire. The policy was customised to the clients’ precise exposures and needs, with an agreed upon value per hectare up front.

Want to know more? Speak with your insurance broker or click here.



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Gentle density: a new tool to easing Australia's housing crisis

"AUSTRALIA'S housing crisis is at a tipping point, and one of the answers lies in embracing gentle density to unlock the missing middle housing solutions," said HIA Executive Director for Planning, Mike Hermon.

"The Housing Industry Association (HIA) is calling for smarter urban planning that allows for more townhouses, micro-lot houses, and triplexes in established suburbs, with minimal disruption to the character of those suburbs.

"Gentle density is about building more homes in existing suburbs – close to education facilities, jobs, and transport – while maintaining the charm of our communities.

"With Australia facing a severe shortage in housing availability and affordability, 'gentle density' provides a balanced approach by optimising land use and introducing diverse housing options.

"Current zoning laws are outdated and restrictive, often leaving Australians with limited choices between sprawling houses or towering apartment blocks. Gentle density bridges this gap by supporting middle-ground housing options like townhouses and small-scale apartments.

"Planning must be able to deliver on the big picture and use the right tools in the



70% of new homes are detached. Gentle density is about allowing more land to be used for higher density dwellings such as townhouses and small scale apartments. Image: Shutterstock

right locations, this means balancing housing needs both in the inner suburbs and greenfield.

"HIA has released a report into gentle density and is urging state and local governments to adopt forward-thinking policies

that encourage this type of development.

"Australia needs to build 1.2 million homes over the next five years to meet growing demand. Unblocking housing in our existing suburbs is a crucial piece of that puzzle.

"By streamlining approval

processes and allowing for more flexible zoning, we can unlock the potential of our existing suburbs alongside greenfield housing and create vibrant, liveable communities for generations to come," concluded Mr Hermon.



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Forestry Australia abstract deadline approaching

FORESTRY Australia extended their deadline for submitting abstracts for the 2025 Forestry Australia Conference by two weeks. **The new abstract deadline is Sunday 30 March**, and it is rapidly approaching with only a few days remaining.

The conference offers an excellent opportunity to share your insights, research, experiences, and expertise, and the Call for Abstracts is your chance to shape the conversation. If you were planning to submit an abstract but missed the original deadline or needed additional time, then you still have the opportunity to finalise your submission.

THE CONFERENCE

The Conference will focus

on restoring forests and landscapes and securing Australia's future. We are halfway through the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration and the conference aims to bring together experts, researchers, forestry professionals, farmers, rangers and tree growing practitioners to explore how forest management and forest and landscape restoration can make a positive contribution to Australia's future.

The conference aims to provide forest scientists, forestry professionals, tree growers and restoration practitioners with tools and best practice ideas to address critical challenges such as reducing carbon emissions, adapting to

climate change and increased bushfire risk, engaging with changing social attitudes and values, empowering and involving Indigenous Australians, supporting regional development and local processing to meet national housing and forest product needs. The role of research, innovation in supporting evidence-based practice and decision making, and the use of emerging technologies, will be important topics.

ALL FOR SPONSORS

Sponsorship opportunities are available for the 2025 Forestry Australia Conference. The event will consist of three days of plenary and concurrent sessions, plus networking and social functions, and an additional

day of field trip opportunities. The Conference builds on the enormous success of the 2024 Symposium in Ballarat, and the 2023 ANZIF Conference on the Gold Coast.

Sponsorship of the Forestry Australia Conference provides your organisation with the perfect platform and opportunity to connect with key decision makers and leaders in the sector.

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WHEN

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NZ's pest wallabies

Effects of their widespread browsing.

PART TWO by MICHAEL SMITH

FOLLOWING on from last week's article on the pest wallaby problem in New Zealand, we look further at efforts to contain and, ultimately, eradicate this elusive marsupial.

Jacqueline Neave, Team Manager, Pest Management Animals, Biosecurity New Zealand (at the Ministry for Primary Industries), says stopping their spread is key.

"To protect our farms, forests and whenua, eradication and a wallaby-free Aotearoa is the long-term aspirational goal.

"The first strategic steps are to stop wallabies from spreading by eliminating populations that are outside the designated containment areas [the Bay of Plenty and Canterbury], and reducing the numbers within these areas to ease outward migration pressure.

"Operationally, this means working in from the outside edge of the wallaby populations and reducing the area they cover so that full elimination becomes possible in the future."

Neave says that, anecdotally, farmers in wallaby-affected areas can lose upwards of 10-15% of pasture and crops annually to wallaby grazing,



Dama wallaby: centred on the Rotorua lakes area. Photo: Dale Williams, Bay of Plenty Regional Council

with livestock reluctant to enter areas cleared out and pastures fouled by wallabies.

"Riparian plantings and production forest areas are equally vulnerable to wallabies, which start attacking shrubs and plantings when there is no grass, nipping the buds out of *Pinus radiata* and other plantings."

She notes that wallabies (and other introduced browsing animals like deer and goats) can potentially reduce the uptake of atmospheric carbon as vegetation grows – causing forests to release rather than hold carbon. "By eating

“WALLABIES STRIP SEEDLINGS OF NEW GROWTH, STUNTING SURVIVORS

seedlings and killing young trees, introduced browsers consume our future carbon sinks."

ON THE FRONT LINE

In an article for the *New Zealand Journal of Forestry* (August 2024, Vol. 69, No. 2) the Tipu Mātoro National Wallaby Eradication Programme looked at two forestry companies that operate in the containment areas – Port Blakely in the south, and Timberlands Rotorua in the north.

"Pest wallabies strip seedlings of new growth, stunting survivors, or causing blanking and a need to replant [to maintain target stocking rates].

"This, in turn, affects the age class of trees across crop rotations, in some cases by up to five years. Scratching around young trees causes

unwanted erosion – a particular problem in steep areas – and wallabies are known to contribute to poor water quality."

At Port Blakely, Ashley Buchan (Operations Manager – Silviculture at Timaru) says it's critical to control wallabies in the first two years of tree growth – and particularly just before the winter planting when there is less food available for them.

In the North Island, Steve Gatenby (Timberlands Rotorua's Environmental Specialist) says "the one metre of good growth Timberlands expects in the first year from its new plantings can reduce by half when seedlings are browsed by the local area's dama and parma species. They remove the tips as if they have been cut out and the trees end up as small bushes.

"Often the damage is not apparent until the trees are 10 to 12 months of age when mortality surveys highlight the failed areas that will need replanting."

ERADICATION

Neave says the Tipu Mātoro National Wallaby Eradication Programme was set up in July 2020 to work towards

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the long-term goal of eradicating New Zealand's dama, parma and Bennett's pest wallaby problem.

"The programme's funding for wallaby control (including on Department of Conservation land) goes to regional councils via Biosecurity New Zealand to maximise efficiencies by taking a landscape-scale, tenure-neutral approach. That means targeting wallabies in a systematic way, regardless of who owns the land."

She adds that operational activities include surveillance, control operations (aerial

“ERADICATION AND A WALLABY-FREE AOTEAROA IS THE LONG-TERM ASPIRATIONAL GOAL



1/ Removing and replanting following wallaby browsing. Photo: Port Blakely



2/ Wallaby detector dog helping locate wallabies in Timberlands' Rotorua forests. Photo: Timberlands Rotorua

and ground-based shooting, and poisoning using Feratox and 1080), and fencing to prevent spread. "Depending on the toxin used and delivery method, the programme's poison operations are achieving between 70 and 99% success rates."

TASMANIAN APPROACH

Given New Zealand's eradication strategy, it's interesting to note the approach in Tasmania where

the Bennett's wallaby and Tasmanian pademelon (rufous wallaby) are scheduled as partly protected wildlife. As such they can be taken under a hunting licence or Property Protection Permit (PPP) issued under the Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulations 2021.

A spokesperson for the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania says officers of Game Services Tasmania

provide advice and information to land managers on methods of managing wallaby damage – including the use of fencing and shooting.

Wallaby-proof fencing is widely used and has proven to be a cost-effective means of reducing wallaby damage to crops and pastures in some situations. Nevertheless, shooting remains the primary method of wallaby control in the state.

Five-year PPPs are available to property owners or managers to undertake and authorise the shooting of Bennett's and rufous wallabies. Permits are issued where abundance can be demonstrated as having a financial impact on stock, crops and equipment, or infrastructure used in the production of crops and stock.

TAKE CONTROL

The Tigercat 573.
A powerful, triangulated three-wheel drive harvesting head with positive control and precise measuring.

573

Workplace safety is not optional

It demands constant vigilance and cannot be compromised.

By **CAMPBELL MCINNES**

I THINK we would all agree that Work Health and Safety (WH&S) is a very important and serious part of every workplace. We put in place what we believe is the right processes and procedures and believe that "everything will be alright"!

Unfortunately, that is not always the case, as one of National Timber and Hardware Association's (NTHA) long-standing members, who has been in business for decades and very experienced with safety in the workplace found out.

David Little, NTHA's CEO tells us that when he caught up with a spokesperson for the company, he told him: "It all started as such a normal day ... such an average day ..., the bustling morning routine, the boring drive to work ... and then a series of silly mistakes, simply not following the process this one time!

This was the day **everything** changed.... and it happened so quickly". They

added: "We go about our daily routines... following our usual pattern ... just as if we're on autopilot. All it took was a moment... the forklift driver parked up on a slight slope, didn't adequately apply the handbrake, didn't put a chock behind the rear wheels – they jumped out for just a second to label some packs, with the forklift tines still



Clearly marked walkways for pedestrians are vital, particularly in zones where forklifts operate. Image: Campbell McInnes

up and the wheels pointing down the slope.....and then the forklift silently rolled away".

This resulted in a person being crushed between the back of the forklift and a truck. His injuries were fatal.

Families' lives have been forever altered. The

spokesperson said: "So many things could've been done differently that day to prevent this tragic event from happening ... to prevent so many lives and families from being impacted by it."

This tragic incident reminds us that even the smallest lapse in safety can have catastrophic consequences for workers, families, and businesses.

Every business owner and operator must be vigilant about asking themselves these questions every day:

- Are my systems sound?
- Do I have the right procedures in place?
- Have I provided effective training that staff know how to follow?
- Are they adequately supervised?
- Am I checking that they're following procedure consistently?"

..... and can I demonstrate

adequate due diligence to meet my WH&S duties?

Because it can all go so very wrong, so very quickly if we don't. Cutting corners, ignoring process costs everyone.

This case demonstrates that unless safety in the workplace is ensured, **not only by employers**, but by the workers themselves, there can be terrible consequences because of the

failure to follow even the simplest and clearest of safety rules.

DON'T RISK IT:

The following also applies to Managers, Team Leaders / Supervisors & other workers on site including contractors.

WHS Act: Div 4 - Clause (29) Duties of other persons at the workplace (extract)

A person at a workplace **must**:

-
- (a) take reasonable care for his or her own health and safety, and
- (b) take reasonable care that his or her acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons, and

Therefore, others may / will be prosecuted under the WHS Act.

CONCLUSION:

This heartbreaking incident is a stark reminder that safety



Bollards with signage are vital tools to assist the workplace with safety obligations. Image: Campbell McInnes

From P 14

protocols are not just guidelines—they are essential measures that protect lives. While the processes may seem tedious or repetitive, they exist for a reason. A moment of oversight, a lapse in judgment, or a simple act of forgetting can change everything in an instant, and no one is immune from the consequences.

For business owners and leaders, the responsibility is clear: Safety must be a top priority, and it requires constant vigilance. This extends beyond compliance with regulations; it requires fostering a culture where every worker, from the newest recruit to the most experienced operator, understands the importance of the rules, is equipped to follow them, and feels empowered to speak up when safety is compromised.

There are no shortcuts when it comes to ensuring a safe workplace. Cutting corners, even with the best

“SAFETY IS NOT JUST A REGULATORY OBLIGATION; IT IS A MORAL IMPERATIVE THAT SAFEGUARDS THE WELL-BEING OF EVERY PERSON IN THE WORKPLACE



1/ **This safety sign is a great example, it is clear, stands out, has precise instructions and is informative.**

2/ **While using marked walkways, it is important for both pedestrians and forklift operators to be vigilant and aware of their surroundings, at all times.** Images: Campbell McInnes

intentions, puts everyone at risk—employees, families, businesses, and entire communities. We must all recognise that safety is not just a regulatory obligation; it is a moral imperative that safeguards the well-being of every person in the workplace.

The hope is that reflecting on this tragic loss inspires a commitment to do better. It's important to remember that safety isn't a one-time check, but a continuous evolving responsibility. The cost of negligence is too high, and the price of complacency is a risk we cannot afford.

For the sake of those we care about, everyone must do everything in their power to ensure no other family has to endure what the NTHA members' team has faced.

UPCOMING ROADSHOW ANNOUNCEMENT

David Little shared: "NTHA will be hosting a roadshow initially across NSW, later this year in conjunction with an industry member and safety specialists, focused on workplace safety. This event is designed to be both informative and practical, benefiting not just NTHA members, but businesses across all sectors. Safety is a top priority for NTHA, and we want to ensure that everyone has access to the latest resources and insights."

As part of the roadshow, NTHA will have available a new dedicated app, that aims to help businesses assess and address any gaps in their WH&S procedures. The app will include a user-friendly questionnaire to guide the user through potential safety improvements. Best of all, the app will be available for free for the first two years following its launch.

Keep an eye out for the roadshow dates and locations, as these events should be attended by Owners, Managers, Supervisors, WH&S officers, and anyone who has an input or responsibility for WH&S in the workplace, dates should be noted in your diaries!

Don't risk it. Prioritise safety every day, in every action.

For further information on how NTHA can assist your business in meeting WH&S obligations, please contact NTHA via: website: www.ntha.com.au phone: 1800 822 621 or email: info@ntha.com.au.

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PHOTO: POSED BY MODELS

Will Daddy Come Home Today?

WORKPLACE SAFETY DOESN'T JUST PROTECT WORKERS
IT ALSO PROTECTS FAMILIES.

WORKPLACE SAFETY IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

SAFETY IN ACTION: BUILDING A WORKPLACE THAT PROTECTS EVERYONE



Site Traffic Management Plan (TMP)

A well-implemented TMP separates vehicles and pedestrians, uses clear signage, and defines safe pathways, creating a safer, more efficient work environment.



Dedicated Loading & Unloading Zones

Greater separation between machinery and people reduces the risk of incidents.



Driver Safety Zones

A clear plan for separating plant and people, ensure designated safety zones are well marked, maintained and kept clear.



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