

TimberTrader

news



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CAN GROW YOUR BUSINESS**

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WORTH THE EFFORT**

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**MULTINAIL'S NEW
PIECEGIVER MACHINE**



PieceGiver



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COVER CREDIT: A group shot of some of the winners at the 2022 Queensland Timber Industry Awards with (back row) Ernie Patterson, Melonie Conduit, Stuart McBean from Multinail and Daniel Parkin; (middle row) Peter Hutchison, Carolyn Crabb and Kiara Claffey from Dindas Australia, Aaron Hillman, David McInnes of Hyne Timber and Michael Gaske; (front row): Matt Green and Anthony Thomas of Gowan Lea Timbers. Photo Courtesy TABMA.

Timber Trader acknowledges the Cammeraygal people, Traditional Custodians of the land on which this publication is produced, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.



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Association news

ATIF

John Halkett

ADDITIONAL TARIFFS WAIVED

The issue of Russian timber imports has resulted in numerous and polarised representations. To make it crystal clear, ATIF condemns in the strongest possible terms Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the atrocities committed by the Russian military. ATIF continues to be supportive of the Government's economic and financial sanctions against Russia and Belarus.

That said, ATIF has advocated that shipments of Russian timber products paid for and shipped in good faith prior to the 'conflict timber' resolution on 4 March 2022 should not be subject to a retrospective additional 35% import tariff. The Australia Border Force (ABF) has now made a ruling supporting that position. Subsequent correspondence with ABF has confirmed that companies importing timber products from Russia that have consignments presently in-transit and expected to be landed at an Australian port between 25 April 2022 and 24 October 2022 will not have to pay the additional 35% tariff.

ABF has pointed out that importers will need evidence that the goods were in-transit and comply with other conditions set out in the Australian Customs Notice 2022/21. Importers are advised to ensure that documentation confirming that timber product shipments originated from Russia

and have been in transit is available for inspection by Australian port authorities and officials.

FUTURE STRUCTURAL SOFTWOOD TIMBER PRODUCT SUPPLIES

ATIF has been in discussions with officials from various Federal Government departments about timber product supply constraint realities that have arisen as a result of the invasion of Ukraine.

In particular, softwood structural timber import shortages, not only from Russia, but from Europe more broadly are likely to result in a significant reduction in the capacity of the Australian timber supply chain to import sufficient quantities of both engineered wood products and solid wood softwood structural products for the foreseeable future.

In correspondence to the ATIF Chairman, the Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment acknowledged the impact on supply chains from the current situation across Europe, and that the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources had noted the disruption to existing supply chains and intends to explore options for diversifying supply chains acknowledging that it is critical to sustain building and construction businesses reliant on such imports.

The Minister also noted that it is essential to have strong contingency plans developed to mitigate the impacts of the now evident

disruptions to existing supply chains and associated arrangements.

In discussions with officials, it has been suggested that a joint taskforce comprising representatives from Federal industry, trade, foreign affairs and supply chain resilience portfolios, together with Forest and Wood Products Australia and the ATIF be established. This taskforce would assess impacts on timber products supply chains, analyse import data and explore options to assist in mitigating prospective reductions in supply. It is proposed that the taskforce be administered and funded by the Federal Trade portfolio.

This work could include reviewing existing government instruments, such as tariffs, sanctions and compliance requirements. It could also explore the prospects of attracting supplies from additional European sources, plus non-traditional prospective suppliers of softwood structural products that may include South American countries, such as Argentina and Brazil, and possibly other sources such as South Africa and South East Asia.

FORESTRY LEVIES REVIEW

The Federal Department of Agriculture, Water Resources and Environment is conducting a review of all categories of forestry levies, including levies paid by importers of timber products. ATIF is participating in this review exercise that is seen as an opportunity to consider how the present levy system could be consolidated

ATIF has advocated that shipments before the cut-off should not be subject to a tariff.

and streamlined across the multiple Acts and regulations that make up the agricultural levies legislation.

Individual levy rates will not be changing, and it is hoped that the review will result in some efficiencies including reduced overhead and collection costs and simplification of related compliance activities.

For further ATIF-related information contact John Halkett at: john.halkett@bigpond.com or 0417 421 187.

TABMA *David Little*

NEW TRAINING MANAGER

It is with great pleasure that we introduce our new General Manager - Training to the TABMA team, Louise Kinloch; who commenced in May.

Louise comes with a wealth of knowledge within the Vocational Education sector, with over 20 years of industry experience in Education. Louise holds an Executive Masters of Business, as well as a Bachelor Degree in Vocational Education and Training. This sets a great foundation for a methodical, planned and positive approach to advances throughout the Training team.

As an experienced people and performance leader, Louise is able to stimulate team growth and identify development of leadership potential through empowerment and alignment to organisational strategic goals and personal goals.

Louise has proven effective problem-solving skills, including the ability to explore alternatives, understand implications and make informed decisions. She is an adept communicator, with demonstrable skills in successfully fostering and maintaining stakeholder relationships, together with effectively negotiating positive outcomes and encouraging collaborative team participation.

Louise's strengths are building successful relationships through connectedness and great communication. She is also very personable, friendly and is looking forward to working with our members and networks.

Please feel free to reach out to her at louise.k@tabmatraining.edu.au



Above: Louise Kinloch

TTIA *Brian Beecroft*

EMPLOYEE RESIGNATIONS

Written vs Verbal Resignations

An employee does not need to put their resignation in writing in order for it to have legal effect. It can, however, be worthwhile for employers to have a written record confirming the details of any employee resignation.

If an employee has resigned without putting anything in writing (or if the employee has omitted certain details in their resignation letter) the employer can write to the employee acknowledging their resignation, and also recording (or requesting) the following details:

- how and when the employee confirmed their resignation;
- the last date of employment;
- the reason for resignation (if relevant for long service leave purposes or other entitlements that may be owed on termination);
- the date when amounts owed to the employee will be paid (such as untaken accrued annual leave);
- reminders about return of property owned by the employer, or any other contractual obligations that are triggered when employment ends.

Forced resignations (constructive dismissal)

It is important that an employee's resignation is their own decision. Generally, employees who resign are not eligible to make an unfair dismissal claim because they were not 'dismissed' by the employer. >>



A 'constructive dismissal' can occur however, when an employee is forced to resign due to the conduct of their employer. An employee who has been constructively dismissed may retain the protections and entitlements associated with being dismissed by the employer (including access to unfair dismissal remedies).

If you are uncertain about any aspect of an employee's resignation please do not hesitate to contact the TTIA Hotline on (02) 9264 0011.

MGA TMA

Marie-Claire McKiernan

KEEPING APPROPRIATE TIME RECORDS

MGA TMA has been communicating with members about their requirements to comply with record-keeping obligations provided in the *Fair Work Regulations 2009 (the Regulations)* and in any applicable modern award or enterprise agreement.

What are time record-keeping obligations under the Regulations?

1. Overtime

Where an employee is entitled to receive a penalty rate, loading or overtime pay in respect of overtime hours worked by the employee, employers are required to make and keep records specifying the number of overtime hours worked on each day and the time that the employee started and ceased working those overtime hours.

Overtime hours are those hours of work that are not ordinary hours of work.

You should refer to the applicable modern award or enterprise agreement to determine what hours are considered overtime work hours.

Examples of record-keeping that satisfies these obligations in the Regulations include:

- Making and maintaining records of **rosters** that state the specific number of overtime hours worked each shift, including the start and finish times that the overtime hours were worked;
- Requiring employees to complete **timesheets** that specify the specific number of overtime hours worked each shift, including the start and finish times that the overtime hours were worked, then keeping these timesheets as a record; and
- Maintaining a **logbook** of each employee's hours of work which notes the specific number of overtime hours worked each shift, including the start and finish times that the overtime hours were worked.

2. Averaging of hours

For particular full-time and casual employees covered by the General Retail Industry Award [GRIA], provisions in respect of averaging of hours can be applied. If an employer and an employee covered by the GRIA agree in writing to an averaging of the employee's hours of work, the employer is required to make and keep a copy of this agreement.

Please note that provisions in respect of averaging of hours do not apply for employees covered by the Timber Industry Award.

3. Payslips

All employees must be provided with a payslip within one working day of paying an amount to the employee in relation to the performance of work. Amongst other things, payslips must specify any separately identifiable amount paid to the employee that is overtime pay, a loading or penalty rate. This means that you must be able to identify and record overtime hours, ordinary hours or hours attracting penalty rates in order to note in payslips any amounts payable in respect of overtime pay, loading or penalty rate.

How long should time records be kept?

Employee records in respect of each employee, as noted in the Regulations, must be kept for at least seven (7) years.

What are time record-keeping obligations under the GRIA?

Under the GRIA, there are certain agreements between a member and an employee that must be kept as a time record. These agreements are as follows:

- Individual flexibility arrangements;
- Length of work cycle (full-time employees only);
- Number of days in the work cycle (full-time employees only);
- Maximum length of shifts (full-time employees only);
- Substituting rostered days off (full-time employees only);
- Banking rostered day off (full-time employees only);
- Minimum consecutive days off;
- Regular work on Sundays;
- Breaks between work periods on consecutive days;
- Substitution of public holiday shift (shift workers only);
- Annual leave in advance;
- Substitution of public holidays; and
- Agreement to increase guaranteed hours of work (part-time employees only).

Are there consequences contravening record-keeping obligations?

Employers who do not comply with their record-keeping and payslip obligations are in breach of the *Fair Work Act 2009*, regulations, and the relevant modern award or enterprise agreement. If a breach is established, civil penalties may apply.

If you require further advice in respect of record keeping, please contact the MGA TMA Employment Law Team on 1800 888 479. If you are interested in learning about the benefits of MGA TMA membership, please contact us on (03) 9824 4111 to discuss. T

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News in brief



Above: Training, trees, infrastructure and energy security are all part of Prime Minister Albanese's agenda.

All out, all change

After a solid electoral rejection of the previous government, can the ALP fix current problems without making new ones?

Anthony Albanese famously hit the ground running as Prime Minister, flying off to Japan the same day he was sworn in. It's one thing to establish he's a do-something PM, but what's he planning to do?

The platform the ALP took to the 2022 election contained some firm promises for the timber sector, based around the three identified needs of future supply support, increased local manufacturing and training. In particular, it promised:

- \$10 million towards sector training;
- \$220 million to expand the work of the National Institute for Forest Products and Innovation, continue the roll-out of Regional Forestry Hubs and other work related to better utilisation of forest products;
- \$500 million from the National Reconstruction Fund for agriculture, forestry and fisheries.
- To conduct an analysis of the national wood volume and the commercial

opportunities from fire mitigation activities.

- To hold a roundtable with the forestry sector, unions, States and Territories to develop a Timber Fibre Strategy to ensure our existing forestry resources are being best utilised.

Finally, it re-committed to a long-established Labor policy of meeting the Billion Trees target and removing the water rule in the voluntary Carbon Farming Initiative that restricted new plantations in areas of more than 600mm of annual rainfall and 400mm for farm forestry from competing in the carbon market.

The Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Penny Wong began this term of government with a hand of friendship extended to our region.

In other areas, there is clear goodwill, but in trying circumstances. The Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Penny Wong began this term of government with an unmistakable hand of friendship extended to our close regional neighbours and courtesy towards China, which has resumed Ministerial talks with Australia after a three-year freeze. At the time of writing, that had not yet translated into any softening of the various tariffs that have been imposed since 2020.

Domestically, certainty on power transition timetables and investment was welcomed by the Business Council of Australia when it was released last December, with support for faster Net Zero targets. The Albanese government has backed this up with a \$20bn fund to accelerate the rollout of electricity transmission assets. However, first it's faced with a harsh winter and soaring gas prices, so has called for coal power stations currently offline for maintenance issues to come back on.

As expected, workplace relations will be in for significant changes, see Peter Maguire's column on page 20 for what to expect.

Already the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water has been restored and Finance Minister Katy Gallagher has promised to lift the cap on public servants, saving an estimated \$3bn pa on consultancy fees, at the same time as Albanese has committed to fund the CSIRO. In the past, the timber sector has benefited enormously from public sector institutional expertise and research not directly connected to profit-making ventures. And if you're scoffing at that statement, remember how much we use Wi-Fi and bushfire modelling; both CSIRO innovations.

With a record debt to manage and multiple international crises ongoing, it won't be easy for the new government to deliver on all its promises, but talking with China again in the first month is a positive start.

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The other hardware store

Mitre 10's new ad campaign seeks to add more DIY customers to their already strong trade base.

The Mitre 10 group has always had an individual way of doing things, but their new ad campaign may be the first time public nudity has played a role.

With tongue firmly planted in cheek (not that cheek) for some of the creative, but backed up by very serious service commitments for all customers, whether industry or nudists needing painting tips, the

group has recently begun its multi-channel rebranding across print, TV, outdoor signage and digital, launching its new tagline "The Other Hardware Store".

The brand's traditional strengths, from its iconic blue to its strong trade focus, remain, but from brochures to buses, the campaign will remind Australians that they have a choice in hardware stores – or over 350 individual store choices, to be more precise.

"The research shows that many Australians are on autopilot where they shop for their DIY needs, and while Mitre 10 is known for service and quality of range amongst existing customers, we are often not considered in the moment of hardware store choice by people unfamiliar with our brand," explains

Karen Fahey, Mitre 10's general manager of marketing. "They're missing out – we can give them solutions to their home improvement challenges on their first trip.

"Builders and the trade understand the value that Mitre 10 brings to their daily lives – expertise that we've built up over generations can save them time and money. We saw an opportunity to engage with those less familiar with our brand. To stop them in their tracks and let them know what is so special about the 'other' store. It's disruptive, fun and memorable. We don't take ourselves seriously but we take our customers very seriously and we take immense pride in the particular care and attention we give them."

The campaign was developed by creative agency Dig, a Melbourne- and Sydney-based firm with a strong track record in multi-channel campaigns that mix witty visuals with cut-through, person-driven messages.

Chief creative officer at Dig, Peter Cerny, says, "This idea challenges the category by embracing Australians' love of the underdog. The campaign cleverly plays-off the salience of the bigger brand, while not poking at it. Developing a distinctive and relatable tone was a real opportunity for Mitre 10 to stand out in a category that tends to be bland and impersonal."

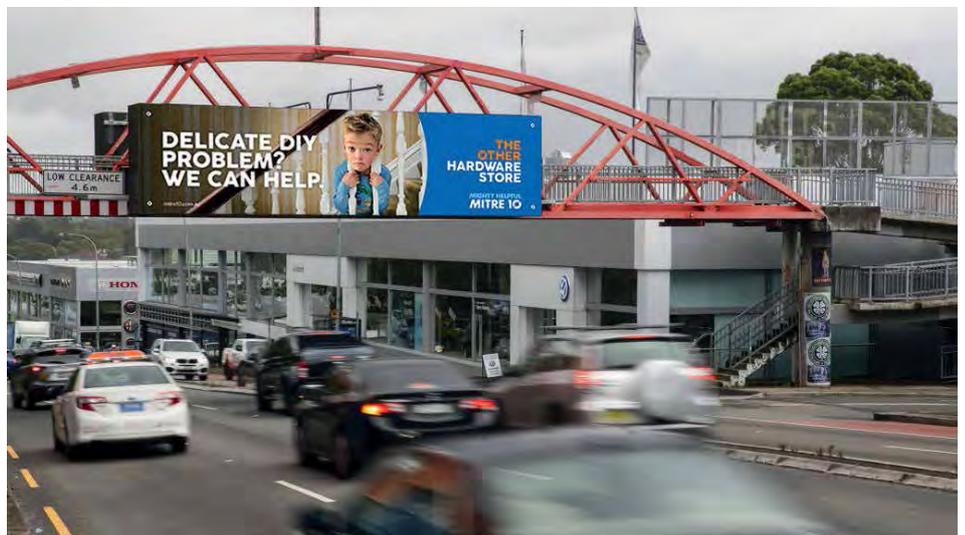
Fahey and the hundreds of independent traders who make up Mitre 10 are thrilled with the results. "We are different, and proud of it," Fahey says.

"This is an open invite to all of Australia to experience hardware another way – in store or online. Because the grass isn't just greener on the other side... it's blue!

You can check out the entire ad campaign at www.mitre10.com.au/the-other-hardware-store



Above: Even nudists need good DIY advice.



Above: Billboards along major thoroughfares are a part of the multi-channel response.

In brief

Owners at Opal Tower have reached a last-minute out-of-court settlement the day before the landmark trial was due to commence in the NSW Supreme Court on 20 May. Terry Walter Williamson and Helen Therese Williamson had filed against the Sydney Olympic Park Authority (SOPA) on 26 July 2019 on behalf of all owners of strata lots in the tower. In a complex case, three cross-claimants and multiple cross-defendants were also named. The questions set out within the summons included what rights the owners were entitled to against SOPA, whether the Opal work was carried out with due care and skill, whether the Opal work was carried out in accordance with the plans and specifications set out in the D&C contract and whether the work was compliant and the materials used suitable. The owners had been seeking millions of dollars in compensation, but the terms of the settlement have not been disclosed. At the time of writing, the settlement was yet to be approved by the court. For the full story, visit www.theurbandevolver.com/articles/out-of-court-settlement-reached-over-opal-tower and for the trial records, visit www.supremecourt.justice.nsw.gov.au/Pages/sco2_classaction/Opal-Towers-Class-Action.aspx

PEFC has appointed a new secretary general and CEO as of 1 June. Dr Michael Berger has stepped into the role, bringing with him 20 years of experience in environmental and quality management,

sustainable supply chain development, and management systems.

"Michael will be an engaged, responsive and dedicated leader for the PEFC alliance," said Eduardo Rojas Briales, PEFC Chair. "With his team-oriented, people-centric management style, his focus on collaboration and innovation, and his remarkable expertise and technical knowledge, we are confident he will guide PEFC in the next phase of its evolution."

Find the full story at www.responsiblewood.org.au/pefc-appoints-new-secretary-general-and-ceo/

CoreLogic's June report on housing over supports the economists who are counselling calm in the face of rate rises. Key findings include:

- The combined value of residential real estate in Australia fell to \$9.97 trillion at the end of May.
- Dwelling values in Australia are 14.1% higher over the past 12 months, down from a cyclical peak of 22.4% in the 12 months to January 2022.
- Sales volumes are starting to ease from recent highs. CoreLogic estimates that in the 12 months to May, there were 586,602 sales nationally, up 6.5% compared to the previous year. However, initial sales estimates over May were 26.9% lower than the same month of the previous year.
- In the four weeks to June 6, there were 39,858 dwellings listed for sale nationally.

While new listings volumes have steadied, they are higher than the five-year average for the equivalent period.

- Through April, dwelling approvals declined for a second consecutive month, down 2.4%. The decline was driven by a 7.9% drop in unit approvals. However, detached house approvals were 10,154 through April, remaining above the decade average of 9,777.

Renters face grim news, with rental value growth remaining high and increasing a further 1% in May, taking rents 9.3% higher over the year. To download the full report, visit www.corelogic.com.au/news-research/news/2022/monthly-housing-chart-pack-june-2022

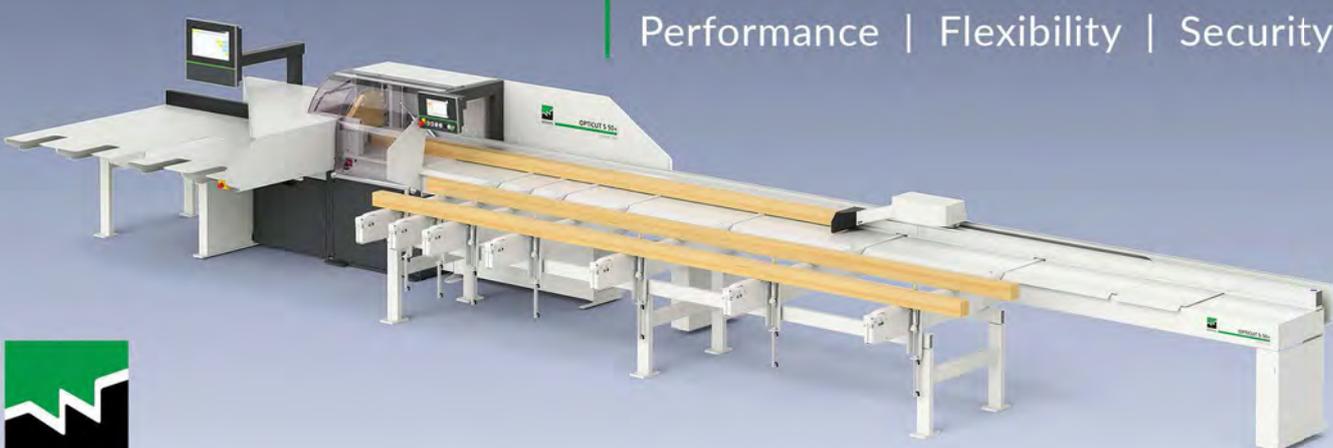
State governments have been busy this month. NSW has extended wood supply agreements on the flood-affected North Coast that were due to conclude in 2023 for five years, bringing expiry dates into line across the region. The Perrottet government also announced a \$10 million Hardwood Timber Haulage Subsidy Program for the region. In Victoria, the Andrews government has introduced legislation to jail or heavily fine anti-logging protestors.

Low in the dark mushrooms in South Australian forests are definitely worth a look! www.abc.net.au/news/2022-06-01/ghost-mushrooms-brings-tourists-to-glenceoe/101110494

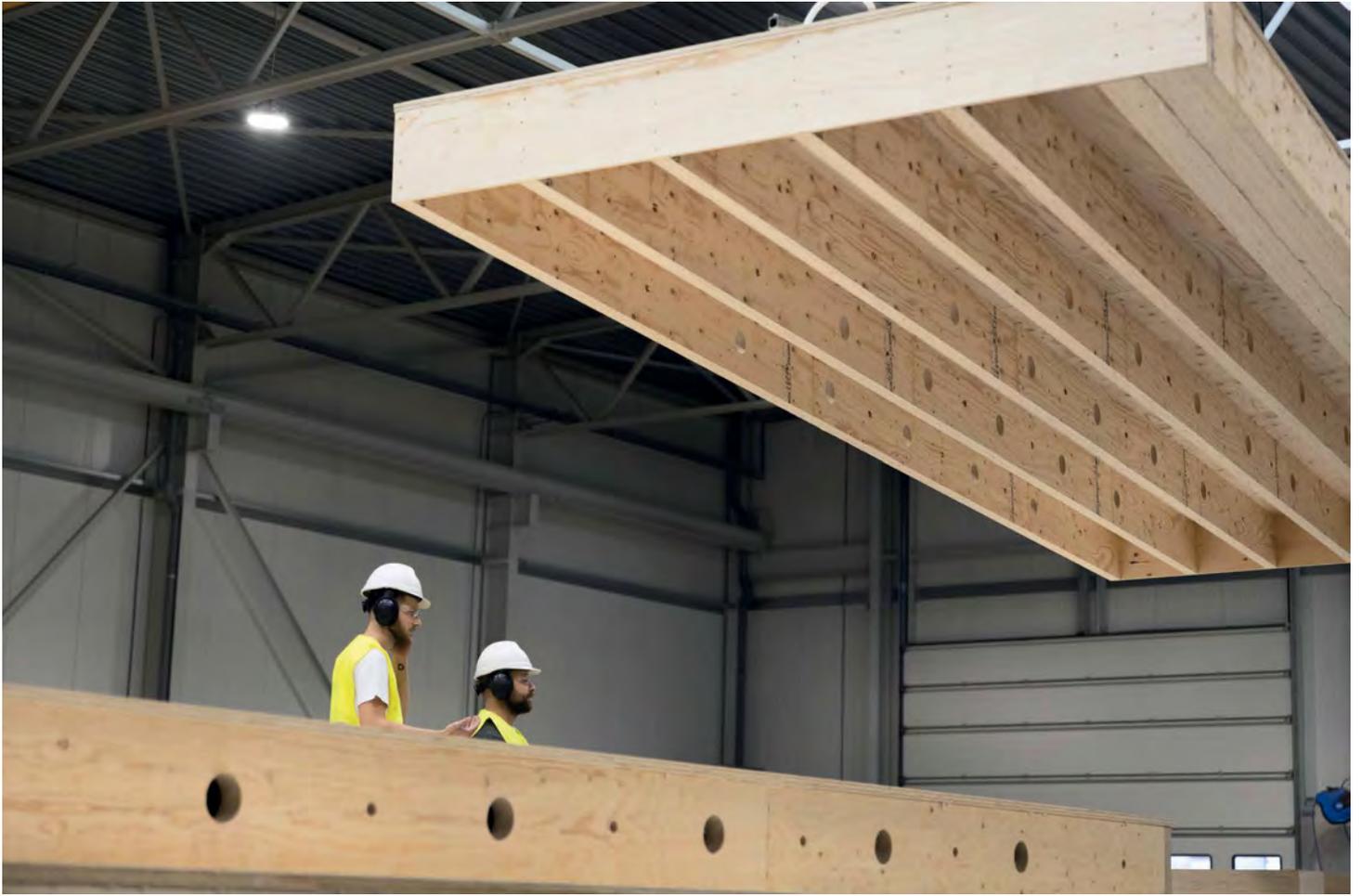


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New Metsä case study

EWP specialists Metsä Wood add their recent Port of Amsterdam build to their online resource kit.

Supply of LVL into Australia out of Europe is still limited from many major brands including Metsä Wood. While the company's recent announcement of a new 250-million-euro plant due to come online in early 2024 is welcome, Metsä isn't resting in the

interim. Instead, it has recently added to its resources library with new information and tools that will be valuable to Metsä customers and also non-customers seeking to show the benefits of EWP and panelised construction to clients.

The Carbon Storage Calculator is a handy tool for Metsä customers. Simply choose your engineered wood product, enter the cubic-metre quantity of it in your project (your order size) and the calculator will deliver the quantity of carbon stored in that product for the full life cycle of the building. It's an easy but effective way to back up the claims of a sustainable build.

For anyone wanting to be inspired by – or help your clients understand the potential of – LVL and prefabrication, Metsä's Offsite Construction section includes a library of reference builds. The Nautical Coordination Centre at the Port of Amsterdam is the most recent addition to this resource.

Designed by WRK Architects, the major material used in the structure is Metsä Wood's engineered Kerto LVL. Fitting in with the Port of Amsterdam's strong focus on the circular economy, all the floor, wall and roof elements were prefabricated by the Belgian timber element manufacturer Dupac and delivered to the building site ready for



Above: Dupac, a leading offsite manufacturer in Belgium, prefabricated the wall, floor and roof elements.



Above: The Kerto-Ripa floor panels average 7.5m spans and rely on glued joints between the ribs and top and bottom panels.

“The industrial appearance of Kerto LVL products is fully visible, and the large floor-to-ceiling windows offer a view of the IJ river.”

assembly. The Lego-like assembly is more than just a fast building method: panels can be later removed and re-used in another build. The minimal requirement for fixings further lowers the carbon cost of construction.

Subtle differences in the panels meet different usage requirements: floors are designed to minimise vibrations, insulation is added to the walls and roof and extra ribs are used to strengthen the panels beneath sliding doors. Thicker LVL helps to meet fire safety requirements

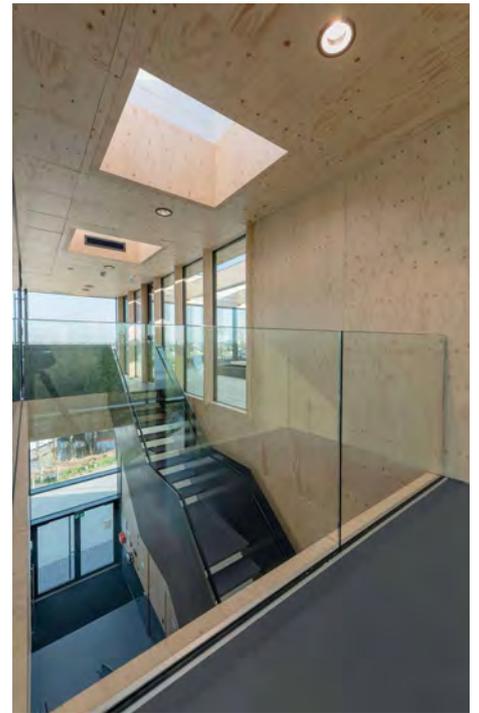
“This beautiful and natural building material contributes to a pleasant working environment and fits the Port of Amsterdam’s ambition to build sustainably,” says Benjamin

Robichon of WRK Architects.

“Those who step in the building are really surprised. A practical open-space working environment greets you when you enter the building, which is ideal for a 24/7 company like the Port of Amsterdam. The industrial appearance of Kerto LVL products is fully visible, and the large floor-to-ceiling windows offer a view of the IJ river.”

Solar panels and a heat pump are the finishing touches for this energy self-sufficient building, which stores a CO₂ equivalent of 159T.

Find links to the Carbon Calculator and Port of Amsterdam build at www.metsagroup.com/metsawood/



Above: LVL remains exposed inside the building.

Coming up in **TimberTrader**
news

CASSETTES

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FOREST TALES

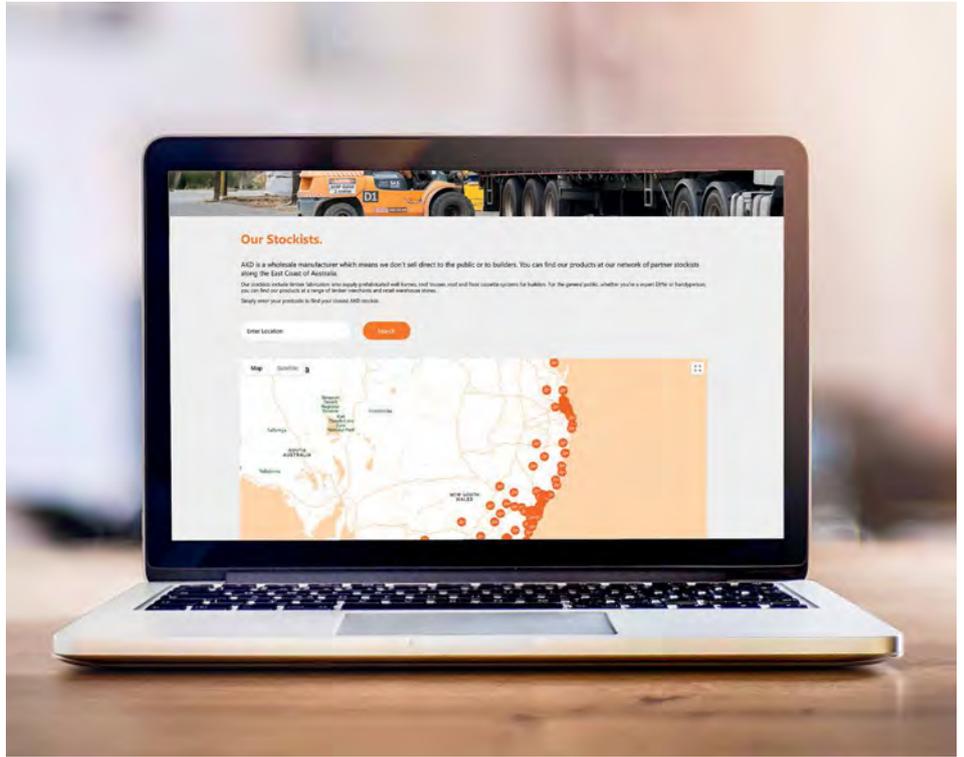
Much as it pains me to admit this, sometimes Americans do things better than we do.

The American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) has brought together 22 recent projects made from American timbers for a remarkable showcase at this year's Triennale Milano.

Curated and designed by Studio Swine, Forest Tales is an edited selection of furniture from four AHEC projects run over the past two years and each piece is made from one (or more) of three underused American hardwood varieties: maple, cherry and red oak. The pieces are displaced around a 'mountain' of packing crates, inspired by the opening of *Citizen Kane*, with stencilled images on the crates coming together to form larger pictures from certain angles.

The crates are the same ones that were used to transport the furniture and will be re-purposed to pack up the exhibition at its conclusion, minimising waste and the environmental impact of the display.

With Forest Tales, AHEC aims to provide a global platform to designers, pieces and projects that have not yet been widely seen due to the pandemic, but also to demonstrate the extraordinary potential of a selection of underused American hardwoods as sustainable design materials. This is especially important at a time when stocks of more widely used European hardwoods have been depleted by overuse, and supply lines heavily disrupted by the current geopolitical situation. View each piece and learn more at www.forest-tales.com



New AKD website

Australia's largest softwood sawmilling business now has an improved new site. Here's what they had to say about it.

AKD's website, www.akd.com.au, has had a 'facelift' and we think it's more than skin deep! Both the structure and content of our company website has been overhauled to make it easier to find relevant content for all visitors, as well as providing more current company information on our products, processes and activities.

Highlights of the new website include:

- Job Vacancies section now with a much easier search process to find AKD job opportunities and enquire online from the website;
- Latest issue of Splinter newsletter published quarterly as an easy-to-read flipbook with back issues also available;
- New AKD Stockist Locator for builders and DIYers to source AKD products from our network of loyal partner customers;
- Updated and dedicated Downloads section for easy access to all materials



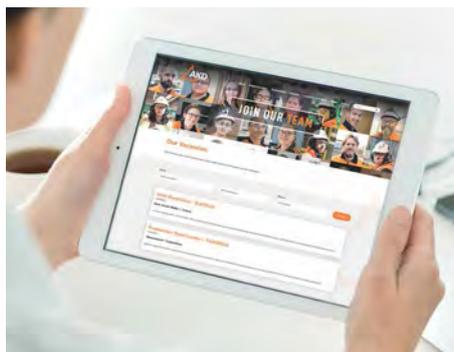
including current product SDSs, site certifications and product compliance information.

For past visitors returning to our site and for new visitors, we are very proud of AKD's strategic expansion in plantation forest ownership and development and the latest about this can be found in 'Plantations' under our 'Forestry' tab.

We also have a new Blog article section on Latest News from the company and is a great part of the website to check out for AKD's latest developments.

We've got more new content and downloads coming in the next few months, so we look forward to sharing these with you.

Help us to keep you updated with all the necessary and helpful information about AKD by dropping us a line on the Contact Us page if you have additional questions or requests for information.



UPCOMING EVENTS



SEPTEMBER

PREFABAUS 2022 CONFERENCE

Leading voices on prefabrication methods and technology as well as those excelling in the field will speak at the Brisbane Conference and Exhibition Centre, on 5–7 September. **Details at www.prefabaus.org.au/conference-2022**

AUSTRALIAN BUSHFIRE BUILDING CONFERENCE

After two years of virtual only events, the only national event on building for bushfires is back on 14–16 September at Fairmont Resort & Spa Blue Mountains, Leura NSW. From \$495 (or \$275 for those who still prefer virtual events), it's two days of the country's best professionals talking planning, designing, building, landscaping, consulting, regulating and certifying buildings in bushfire-prone areas. **Full details at www.bushfireconference.com.au**

JULY

AIBS MIDRISE TIMBER BUILDINGS WEBINAR

A surveyor-focused webinar run via Zoom looking at the reasons why timber structures are a safe cost-effective alternative to other construction systems and approaches to code compliance and inspections during design and construction. Held Wednesday 6 July,

12–1pm. **Full details via the Events tab at www.aibs.com.au**

WOOD SOLUTIONS WEBINARS

Every second Tuesday morning or lunch, free webinars on Timber topics. **For more or to find past webinars, visit www.woodsolutions.com.au/events/calendar**

Want the full story? Subscribe to the *TimberTrader News* fortnightly e-newsletter at www.timbertradernews.com/subscribe/newsletters

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Above: (clockwise from top left) The dinner was the first proper get-together for many of the attendees since the start of the Covid pandemic; the teams from Gowan Lea Timbers and Builders Supply Group; Marcus Bloch from Easycraft having a laugh.

Best in Queensland

As the nation listened to Antony Green, an equally exciting set of results were being announced with TABMA hosting the 2022 Queensland Timber Industry Awards.

The evening of 21 May was one of the more exciting this year. While some people might have been focused on the politics, the 2022 Queensland Timber Industry Awards was where the real action was – and with far less drawn-out results!

Alicia Oelkers, TABMA's general manager, membership, set the scene for the evening in her welcoming speech. "Can you believe how long it has been since a lot of us were all in the same room together?" Oelkers asked, before describing those attending with a quote from Les Brown: "Our ability to handle life's challenges is a measure of our strength of character."

It's definitely been a challenging time since the last awards ceremony but on the night, that merely added to the festivities. The TABMA team gave all the attendees a well-deserved pat on the back for how they've survived the Covid period so far, including rapid uptakes of remote learning and

infection control as well as continuing to take on trainees and apprentices. Keeping the next generation of the industry coming during a pandemic hasn't been easy, but everyone can see that it's paying off.

Government support was acknowledged, and especially the collaboration with other industry associations, including FTMA, ATIF, Responsible Wood and Hardware Australia.

The awards themselves were judged by Bruce Harle, formerly of Timber Queensland. Oelkers enjoyed taking Harle to visit many of the nominees, saying, "After a couple of years being stuck behind the computer, it was a real pleasure to get out and about to see what our finalists have been up to. Both Bruce and I were really impressed with the improvements and adaptation to the times that our finalists have made."

The finalists themselves represent the best of Queensland's timber industry. Here are the edited bios for the nominees and the winners.

BEST TIMBER WHOLESALE SALES REPRESENTATIVE

Daniel Parkin, Pentarch Forestry In three years working with Pentarch, Daniel has created strong relationships and grown his territory significantly thanks to his passion, professionalism and positive attitude.

Mick Dixon, VIDA Wood Mick has worked for Vida Wood since its inception in 2015. His exceptional product knowledge of the construction sector and strong relationships with his customers are stand-out qualities.

Wayne Barton, Hyne Timber After 17 years at Hyne, Wayne is respected by all his clients. He is focused on ensuring his customers are kept well informed and goes the extra mile, always looking for solutions as well as being trustworthy, diligent, strategic, reliable and honest.

Carolyn Crabb, Dindas Australia Before she moved to Dindas nine years ago, Carolyn was already working in the industry and brought with her the strong relationships she has created over the years, thanks to her communication skills and friendly demeanour.

Melanie Conduit, Parkside Timber In her 10 years at Parkside, Mel's customer relationships and service have been consistent, helping her to grow sales and consistently exceed budget.

WINNER: Daniel Parkin

Oelkers described the audience with a Les Brown quote: "Our ability to handle life's challenges is a measure of our strength of character."

MOST INNOVATIVE OPERATION

Multinail This Queensland-based firm produces cutting-edge software, machinery and building products for the Australian, New Zealand and North American timber frame and truss industries. It has a strong culture of highly dedicated and progressive staff who constantly strive to implement evolving and emerging technologies to its wide range of product and service offerings.

Pinetech Engineered Timber Solutions

Supply issues have been a major driver in Pinetech's recent changes. Through putting people at the centre and creating a strong culture of collaboration with staff, consultants, suppliers and customers, the business has evolved and grown at the same time as customers have reassessed the benefits of onshoring.

Britton Timbers Stocking more than 50 quality Australian and imported species, Britton Timbers expert team partners with timber craftspeople and design professionals to enhance projects from residential to large-scale commercial fit-outs. Expert advice ensures that the right timber solution is adopted for every project.

Tilling Timber With major distribution centres in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth, Tilling has served the Australian building market for almost 60 years. The company's SmartFrame range of engineered wood products is extensive, backed up with strong customer service, software, systems, infrastructure, technical support and product innovation.

WINNER: Multinail

BEST SAWMILLING/PROCESSING OPERATION

Walker Cypress Mills Working with distribution partners ITI Australia and Simmonds Lumber, the mill has become one of the leading suppliers of Cypress T&G flooring in NSW and Qld, meeting the growing demand through production efficiency gains of 30% over 2021-22. Owners Walker Bros Timber & Building Supplies also contribute to One Tree Planted, the global reforestation charity.

Parkside Timber – Dry Mill A state-of-the-art hardwood manufacturing operation, the dry mill uses scanning and optimising technology developed specifically for the range of species and grades it processes. Other innovations include an automatic sorting and stacking system that was a world first when in concept and a high-speed twin shaper finger jointer and an in-line decking coating system on the way.

Hyne Timber The company's Tuan Mill near Maryborough is the largest sawmill in Queensland and increased its capacity in the

past 12 months when construction needed it most, with the commissioning of a new continuous drying kiln. This saw the mill create an additional 60 jobs, with 50% of the new recruits being women, improving gender diversity and diversity of ideas.

Robertson Bros Sawmills A long-established traditional timber producer, Robertson Bros sources Queensland hardwood logs from sustainable logging operations and private forests in the SE Queensland region for the production of fine quality sawn, dressed and moulded products in structural, flooring, decking, joinery and cladding applications. Alongside a huge standard range is a high level of service for customers who need bespoke species options, lengths or finishes.

Allied Timber Products This wholesale timber manufacturer specialises in converting raw pine logs to a range of sawn and dressed timber products for the construction, landscaping and DIY markets. Allied is a family business with long ties in the industry that proudly maintains strict quality standards and has an unshakeable commitment to its

customers' needs in doing so.

WINNERS: Hyne Timber (Sawmilling), Parkside Timber (Processing)

BEST TIMBER MANUFACTURING OPERATION

Duce Timber Windows & Doors This fourth-generation family business specialises in custom-designed timber windows, doors and architectural products. Since 1934, the company has shown innovation in design and excellence in craftsmanship.

Brisbane Timber Doors and Windows The factory in Underwood manufactures windows and doors for renovations and architect-designed homes in SE Queensland using the latest CNC machinery and techniques.

Engineered timbers also ensure high-quality, accurate products at a competitive price point.

Easycraft For nearly 40 years Easycraft has provided decorative wall and ceiling panelling solutions for residential and commercial projects throughout Australia. Still owned by its original owner, the Bloch family continues to manufacture quality products using all >>



Above: (a) Mick and Joann Dixon and Trevor and Sarah Dixon (the couples aren't related) from Vida Wood; (b) Samantha Smith, Kiara Claffey and Fiona Luckey from Dindas Australia; (c) Neil Jones of Versace Timbers with Mark Day.



Above: (a) Michael Gaske (TABMA Australia Vice Chair and Ozline Timbers) with Daniel Parkin of Pentarch Forestry; (b) Michael and Trent Taylor of Multinail; (c) Michael and Melonie Conduit of Parkside Timber; (d) Michael and Ernie Patterson of Sunshine Mitre 10 with Peter Hutchison (TABMA Australia Chair and Mitek); (e) Aaron Hillman of TrussCorp and Peter Hutchison.

Australian-sourced materials.

Timbeck Architectural The Brisbane-based team has proudly supplied top-quality, sustainably sourced panelling, cladding, mouldings, weatherboards, shutters, blinds and joinery components to the Australian market for more than 50 years. Timbeck now also offers a range of value-added services including sanded and pre-coated products direct from their Rosewood plant.

WINNER: Timbeck Architectural

BEST BUILDING MATERIALS CENTRE

Bretts Since the turn of last century, Bretts has had a hand in all aspects of timber production and marketing including sawmilling, importing, distribution and value

adding. With four timber yards strategically placed around SE Queensland to serve the ever-growing population, each crewed by an experienced team of experts who provide training for new recruits, the company will continue to excel into the future.

Sunshine Mitre 10 Their dedicated trade teams service commercial and residential projects, and their knowledgeable retail experts are available in-store to assist DIY customers. Both areas of the business are supported by a substantial logistics division. The over 110-year-old business employs more than 400 people in 19 state outlets, including a dedicated F&T Plant and trade distribution centres to mitigate supply chain disruption.

Building Material Supplies (BMS 10) Toowoomba and the Darling Downs have

relied on BMS for more than 50 years. They are the largest building materials supplies company in the region with over 23,000m² of warehousing space. A strong supply partner, BMS has unique processes that ensure delivery of supplies in a repetitive, reliable manner: customers can trust the experienced BMS team to find the best supply solutions to their whole of house building problems.

Big River (Sabdia's) A focus on reliable stock levels, topped by a knowledgeable and experienced crew who are passionate about their work are behind Big River's success, coupled with close discussions with their customers about their construction schedules to provide on-time deliveries.

WINNER: Sunshine Mitre 10

BEST TIMBER FRAME AND TRUSS OPERATION

TrussCorp Service is the first of the three pillars that drive TrussCorp's business and is embedded in their culture. Investments in customer-focused systems and technology include 'live' reporting on quotes, orders, production and transport, through to customer SMS notifications confirming manufacture and delivery dates.

Noosa Truss & Frame For 20 years, Noosa Truss & Frame has supplied both large commercial projects and the domestic residential market in Queensland and abroad. A top-quality product and extraordinary service come from a company that's small enough to know each of their builders by name and deliver the time and instruction they need, while large-scale enough to successfully deliver big, complex projects.

Premier Timber & Trusses Specialising in custom multi-storey homes, development projects and renovations by providing a comprehensive supply of the products required to build a house, Premier Timber & Trusses holds a large array of stock on hand and relies on a strong supplier network for ready access to materials. The team provides their large, loyal customer base with quality products at competitive prices without delay.

King Truss Supplying Queensland and Northern NSW construction with frame, truss, floor systems and a full range of building supplies, King Truss is a committed early adopter of industry-leading technology and sustainable processes to provide affordable, accurate and timely whole-of-building solutions. With over 30 years of local experience, King is large enough to do the job, small enough to care.

Langs Building Supplies The team at Langs are humbled to once again be recognised as a finalist. Their goal is to be seen as supportive, innovative and reputable in the industry and the business achieves that thanks to the dedication of wonderful staff, the support of long-term suppliers and the commitment of industry bodies.

WINNER: TrussCorp

BEST TIMBER MERCHANT

Gowan Lea Timbers This fully independent timber and building supplies merchant has been on the Sunshine Coast for 30 years and continues to grow by concentrating on the basics – finding and retaining great staff, having personal relationships with customers and suppliers and investing back into the business for continual improvement.

5 Star Timbers Setting your standards high is one thing – putting them into your company's name is another. At 5 Star Timbers, the standards show in dedication to the quality of product and excellence in customer service, working hard to advise and educate the customer base.

Tradeware Building Supplies Difference starts with the staff at Tradeware, who are empowered to help the business take on and invent new and interesting products regularly. This unique team keeps the business one step in front of the opposition, which in these tough times is very challenging and rewarding.

Versace Timbers This family-owned business began in 1956 as a sawmill, then moved into its core business of timber merchandising before expanding into frame and truss manufacturing in 2008. With over 100 years of collective knowledge and

The finalists are the best of Queensland's timber industry.

experience they are dedicated to providing friendly service, expert industry knowledge, competitive prices and quality products.

Doyles Timber & Hardware Combining a comprehensive range of timber and hardware with expert knowledge and highly personalised customer service, Doyles offers a quality experience and product to the business's customer base.

WINNER: Gowan Lea Timbers

BEST TIMBER WHOLESALE OPERATION

Dindas Australia The needs of clients and end users guide Dindas's business. Extensive knowledge of the industry combines with service, quality and products that meet the highest structural standards. EWP and software specialists, Dindas works closely with its partners and adheres to all their requirements in store and onsite.

Thora Wholesale Timbers Since its early days as a Blackbutt specialist, Thora Wholesale Timbers has expanded and now stocks all grades of hardwood, from dunnage to high-quality KD hardwoods, all sourced from regional mills. Services include docking, dressing, dowel production, oiling, contract dressing and multi ripping.

Vida Wood Australia The global supplier has firmly supported the Australian marketplace since arriving in 2015, and a new warehouse in Brisbane and recently installed treatment facility plus more storage capacity in Melbourne confirms its commitment. Along with quality, sustainability is key, with timbers PEFC and FSC certified, and a commitment to supply has seen continued market share growth.

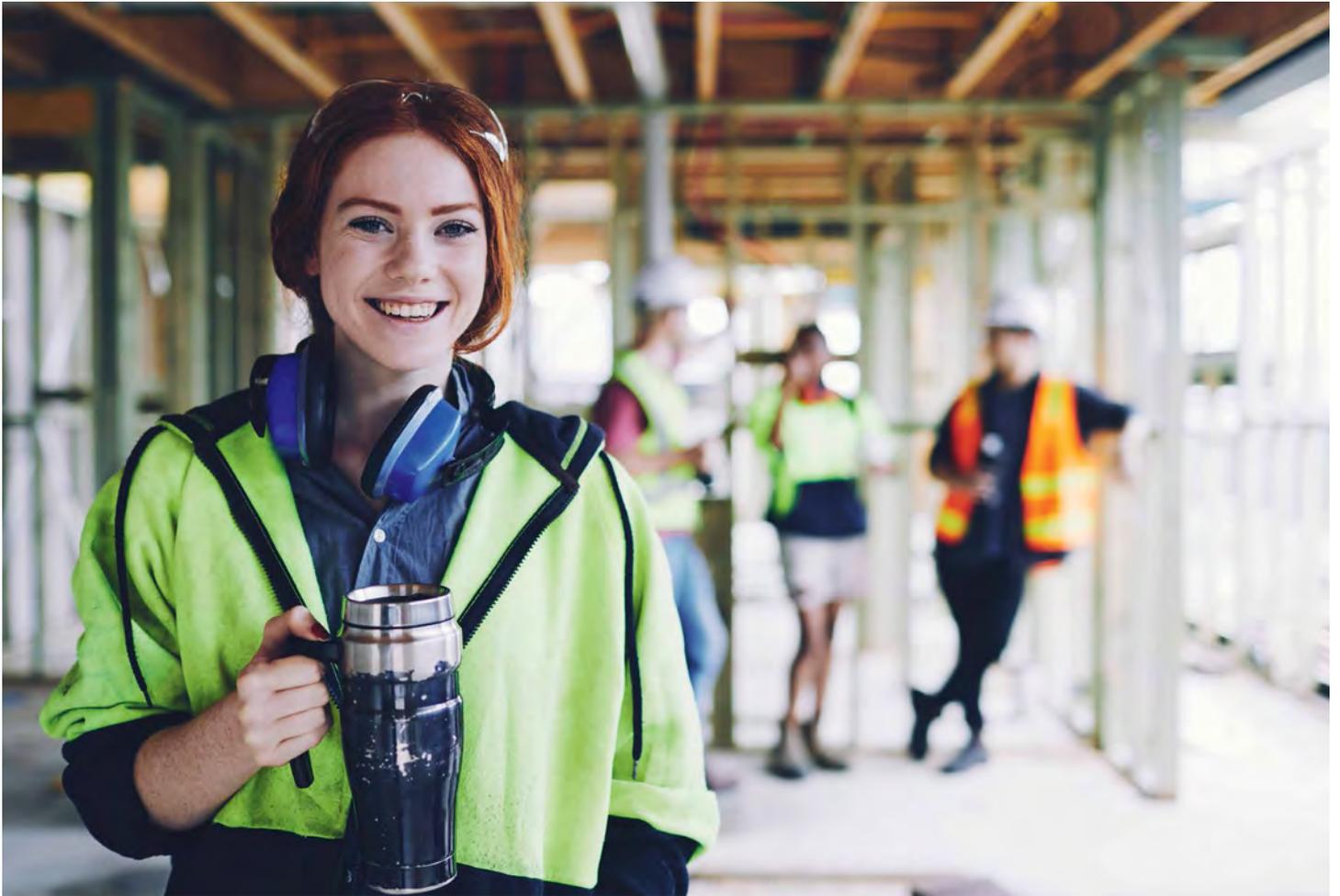
ITI Australia From a small team of three in 1987, ITI has grown to become the largest independent wholesale timber supplier in Australia today, with nine distribution centres, accessible to the whole country, coupled with an extensive range and groundbreaking product innovation.

Pinewood Products Once a small pine log and landscape supplier, Pinewood products is now a leading manufacturer servicing all aspects of the building and construction industry. The family-oriented team of 50 includes qualified tradesmen, an amazing admin and sales team, and a fleet of trucks to service clients all over Australia.

WINNER: Dindas Australia T



Above: (a) Matt Green of Gowan Lea Timbers and Peter Hutchison (TABMA Australia Chair and Mite); (b) Kiara Claffey of Dindas Australia and Peter.



New government, new rules

A preview of some of the probable implications of Labor's Workplace Relations Plan.

By Peter Maguire

There wasn't a lot of talk about workplace relations in the lead up to the federal election and Labor's intentions in relation to workplace relations wasn't raised as an election issue.

Labor deliberately flew below the radar in this election and didn't say much about changes that it would deliver other than the most popular ones – climate change, an integrity commission, Indigenous Voice and gender equality were the lead items. So I was somewhat surprised that the Coalition didn't target workplace relations as a key point of difference between the major parties because it generally is and this year is no exception.

The central themes are around security and equality.

There was talk about convening a summit of business and union and government representatives to discuss reforms for our workplace relations system. Our new PM also lent his support to the case for the Fair Work Commission (FWC) to hand down this year's Minimum Wage Review decision consistent with increases in cost of living and the recently released CPI figure of 5.1%.

But that was about it as far as workplace relations matters went.

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?

If you look at the workplace relations/employment policies on the ALP website, there are some big changes in the wings. In addition to the ALP's majority in the House of Representatives, there are plenty of worker-friendly partners in both Houses of Parliament for them to get their proposed legislation through.

The central themes are around security of employment, equal pay, gender equality and security of workers' legal entitlements.

SECURITY OF EMPLOYMENT

Labor is proposing the following measures to improve job security for workers:

1. Inclusion of job security as an Object of the Fair Work Act so that the FWC would have to consider job security in all of its decision making.
2. Extending the powers of the FWC to make orders for minimum standards for new forms of work such as gig workers.
3. Restoring the common law definition of a casual worker to undo recent Court decisions that placed primacy on the employment contract entered into at the start of an employment relationship rather than the character of the employment relationship during the relationship.
4. Limiting the use of fixed term contracts for the same job to a maximum of two back-to-back contracts for a maximum aggregate term of two years.
5. Reforming employment practices in the federal public service by only using non-

permanent employment where it is essential and reducing the incidence of labour hire, outsourcing and back-to-back contracts.

6. Introduction of a Secure Australian Jobs Code as a requirement for performing government funded work and government procurement.

EQUAL PAY AND GENDER EQUALITY

These measures are designed to make it more difficult to discriminate against women on an individual or industry basis.

1. Introducing a requirement for employees engaged through labour hire to be paid the same as workers directly engaged by the host to do the same work.
2. Legislating to require employers with 250 or more employees to publicly report on their gender pay gap and to abolish pay secrecy clauses and implementing all 55 recommendations of the Respect @ Work report.
3. Legislating 10 days of paid family and domestic violence leave for full-time employees (pro rata for part-time employees) extending the recent decision by the FWC to award-free employees.

4. Strengthening the ability of the FWC to order pay increases for workers in low paid, female dominated industries.

SECURITY OF WORKERS' ENTITLEMENTS

Given the frequency of high profile wage underpayment cases, this was always going to be an area that Labor would target.

Proposals include:

1. Including superannuation as a National Employment Standard so that workers' superannuation entitlements are better protected and can be pursued as a workplace right if underpayment occurs.
2. Making wage theft a crime but not overriding current legislation in States or Territories (it is currently a crime in Victoria).

3. Consulting on the development (where practical) of portable entitlement schemes for Australians in insecure work.

As expected, Labor will abolish the Registered Organisations Commission and the Australian Building and Construction Commission which were both primarily established to regulate unions and penalise unlawful behaviour by unions and officials.

CONCLUSION

So, there is a lot in all of this and there are major structural and commercial implications for businesses in a number of areas.

In the months ahead, employers will need to keep their eyes on how these items progress through the legislature and are implemented, and be ready to adapt their workplace relations practices accordingly. **T**

Peter Maguire is the owner and practice leader of Ridgeline HR, an award winning HRM consulting practice which he founded in 2000. Peter is an acknowledged expert in workplace relations compliance and also a high-performance leadership coach with over 40 years' experience in HRM. Ridgeline HR's byline is Helping PEOPLE in BUSINESS and that is essentially what Peter does – help business people with their people business.



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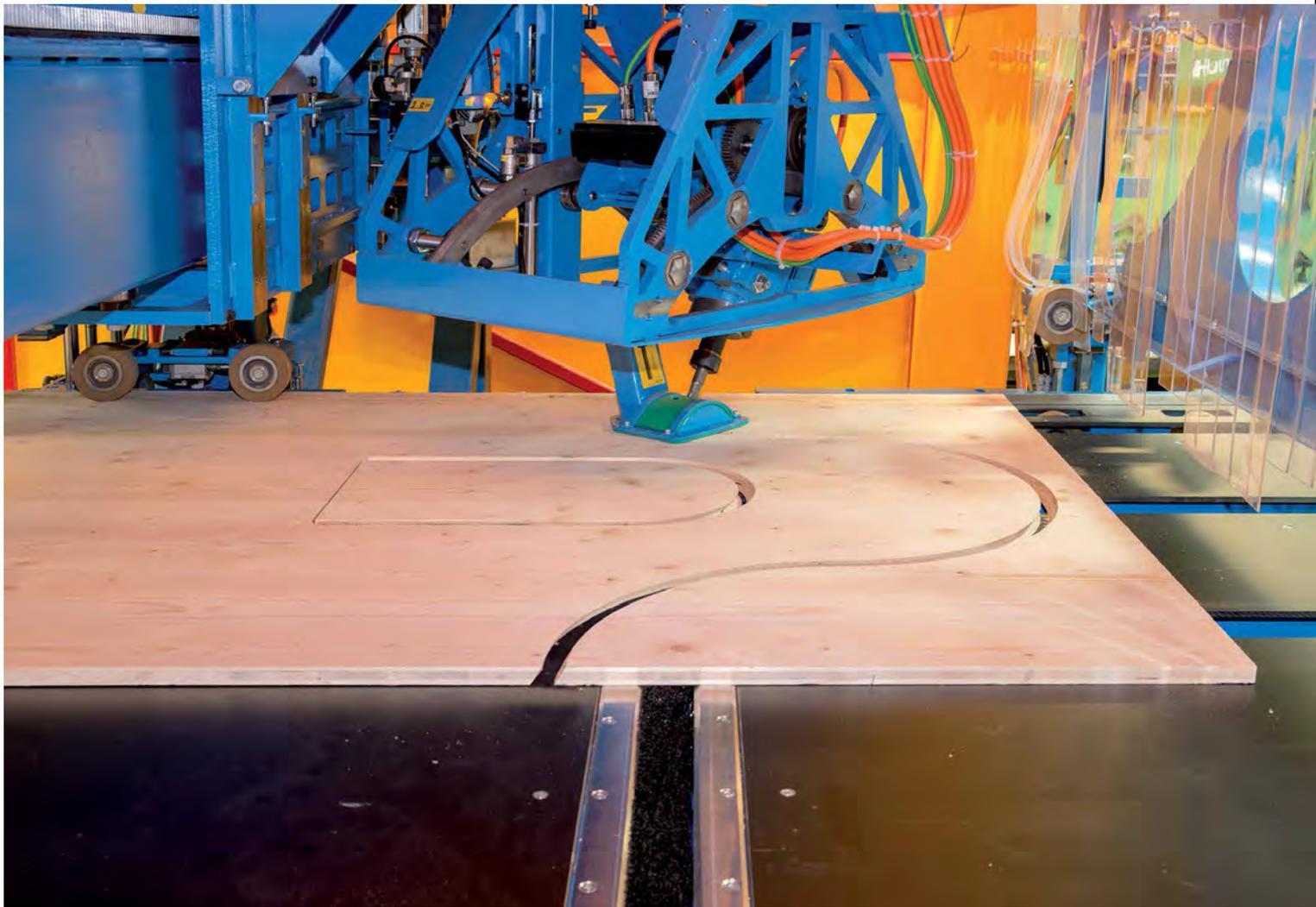
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AUSTRALIA'S MOST RELEVANT AND WELL-LOVED TIMBER INDUSTRY MAGAZINE



Above: Complex cutting tasks on machines like this Hundegger are only achievable through good design software, which ensures accurate, repeatable outcomes.

The power of software

For many timber industry businesses, the single most impactful and affordable change to productivity can come from reassessing your software needs and solutions. **By Donyale Harrison**

Felix Choo spends his days thinking about what the Australian timber industry needs. “Obviously, getting enough timber is the first thing,” he says, “but very close behind would be more willingness to automate. People underestimate what technology can do for them in terms of improving profitability, getting higher turnover or generating leads and so on.”

As the CEO of TIMMSanywhere, a timber industry specialist business management solution, it’s no surprise that Choo would say that, but he’s right. Whether business solutions or powerful design tools, quality software is at the heart of growing every part of the timber sector, from forest management, to mills and merchants, to fabricators and builders.

We talked with software users and suppliers about how they deliver value to their customers. Some of these programs may also be the right options for you; all will help you identify ways in which your business could benefit from automation.

EVERYDAY DESIGN TOOLS

Most readers would already be familiar with the packages offered by the major timber and nailplate suppliers. Although each has distinct goals and interfaces, they all have a common theme.

“We make it easier to design something that will work, and much harder to get it wrong,” says Craig Kay, national product engineer for Tilling (and author of *TTN*’s regular In the frame column).

“People underestimate what technology can do for them in terms of improving profitability, higher turnover or generating leads.”

“Our SmartFrame software is third-party audited to meet the ABCB software engineering protocol, which means it does deemed-to-satisfy solutions,” Kay says.

“So for our users, it’s equivalent to them looking at a span table in AS 1684 and gives the same level of confidence. We use the same loading pictures as you’ll see in 1684, it’s the same modelling, the same load widths. We keep it very close to the Standard for ease of translation, while at the same time the software does the work they would have been calculating themselves and then delivers that information in more usable ways.”

The precise floor joist layouts it delivers can be printed in ways that are easy for builders to use or for certifiers to follow the load paths and the accurate take offs ensure correct ordering.

“We keep that program very current with what materials are available,” says Kay. “And if materials aren’t available, they’re not in the software. For example, some new glulams have just come onto the market, GL15s, that we have design guides and so on for. For people using the software, they can get access to those. They might not even have realised they existed before.”

In this time of rapidly changing supply, both SmartFrame and the SmartFrame app can check that alternatives or last minute design tweaks will be acceptable in the design. Kay says, “SmartFrame gives the full analysis or, for changes that are just at the level of checking span tables, the



Above: Software manages projects for businesses like McKay Timber that run complex operations.

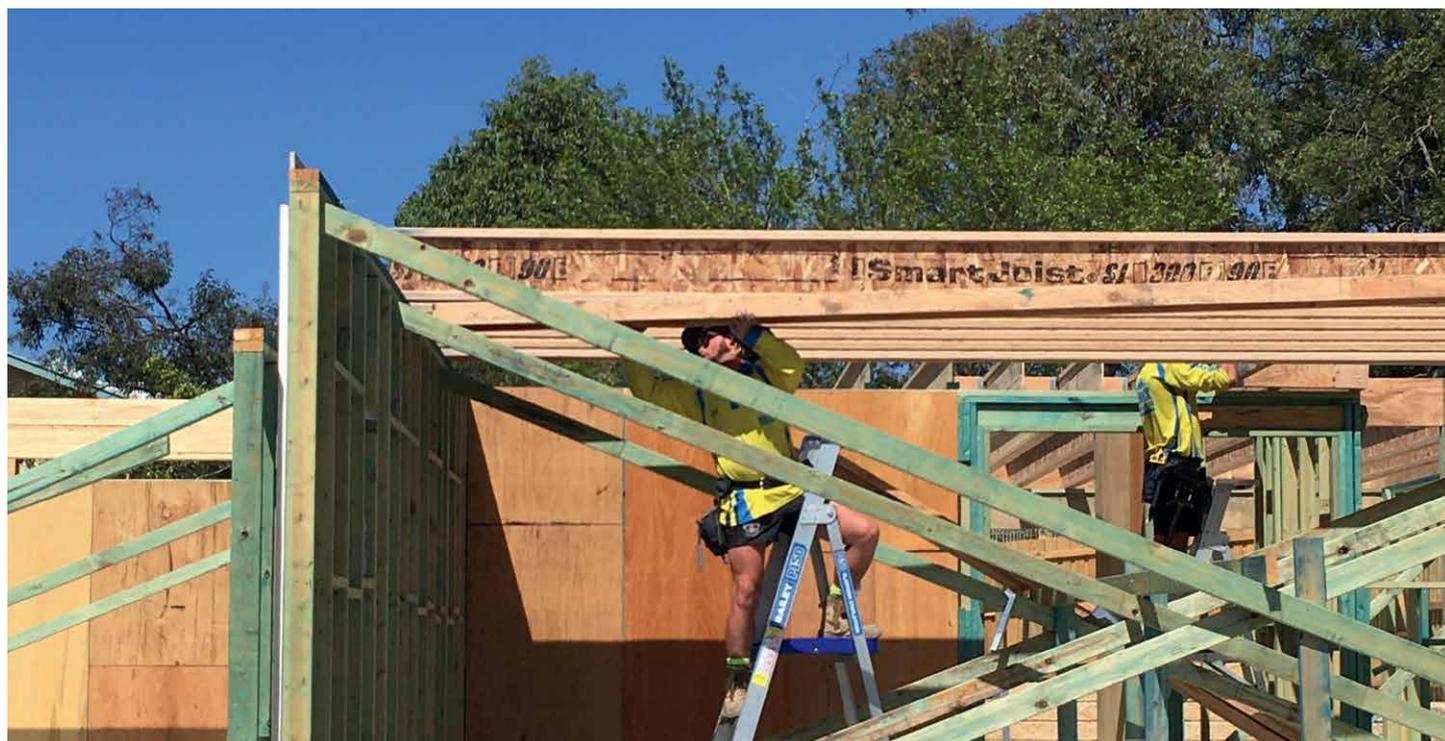
SmartFrame app can do it on-site from your phone or tablet.

“In the program, you have the full design and analysis ability, so if you’ve previously designed a floor in one original element that you found you couldn’t use, you can find an available option that will do the same thing. You can check that they have the same serviceability limits, deflection limits and so on. So users can design confidently, knowing that they’re doing the same thing.”

For more complex jobs, SmartFrame includes a ‘designed by Tilling engineers’ option that allows for Kay and his team to deliver individual solutions. “The engineers

here often use the SmartFrame software, because they wrote it,” says Kay, “but it is limited. In order to meet the ABCB software protocol, you can only do certain things in it. We use higher level programs like cadwork and other CAD programs and higher order structural analysis programs, including the background analysis program that runs SmartFrame. Those mean that we have far more flexibility in our designs.”

While these programs require a high level of engineering skill to navigate, they deliver seamless results. “For example, we’ve used cadwork mainly for cassettes,” Kay says. “It feeds seamlessly into the cassette-making >>



PHOTOS: (TOP) COURTESY MCKAYTIMBER; (BELOW) COURTESY TILLING

Above: Tilling’s SmartFrame software can empower fabricators or be used in conjunction with Tilling’s own design services, depending on the difficulty of a build.

machine and creates a component list. So it's a very powerful tool in the right place."

MASS TIMBER SOLUTIONS

For Danny Watson, structural engineer at ASH's MASSLAM division, cadwork is a core partner in his design solutions.

"Our work is predominantly mid-rise commercial, so four or five storey, as well as residential," Watson says.

In the architect-driven space in which the MASSLAM team works, Revit is the industry standard for many, "which is great if you want lovely architectural renders," says Watson, "but we're not really interested in that. We're interested in being super accurate and in having our program talk to our robots."

MASSLAM runs a Hundegger CNC system that operates on Cambium. "We've found cadwork, as a specialist timber program that knows the importance of things like dovetails, mortises and tenons, is the best option in terms of translating a design to a language that Cambium can understand," Watson says.

"There are two parts to that: the first is going from CAD to CAM, so that our CNC robot interprets cuts, tenon slots and drawings in the way that we want them to be interpreted. The second is that there's a strong company relationship between the



Above: MASSLAM's GoodWood Victorian ash columns at the UTAS Burnie campus.

firms behind Cambium and cadwork. They know they're often used together, so there's a lot of finessing that goes on in the background. Cadwork's also good at talking to manufacturers and suppliers of CNC robots and proprietary fixings to include libraries of screws and bolts and so on within cadwork. So instead of having to design up a custom bracket, it's readily

available in the library and you just pull it out. Similarly, if you need to change suppliers due to any issues, you can just import their library directly rather than having to manually update."

The booming appeal of mass timber, particularly in commercial builds, has seen MASSLAM's glulam in high demand and cadwork has made life easier for all stages of those builds, well beyond the design team.

"We partner with a number of site install teams," says Watson. "With cadwork, we can model up each of our designs exactly as it is. Every screw, every bolt, every marking that tells you which face is top, which face is north. We can export these directly from cadwork to a set of shop drawings and to the model, so the installers know exactly what everything is and what it's doing."

The easy-access html model includes the installation sequence, whether each element will be coated or not, pre-attachments and fixings, all clearly related to the construction drawings. "So the installers can spin it around and have a look at how it goes together," Watson says. "I often describe these buildings as kind of like a giant piece of IKEA furniture, you've got slot A, slot B, put your bolt through. And if you end up with bolts at the end of it, that's probably not ideal. It's the same concept, just the elements are bigger."

This ease of understanding has helped to speed the uptake of timber design in larger builds. "A few years ago, many builders would add on a margin for mass timber, because they didn't understand the process. These sorts of models have helped to familiarise the teams we work with and to educate new ones, as well as to solve problems in design long before we get to site." >>

"We're not really interested in lovely renders. We're interested in being super accurate and in having our program talk to our machines."



Above: Devil's Corner Winery in Apstlawn, Tasmania; McKay Timber supplied the eye-catching cladding.

PHOTOS: (TOP) COURTESY ASH; (BELOW) COURTESY MCKAY TIMBER

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Above: TIMMS has helped timber businesses for 40 years, the new TIMMSanywhere just makes it easier.

For the MASSLAM team, cadwork has also helped showcase their product's abilities. As Watson says, "Using hardwood, we get quite a lot more strength than a typical European spruce glulam. So we can produce longer, more slender members that give greater spans with strengths closer to what traditional steel and concrete designers have worked with.

"It means we can help take even more mass out of a building, and therefore make it more sustainable."

INTEGRATED BUSINESS TOOLS

Of course, there's more to the timber industry than design. Foresters, sawmillers, merchants, retailers and more all benefit from productive software solutions, too. One of the most widely used industry-specific programs is TIMMS, which was launched by CEO and Founder of the PNORS Technology Group, Paul Gallo, in 1982.

"Now, 40 years later, we also have TIMMSanywhere," says Felix Choo. "It's an open-source, cloud-based platform that's accessible wherever you are."

Like traditional TIMMS, TIMMSanywhere consists of multiple modules that can be purchased and installed as needed. Within these modules, each part of the team uses only what's relevant to their part of the business, but information flows freely between silos. "It's a very smart, collaborative tool," Choo says. "And very easy to pick up, because each individual is only working within the few screens that are specific to their role."

"But in the background, TIMMSanywhere, pulls in all the relevant information from all the relevant parties, and updates constantly. For example, one of your sales team creates

a sales order. That information is passed to the warehouse people, who say 'We can do this bit, but we'll need to substitute for that or they'll have to back order.' At the same time that message goes back to sales, the information is automatically passed along to the accounts team for the invoice and then it's automatically updated again depending on

"It's a very smart, collaborative tool. And very easy to pick up, because each individual only works with the few screens specific to their role."

what the customer chooses."

While many customers are timber merchants, where the various stock management tools shine, TIMMSanywhere has modules designed for all parts of the industry. Choo says, "For foresters, we can add-on community developed apps to help with tracking plantations; growth, harvesting and more. For retailers, the program incorporates an ecommerce store within the system. There's a customer portal as well, so customers can log in and pay or look up when deliveries are coming and so on."

One function that Choo highlights is marketing automation: "Everyone in the industry is after more sales, so we have a function you can choose to install within TIMMSanywhere that will automate responses to email campaigns. More than MailChimp-type reports, I can pre-set a follow-up action. So if people are reading

about a new product, it triggers a salesperson to follow up with the potential customer. If they're opening up information on something you're not currently selling to them, we can design an action to flag that."

TIMMSanywhere is very affordable compared to the multiple software solutions many enterprises use to manage different parts of their business, such as ERP, CRM and MRP solutions. And it comes with the cost and time benefits of being fully integrated.

"And our costs are on a sliding scale, depending on the number of users and the modules you're using," Choo says. A full support team is consistently available and, as an open-source system, communities have sprung up to develop, trouble-shoot and share functionalities. "So when a need arises, I have immediately a library of functionalities I can go to," says Choo. "What that means for the customer is they don't need to start from scratch when they're adding something new. Again, more cost savings."

For Ashleigh Mileto, one of the founders of NSW-based BOM Building Supplies, TIMMSanywhere has been a vital part of the business from its earliest days. "We're a brand new timber merchant, Mileto says, "and before we opened, we talked with a lot of similar businesses and a lot of software suppliers while doing our research. »

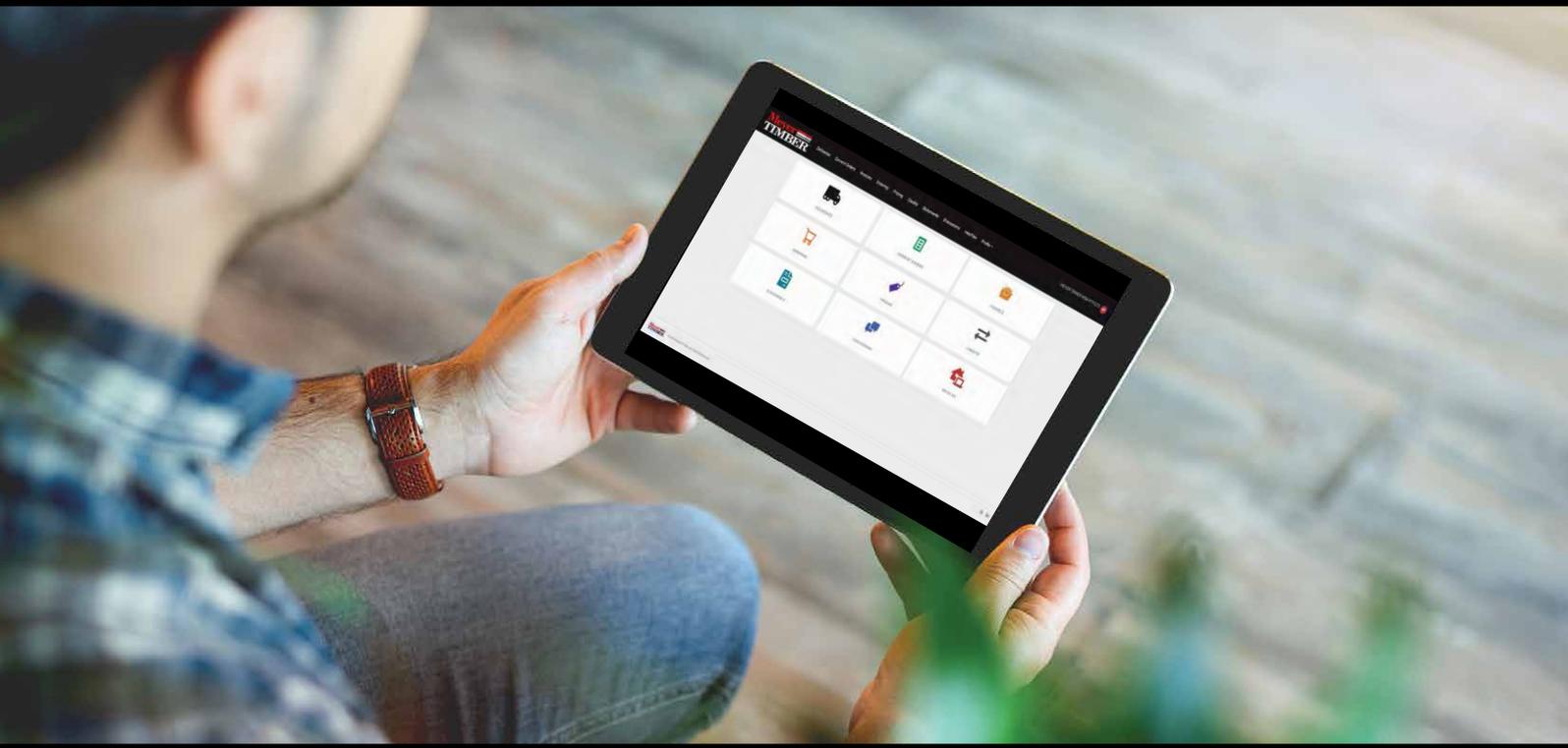


Above: Felix Choo, CEO TIMMSanywhere

PHOTOS: COURTESY TIMMSANYWHERE

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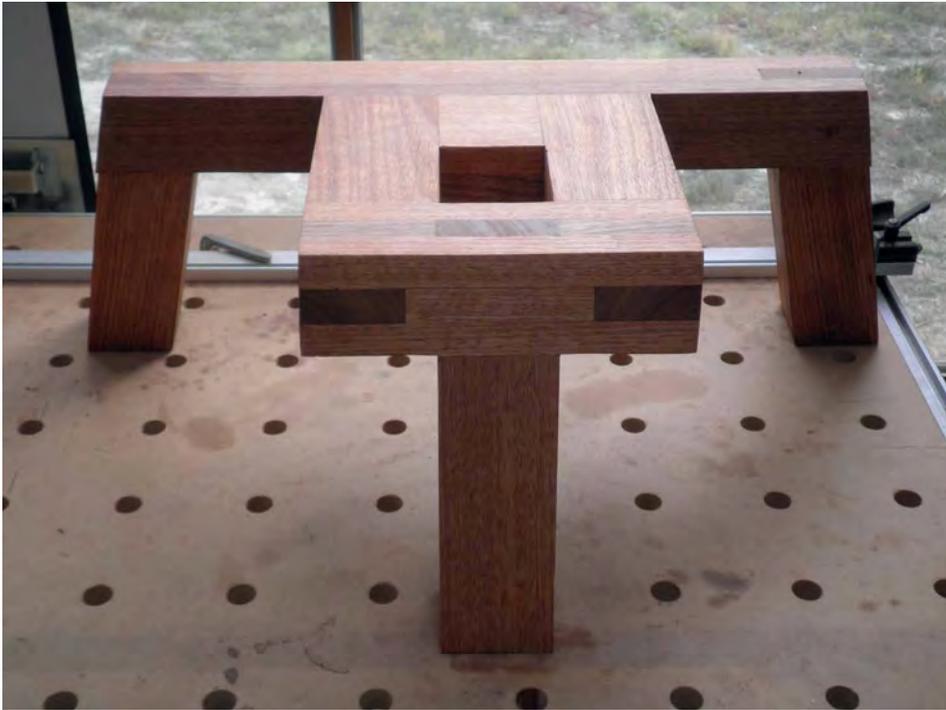
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Above: McKay Timber's customers range from Asian importers to designer furniture builders.

"We settled on TIMMSanywhere and it's been up and running since April 2021, but we would have started talking with the team about 18 months before that."

Two of the key factors in the choice were the support she received while researching and the options the program offered. "I found it to be the most flexible package," says Mileto. "It can grow and adapt to the changes that may happen in our business,

particularly because we plan to grow in what we offer as well as size and productivity."

The modular aspect was particularly attractive as BOM could invest in and implement just what was needed at the company's start, but would have ready access to expanded functions.

"The growth has been so rapid. We opened our first factory in December 2020 and we've already had to forfeit that lease

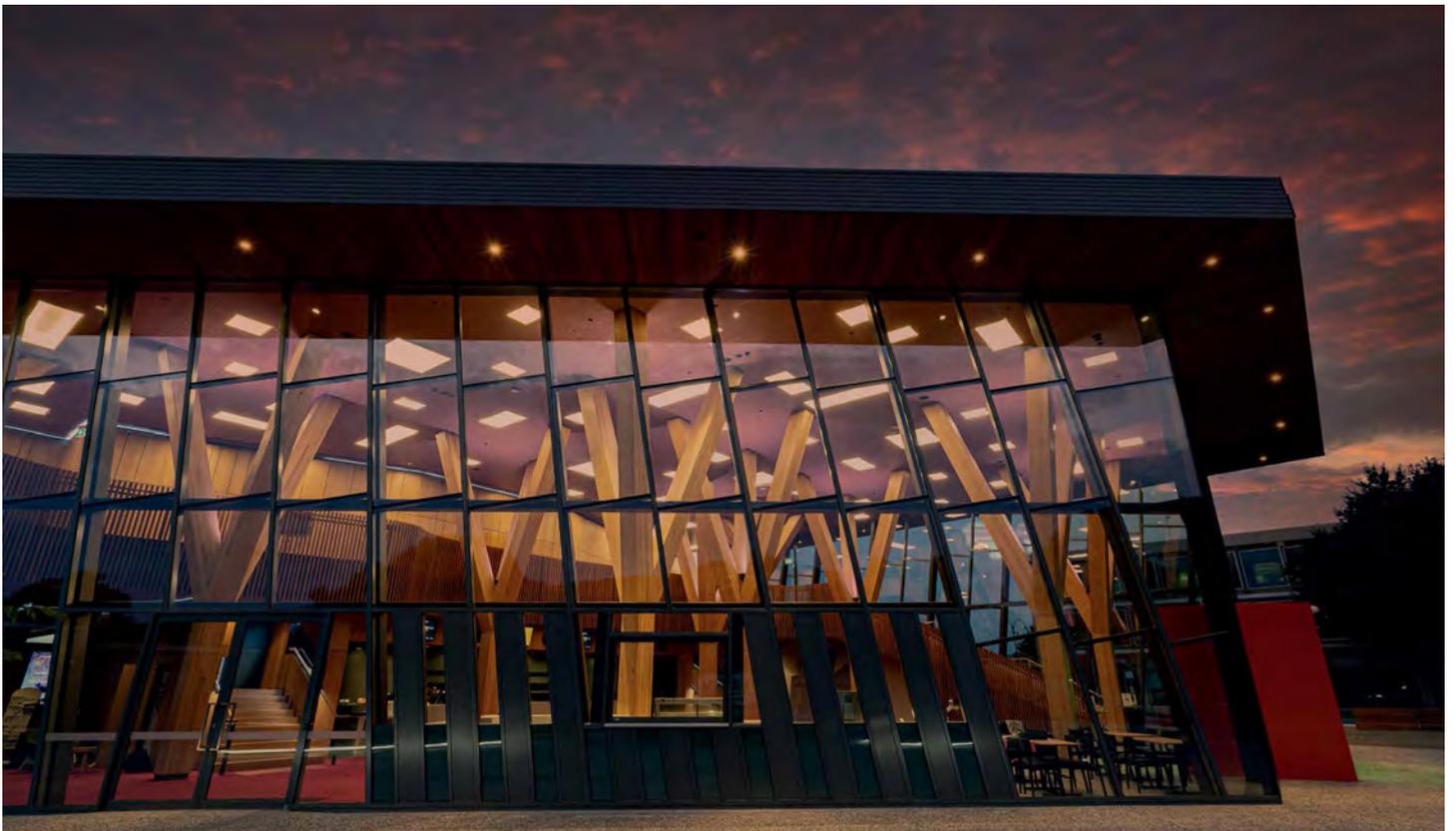
because we outgrew the space," Mileto says. "We've moved into an old Bunnings site. Right now we're in the middle of planning our next expansion, which will involve us bringing new products to the market. TIMMSanywhere keeps up with our growth."

A cloud-based system was ideal for the move, and has been even more useful since. Mileto says, "We had hired a new inventory person and trained them specifically for our stocktake, and then they caught Covid at the worst possible time. But we were still able to make it work with TIMMSanywhere. Our team on the ground could do the physical stuff and then our inventory person had that information coming in live and made effective use of it."

As much as the systems' strengths have been appreciated, on some days the service has helped even more. "When you're building a business, you want support that you can trust," says Mileto. "I had a week where two key staff resigned to chase other opportunities and our TIMMSanywhere person picked up the phone and asked, 'Ash, what do you need? What can I help you with?' I would have probably had a heart attack without them that week."

Tasmania's McKay Timber has been using original TIMMS since 2010 and is planning to transition over to TIMMSanywhere

"We've got quite a diversified business," says finance manager Mike Cotton. "And >>



Above: MASSLAM 'trees' of Goodwood Victorian Ash hold up the ceiling at the Gippsland Performing Arts Centre.



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Above: Design software makes it relatively simple to reliably integrate complex elements like cassettes.

TIMMS has enough modules to cope with all the things we're doing. We're basically running the whole business through it, right through from sawmilling to accounts."

Each section of the business interacts with its own part of the software, which either passes on actions immediately or integrates through a journal process overnight. "Having integrated systems is much better than isolated systems where you're doing a lot of data entry," Cotton says. "Without doubt, it saves us money, time and keying issues and reduces errors.

"At the same time, the information is also well siloed, so you can't make a mistake outside your own module and pretty much

any mistake can be reversed. That is one of the big features in TIMMS: you can back things out quite easily and fix up mistakes."

The movement to TIMMSanywhere is in part because newer operating systems are less compatible with the original Unix-based system and also thanks to it offering more business opportunities. "Being cloud-based means better accessibility. Our sales teams will be able to put orders on the spot in using their mobiles," says Cotton.

Even before the shift, the system is helping the McKay team manage recent industry challenges. "Trying to keep track of prices at the moment is very tough, but TIMMS has a fast system with lots of platform levels for the

pricing set-up, and that helps us navigate the current volatility," Cotton says.

It's not just one stream: McKay Timber imports and exports timber, manufactures timber products and supplies to clients ranging from mums and dads to big commercial projects, high-end architectural jobs and even quality furniture makers at the same time as running an F&T plant.

"There's a lot of variety," says Cotton, "and that comes with a lot of changes with regard to timings, orders and movements. We use Excel to do our reports and ODBC (Open Database Connectivity) links directly into TIMMS and pulls information out directly. So whenever we do a refresh, it pulls the data back through again, and updates anything that has happened, keeping us informed and accurate.

"It takes a load off most of the business, freeing people up to deliver special projects all over Tasmania and beyond, where our timber comes up a treat." **T**

For more information, visit www.ash.com.au, www.cadwork.com.au, www.mckaytimber.com.au, www.tilling.com.au, www.timmsanywhere.com, or call BOM Building Supplies on (02) 8328 1014.

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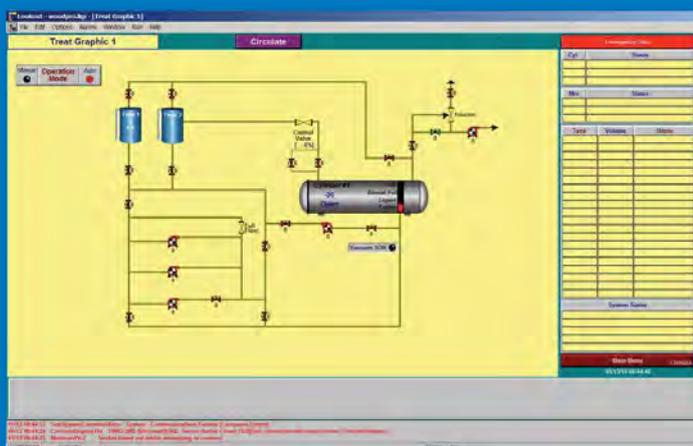
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Example of a treatment charge in progress

Customer	Ref #	Reference	Description	Depth	Width	Length	sq m
CNR119539	4380		Decking	0	0	C	2.00
CNR119544	4390		Decking	0	0	C	2.00
CNR119543	4380		Decking	0	0	C	2.00
CNR119542	4300		Decking	0	0	C	2.00
CNR119548	4300		Decking	0	0	C	2.00
CNR119538	4380		Decking	0	0	C	2.00
H1483	4337		Machine Guard	0	0	C	1.30
3NCT9	RETRBAT	Qty		0	0	C	5.00

Example of a charge sheet

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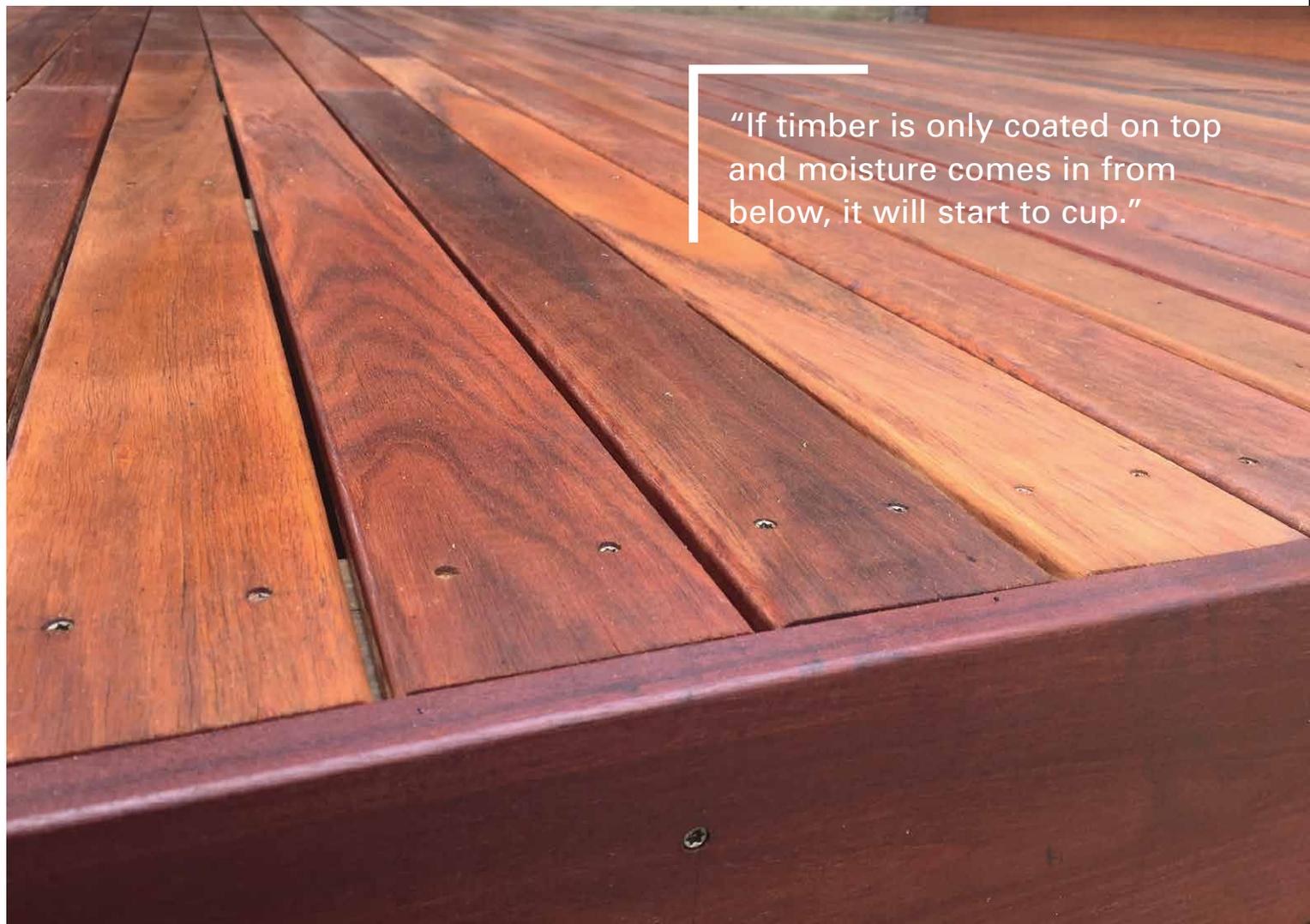


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“If timber is only coated on top and moisture comes in from below, it will start to cup.”

Protect and preserve

For practically every type of timber product you make, pre-oiling can help keep it looking and performing at its best from day one.

Pre-oiling is far from the sexiest topic, but like fibre and sunscreen, it's worth every bit of effort in most cases. For a small additional cost, you add considerable value not just to your timber product, but to everyone down the line in your sales chain.

We spoke with three industry leaders who are strong advocates for pre-oiling in different parts of the market. They told us what the service can deliver to their customers, how they sell it to those who are unsure and what their process is.

TOP DECKS

“We started offering pre-oiling as a service after we had customers coming back to us complaining of their decks cupping,” says Ryan McCarthy sales marketing manager at Coffs Harbour Hardwoods (CHH).

“We knew it wasn't coming from us, as we take pride in our ability to dry timber correctly. Some were also getting a lot of surface checking, which showed they'd left their deck without any type of coating for far too long.”

McCarthy and his team talked with their customers about the importance of fully coating decking timbers before installation. “We explained that if timber is only coated on one side and is getting moisture ingress from underneath, then it will start to cup,” he says. “The top, which is copping all the sun, will dry out faster than the bottom and the timber will change dimension. So we'd be patiently saying 'timber used externally should be coated on all sides along with the

ends' and then they'd get it to site and either forget to coat the bottom or find it inconvenient on-site.”

Accepting that some customers weren't going to change, the CHH team looked for a solution. They had seen promotions regarding pre-coating machinery and set about doing their homework to find what would work for them and their customers.

“We spoke with the guys from Ceetec in Melbourne and they recommended their Ceetec A250 machine,” McCarthy says. “We decided to purchase the machine, so we could offer our customers the added protection that pre-coating timber provides.”

The response was positive from early on, especially from local customers who could see the product at CHH. “We could explain to them that if they were going to spend good money on putting down a nice hardwood deck then they should also invest in good coatings and good fixings,” says McCarthy.

“For those who look at the small extra cost and ask ‘Do I need it?’, we can make a very good case for pre-coating. The timber arrives onsite already encapsulated in oil. This saves them time and money – we can put it through our pre-coating machine a lot faster than they can do it onsite and at a lower labour cost. On some building sites, the room to do it just isn’t there.

“It also protects the surface of the deck while the building is going on. As we found from the cupping complaints, decks are often left uncoated until the job is complete, which can be weeks or months. Dust and dirt is driven into the bare timber by the build team walking over it and water soaks in. If it’s pre-coated, then you just need a quick wash-down with a deck preparation product, a final oil and it’s ready for the homeowner.”

The choice of oils on offer was another research project. Eventually CHH decided to go with Intergrain’s Universal Timber Oil, because it is an open system that is compatible with most other products on the market, so customers could choose what they wanted to use on top, and Intergrain has a relationship with Ceetec.

“We’re still using the same product and machine today and found that both of them are easy to use,” McCarthy says. “Helpfully for us, the timber can be wet-stacked back into the packs after oiling, without the need for drying racks.

“The only thing we’ve had to tweak is that we found that the timber becomes slippery when coated, so we had to put a paper backing on our trolleys to stop the oil getting on the tynes of our forklifts.”



Above: Masslam members in the finishing shed at ASH, where they are sanded and pre-oiled.

MASSIVE EFFECTS

At the other end of the size spectrum, national business development manager Daniel Wright and the team at Australian Sustainable Hardwoods (ASH) use pre-oiling for their mass timber systems as a primer.

“Our laminated boards are produced in some pretty large sections, and they’re connected to other large laminated sections with precise, concealed connections,” Wright says. “Here in Melbourne, you might be installing them anywhere from today, which is wet, windy and cold, through to summer conditions where it’s 40 degrees and very dry. Large sections of glulam can take on moisture and expand or lose moisture and shrink. The result can be little checks,

misalignment issues, even mould. Pre-coating gives the builder a little bit of peace of mind and can protect the timber from some of that expansion and contraction where it’s exposed to weather. It’s not perfect, but it’s a bit of insurance.”

The ASH team also opted for Universal Timber Oil as their main product. “We use it in the Clear almost exclusively,” says Wright. “It’s an effective primer for many of the other Dulux, Cabots and Intergrain products, it looks good and it performs well at preventing a little bit of moisture take up and loss. Add to that, it’s easy to apply, it’s local and, importantly because we’re a big production factory line, it can be wet stacked. We can apply the coating and then pack it, we don’t have to wait for it to dry.”

With members weighing up to 3T, and some other oils requiring overnight or several days of curing time, this saves a serious amount of time and space. ASH uses a roll-on or wipe-on application, due to the size and lack of uniformity in their product. The pre-oiling is done in the same finishing shed as the sanding, polishing and other touch-ups, including pre-attaching connections. The finishing team hand-apply the oil, flip the member to coat the other side, then wrap, pack and stack, ready for delivery.

“For our builder clients, protection during construction is front of mind,” Wright says. “We offer two solutions. One of them is a vapour-permeable wrap for each member, which can stay wrapped during construction, but then they have to pull the wrap back to make connections and remove it if they’re putting flooring on top of the beams.

“So it’s a lot of extra work for the installers and if water gets trapped inside the plastic, it can actually have an adverse effect. The other solution is the pre-coating. Even >>



Above: With glulam members weighing up to 3T each, they’re pre-oiled by hand before wrapping.



Above: Pre-oiled product waiting to be stacked at Coffs Harbour Hardwoods.

“I tell customers, if it was my house, I would only ever put up pre-oiled cladding. Because moisture always gets behind things.”

though it's three times the price upfront, the end result is so much better and the labour costs so much less than the wrap that I'd say 90% of these jobs push us towards priming because of the ease on site."

SUCCESSFUL SCREENING

"We make a prefab panel product that needs oiling, because it's going to be exposed to the elements" says Fergus Forbes, director

of Kosny Timber. "In the past, some of our customers chose to oil it themselves, but a lot of the time, we were oiling for them. And in those days, we were spraying panels in our factory, which was an awful process. There were so many fumes and plumes of oil in the room. It was unpleasant to work in.

"So we picked up a Ceetec machine from Dulux. And we haven't looked back. It's dramatically easier to work with."

The change to a machine-based system has expanded Kosny's pre-oiled offer to around 70% of the products they send out. "We always recommend pre-oiling to our customers," Forbes says, "because it makes our products last longer. And pre-oiling prior to assembly is far superior to trying to oil something after you've put it together. It's faster, more even and on all sides.

"It's even more essential on some of the other lines we supply, like tongue and groove cladding. I tell customers that if it was my house, I would only ever put up pre-oiled cladding. Because moisture always gets behind things. And you can't coat it on the back later."

Forbes looked at a range of oiling machines before deciding on the Ceetec. "There are two or three main models on the market and they all had different strengths," he says. "When it came down to the final selection, the Ceetec was more expensive than one of the other models we were looking closely at, but it had other attributes we wanted, particularly its speed.

"The speed it runs at is excellent, perhaps three times faster than the alternative we were looking at, which translates directly into productivity for us."

Because the Kosny team is only running one machine, they only offer one oil choice, Universal Timber Oil. "If you offer multiple products, you need to clean the machine between each," Forbes says. "And that's a bit of a task. It means time with the machine down and it wastes a lot of oil as you flush each different type through.

"The machine itself is very versatile, it can even be used for painting, but if we ever decide we want to introduce pre-painted products, we'll buy an extra machine."

Again, even though the pre-oiled product comes at a price premium, the benefits are clear to Forbes' customers. "It gives our resellers more margin. So it's an upsell for them as well," he says.

"And for the end users, they see the twin benefits of the time savings for installation and the product being protected. We did a TV shoot last week, with our pre-oiled merbau panel. And we completely transformed someone's backyard in just one day. Our team framed up a fence, then just screwed the panels up. And that was it. They're already oiled, the whole job's done. Move on to the next thing.

"For us, that was getting back to the factory, but for our customers, that might be two jobs in the time of one." **T**

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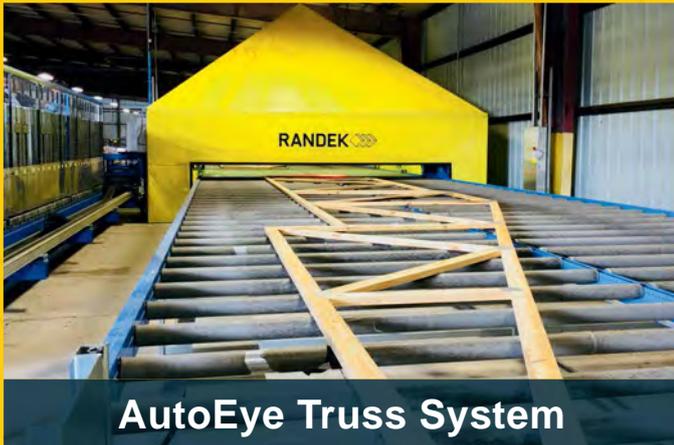


Above: The Kosny Timber team gave this backyard a makeover in a single day with pre-oiled panels.

PHOTO: (TOP) COURTESY COFFS HARBOUR HARDWOODS; (BELOW) COURTESY KOSNY TIMBERS

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Powering productivity



When Multinail realised many of their customers weren't getting the most out of their linear saw, they engineered a solution. **By Warwick Porter**

In response to our customers' production needs, Multinail has been delivering highly specialised and technically advanced Australian-made solutions into the local market for over 40 years. As a company, we've led many of the innovations that fabricators now take for granted.

In 2018, we launched the PieceMaker automated linear saw. The Multinail team worked closely with fabricators across the country, demonstrating the productivity benefits from adding an automated linear saw to their manufacturing operation.

We've had a strong take up, and over time we've received a lot of customer feedback. One comment we heard from multiple fabricators was that they wanted more speed, which seemed a strange request as we know the saw is fast and most truss plants can't press enough trusses to keep up with the saw when it's running flat out.

We decided to take a deep dive into the saw's data and discovered to our surprise that most plants were only running the PieceMaker for about three to four hours a day. Talking with the fabricators, they knew the saw was being underutilised, but

explained that they were running at their internal limits and the operator staff were at their full capacity with work.

Understanding the situation required even more in-depth investigation across a wider range of truss plants. Our research revealed



Above: The more timber brought to the saw, the PieceMaker cuts, the more trusses you can press.

this was a common issue throughout the industry: many fabricators were unable to keep an automated linear saw loaded and running because of commonplace issues within both staffing and factory logistics. The most frequent ones were:

- The machine is stopped while the operator walks around the yard looking for a piece of timber;
- The loading of the machine is stopped while the operator looks for trolleys;
- The machine is stopped while the stock pack in front of the saw is swapped;
- The machine is stopped because the people on the outfeed are saying they can't keep up;
- The machine is stopped because the operator is distracted by other people in the factory.

While each of these individually is understandable, the impact is significant when you consider that a machine like the PieceMaker is a big financial investment and fabricator plants need to run it as much as possible if they want a return on that investment.



Above: Multinail's new PieceGiver is designed to directly load timber to the infeed deck.

AUTOMATED SOLUTION

We decided this was a situation ripe for innovation and our working knowledge of the PieceMaker meant we were in the best position to deliver a seamless, Australian-made solution.

In 2020, we launched a development project involving a worldwide team of engineers and technologists with the sole aim of providing truss plants with an automated solution to ensure the PieceMaker Linear Saw was able to operate at maximum efficiency. What followed was an extensive research and testing program and in 2021 we welcomed yet another Multinail innovation with the arrival of PieceGiver.

The PieceGiver replaces the operator at the head of the linear saw. Like a human operator, it picks up the timber and feeds it into the machine. Unlike humans, it doesn't need a break, or to go hunting for timber around the factory, or to have a chat with a colleague; it just keeps loading the machine.

In our trials, the PieceGiver has delivered a game-changing transformation in the efficiency and productivity of the

PieceMaker saw. Because the timber is directly loaded on the infeed deck, the saw can just keep cutting. Most of the excuses given for stopping disappear, and the saw itself can deliver fully on its production promises to the owner. And the people freed up from feeding the saw are now available to help on the outfeed, so that problem is also solved.

Customer feedback from early adopters of the PieceGiver has told us that one of the more surprising advantages of the machine is the comfort it gives the schedulers. They are now able to more confidently say to a builder "you can have your job when you need it" because they know the saw will have cut the job ready for pressing.

Fortruss Frame & Truss was one of those businesses. "We absolutely love the PieceGiver. It has made a huge difference to our cutting productivity," says owner Ashley Young. "I am convinced that once people are shown how the PieceGiver works, Multinail will not sell another PieceMaker linear saw without a PieceGiver."

HIGHER PROFITS

The hard business equation is that saving is considered an overhead and you don't make any money until you press a truss. The Multinail PieceGiver combines with the PieceMaker linear saw to make this necessary part of your truss plant as trouble-free, efficient and simple as possible, allowing you to concentrate on assembling trusses and making money.

We started the process of developing this machine with a research project that gave us a list of problems getting in the

way for truss makers, now we've had it running in enough plants to be able to construct a similar list of solutions the PieceGiver delivers.

- You reduce labour costs;
- You get control of your cutting. You know the capacity of your saw and with automated feed you know it's going to cut at that capacity so you can plan your deliveries with confidence;
- If you need more production, the PieceGiver will dramatically improve your output. It will give you an extra 3-4 hours per day of cutting when compared to a standard truss plant;
- If you don't need more cutting you can deploy the outfeed staff to making trusses once they're finished cutting. They'll now cut flat out rather than having the process broken up into a series of smaller tasks.

The result of all these solutions translates directly into profit for both you and your builder clients. Every single day you will be able to cut and press more, which leads to a quick payoff on investment and more options when it comes to future expansion. And in this time of extreme demands on so many builders, it will help your clients' businesses to flourish, too.

We know that truss plants can be difficult to run. Let's take cutting off your list of problems and help you become more efficient and profitable. **T**

For more information, contact Warwick Porter, National Machinery Sales Manager at Multinail Australia via warwick.porter@multinail.com



Above: The PieceGiver in operation, automatically delivering timber to the PieceMaker saw on this line and helping the saw and the truss plant operate at maximum efficiency.

Links of the chain

Solving wind bracing isn't a one-step process and ensuring the adequacy of every link is vital. **By Afzal Laphir, Principal Engineer, MeyerTimber Pty Ltd.**

The saying 'the chain is only as strong as its weakest link' is commonly used as a metaphor for the strength of any system that is made up of multiple parts. Be it a football team, the drivetrain of a car or even a combination of structural connections, the same saying holds true. It is no different when looking at the lateral stability of a home.

Wall bracing design fundamentally involves the determination of horizontal wind (racking) forces on the building, in two perpendicular directions, and then providing sufficient bracing units to resist these racking forces. That sounds simple enough on paper and, once done, the job is completed to many wall designers.

However, in reality, the provision of bracing units is only one link of the chain that ensures racking forces are effectively transferred to the ground. This transfer takes place through a load path that is formed by a complex interaction between the walls, ceiling/roof structure and floor structure, translating to a simple chain with several links, as illustrated in Fig 1 (right, top).

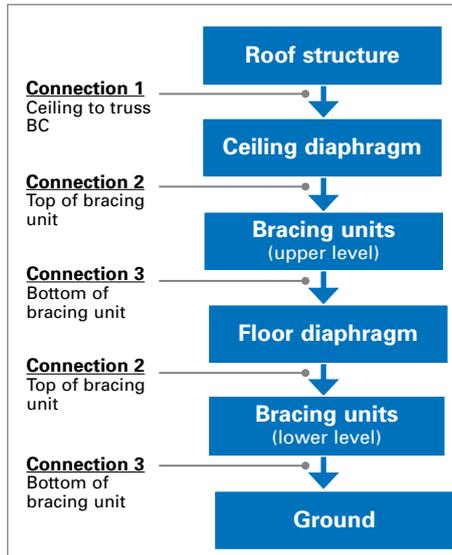
Let us dive deep into these links and explore the roles each of them plays in an effective bracing system.

STRUCTURAL CEILING OR FLOOR DIAPHRAGM

Ceilings and floor structures form large horizontal diaphragms that play an important role in the structural integrity of a building. For the diaphragms to work properly, the ceiling sheet must have direct/positive fixing to the roof structure, i.e. the truss bottom chords or ceiling joists. Ceiling battens, if used, must be fixed positively to the truss bottom chords. Ceilings that are suspended or fixed via clipped-on metal furring channels do not provide this connection.

In addition to connections, the depth and span of the ceiling diaphragm are two other critical factors that determine its capacity. A deeper diaphragm is required to distribute wind loads over a larger distance.

In low wind areas (N1 or N2), AS 1684 allows ceiling diaphragms to span 9000mm without any restriction on depth (clause 8.3.6.7) and floor diaphragms to span 14,000mm for a minimum depth of 4800mm (clause 8.3.5.9). Table 1 (right) summarises



Above: Fig 1 – Links of the Chain for a two-storey structure.

the AS 1684 requirement, where the span of diaphragm is taken as the spacing between bracing walls.

Clause 1.4.8 of AS 1684 allows an alternative system to be specified if the above requirements are not met, provided it is designed and approved in accordance with engineering principles. These systems may include one of either a wind beam, wind truss, steel cross bracing or a plywood bracing system.

CONNECTIONS TO TOP OF BRACING WALLS

Clause 8.3.6.9 in AS 1684 states that "All internal bracing walls shall be fixed to the floor of lower storey bracing walls, the ceiling or roof frame and/or the external wall

frame, with structural connections of equivalent shear capacity to the bracing capacity of that particular bracing wall."

Typical details and shear capacities are specified in Table 8.22 of AS 1684. A combination of these shear connectors may be used to satisfy a single bracing unit. If required, they can be located outside the width of the bracing unit, but in the same wall as long as the top plate is continuous between the shear connectors. Refer Fig 2 (opposite page) for an example.

A few alternate products to those given in Table 8.22 are available, for example the SDPW Deflector Screw from Simpson Strong-Tie, which can function both as a shear connector as well as a connector that provides lateral stability to non-loadbearing walls.

CONNECTIONS TO BOTTOM OF BRACING WALLS

As stated in clause 8.3.6.10 of AS 1684, the bottom plate of timber-framed bracing walls shall be fixed at the ends of the bracing panel and, if required, intermediately to the floor frame or concrete slab with connections determined from Table 8.18. For bracing systems with racking capacity up to 3.4 kN/m, specific tie-down connectors are not required, meaning nominal fixing of the bottom plate to floor frame or slab as per Table 9.4 is sufficient.

For racking capacities greater than 3.4 kN/m, Table 8.18 AS 1684 nominates specific fixing comprising of M12 rods or a 13 kN connector at each end of bracing units as

N1/N2 Wind	Spacing of Bracing Walls (mm)	
	< 4800	≥ 4800
Depth of Ceiling or Floor (mm)		
Single or Upper of two storey	9000	
Lower of two storey	9000	14000

N3/C1 Wind	Spacing of Bracing Walls (mm)		
	< 6000	≥ 6000	
Depth of Ceiling or Floor (mm)			
Roof Pitch (deg)	≤ 35	≤ 20	> 20
Single or Upper of two storey	Varies	9000	Varies
Lower of two storey		14000	

Above: Table 1 – Maximum spacing of bracing walls (summarised from AS 1684).

well as an intermediate 13 kN connector at 1200mm centres. Several tie-down connector options are given in Table 8.24 to achieve this 13 kN requirement, but the most common connector used in practice is the M12x150 concrete screwbolt or anchor screw.

EVEN DISTRIBUTION OF BRACING WALLS

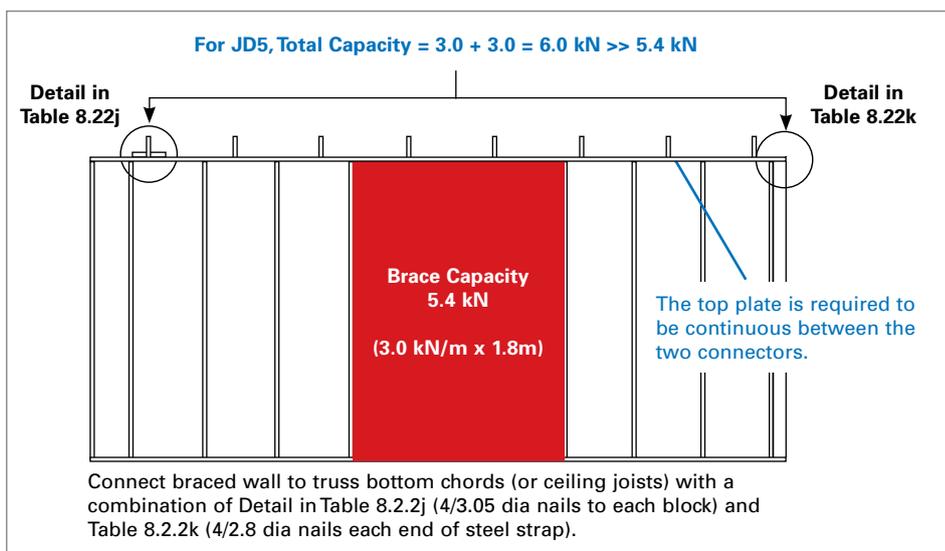
Clause 8.3.6.6 in AS 1684 requires bracing units to be “approximately evenly distributed and provided in both directions.” It also states that “bracing shall initially be placed in external walls, and where possible, at the corners of the building.” This is easier said than done given the complex nature of modern houses.

One way to achieve this is by drawing a grid pattern of bracing lines, in the two perpendicular directions, that coincide as much as possible with wall bracing units. Then, locate these units evenly throughout the building and as close as practical to corners and external walls.

Where bracing units cannot be placed in external walls because of openings, AS 1684 allows wall frames to be designed for portal action (refer clause 8.3.6.7). A number of engineered timber solutions are available for this application such as meyBRACE from Meyer Timber.



For more information on this topic, contact Afzal Laphir via email at AfzalL@meyertimber.com.au



Above: Fig 2 – An example of shear connector requirement at top of bracing wall.

Having discussed the individual links of residential lateral stability chain it is important for a wall designer to identify the weaker links and pay closer attention to them.

This might require validating some of the common assumptions made in wall bracing design. For example, a knowledge of the fixing method of ceiling will enable the designer to determine its effectiveness as a diaphragm and specify an alternative at the time of the design.

It might also be useful to prepare a sheet with a list of common connections to bring this to front of mind for the installer.

The overall system for lateral stability has a number of links and from above you can see that the original quote holds true – the system as a whole is only as strong as the weakest link. There is no point having Ronaldo on your team if you have a third-string goalie. **T**



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Above: Responsible Wood CEO Simon Dorries (centre) with Jason Ross Marketing and Communications Officer (right)

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news

Getting together

As events return to a more normal schedule, FTMA members have a chance to reset.

By Kersten Gentle

At the time of writing this, we are just a few weeks out from our 2022 FTMA National Conference, which is our first weekend retreat, to be held at RACV Royal Pines on the Gold Coast.

Last week, as we made our final preparations, the FTMA Australia Board flew into Queensland and toured fellow board member Aaron Hillman's business, Trusscorp, which had just won TABMA's 2022 Award for Best Queensland F&T Plant.

This was the first time the board has been together face-to-face since February 2020 and I can't believe how good it was to be there. To network at Top Golf with members, to attend the TABMA Awards and to just laugh again with people and talk about everyday stuff, without Covid ruling our lives was absolutely brilliant.

It was also a great opportunity to give the FTMA Board their Carbon Warrior T-shirts to wear at the FTMA National Conference. It was fantastic seeing the response from total strangers, who often asked what it meant, which gave us the opportunity of explaining that timber stores carbon for life.

I'd like to congratulate Alicia Oelkers and her Queensland team for the TABMA Queensland Timber Awards which they held on election night, 21 May. This is the second Covid-era TABMA event, following their successful National Conference held in June 2021, which gives me some reassurance for our events. A huge congratulations to all the winners on the night.

I can only imagine how good FTMA's conference will be with 200 delegates on the Gold Coast. I'll share photos next edition.

FTMA'S INSPIRATIONAL BOOK OF THE YEAR!

For the past few years, FTMA has given our members an 'inspirational' book to help guide them through the tough times. Not everyone is into the self-help books, but we have been pleased with the feedback and learned that there are enough of you who do get something from these reads, so we are going to continue.

The first was *Who Moved My Cheese* which focussed on surviving change – and let's face it, in July 2020, we all needed help with that. In 2021, it was *Fish!*, which focused on helping the team come together and enjoy being at work. After lockdowns and so much disruption in our lives, we thought it was what we needed.

The book chosen for 2022 is called *Stress Teflon* by Luke Mathers, who just so happens to be our guest speaker at our National Conference. I received the boxes of books a few weeks ago and read the book on my recent trip to Queensland.

If there was ever a time to learn some tips on reducing stress and living a less-stressed life, it's now and I loved the book. It was a bit hard getting into as it was all

This was the first time the board has been together face-to-face since February 2020 and I can't believe how good it was to be there.

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Above: The FTMA Board – full of Carbon Warriors (L-R) Mark Hull, Brendan Schneider, Andrew Nguyen, Aaron Hillman, Nikita Bourke, Christine Flanagan, Jamie Dahlsen and Kersten Gentle.



Above: FTMA Board members Aaron Hillman (Trusscorp) and Jamie Dahlsen (Dahlsens).



Above: FTMA Board members Christine Flanagan (Calco Truss & Timber) and Nikita Bourke (Westruss).

about our 'old brain' and our 'new brain', but by the end of the book, which is another short read, I was sold. I've since implemented a few of the techniques to help me get through these next few stressful weeks in the lead up to the conference and I'm stoked I read it and can't wait to see Luke in action at the conference.

FTMA FAMILY GROWS

FTMA is delighted to welcome our latest Bronze Sponsors, McCormacks Australia and

Bliss & Reels. Both businesses have been longtime members of the Association with Phil having served on the FTMA Board for over a decade. We look forward to both our new Bronze Sponsors setting up at the National Conference in our Trade Exhibit.

We would also like to welcome our new members, Coral Coast Homes (WA), Trussmasters (Qld & NSW) and East Coast Frames & Trusses (Qld). **T**
Kersten Gentle

For more information contact FTMA on **0418 226 242** or via email at **kersten@ftma.com.au**



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Taking flight

Aeronautics has a glorious history of unlikely aircraft but, speaking as an engineer, these should never include roofs. **By Paul Davis**

Forget the Wright Brothers, an Australian, Lawrence Hargrave was the first person in the world to fly in a heavier-than-air craft. He predated the Wright brothers. Okay... it wasn't powered flight – it was a large kite – but he did fly!

Apart from taking a major step towards a future of air transport, Hargrave proved that something that looks like a big washing basket could fly! His kite was a canvas box with open ends, and it flew due to Hargrave's ingenuity, not because of any streamlining.

So, if a washing basket can fly, then perhaps we can consider what other sorts of objects can do the same. As an aircraft-obsessed kid, the cartoonish XF-85 Goblin come to mind (Google it) as does the 'Flying Bedstead' that infamously almost killed Neil Armstrong when he was training for the Apollo missions. Eddie the Eagle flew in the 1998 winter Olympics, and it was clear that was just wrong.

If virtually any shaped object can be made to fly, then it's not unreasonable to think about the prospect of one of our roofs taking off.

A classic wing cross-section has a flat underside and a top surface profiled so that the wind passing over the top must take a longer path than the wind under. That perfectly describes a roof such as a freestanding pitched roof picnic shelter, a porte cochere entry to a house, or a pitched roof over an alfresco area, which many new houses have nowadays.

The wind running under these open structures travels unimpeded but the wind blowing over the top of the roof must travel a longer path. My favourite equation in all of engineering beautifully describes this – okay,



okay I know I am a total geek, but Bernoulli's equation and its vast range of applications is amazing! As designers, we sadly don't need to whip out Bernoulli – the higher-tier Wind Loading Standard AS 1170.2 does the work to describe the wind loads for us in a series of tables.

One significant effect on the wind load is whether the air can pass relatively unobstructed underneath or whether it is impeded, for example by partial walls or planter boxes. If, in the standard's terminology, the roof is more than 50% 'blocked under', then the wind loads on the roof start to rise to significantly higher values.

The wind loads are also highly dependent upon the roof pitch. Up to about 15 degrees, wind loads are pretty much like a normal gable ended roof, at least when 'empty under'. But up around 30 degrees they are hellishly high. So, awkwardly, right around the slope where most domestic roofs are pitched, we have the highest wind loads.

I'd be happy to be corrected, but I suspect that your truss design software struggles to properly assign the correct wind load to these 'pitched free' roofs. I have never seen the important question of whether they are 'blocked under' asked by the software; this would be a tell-tale that it is designing for this situation.

That 'other' wind standard AS4055, is silent on the issue of these 'free' roofs, so in some ways pitched free roofs are included by omission, even though the wind loads it produces would be mostly wrong.

So, I suspect some alfresco roofs, and similar, are being designed for a lower wind load than required. I'm struggling to come up with any recommendations to help you combat this problem (assuming your software doesn't cover this situation). You could manually crank up the wind pressure coefficient in your software and so perhaps a short-term solution would be your providers issue some sort of guidance on how to adapt your software use. Ideally, longer term, the software should be upgraded. I'd suggest at least you ask your supplier how these roofs are treated so you can make decisions as appropriate.

I still am somewhat aircraft obsessed. While some guys might be watching the footy or reading car magazines, I am googling cold war era fighter jets or comparing the merits of a Sopwith Camel and a Fokker Triplane. In fact, a good friend and I have idly discussed buying a second-hand MiG-21 (going-price: half to one million dollars) and refurbishing it as a 'project' for the mancave.

I did start flying lessons about 18 months ago. My still-developing flying ability and a MiG-21 (top speed 2000km/h) would be a deadly combination! However, even if I could afford the plane, I couldn't afford the fuel bill. At 250 litres per minute, rest assured readers, that I will not be dying in a plane crash; this TrussTalk column will continue! **T**



Paul Davis is an independent structural engineer managing his own consulting firm Project X Solutions Pty Ltd. The views in this column are Paul's and do not reflect the opinions of *TimberTrader News*.
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