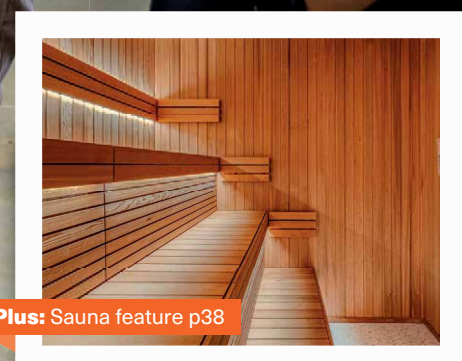


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SELLING IN A DOWNTURN

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ADDING CUSTOMER VALUE
WITH NEW OPPORTUNITIES

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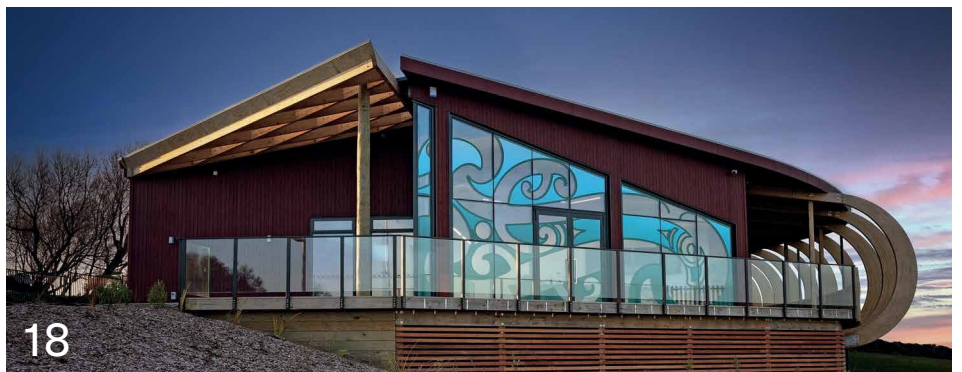
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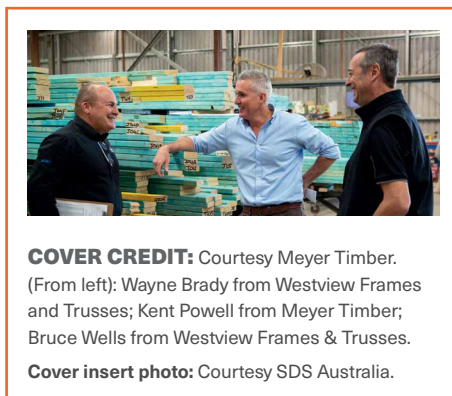
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COVER CREDIT: Courtesy Meyer Timber.
(From left): Wayne Brady from Westview Frames and Trusses; Kent Powell from Meyer Timber; Bruce Wells from Westview Frames & Trusses.
Cover insert photo: Courtesy SDS Australia.

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Timber Trader acknowledges the Darug 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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Publisher's note

Our subscriptions are growing and we would like to thank all our subscribers who renew quickly when the annual invoice arrives. It is great to connect with just some of our readers and listen to what is happening in their business. One interesting call I received was from the Director of a timber processing facility calling to complain about not receiving his magazine. Upon checking with our master records, it was correctly addressed to him and at his business address. He was pulling my leg as the real issue was his staff were reading and passing the issue around the office. By the time he received it, the pages were dog eared and marked. He signed up for a second copy and everyone was happy.

In this edition, we again have a number of interesting editorials with our front cover feature exploring Meyer Timber, their success and how they have evolved from focusing on product and relationships. These days Meyers have a people-centric philosophy starting with their recruitment of individuals. Having good people from the ground up to management is just one of the important components which Meyer's attribute to their growth and continued success. It all begins on page 26.

In the last issue we showcased our new Australian made and owned logo and would now like to draw your attention to the

editorial and information located on page 13. The iconic Australian made brand is for all Australian businesses making products locally. It really is a simple process to register, and we are very keen to encourage all eligible businesses to register and proudly use the Australian made logo.

Using the right products in the right places can be one of the key components to the long-term integrity of timber structures. Our editorial "Lasting Strength" explores this with using the right treatment level in floor structures that are close to or touching the ground. Woodhouse's TerraFrame is a new H4 timber treated product which is suitable for many structural applications.

This ties in nicely with Paul Davis's story on Page 50 as Paul discusses the importance of ensuring sub floor structures are designed correctly keeping the potential loads in mind when looking at the design.

Western Red Cedar is a popular timber, with its natural characteristics, like the ability to repel insects, light weight to strength ratio, meeting BAL 29 fire rating, its smell and looks great, why wouldn't it be. Timbeck a third-generation business explain a little of their history and long commitment to cedar. This feature also explores saunas by one of Timbeck's customers, SDS Australia who build and create amazing saunas, many of them using cedar, supplied by Timbeck.

Jason at Arrow Executive sales explains how we can sell in a downturn market, through evaluating, developing, aligning sales process and ensuring what is learnt is then executed.

We would like to highlight our Professional writer based in New Zealand, Mr. Michael Smith. Michael eagerly travels and connects with people and industry all across NZ, seeking out important stories, researching, interviewing and attending important events on behalf of *TTN*. Michael has been with *Timber Trader News* since we purchased it at the beginning of 2023 and has been writing for our sister publication, *Timber and Forestry Enews* since 2015. Michael has been expanding his network and allocating more time to *TTN* as we seek to grow our connections and reporting across the ditch. We hope you enjoy the stories across pages 18-22 with new Kiwi brown headings.

We trust that you value the spread of articles in this edition. Like most things these days, the cost of production and distribution have climbed, so we really appreciate the support from advertisers, contributors and readers.



Timber Media
AUSTRALASIA

News in brief

Peter Taylor announces transition to Multinail Group's new CEO

Multinail group reached out to *Timber Trader News* with the following special announcement for industry.

Dear Industry Partners and Colleagues, we are pleased to announce a significant leadership transition within the Multinail Group. I am excited to share that Trent Taylor will be stepping into the role of Group CEO. Additionally, I am proud to announce that both Travis Taylor and Trent Taylor have joined the Board of Directors.

Trent's extensive experience and strategic insight make him the perfect leader to guide Multinail. As I transition to the role of Non-Executive Chairman, Trent will play a key role in advancing our mission to deliver the exceptional products and services you have come to expect.



Above: Left Travis Taylor, center Peter Taylor and right Trent Taylor.

"Trent's extensive experience and strategic insight make him the perfect leader to guide Multinail."

This evolution in our leadership will build on our legacy of excellence, ensuring that Multinail remains a market leader, continually pushing the boundaries of quality and innovation. We value the trust and partnership we share with our colleagues and stakeholders in the industry, and we thank you for your ongoing support and collaboration.

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Shipping: Red Sea piracy, congested transshipment hubs and forecasting updates. **By ADM Global**

Global Supply Chain disruptions continue with severe congestion at major Transshipment ports due to ongoing Red Sea Crisis. As a result, Carriers ceased bookings into Australia/New Zealand during August to ease the services and infrastructure.

Significant impacts are being felt on a global scale, placing compounding pressure on port infrastructure and global Carrier

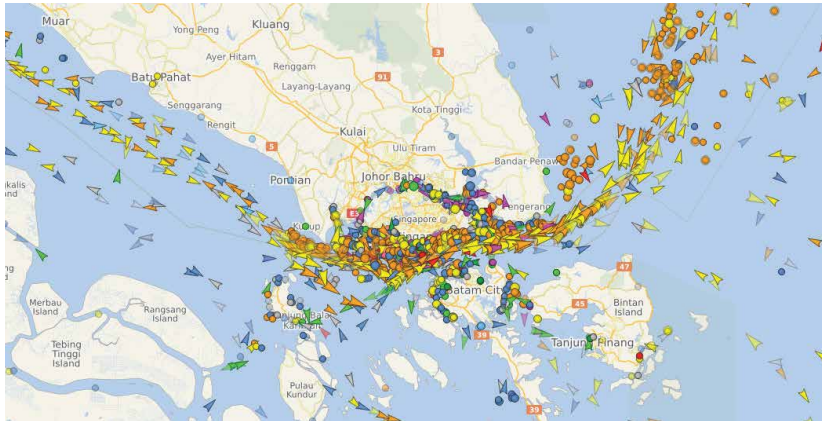
services, as outlined below:

- Vessel delays and congestion
 - Extended transits and global equipment imbalance
 - Omissions/blank sailings and suspended services
 - Extended lull times in major global transshipment hubs of 4-5 weeks
- Additional costs are being incurred by the

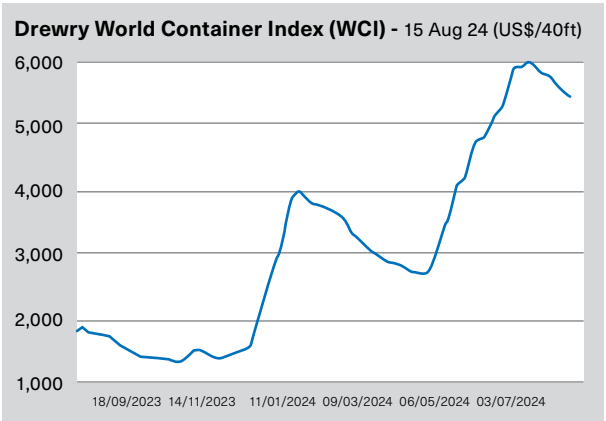
shipping lines/airline such as general rate increases and peak season surcharges.

Please be aware of these severe ongoing conditions on a global scale, it is imperative to plan/book well in advance and allow for inevitable delays.

Forecasting is a necessity to maintain a robust supply chain to navigate through these challenges.



Above: Singapore port congestion.



Above: Soaring freight container costs.

SOURCE: RINA MCLAUGHLIN - ADM GLOBAL

Timber Construct Conference 2024

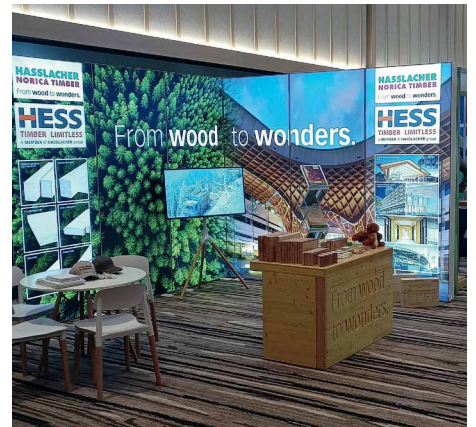
Delegates, guest speakers including Government and overseas presenters along with a range of exhibitors were all on site at Rydges Melbourne for the Timber Construct Conference 2024. Andrew Dunn and his team are to be congratulated on the significant effort to bring together such a range of informative speakers with some to provide presentations from overseas.

TOPICS INCLUDED:

- The latest timber engineering developments and projects
- Out timber journey and money matters

- Timber takes on housing shortfall with housing targets, townhouses, panelised solutions, combined framed timber formations and CLT, Social housing and a timber concrete and glulam solution
- Conquering low rise challenges and future engineered wood solutions
- Exploring the cutting edge of timber construction across cultures, including Toyoko Olympics
- China – the next time revolution
- North America mass timber skyline, roofing and revolution
- Trends in Mass timber in USA
- Portland airport terminal mass timber project
- NCC Compliance for off-site manufactured buildings
- Conquering moisture issues and leak detection
- Conquering mid to high rise challenges in mass timber
- Building and fire code changes in North America
- Code updates and outlook for Australia

A full report has been sent our from our office and uploaded to the Timber Trader News Website for your reading. See also report from Kersten Gentle – FTMA at the back of this issue



Above: Conference exhibition.



Above: Madhuri Ranjan from Intergrain.



Above: Warrick Drysdale of Programmed Timbers.

PHOTOS: TTN

Cyber threats are real

Protect your timber business with free cyber security training starting with the basics.

In an era where a cybercrime is reported every six minutes in Australia, small businesses, face an escalating threat. The financial, operational, and reputational impacts are severe, with repercussions including:

- **Financial loss:** Small businesses lose an average of \$46,000 per attack.
- **Customer retention:** A significant drop in customers, up to 30%, can occur post-attack.
- **Downtime:** Businesses can lose an average of 25 hours after an attack.
- **Human error:** An overwhelming 95% of cyber-attacks involve human error, highlighting the importance of proper training.

Recognising the urgent need for protection, the **National Timber & Hardware Association (NTHA)** has partnered with the

Council of Small Business Organisations Australia (COSBOA) to bring businesses and their staff the **Cyber Wardens** program—a free and simple online course designed to quickly safeguard your business from cyber threats.

Small businesses account for 43% of all cyber-crime targets. These attacks are not only becoming more frequent but also increasingly sophisticated, making it essential for businesses to be proactive.

Timber businesses must be vigilant against a variety of cyber threats, including:

- **Email hacking:** Deceptive emails or messages aimed at stealing login credentials.
- **Ransomware:** Malicious software that encrypts data until a ransom is paid.
- **Data breaches:** Unauthorised access to confidential business information.
- **Insider threats:** Misuse of system access by employees or contractors.

The Cyber Wardens program offers a straightforward and efficient way to fortify



your business against cyber threats.

- **Free of charge:** No cost to you or your business.
- **User-friendly:** Designed for small business owners and employees with no IT jargon.
- **Self-paced:** Enrol in just two minutes and complete the program in 30-45 minutes.
- **Tailored for small businesses:** Addresses the specific challenges faced by smaller enterprises.

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PHOTO: BRIAN A. JACKSON/SHUTTERSTOCK

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TASMANIAN REGIONAL FORESTRY AGREEMENT 5 YEAR REVIEW

The Tasmanian Regional Forestry Agreement (RFA) is currently being reviewed, and the TFPA has prepared a submission to the outcome report for the previous five years.

The Tasmanian RFA covers all forms of forestry and forest management across the state, including public and private, plantation, native, reserve and production areas.

By covering all forestry across the state, this efficiency leads to better outcomes for the environment because implementation requirements are clear – for our foresters, farmers, private landowners, and parks managers, who all adhere to the same accredited and consistently applied set of rules.

In our submission we emphasised that it is critically important that the RFA continues to deliver on economic, social and environmental outcomes, particularly the maintenance of investment certainty for internationally competitive forest-based industries.

In addition, the TFPA noted that the Tasmanian RFA process undertook a scientifically rigorous assessment of Tasmania's forests, through the Comprehensive Regional Assessment (CRA), leading to the establishment of a Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative (CAR) reserve system.

We agreed that the Tasmanian RFA is the right mechanism to balance the competing economic, environmental and social demands on Tasmania's forests into the future.

The continuance of the existing RFA is vital to the forest industry, and the regional communities that depend upon it, by providing a level of certainty of resource supply.

The comprehensive and adaptive policy approach taken in the RFA has provided a stable and solid foundation for the protection of biodiversity in Tasmania for over two decades. This should continue.

However, the TFPA argued that future



Nick Steel.

periodic reviews should focus not just on environmental outcomes inside the forest area managed for wood production but should assess the performance across all land tenures.

With nearly 60% of public forests in Tasmania now held in conservation reserves that form the CAR forest reserve system and excluded from wood production, it is important that these reserved areas are actively managed and regularly monitored to ensure the values for which they were reserved are being maintained.

The economic and social health of the forest industry and communities dependent on the industry are equally important.

The exiting RFA also aimed to provide the investment certainty needed for internationally competitive timber and forest-based industry.

Therefore, the TFPA argued that future RFA reviews should maintain equal weight to economic and social objectives, such as annual investment in upgrading existing and developing new processing capacity, forest industry employment, and the economic health of communities dependent on forest industries.

Another strength is that RFAs deliver a substantial reduction in red tape by recognising one regulatory system (at the State level) rather than requiring two levels of regulation (State plus Commonwealth), each delivering on the same objectives. This is critical for the efficiency of our forest practices on public and private land.

Interested forestry partners still have an opportunity to submit to the review. Only by showing a united front in our support of the current Tasmanian RFA can we fight the dissolution and watering down of the

protection for our industry we have long battled for, and the current RFA affords us.

Nick Steel is Chief Executive Officer of the Tasmanian Forest Products Association



Above: Natalie Reynolds.



A NEW PENALTY LANDSCAPE

Is your Due Diligence system in order?

While we have all been worried about the out-of-control costs of housing construction and the general cost of living, amendments to the Illegal Logging Prohibition Act have been introduced to Parliament that can only make importing or processing timber more difficult with unnecessary red tape.

ATIF has as a condition of membership and fundamental tenant that it wholly opposes illegally logged timber being traded. It goes even further than this by >>



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taking a strong stance against conflict timber, even where it *could* be legally imported, despite in some circumstances attracting additional tariffs.

So, we agree that illegally logged timber is terrible for the planet, encourages deforestation, and does not bode well when dumped on the market. This is not about imports vs domestic production as has been espoused. Australia simply has not invested in the forestry resources it has needed to in order to replace imported products and meet the skyrocketing demand for timber. We need to import timber or our domestic housing crisis will only get far worse.

So how do we arrest this global problem? Government has introduced a new Bill the Illegal Logging Prohibition (Strengthening Measures to Prevent Illegal Timber Trade) Bill 2024 into Parliament on March 27. This follows the Sunset Review of the Regulation.

The new Bill introduced a number of elements which ought be of significant concern to readers importing Regulated Timber Products, including:

- A strict liability offence for importing illegally logged timber
- A new requirement to give notice for a product intended to be brought into Australia
- Power for seizure and forfeiture of goods
- Power to take and fibre test samples of shipments
- A 'name and shame' register for breaches of the Act/Reg

It is also crucially important to point out that the Act applies equally to importers and domestic processors. It has to, in order to comply with Australia's WTO obligations. Mirror due diligence processes apply to domestic processors and importers.

The problem is that those prescribed processes simply don't work for many products that it covers. It can be practically impossible to comply – a huge problem when such significant penalties may well pass.

In the meantime, importers and domestic processors are urged to get their houses in as much order as is possible and properly inform themselves as to what is required and how to conduct Due Diligence.

Natalie Reynolds – General Manager



TIMBER & HARDWARE AUSTRALIA AWARDS 2024 FREDERICK O'CONNELL SCHOLARSHIPS

Timber & Hardware Australia (THA) proudly announces the recipients of the 2024



Above: Mikaela McKenzie.

Frederick O'Connell Scholarship, continuing its tradition of supporting education and professional development within the timber industry. This prestigious program, named in honour of Frederick Richard O'Connell, former Executive Director of the Timber Merchants' Association (Victoria), aims to empower members, their families, and employees through educational opportunities.

Frederick Richard O'Connell's legacy, rooted in his leadership during the 1950s, includes a generous bequest to fund scholarships that promote harmony and strengthen relationships within the timber sector. These scholarships, totalling over \$1.5 million awarded to date, provide financial assistance of up to \$6,000 per recipient. They support individuals pursuing degrees, certificates, or diplomas at Victorian universities, emphasizing qualities such as good character, academic achievement, and participation in sports.

Among the distinguished 2024 recipients are:

- Jorja Brown - Dahlsens Building Centres
- Luke Caddy - Lamcal Builders Supplies Pty Ltd
- Sophie Caddy - Lamcal Builders Supplies Pty Ltd
- Brianna Coutts - Davids Timber
- Adam Efron - Davids Timber
- Kelsey Foot - Danahers Timber & Hardware Mitre 10
- Owen Mathews - Mathews Timber
- Rhys McDougal - Drouin West Timber & Truss
- Deakin Miller - Dahlsens
- Sam Taylor - Bendigo Truss Plant Pty Ltd
- Harry Taylor - Bendigo Truss Plant Pty Ltd
- Hannah Walls - Lamcal Builders Supplies Pty Ltd

THA is thrilled to support these talented individuals and extends its best wishes for their ongoing success in both academic endeavours and professional pursuits.

M.McKenzie – Director member engagement



SICK LEAVE ON A PUBLIC HOLIDAY

The TTIA National Timber Members' Hotline is often asked by Members for clarification on the entitlement due when an employee falls ill on a declared public holiday.

THE FAIR WORK ACT

For clarification, according to the Fair Work Act (s98), if the period an employee takes paid personal/carer's leave includes a day or part day that is a public holiday, the employee is taken to be on the public holiday and not absent on paid personal/carer's leave. They must therefore be paid for the public holiday.

ANNUAL LEAVE AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

If a public holiday falls during a period of annual leave, an employee is paid for the public holiday. This includes any hours that fall on a part-day public holiday.

Under the Fair Work Act (s89), if a public holiday (or part-holiday) falls during a period of annual leave, or a period where an employee is eligible for personal/carer's leave (including compassionate leave) or community service leave, the employee is taken not to be on annual leave for each day eligible for the other leave or public holiday.

The period of annual leave is not extended by any such absence, but the employee is to be re-credited annual leave for each day of eligible absence.

UNPAID LEAVE AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

An employee isn't paid for any public holiday that falls during a time when the employee is on unpaid leave.

LONG SERVICE LEAVE

Whether a public holiday extends a period of long service leave will depend on the relevant Commonwealth, State, or Territory long service leave legislation.

PAYMENT FOR HOLIDAYS NOT WORKED

Under the Fair Work Act (s116), an employee is to be paid at their 'base rate of pay' for their ordinary hours of work when absent on a specified public holiday.

Base rate of pay is an employee's ordinary rate of pay excluding incentive-based

payments and bonuses, loadings, monetary allowances, overtime or penalty rates or any other separately identifiable amounts.

This means an employee will be paid at their ordinary rate of pay excluding the appropriate public holiday penalty payment (had the employee worked) provided by the applicable modern award or enterprise agreement.

As a member, should you need any clarification on any award related issues, you are able to speak to one of the TTIA team anytime on (02) 9264 0011.

Brian Beecroft, Chief Executive Officer



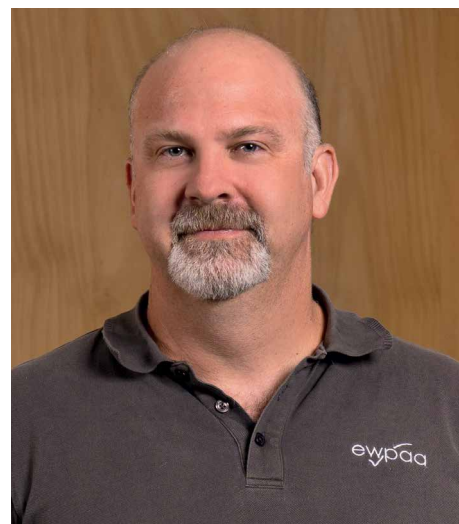
ENSURING GLT PRODUCT INTEGRITY: THE IMPORTANCE OF BRANDING AND TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Glued Laminated Timber (GLT) has a long history, and its use is growing in Australia and NZ. From bearers, joists, and lintels in residential construction to exposed posts and beams in mass timber construction, the range of architectural and design complexity

that GLT products are used in, is endless. However, incorrect branding and poor communication of technical specifications have led to instances of non-conformance or inappropriate product substitution which threatens consumer confidence in our renewable and versatile engineered wood products.

The natural variation and characteristics of timber are well known. Manufacturing engineered wood products allows us to produce more consistent and high-performance products, even out of lower grade fibre, however we still need to consider the natural characteristics of timber that affect how a specific product can be used. The combination of structural properties, durability performance, and fire resistance of GLT is unique to each manufacturer, so the technical specifications of each product need to be clearly communicated through product branding, technical data sheets, installation guides and design information.

Understanding the requirements of branding, and clearly communicating the technical specifications of GLT are integral to choosing the correct GLT required for the specific application. Additionally, there are



Above: Gavin Matthew – EWPAA CEO.

clear implications for product substitution if it does not match the design specification, i.e., GLT must not be substituted into a design without the appropriate review and approval processes.

GLT is commonly branded with a GL grade (GL8, GL10, GL12, GL13, GL17 or GL18). Branding a stress grade is a claim from the manufacturer or supplier that the product can be designed using a suite of design >>

PHOTO: COURTESY EWPAA

arxada

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values published in AS 1720.1 or NZS/AS 1720.1. Due to slight differences in these design standards, it is important that the manufacturer or supplier confirms whether the GLT grade is intended for design in Australia or New Zealand. GLT products can also have proprietary grades, with structural properties unique to the manufacturer.

The structural performance is not wholly governed by the GLT stress grade. The density and wood species are often used for 'standard' fastener performance and secondary design properties, however the use of different timber grades in the GLT layup needs to be considered when designing for hangers, bolted connections and notches, for example. In addition, the durability of GLT products is dependent on the type of adhesive used, the timber species, and if preservative treatments have been used.

AS/NZS 1328.1 branding requirements allow for clear identification of GLT in the marketplace and in service, which can be linked to the structural properties, associated design guides, and limitations of use. GLT branding must include reference to: AS/NZS 1328.1, manufacturer's name or trademark; the stress (GL) grade or product name that can be linked to published design properties; Adhesive Type and Service Class; production week and year; if applicable, product certification; and additional branding if required by other standards, for example, where GLT is preservative treated.

EWPAAs new technical alert '*GLT conformance and substitution*' (see www.ewp.asn.au/technical-resources/) details what you need to look for in a complying GLT that is fit for purpose and meets the National Construction Code (NCC).

The best protection for your business is to use due diligence to ensure your products are compliant with Australian standards and codes, and the product performance claims are clear and can be verified.

To support market participants in making informed choices, EWPAAs urges GLT manufacturers and suppliers to publish associated technical data sheets, design resources, product certification information, installation guides, and product technical statements.

A credible product certification mark is a great way to have confidence that the manufacturing facility, the timber building product, and associated claims have been inspected, audited, tested, and reviewed against the product standards by independent experts. EWPAAs provides such a mark! See www.ewp.asn.au and EWPAAs technical notes.

Gavin Matthew – EWPAAs CEO



Above: David Little NTHA CEO.



NTHA NOW RECOGNISING THE BEST IN NSW & ACT

By the time this publication goes to print, we will likely be celebrating the winners of the 2024 New South Wales & ACT Timber & Hardware Industry Awards, to be held on September 13 at the George Street Hilton in Sydney.

I've been across NSW judging the Frame & Truss Category and again this year I've been blown away by the standard our Members set, and genuinely moved by the pride shown by the nominated teams. As usual it will be very hard to split them.

Perhaps this year more than most it is so important to celebrate and recognise the wonderful work our Industry does in driving the construction supply chain, so important to our economy and to families across the country. Building on the legacies of Hardware Australia and TABMA, bringing people together to celebrate really is a testament to the collaborative spirit and commitment that drive our industry.

This event promises to be a memorable evening not just of recognition but of celebration, camaraderie and a bit of glamour. I'm certainly not including myself there.

I also want to extend my congratulations to all the finalists and winners of the Victoria & Tasmania Timber & Hardware Industry Awards, held in Melbourne in June, it was a fabulous evening and thank you to all those who attended.

The finalists for this year's NSW State Awards are as follows:

Best Frame & Truss Operation:

- North West Frames & Trusses
- MCM Frame & Truss Pty Ltd
- South Pacific Roof Trusses
- Trueform Frames & Trusses
- Dahlsens Truss & Frame

Retail Store of the Year Over 2500sqm:

- Dipper's Home Timber & Hardware
- Petries Mitre 10 - Bathurst
- Kincumber Mitre 10
- Johnson Bros Mitre 10 - Mona Vale

Retail Store of the Year Under 2500sqm:

- Yamba Mitre 10
- Lavis Mitre 10 - Muswellbrook
- Booth and Taylor Hardware
- Hay's H Hardware

Garden Department of the Year:

- Acheson's Mitre 10 - Forbes
- Woolgoolga Mitre 10
- Moree Mitre 10
- Petries Mitre 10 – Dubbo

Trade Store of the Year:

- ROYAL - Formwork Solutions
- Hudson Trade Centre Mitre 10
- Townsend Mitre10 Trade Centre
- Hardware and General
- Swadlings Timber & Hardware
- GBS - Building Product Specialists

Safety Culture Award:

- Woolgoolga Mitre 10
- Kincumber Mitre 10
- Petries Mitre 10
- GBS Fire Doors & Frames

Retail Supplier of the Year:

- Bremick
- Dulux
- FIX-A-TAP
- Mayo Hardware
- Stanley Fat Max Power Tools
- Uni-pro

Trade Supplier of the Year:

- Allied Forest Products
- Haymes Paint
- Hume Doors & Timber
- ITI Australia
- Meyer Timber
- Tasman KB

Garden & Outdoor Supplier of the Year:

- AMES
- Amgrow
- Mayo Hardware
- Weber
- Yates

In addition, NTHA will acknowledge individual awards including Supplier Sales Representative of the Year, Student of the Year, and Trainee/Apprentice of the Year.

For more on these awards, visit: <https://www.ntha.com.au/events/2024-state-awards/>

David Little, CEO T

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kangaroo logo gives consumers confidence that your product is made or grown in Australia. Australian products are known for being made to the highest standards of quality and integrity, and are associated with using ethical labour, sustainable practices, and good value*.

Ownership is important to many shoppers,

and for that reason businesses with a license to use the AMAG logo can also choose to include "Australian Made and Owned" as a descriptor.

For over 35 years, the AMAG logo has been a cornerstone for thousands of brands, helping them showcase their Australian credentials to consumers, businesses, and government bodies alike. Its presence on packaging signifies more than just origin; it's a powerful tool for sales and marketing, instantly communicating authenticity and reliability to local and global audiences.

If your brand is striving to differentiate itself in the market, the AMAG logo is your assurance of quality, trust, and true Aussie pride. Embrace the symbol that speaks volumes about Australian excellence.

Aussie, Aussie, Aussie! **T**
australianmade.com.au

*Roy Morgan 2022

"Products must meet stringent criteria outlined in the Australian Consumer Law and the AMAG Logo Code of Practice."



LOGO: COURTESY AMAG



Certify your products as Australian Made

Apply to use the logo at australianmade.com.au





Continuous coaching in your business

Time for you to transition from manager to coach?

By Peter Maguire

There is an unprecedented wave of change in employment law that really requires business owners and employers to rethink the way that they manage their people and the legal obligations that go with being an employer.

Similarly, we are seeing big shifts in societal values and expectations of businesses in areas such as gender equality, sexual harassment and gender-based behaviours as well as environmental issues and the rising cost of mental health and psychosocial hazards at work. All of these have an impact on how people view and decide on employment opportunities.

The experiences that people had in the pandemic in this regard as well as the associated rise of expectations around hybrid and flexible working arrangements add to all of that. Again, these figure prominently now in people's decisions on employment.

Underpinning all of this is a message that we need to find new ways to meet new

challenges and that perhaps some of the problems are the approaches which we have been taught to use in managing people's performance and behaviour.

So what can we do differently?

THE GLOBAL STATE OF PLAY

In its *"State of the Global Workplace: 2024 Report"*, Gallup has reported that:

- the majority of the world's employees continue to struggle at work and in life, with direct consequences for organizational productivity and
- 20% of employees globally report experiencing loneliness for a lot of the previous day and
- Social isolation and chronic loneliness have devastating effects on physical and mental health and
- Gallup estimates that low employee engagement costs the global economy US\$8.9 trillion, or 9% of global GDP.

There is nothing really new in any of that and,

Make training and continuous feedback focus on improvement to drive engagement.

if you look back over the years that they have been running this, you roughly get up to 25% of people who are engaged, up to 15% who are actively disengaged and the other 60% are not engaged.

The big question is "how do we get more people into the engaged space?" Clearly the traditional methods of managing people are not having that effect.

A WELLBEING LENS

Since 2018, the Leaders Lab has been running a National Workplaces Survey with the Australian Human Resources Institute. An element covered in that is the incidence of burnout for leaders and workers generally.

One of the very sobering findings from the last one done in 2023, is that, while just over half of workers (54.4%) reported feeling burned out sometimes or often, over two thirds of leaders (68.8%) reported that they did.

One of the conclusions reached in this study was that we need to move from a culture of compliance to a culture of care if we are to effectively support our leaders and our people more generally and manage risks arising from psychosocial hazards in the right way.

That means that we have to manage people in quite a different way to what we have been taught to do.

That is essentially why the positive duties to eliminate or control psychosocial hazards and to prevent sexual harassment and gender-based behaviours have been introduced.

Rather than just focusing on managing risk, we have to be actively managing behaviours and human interactions in the workplace.

THE GENERATIONAL CHANGES

We know that our younger generations live in a world where:

- if you want to know about something, you can probably find out now through google or social media and
- if it happened in the past and we have moved on from it, what does it matter now.

This presents real challenges for the traditional method of doing annual performance reviews especially where that is

the primary way in which employees get feedback about how they are going at work.

Additionally, many of our young people can very quickly pick up on anything that is fake (e.g. we do these performance reviews because we are expected to do them rather than because they serve a valid purpose and deliver positive outcomes). That doesn't help.

SO WHAT WORKS BEST

Gallup has long held that the most important experience that employees have (and the key determinant of engagement and performance and retention) is that of their relationship with their immediate manager.

They advocate that regular (ideally weekly) coaching catchups and the practice of strengths (understanding what employees' innate strengths are and giving them the opportunity to use them) are key drivers for a successful manager-employee relationship.

More recently, they have added a focus on wellbeing to the mix. Jim Harter, Gallup's Chief Workplace Scientist has said:

"Combining strengths and wellbeing at work is potentially the most transformational treatment yet in the urgent pursuit of resiliency, mental health and ultimately, net thriving."

I agree – a coaching approach with regular catchups and inclusion of strengths and wellbeing in the conversation works for lots of reasons:

1. You are doing it NOW so it has the benefit of meeting staff expectations for timely feedback, recognition and direction.
2. In a rapidly changing world, you are dealing with performance and behavioural issues in real time before they become a bigger problem.
3. You get better at having these conversations because you are having them more regularly.
4. Your people are more likely to let you know if they are having any challenges at work or in life because the regular conversations normalise

talking about wellbeing and they build trust.

5. Through this approach, you are exercising your positive duties, consulting people and putting in place control plans for individual employees – so showing compliance through a care approach.
6. As a result of all of that, managers are feeling less burdened because the conversations are part of the culture and they should be recipients of those too.

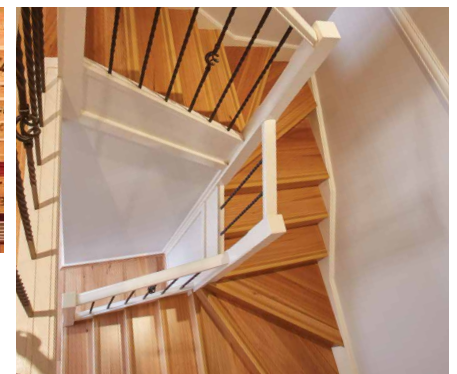
Of course, all of that does require a significant investment in cultural change, reengineering of policies and processes and retraining of people especially line managers.

But can you afford not to do it? **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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UPCOMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

NTHA NSW/ACT STATE AWARDS SEPTEMBER 13

Join us in celebrating the New South Wales & ACT Timber and Hardware Industry. Nominations open at <https://www.ntha.com.au/events/2024-nswact-state-awards-nominations/> Contact Tahlia at events@ntha.com.au

ADVANCING MASS TIMBER CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 23-25

Advancing Mass Timber Construction 2024 conference including sessions on Translating mass timber regionally for maximum adoption, A review of over 40 completed mass timber projects, Understanding how moisture can make or break your project and Reaching new heights: Study on the academic wood tower. Contact and information: construction@hansonwade.com

OCTOBER

TIMBER FRAMERS GUILD 2024 CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 17-20

Timber Framers Guild is a non-profit educational association dedicated to the craft of timber framing. The national conference will be held in Ann Arbor, Michigan USA. More information info@tfguild.org

2025

SAVE THE DATES FOR 2025

MARCH 22: NTHA SA/NT/WA State awards – Nation wine centre, Adelaide

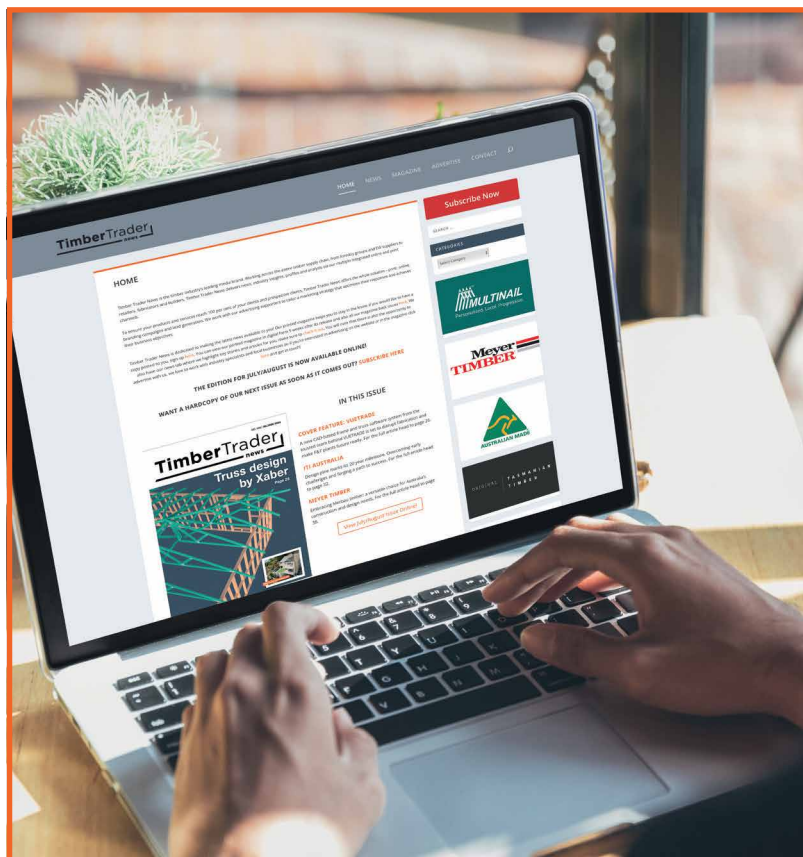
MAY 30: NTHA QLD State awards – Brisbane City Hall, Brisbane

JUNE 22-26: World Conference on Timber Engineering, Brisbane. WCTE is the world's leading scientific forum for the presentation of the latest technical and architectural solutions and innovations in timber construction.

Want the full story? Subscribe to the *TimberTrader News* regular e-newsletter via our website www.timbertradernews.com



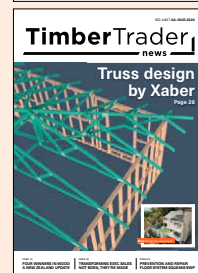
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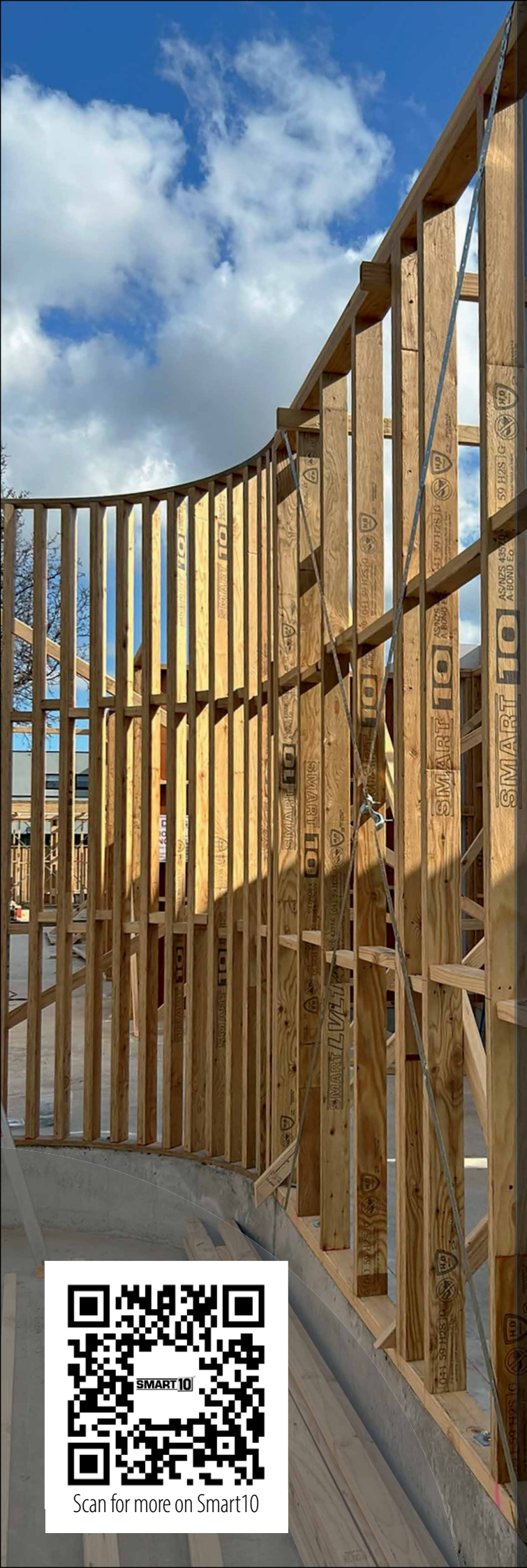
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Murihiku Marae: Community facility with a focus on sustainability



Durability of cladding achieved without using toxic chemicals.

By Michael Smith

Among a number of recent examples that demonstrate the increasing influence of Māori culture in architecture and construction is Murihiku Marae, located on the fringes of Invercargill's CBD.

Timber Trader News invited Murali Bhaskar, lead design architect with BOON, to discuss the project's design consultation process, timber structure and key sustainability features.

Mr Bhaskar says that before starting the design process, wānanga (workshops) were held with Waihōpai Rūnaka trustees to understand their values and aspirations for the project. "The site plan, entry locations, and spatial arrangement of the buildings were all guided by the cultural values and narrative identified during the project master planning and concept process.

"An important part of the design brief was that the building would be anchored in

tikanga [customary practices/values], and that the cultural narrative of the Rūnaka was to be celebrated."

Envisioned as a vibrant community hub, the marae has enabled Waihōpai Rūnaka to expand its community support services, operate as a Civil Defence Emergency Centre, and provide a hub for educational initiatives in Murihiku Southland.

Mr Bhaskar notes that the marae is constructed entirely of timber (radiata pine), with 58 tonnes of carbon sequestered. "The curved glulam beams from Techlam make up

the whalebone structural effect along one side of the building. Glulam roof beams and columns are exposed internally and make up the main building structure."

The marae also features Prolam timber posts and beams, timber rafters and piles, and Earthen Cladding (shiplap weatherboards).

"Earthen Cladding is locally manufactured from premium quality New Zealand radiata. Micropro Greengard Certified infusion establishes H3.2 durability without the use of toxic chemicals such as chromium and arsenic. Precision profiling, including surface exfoliation before coating, ensures Foreverbreathe Oil coatings infuse deep into the timber surface to increase performance and reduce maintenance costs."

He adds that the curved eastern roofline – designed to emulate the shape of the tohorā (whale) – "is created with an internal

"Cutting-edge design that uses energy-efficient practices."



Above: Curved glulam beams make up the whalebone structural effect along one side of the building.
Left: Murihiku Marae stands as a testament to sustainable building practices.

been key in this development. The Waihōpai trustees understood and embraced this, which was fundamental to the success of the project.”

Mr Bhaskar says the main issue faced during the construction phase was protecting the primary structural frames from the elements. “Invercargill is New Zealand’s most southern city – and the site is exposed to extreme temperatures and can be affected by long cold and wet periods during winter.

“Because of Covid there were delays with the delivery of other materials. We were faced with having some structural elements installed and exposed to the elements much longer than anticipated – notably the glulam frames. So we worked closely with the contractor to provide a breathable protective wrap until such time as the building was enclosed.”

Murihiku Marae stands as a testament to sustainability – a key focus of the project.

“We worked with a sustainability consultant to develop a comprehensive framework that was implemented in line with the goal of achieving triple net zero status [net zero energy, water and waste].

“The project showcases cutting-edge design that uses energy-efficient practices with a renewable energy source [solar]. Sustainability design principles include designing for kaitiakitanga [guardianship and conservation], health and wellbeing, operational performance, and whole of life value.”

Mr Bhaskar says BOON has extensive experience in this field of construction ... “and there are no significant challenges we find when designing with timber. The structural member sizes are generally bigger in scale than steel or concrete. However, when expressed internally this can be celebrated rather than concealed as would be common with other structural solutions.” **T**

membrane gutter, and the curved glulam beams extending to the exterior decking spaces represent the ribs.

“It was a challenge to develop the construction details for the curved shape of the eastern roofline and extrusion to act as a canopy to the deck that runs the length of the building. However, the resulting curve makes this building unique.

“The curved glulam members have remained in place from the original concept, surviving a value engineering exercise and forming a key element of the design narrative.

“The glulam structural beams and columns were fabricated off-site and assembled in situ. Technology allowed us to work in multiple locations, and then come together as one.

“Maintaining a genuinely collaborative and robust relationship with shared values has



Above: As a community hub the marae incorporates multiple functions, and aims to achieve positive social outcomes.

NZ survey reveals shift to more sustainable and innovative building practices

Identifying perceived barriers to use of EWPs. **By Michael Smith**

The results from the recently released Building Research Association of New Zealand (BRANZ) survey into the use of engineered wood products (EWPs) show a significant shift in the building industry towards the adoption of mass timber.

Timber Trader News considers the survey's wide-reaching intent – from gaining a better understanding of the use of EWPs across the construction sector, to identifying perceived barriers to their use and uptake.

The comprehensive report (*Usage and Uptake of Engineered Wood Products in New Zealand: Results from Survey 2 – 2024*, by David Carradine, Orin Lockyer and Amy Knight) noted the significant global increase in the use of timber products in recent years.

“A major portion of this increase is attributable to EWPs – from large-scale structural elements through to non-structural and decorative components used on the interior and exterior of buildings. This includes materials such as laminated veneer

lumber (LVL), cross laminated timber (CLT), plywood, particleboard and other composite products utilising wood as a base material” (see page 6 of the report).

The survey (the third in a series since 2019, with one more survey planned for 2026) was distributed to manufacturers, builders, architects, designers, engineers, building officials and quantity surveyors. “The questions were developed in consultation with BRANZ staff and external specialists so that a comprehensive survey, including a variety of perspectives, would result” (see page 1).

Most of the survey's 210 participants were split between the engineering, architecture and building professions – with a significant majority having over 10 years' experience in their current roles.

Over half of those surveyed observed increases in the use of EWPs in construction over the past three years. With architects leading the charge, the industry is witnessing a transformation towards more sustainable and innovative building practices.

Data comparisons with the 2022 survey reveal a noticeable growth in the adoption of standardised design methods and a growing recognition of mass timber's role in reducing the construction industry's carbon footprint. This goes hand in hand with global trends and the local regulatory shift towards greener building materials.

The greatest perceived advantages of EWPs identified by the survey's participants included sustainability, structural performance, waste minimisation, carbon sequestration, speed of construction and aesthetics.

Among the requests for information, and to develop an understanding of the use of EWPs, participants were asked to assess the practical challenges of using them on-site – such as storage, handling and installation.

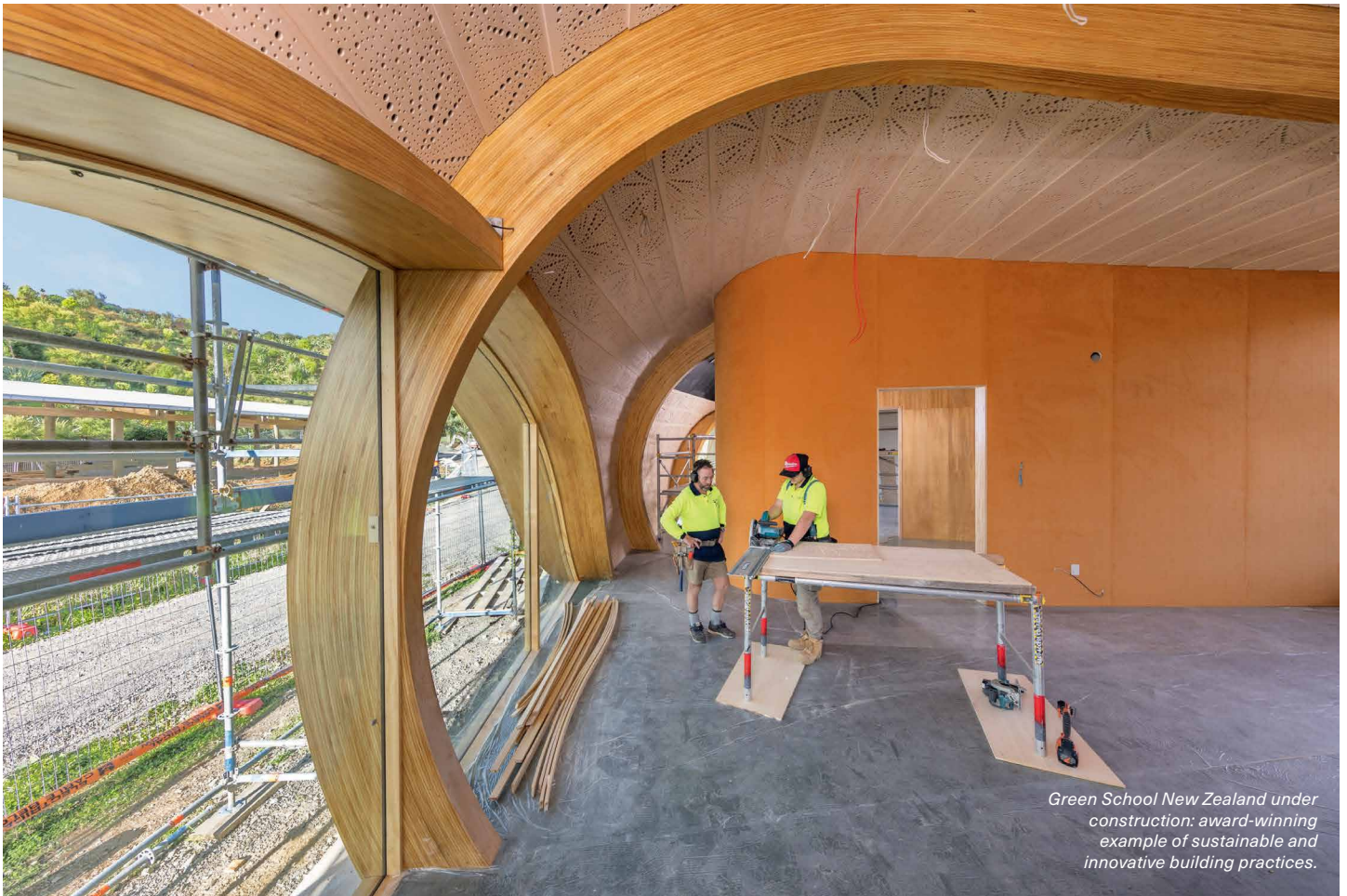
A number of responses “focused on adequate planning and understanding the need for storage or covering options. It was noted that many contractors were not familiar with the sizes and requirements for EWPs, so forward planning and knowledge of site were considered critical – in addition to having a plan for managing moisture and knowing what to do if EWPs get wet.

“Early engagement, education and understanding on the building site were often suggested as ways to avoid construction delays and damaging EWPs” (see page 16).

Further, increased cost was often noted as a concern (reflecting the need for more manufacturers) – as was the issue of EWP availability. Participants indicated that LVL



Above: David Carradine, first author of the BRANZ report.



Green School New Zealand under construction: award-winning example of sustainable and innovative building practices.

was more cost competitive than CLT and glulam in relation to supply.

Additional information concerning the full life cycle and environmental impacts of EWPs was deemed necessary to allow for more informed choices to be made by designers and consumers of EWPs – as was the need for more cost comparisons with concrete and steel options.

An improvement in methods and guidance to develop code-compliant designs that would be accepted by consenting authorities was also seen as crucial to increasing the uptake of EWPs.

This should include knowledge and education for designers and consenting officials, so they are on the same page when it comes to what is required. “Connection design and fire resistance were noted as specific areas of concern for designers” (see page 25).

A basic notion that emerged from the survey’s results was the need for more information about EWPs and how they could be effectively used.

Webinars, training, roadshows, and seminars and site visits (where discussions could be had between various building sector participants) were mentioned as ways of better understanding how to use EWPs effectively and to spread the word.

“Training was also considered important



Above: Hardy St, Nelson. There’s a growing recognition of mass timber’s role in reducing the construction industry’s carbon footprint.

Need for more effective information about EWPs.

for trades and builders due to differences between the traditional methods of timber construction and EWP construction” (see page 26).

The survey also had several suggestions related to university education and research that could apply directly to EWP usage. By including EWPs within university curricula there is the potential to produce graduates already familiar with these products and systems, and how best to apply them across the building industry.

As noted in a media release that accompanied the report – as part of the move towards greener construction, BRANZ recommends “further development of economic data on EWPs, expansion of educational efforts, and a broader dissemination of case studies that demonstrate mass timber’s benefits”. **T**

The full report can be accessed on the Mid-Rise Wood Construction website: <https://midrisewood.co.nz/branz-survey-on-engineered-wood-products-copy/>



Above: Partnership members with the Building and Construction Minister, Chris Penk, at the announcement event (from left to right): Russell Turner (CIL), Huia Reriti (NZIA), Claire Falck (BRANZ), Chris Penk MP (Minister), Judith Taylor (CIL board chair), Ankit Sharma (RMBA CEO).

New industry initiative to reduce carbon emissions of NZ buildings

A new industry-led initiative aims to reduce the environmental impact of New Zealand's buildings, which contribute up to 20% of the national carbon footprint.

The Building Research Association of New Zealand (BRANZ) has announced a partnership with Masterspec to develop a national online resource of carbon data for construction materials and products.

This free and authoritative database will empower the industry to make environmentally responsible decisions regarding their building designs and material selections. BRANZ has been collating and verifying the data underpinning this initiative since 2012.

In response to industry demand, and with endorsement from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, this initiative will use BRANZ's underlying data to create a highly accessible and usable national data resource, covering a broader range of construction products and materials.

As an independent and impartial research organisation, BRANZ will continue to ensure the carbon data feeding the online resource is reliable and accurate.

Minister for Building and Construction Hon

Chris Penk says this initiative is an excellent example of how the construction sector can collaborate to achieve great results.

"In particular, providing high quality data will enable conscious consumers to make informed decisions. This in turn empowers builders to provide more sustainable solutions that the market is seeking," says Penk.

BRANZ Chief Executive Claire Falck says that sharing the data is about the industry working together to provide essential tools to design more sustainable buildings.

"Today marks a significant step forward for sustainable building in New Zealand. To reach Aotearoa New Zealand's zero-carbon targets, we need collaboration across the building and construction industry.

"Our research shows that the best way to drive this change is to work together to equip the industry with the tools, knowledge and abilities to make effective zero-carbon decisions," says Falck.

Masterspec Chief Executive Russell Turner

says, "New Zealand's construction, architecture and design professionals need to establish the embodied carbon content of their projects – and need to know the consequences of their product decisions.

"This partnership will provide a science-based repository, combined with a service to maintain and update the data regularly. The development of the national embodied carbon dataset for construction products will help the industry to reduce its carbon emissions," he says.

Master Builders Chief Executive Ankit Sharma says the initiative exemplifies how collaboration and innovation can drive meaningful change.

"It highlights the industry's commitment to sustainability and innovation. It's important that we, as a sector, play our part in reducing emissions. This initiative is a crucial step towards providing the industry with better tools and resources that support decarbonisation across the whole construction life cycle," says Sharma.

Te Kāhui Whaihanga | New Zealand Institute of Architects Perehitini (President) Huia Reriti says that registered architects all over Aotearoa welcome the initiative.

"Our members are already focused on making environmentally responsible decisions. We've hired a sustainability advisor, and this national resource will be another very valuable addition to the tools available to members."

"By providing impartial data and including a more comprehensive range of materials, the initiative will help architects to reduce embodied carbon in every project they embark on and to get closer to our zero carbon targets faster," he says.

The platform will be developed and built over the coming months, with the first data estimated to be available next year.

ABOUT MASTERSPEC

Masterspec is an existing construction specification platform that is trusted by architects, product importers and manufacturers – and is independent of any manufacturer. It is owned by Construction Information Limited (CIL), which is jointly owned by Te Kāhui Whaihanga New Zealand Institute of Architects and the Registered Master Builders Association.

CIL employs full-time architects and designers who assess and verify construction products for inclusion in the database for access by architects to create construction specifications for projects. Most commercial construction in New Zealand is specified using this platform. Find out more: masterspec.co.nz **T**

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Arrow Executive Sales: Selling in a downturn market

A four-step guide to get your sales team firing. **By Jason Howes**

THE ACCIDENTAL SALESPERSON

For most of us, the path to a career in sales is less of a conscious choice and more of a “lucky accident.” It’s a field often populated by individuals with industry experience, and many don’t have formal qualifications. Recruitment is often driven by a “gut feel” or the necessity of filling a role quickly rather than a careful selection process.

We all know the perks of working in sales—competitive salaries, company cars, fuel allowances, and incentives. But sales can also be a hard grind, that requires “grit” to survive in today’s fast-moving economies.

Currently, the pressure on sales teams is intensifying as companies need to scale up to cover rising costs. Salespeople are now expected to step outside their comfort zone, but can they? The ideal time to grow your market share is when the market is quiet, but is your team motivated and committed to doing what it takes to succeed? A window of opportunity can close quickly, so procrastination will destroy you.

Let me show you four key steps to energise your sales team and turn challenges into opportunities, including winning new clients, selling new products and not avoiding prospecting.

59% of sales leaders don't understand how to motivate their sales team, Gartner.

1 EVALUATE PEOPLE, SYSTEMS, AND PROCESSES



Our first step in revitalising your sales efforts is an objective evaluation of your current setup—your people, systems, and processes. This assessment benchmarks your practices against global best standards. Enter Objective Management Group (OMG).

Business and sales leaders understand their business success depends on having the right people in key roles and retaining top

talent. However, many clients only realise this after salespeople have left, are being managed out, or moved to a better-suited position.

A recent review by our partner, Objective Management Group (OMG), of more than 100 sales teams identified that 64% of companies have more than half of their salespeople in the wrong role, and they are not capable of executing your long-term strategies.

2 DEVELOP A DETAILED PLAN TO DRIVE SALES GROWTH



Effective pipeline management is critical, as it helps qualify prospects early and directs focus towards the most promising opportunities. In times of economic downturn, it’s essential to streamline activities and eliminate distractions. Get your team involved.

Your plan should include daily activities that focus on what you are doing and not doing and start to finish time blocks to focus on new business development and leading activities that contribute to your required outcomes.

If your sales team is bogged down with customer service tasks, reassess their roles and ensure they align with the company’s strategic goals. The key to growth is encouraging your team to engage in uncomfortable but necessary activities.

Remember! If it's uncomfortable, then you're growing.

Even during tough times, an organised and focused sales strategy can make a difference. This is where the “elite” sales professionals shine, not order-takers.

Like in the Battleships board game: point, aim, and fire.

3 ALIGN SALES PROCESSES WITH TECHNOLOGY



Incorporating technology into your **sales process** can enhance efficiency and effectiveness. A well-defined

sales process with clear milestones and scorecards helps guide salespeople and ensure consistency. It helps identify the best prospects, understand their needs, and create a sense of urgency that moves deals forward.

Sales technology, when aligned with your

processes, can boost sales by up to 30%. Most companies don't have a sales process or are not aligned with technology and automation to improve effectiveness. Average score for sales process is 58%, leaving a huge opportunity for improvement.

Too much information is in people’s heads or in spreadsheets you can’t find. Implementing a technology-driven sales process ensures that your team has the tools they need to succeed, and it facilitates better onboarding and training for new hires.

Stat: 95% of new products fail because of the above shortfalls. Harvard Business Review

4 EXECUTE AND REINFORCE LEARNING ON THE JOB



Finally, execution is where your plans and processes come to life. Real-time coaching reinforces learning and ensures salespeople apply new skills effectively. Regular one-on-one coaching sessions focused on reviewing activity and pipeline management can help your team stay on track and continuously improve.

Leadership teams are crucial in setting the bar high and holding the team accountable. Utilising technology and automation can streamline these processes, making it easier to track progress, **lead activities, and achieve outcomes. However, this requires a commitment to change, allocation of time, and a willingness to embrace new methods.**

Membrain, our CRM and sales enablement partner coaching platform, allows leaders to build professional development plans to maximise performance.

ACROSS OMG 21 CORE COMPETENCIES, HERE ARE THREE YOU CAN START WITH

- **Consultative selling**—the most powerful skill where a salesperson listens attentively, asks open-ended questions, the right questions and guides the conversation

Consultative Selling

27

Target 67

towards mutually beneficial outcomes. Salespeople, to be successful, must be “in the moment” so they can identify compelling reasons to change to be a partner that provides solutions and value. They own this part, always outcome focused. Recent data from OMG, the **average score for consultative selling is 42%, which means that over half of the 2.8m salespeople evaluated are in the bottom half!**

- **Qualifying** - It's also vital to identify your ideal client profile. **Who's your target? What do they look like? What problems do they have that your products and services can improve?** Statistics show that nearly half of salespeople chase opportunities that aren't a good fit for their products or services. By clearly defining your target audience and using scorecards, your team can qualify prospects more effectively, saving time and increasing success rates. Not just a

scattergun approach, focused and execution.

- **Sales messaging** - Crafting sharp, compelling sales messages is crucial. This helps to open doors. A well-defined message can significantly enhance your team's ability to convey value, secure meetings with potential clients, get you in front of decision-makers and set you apart from your competition.

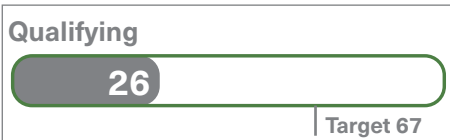
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Team players

Meyer Timber's close connection with its customers starts with a workplace that celebrates, passion, drive, care and mateship. **By Donyale Harrison**

Next year, Meyer Timber turns 50. It's a milestone no business reaches by accident, only by growing with its customers along the way.

"In the early days, business was about two things," says Kent Powell, national sales and marketing manager at Meyer Timber. "Good product and good relationships.

"Now it's about good product, good engineering, good logistics support, aiding our customers into new markets, delivering for them on new opportunities, guaranteeing quality when it comes to certification and assurances, plus so much more – *and* good relationships!"

Meyer's secret for success over half a century has been consistent.

"It's the people," says Powell. "Our people, from the warehouse floor up to management, and the customers who invite us into their businesses. Without having all of those relationships, you don't get Meyer Timber."

So how did they build those relationships?

PEOPLE ARE OUR BEST PRODUCT

"It starts before we even hire people," says Powell. "We have a 20-year relationship with our recruitment company and we take it very seriously. They have great profiles on who will fit best in our various roles, from the warehouse floor to management."

"Across all those profiles, there are two core qualities: 'teamwork' and 'striving'. Sometimes that striving comes from a

competitive sports background, sometimes it's a person who's really career-focused, sometimes it's a person who just wants to do their specific thing as well as it can be done.

"Anyone who can combine those two qualities, we want them at Meyer Timber – even if they've never worked in the building industry before. We can teach them timber if they have teamwork."

Looked at through this lens, Meyer Timber is much more than a wholesaler. "We're not just a sales business," says Powell. "We're a solutions business that happens to specialise in wood!

"Selling timber is at our core, but there are many layers to how we sell, including intellectual advice, product development, product knowledge and more. Those are the things that keep us at the front of our customers' minds when they're deciding where to buy."

Meyer's solutions start with careful listening, whether that's sales staff identifying service gaps around logistics through customer feedback or from a team member (who may even be the delivery driver), or the technical team talking directly to a builder on site and taking that intelligence back to the correct advice centre at Meyer.

"That happens pretty regularly," Powell says. "We identify customer desires that are deeply sought after, whether in person or through our customer portal. If they're design issues, we come back to our detailing team and we get a quick response. Sometimes it's a bigger issue, like identifying new challenges on a particular style of build where opportunities for a timber solution are possible over steel.

"Our meyBRACE portal frames are a good example: they've become very popular in the seven or eight years we've been doing them because our engineers can identify projects where they will work and can explain the benefits without the customer needing a high level of engineering understanding – plus that's one less supplier on the project if you replace steel with timber."

It's not a case of simply designing a new product and giving it a pretty web page: Meyer actively looks for projects on which their new solutions will deliver results.



Above: The Meyer Timber office and warehouse teams working in collaboration to fulfil projects in the prefab department.

PHOTOS: COURTESY MEYER TIMBER

Meyer Timber NSW warehouse and office teams pictured at the company's Penrith site.



Powell says, "When our team go out to talk with their customers, they'll say, 'Hey, are any of your builders doing this sort of build? Because we can supply this now...' And our timber merchants and F&T plants can quickly see the opportunities.

"Because we make sure we keep the same sales guys going out to see the same customers year after year, we learn a lot about those customers' businesses, which is great for both spotting where a new product we have can help them and for learning about gaps they have that can drive our next new solution.

"We don't optimise who our reps see in terms of regions they cover, we focus on building and keeping those relationships between customers and sales reps. I still fly up to see some of our very first founding Brisbane customers, for example, because he believed in us on Day One and it's important to keep the original connection. Is that the most economical use of our travel budget? No. Are we going to keep doing it anyway? Yep."

Where the Meyer team does optimise is in delivery.

"This takes two forms," says Powell. "The first is around the designs we work on: we'll look for areas where we can supply more timber and we'll look for ways we can supply

Meyer actively looks for projects on which their new solutions will deliver results.

that more efficiently. Say we've identified a project for our cassette floors. We'd speak to that customer and say 'We're delivering nine cassette floors on 22 October, if you can have nine bottom-storey frames ready by then, we can go straight from delivery to floor install', so they can do nine floors in one day and decrease the amount of time they need a crane on site.

"Our design team looks out for those sorts of efficiencies and, because we've been a reliable partner for those customers over years, they trust our advice in those situations."

Then there are the more mundane but every bit as vital logistical efficiencies.

"A lot of our material is going out to regional centres, we're talking about a 500km road bridge to some," Powell says. "We work to group delivery to these types of customers in a way that gains a reliable and

timely supply offer for them and makes sense for us commercially. Fortunately, those customers are supportive and are cleverly using our diverse range, so together, we tend to be able to put together an attractive delivery offer to the regions.

"It doesn't always result in a freight cost saving, but it does mean that those regional areas experience a higher delivery frequency, helping them deliver faster service for their customers."

This consistency of supply benefits metro as well as regional customers. "It can be that one or two sticks of timber are the most important thing someone needs," says Powell. "If we get an email at two o'clock in the afternoon saying 'We need two very important beams tomorrow!', chances are they'll get those beams, because we're already going out to them."

"Even in a softening new home market, the service model promise remains. We're still seeing demand for a lot of commodity DIY/renovation consumption items: merbau, treated pine and white-primed pine and panels for renovations and extensions are still in high demand. So our trucking remains intact and ready to roll, and our reps are fast responders! Our customers know that they'll see their same Meyer Timber truck and driver turn up with seamless regularity." >>



Above: Meyer Timber's 'Builder-go-to' Charlie Vella providing onsite support.

“We’ve long invested in engineered wood from an education point of view, creating opportunities as well as supplying product.”

ENGINEERED RESULTS

Meyer’s focus on engineered wood products and high level inhouse engineering services have been at the heart of its differentiation from most other timber wholesalers.

“We’ve long been pioneers in solution-selling engineered wood,” Powell says. “Australia is quite an educated market – I travel a lot and see what’s happening elsewhere and our customers would be some of the most savvy and educated EWP customers in the world.

“For over a decade, we’ve been investing in that resource from an education point of view, creating opportunities as well as supplying product, because we believe that 80% of the market is buying on more than price. Other major players in the industry have done the same, but that benefits all of us because it increases the number of builds in timber and people’s confidence in the material.”

In 2012, Meyer hired George Dolezal as principal engineer, followed by Afzal Laphir in the same role a few years later. “They both came from Pryda, with George also working at Carter Holt Harvey before he came to us,” says Powell. “We actually hired George to focus on mass timber, and six months into that appointment, we realised the market at our level at that time wasn’t ready for that. So we changed the strategy and put George’s time and effort directly into our truss and frame customers, and it was an overnight success.

“Before long, he’d been such a success in the New South Wales business, we required his equal in Afzal down in Victoria. Having

their expertise means we’ve been able to expand our offer to our customers: they can buy their EWP from Meyer, but they can also turn to us for engineered solutions and for engineered products to fit into those solutions.”

Alongside meyBRACE, Meyer cassette products, particularly floors, have been growing their market share. “We’ve been supplying these into Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland – both regional and metro,” says Powell. “When we did our first cassette line in NSW, it was built with a proof-of-concept mentality. We wanted to bring in fabricator customers and show them

what it looks like and how it’s done, and hoped they would take on the job in-house themselves because in our opinion this is the space that they rightly exist in.

“The idea was for us to build and teach and then create a network that the market could draw on. One cassette line can’t feed the market, but many can – plus the Meyer Timber warehouses are built for bulk storage, picking of timber and processing of components.”

That shift to Meyer designing cassettes rather than producing them has been slower than the team envisioned but is underway. Powell says, “Nationally, there’s a small but growing network of customers who have embraced partnering in cassettes; some in Queensland, a couple in NSW and one or two in Victoria. They’ve taken on the manufacturing themselves, but still use the design and componentry supply from Meyer Timber.”

The number of builders using these cassettes has also grown, with several of the manufacturers now supplying them to multiple customers.

“I think there’s room for growth and change in their model, too,” says Powell. “It could end up even involving install. We all need to be open to change in how the market is supplied or someone will disrupt from the outside. We need to continue to evolve.”

One unexpected change that Meyer has embraced is supplying cassette projects into Passivhaus builds.

“We expo-ed at a few Passivhaus conferences and now we’re doing three to six Passivhaus builds in NSW every year,” Powell says. “That’s a fully closed, insulated roof and floor cassette and they’re done to >>



PHOTOS: COURTESY MEYER TIMBER



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a very specific standard, but I think they are pointing the way.

“The market growth in closed thermal panels will only grow. We may not all want the extreme Passivhaus standards, but we do want to run our houses in an energy-efficient way, so these sorts of high-performance, roofs, floors and walls will continue to be a trend in some form.”

Over the eight years that Meyer has been focusing on cassettes, they’ve seen builders readily understand the benefits of their offsite construction. “There are fewer trades on site, less waste, cleaner sites and fewer phone calls to coordinate delivery,” says Powell. “We’ve been working with one builder in New South Wales who has a utopian plan to lock a house up with just three phone calls. These are the sorts of visionary builders who can deliver 100, 300, 500 houses towards the country’s 1.2 million goal for solving the housing crisis.

“For all of us it’s a win, because those houses will be storing carbon in their timber products, and for the merchants, frame and truss guys and builders, it means that rather than buying from four or five suppliers – on any one day you could have two or three deliveries coming in – you’re consolidating all of that and building faster and more efficiently.”

MAINTAINING FOCUS ON CUSTOMER NEEDS

Effecting this level of change in the marketplace is only possible for a company that has great relationships. “We spend a lot of time doing due diligence on our product,” Powell says. “A core Meyer Timber supplier would be visited two or three times a year by our buyers and our engineering team, and



Above: *meySPAN Structural LVL is a trusted material for builders.*

some more than that.

“On top of that we do third-party auditing and have in-house testing facilities in Sydney and Melbourne. Part of that is being able to hand over documentation that will satisfy any certifier and give assurances as to sustainability, but we also want to make certain that we’re meeting our legal and moral obligations when it comes to avoiding risks of illegal wood.

“The market has had sustainability at the top of its concerns for decades and, since Covid, people are now further understanding the importance of compliance – not least because certifiers on building sites started speaking out when they saw non-compliant material. Now, it’s clear to us that our

market’s also going to very quickly become educated around legal procurement of wood.”

New legislation regarding deforestation as well as the greenwashing of timber out of war zones and similar areas have made tracking the origins of raw material in timber products more important than ever. “Policing that is a full-time job that takes up a lot of resource,” says Powell. “But it’s better than the alternative.”

On a happier note, all that effort into product research is often rewarded with attractive additions to the Meyer offer.

“We’re now the national distributor for TimberTech wood composite decking, which is a medium- and high-end wood composite,” Powell says. “It’s a long-lasting product perfect for around pools and outdoor entertaining areas and has a very long guarantee. Even better, it’s mostly made using recycled material!

“Also on a decking note, we’re now selling pre-oiled merbau. This was a funny one because the whole timber supply market had been trying to get pre-oiled product out there on numerous occasions and it just hadn’t broadly stuck. But this time it looks as though the market has done a good job of educating builders around the advantages to buying pre-oiled decking in particular.

“So mills in Australia and Southeast Asia are investing in pre-oiling now and it will probably become the new standard. We’ve got customers now that prefer their merbau decking pre-oiled, whereas 12 months ago, they weren’t buying a stick of oiled merbau decking. The manufacturers have made the price add-on very palatable in our opinion and it will result in far fewer claims from uneducated end users who decide to not oil their deck for the first six months.”

It’s not the first time Meyer has taken a few goes at a product the team knows to be worthwhile, waiting until the marketplace catches on, and it probably won’t be the last.

“But when we know something will help our customers,” says Powell, “we’ll give it our best shot, even if we get knocked back once or twice. For us, Meyer Timber isn’t about the greatest possible number of sales, it’s about people, products and service. We focus on delivering an experience and a relationship.

“You can see that when it comes to our own marketing: 10% of that is traditional brand marketing and then 90% is figuring out what each and every different type of customer wants from Meyer Timber so our people can deliver the personalised results that are right for each of them.” **T**



Above: *The Meyer Timber NSW warehouse team at the Penrith site: the warehouses, sellers and designers work together to deliver the best solutions in optimal time.*

For more, visit www.meyertimber.com.au

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



Lasting strength

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

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

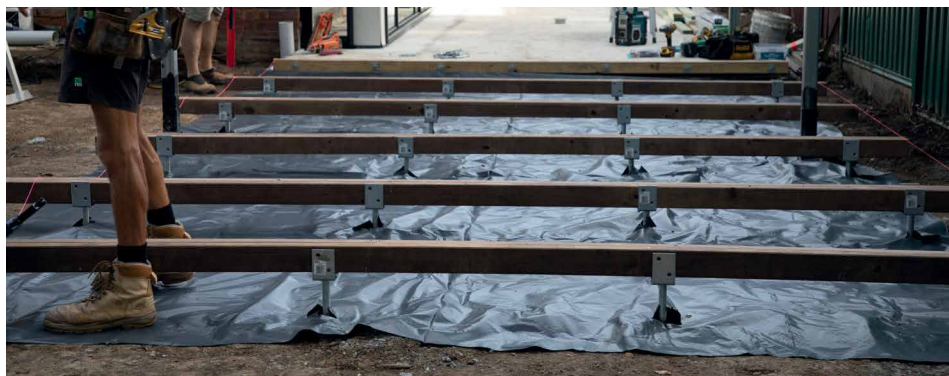
“I was installing a 25m² deck at my house and I planned to use a composite decking product,” King says. “That decking has a really long warranty period of 50 years. I wanted a timber subframe, but we’re on a concrete slab, so the deck was very low to ground. I realised that most of the products on the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

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

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

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

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



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

FROM PLAN TO PRODUCT

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

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

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

“We wanted to choose a preservative treatment that would give a similar service life to composite decking boards,” says King.

“The MCA option means that we can offer a 50-year guarantee in-ground contact, but also, because the treatment itself is water-borne, it has a range of other benefits.

“These include the fact it’s an environmentally friendly, low-impact treatment. Because there are no solvents, there aren’t VOCs, so the odour is much lower. Plus it’s very neutral in its colour, meaning there is no need to top coat.

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

The MCA treatment doesn’t carry risks for

animals or children playing on the timbers and is suitable for use with all galvanised and stainless-steel fasteners.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

“We wanted to choose a preservative treatment that would give a similar service life to composite boards.”

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

ALL SYSTEMS GO

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

“We’re based in Queensland, so we get some very wet weather,” King says. “We’ve tested TerraFrame over multiple summers with several popular clip and other fastening types and they’ve all worked extremely well. In every case, we looked at the deck as a whole system and made the best decisions for that specific location.”

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

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

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

Accordingly, steel stirrups have been used in locations such as the one photographed to lift the timber subframe from direct ground contact in cases where drainage can’t always be guaranteed. Aids to sub-floor ventilation, like plastic membrane covered in gravel to prevent vegetation growing beneath the deck, are also covered in the comprehensive installation guide, along with recommendations for coatings, fittings and deck design.

“We used VapourSeal joist tape to protect the top of the joist,” King says. “We like adhesive-backed tapes that form a strong bond with the joist because it’s another



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



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

layer of protection that doesn't trap moisture. All these things work together.

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

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

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

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

ABOVE AND BEYOND

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

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

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

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

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

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

TerraFrame has also been popular for its use in landscaping and outdoor access features. "Things like raised garden beds are an obvious application," says King, "but add to that stairs and ramps. Changes to accessibility requirements in the Livable Housing Design Standard will see more ramps in future and this sort of product makes them more affordable and achievable in retrofits as well as new builds."

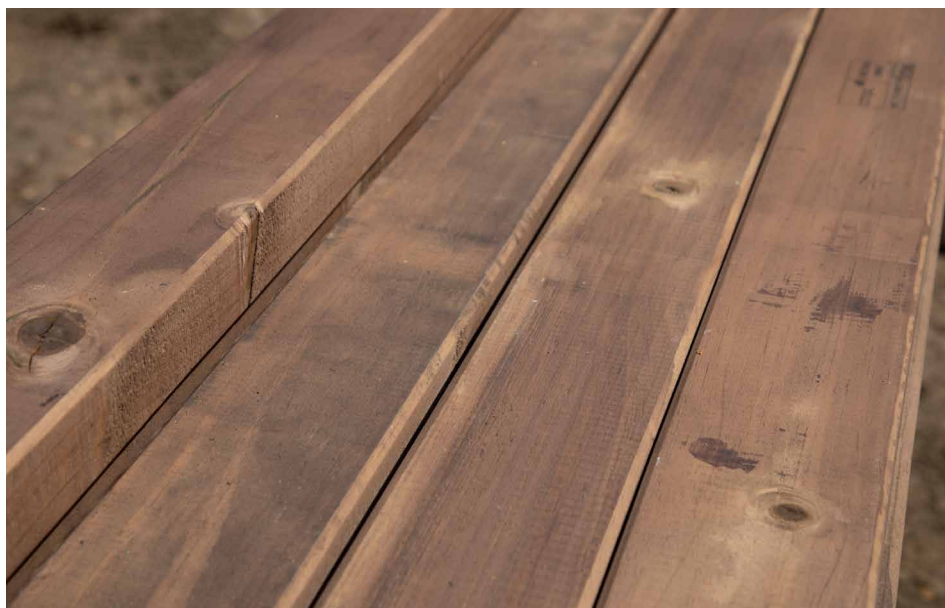
While the early marketing for TerraFrame was designed to target builders and decking specialists, there is already interest coming from the DIY sector as well. Accordingly, the installation guides and other educational materials for TerraFrame have been written in clear and accessible language and the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

"The reception from timber merchants for TerraFrame has been very strong, because they see the same big set of opportunities we do," King says.

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

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

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



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



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Woodwise: Mountain Ash

Mountain Ash – a mighty Australian hardwood tree.

The magnificent hardwood Mountain Ash (*Botanical name: E.delegatensis & E. regnans*) is a very tall species of forest tree known to grow in the Victorian highlands. It sometimes is known as Alpine Ash because of its growing area. It has a tall straight trunk with smooth grey bark with rough brown bark at the base. It produces between 9-15 cup shaped white flower buds with conical fruit and is listed as the tallest of all flowering trees and can grow to a massive height of up to 100m (328 feet)!



Classic Mountain Ashwood carved bed.

In researching this magnificent tree, I recall driving through the Victorian Alps and pulling over in the car so the family could get to look at the amazing forest of tree giants. They appeared to reach to the sky and were so high we were in awe. I recall my very young daughter pointing upwards with a very straight arm and stating 'they are taller than a telegraph pole'.

CHARACTERISTICS

Mountain Ash Known for having a straight grain but can also have visible gum and mineral-like veins, with streaks common in the heartwood which tends to be a medium yellow, pale pink to light brown colour. A richer walnut colour can be achieved, if desired, by steaming with ammonia. The texture is usually medium through to coarse. One important fact is unlike Tasmanian Oak, Mountain Ash is not susceptible to lyctid borer attack, is known to be very durable against decay and is easy to work with. It is listed as being suitable for turning, gluing,

Above: Mountain Ash Trees – tall, straight and reaching for their share of sunlight

planes and sands exceptionally well and it will also readily steam and bend.

Mountain Ash does not have a particular Odor, but has been reported to cause eye, skin and breathing irritations and appropriate protection should be taken.

PRIMARY USE

Mountain Ash is ideal for construction, such as F17 seasoned structural framing and is also suited and sort after for flooring, staircases, balusters, handrails, panelling, mouldings, cupboards and benchtops producing a beautiful finish along with high value furniture as well as painted/protected window joinery. **T**

Further information:

With thanks to Wood Solutions www.woodsolutions.com.au and The Wood database: www.wood-database.com

PHOTOS: (TOP) SORRELL THOMAS/SHUTTERSTOCK; (INSET) SHUTTERSTOCK AI GENERATOR/SHUTTERSTOCK



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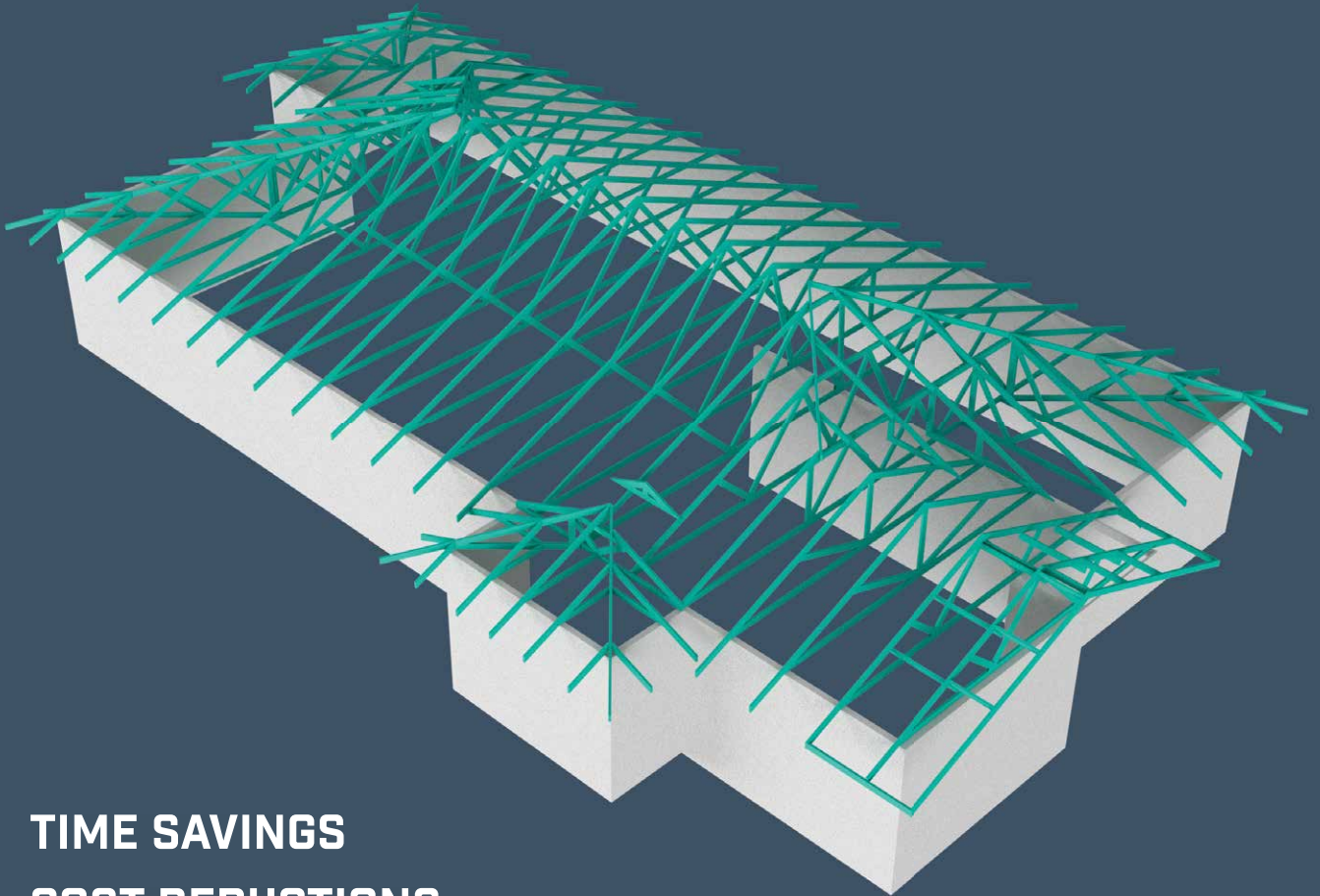
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The Western Red Cedar supplied to SDS Australia by Timbeck is always of the highest quality and enables us to create amazing spaces for our clients.

Timbeck a leading Australian timber importer and producer

Queensland-based family owned Timbeck continue to dominate as one of Australia's largest importers and manufacturers of high quality timber products. **By Nicky Ainley**

Manufacturing timber is in the blood of the team at Timbeck who have been in the industry for over 50 years. The Brisbane-based, family-owned-and-operated business was first established in 1967, and as they fast approach 6 decades the team represents the third generation continuing the family's proud tradition of providing high-quality timber products to the Australian Market.

General Manager Jacob Ferrow, and his brother Kyle who handles the Companies finances, have been involved within the business since their early teenage years, said it's the family focus, passion and pride in their products that continues to drive the company forward.

After originally starting out as an Oregon formworks supplier through the to 80's and

90', Timbeck then moved into western red cedar with a primary focus on making components for other businesses including window, door and shutter components. Then further expansion after 2010 saw the business broaden into other species, closer to home. Since taking on his current role in the business in 2015, Ferrow, has played a critical role in the business's transition from supplying primarily cedar products to now also offering a range of locally grown and sourced Australian hardwoods.

SPECIALTY CEDAR

Since the early 2000's cedar has been a key product for Timbeck. Their long history of imported Canadian and American species have made them a specialist in the

manufacturing and coating of Western Red Cedar and Hemlock.

"The cedar side of things was always a niche market and one that proved to be successful," Ferrow said.

"The cedar market became more of a focus specialist market for us, and we did a lot of panelling and screening. It's also the time when the sauna market opened up and this continues to be one of our core areas."

In the Late 90's and early 2000's, cedar was Timbeck's only market focus, it was originally for the window and door market, the shutter market and the joinery markets.

"As the price has increased people have naturally looked for more cost-effective timber, so the product range has shifted," Ferrow continued.



Above: Western Red Cedar, purchased green and put into sticker to dry naturally in the Australian climate.

The core areas for the still popular cedar are now internal screening, external screening, panelling and cladding.

Despite the shift in focus, Ferrow says cedar will always have a market in Australia, particularly in the major cities like Sydney and Melbourne.

"It remains a key focus for us however, it now forms around 40 percent of the total business whereas a few years ago it was 100 percent.

The shift in the business operation has been due to the introduction of the native hardwoods which have now taken up the bulk of what Timbeck run.

"It's purely a reflection of the change in the market."

**"Western Red Cedar
will always have a
market in Australia"**

A MOVE TO AUSTRALIAN HARDWOOD

The transition to the offering a range of locally grown and sourced Australian hardwoods came from market demand and has proven to be a successful one for Timbeck with customers sourcing more

Australian native products.

"There's high demand here, particularly in the fit-out market," Ferrow said. "There's always a nice story to tell about sustainably sourced, local species."

It's the usability, reliability and look of the Australian timbers which has resulted in its increased popularity with Timbeck focussing heavily on certification to assist the usability. Sourcing a lot of their Spotted Gum locally in Queensland and their Blackbutt from further south, demand has increased over the past years in part due to the products great look and features.

Another benefit of the Australian species is that the products meet BAL requirements for those areas which is also important. The natural BAL ratings of the timber make it a suitable choice for many projects in bushfire prone areas, taking out the pressures of BAL certification.

"We have a customer in Melbourne who has developed street furniture with our hardwoods," Ferrow said.

"One reason the customer loves the product is because of the BAL rating. It's BAL 29, looks so good, is durable and is BAL rated."

The expansion with Australian hardwood has also seen Timbeck further broaden their range with the product proving to be popular not only in cladding, panelling and architectural screening but also in the use of decking, exposed stairs, street furniture and more.

"The product looks great! The spotted gum with its range of colour textures and the blackbutt has that beachy look which is a popular trend in southern coastal states," Ferrow said.



Above: From left to right: Graeme Ferrow Managing Director, Jacob Ferrow General Manager and Kyle Ferrow Financial Controller, Timbeck.



Above: Timbeck manufacture a range of products in house which allows them to control the quality and lead time. This includes a full coating line which is used for both Cedar and Hemlock timbers.

SERVING THE MARKET AND THE CUSTOMER

With its continued adaption to the market and sustained position as a manufacturer for over 5 decades, Timbeck has a focus on the customer, meeting demand, staying consistent with and adapting to the market.

“The best way to get feedback is to know the market,” Ferrow said.

“What are people looking for? Both in the way products perform and the looks of products, and keeping up to speed with trend is also key. These are key elements for us.

“I think the durability of the product is also important, using the right species and the right product in the right area is essential.”

Ferrow says Timbeck remains strong in its customer position.

“We have always sat at the back as a wholesale manufacturer. We do take a step back from dealing with architects etc, even though we are adapting colour and trend in response to change, our primary focus is to support a merchant trade base and a wholesale sale distribution base.

“We know our position. We are good at manufacturing; we are good at making sure the right product is going out to the right jobs and that is and will continue to be our core focus.”

RANGE AND GROWTH

With the continual growth of Timbeck has also come a growth in product range however Ferrow says this is a natural expansion with the company still focussed on efficiencies and product supply.

“Efficiency is important. Having competitive lead times and things like that are essential so we ensure we run on a fortnightly basis on the core things we offer.”

“A big focus for us has always been not letting people down. The construction and building industry is a lead based industry.

People need product when they are expecting it and its imperative that we continue to meet that expectation. It’s a big focus for us ensuring we are not letting people down.”

Queensland-based, Timbeck have their Brisbane machining facility and Rosewood Coating facility and the good-sized primary facility ensures they can be constantly manufacturing in order to meet the needs and demands of Australia’s thriving construction, building, and renovation industries.

“We have the luxury to sit on a fair number of products here so we can turn things around quickly” Ferrow continued, “It’s part of our model and ensures we continue to meet those demand.”

One area that Timbeck has been invested in for an extensive time, which has seen a boost in years post COVID is the sauna market.

With their stunning cedar product, Timbeck has been providing product to sauna manufacturers like SDS Australia, providing everything from the stunning exterior and interior panelling to seat slats and more.

SDS AUSTRALIA & THE SAUNA MARKET

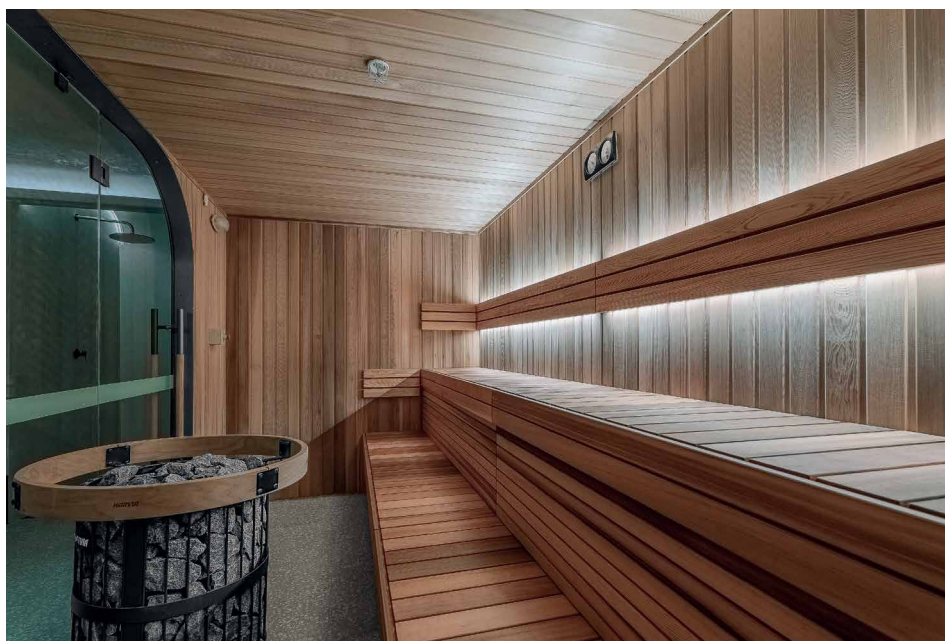
After only 18 months at the helm, Ben Ridgway and his team at SDS Australia have experienced exponential growth in the demand for their saunas which, in part, Ridgway puts down to the relationship, product quality and supply from Timbeck.

After 22 years of different ownership, SDS Australia has undergone a boom after Ridgway and the new owners took it over.

Specialising in custom indoor and outdoor saunas and prefabricated saunas, SDS Australia has become one of the market leaders in designing, supplying and installing saunas to a range of customers from luxury gyms to private homes.

After taking on the business, Ridgway saw ample opportunity for rapid growth, particularly following a surge of interest into health and wellness during and following COVID. And rapid growth it has certainly been with Ridgway and his team more than doubling their size in the first six months and expanding out from one to three sites in NSW and in recent weeks, taking on Victoria with their first site opening in Melbourne.

The team from Timbeck already had a working partnership with SDS Australia when Ridgway took over and his own pre-existing relationship with the Queensland >>



Above: Custom built bespoke Sauna for SOMA Health and Wellness in Sydney by SDS Australia. The brief was to fit as many people in a tight space and we achieved this with 2 x entry points. The myriad of colours in this high quality Western Red Cedar fitout match the ambience of the space

PHOTOS: (TOP)/COURTESY TIMBECK; (BELOW) COURTESY SDS AUSTRALIA



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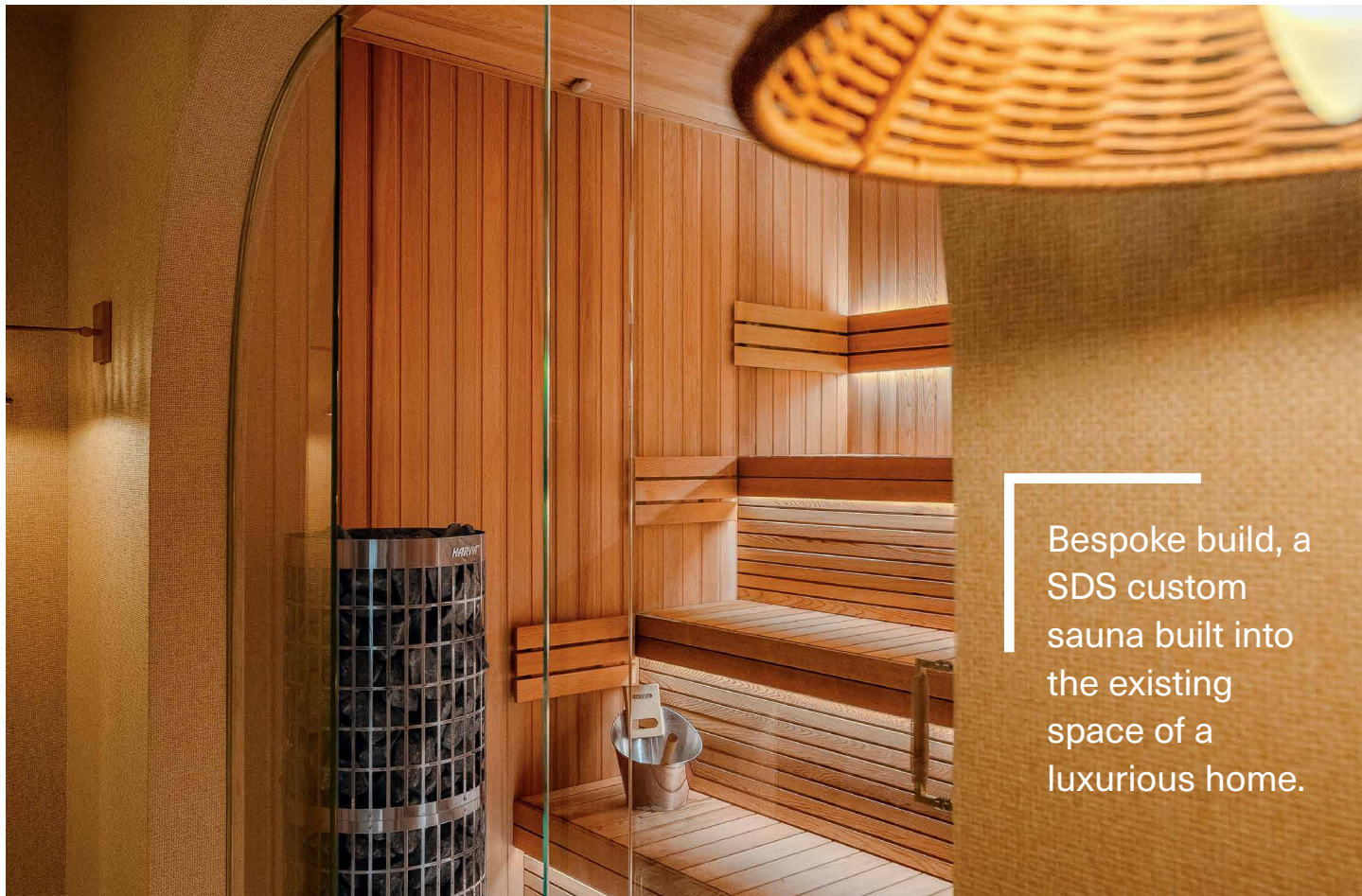
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Bespoke build, a SDS custom sauna built into the existing space of a luxurious home.

Above: In a home of this calibre the sauna layout and fitout had to match. The high quality finish and aromatics of this Western Red Cedar sauna truly match the brief from the client and the immediate surroundings of their wellness space.

based manufacturer has only led to an even stronger business relationship. It was this strong foundation that assisted SDS Australia in the direction it's taken, now owning a strong position in this niche but demanding market.

"We can't keep up [with demand]," Ridgway said.

"COVID accelerated the health trend, particularly at home and people continue to want to be prepared for the future, its accelerated peoples mind set.

"From renovations to new homes we are seeing so many custom saunas being installed and there's no signs of it slowing."

For Ridgway and the SDS team, ensuring they have the right people, product and service holds the key to their success.

"It's key we have it right. I don't want people to call and say there's a problem. We want confidence in our product. That what we create, and install is going to be great in 3, 6 and 10 years or more, and with Timbeck we have that," he said.

Ridgway believes that it's the strong working partnership that SDS Australia has with Timbeck which has contributed greatly to the company's ability to grow exponentially.

"Often a client will come to us with a brief and simply provide a space and say, 'we want this to be our sauna', with our craftsman, our

The warmth of Cedar enhances the Sauna experience and beauty.

tradesman and our Timbeck product we are able to create a luxurious sauna for the client," he said.

"If you don't have the right product, you can't get the job to look good."

Reliable, good-quality products that are manufactured to their specifications has ensured SDS Australia consistently delivers the top-end product their brand has become known for and the excellent customer from Timbeck and service experience has ensured SDS Australia is not only looked after on a regular basis, but the needs as a growing business are met.

"I would talk to the sales guys twice a week to place orders," Ridgway said.

"It's been vital in our growth to have Timbeck as a partner. The service, product knowledge and response to enquiries is simply outstanding. We never go wanting for more than a few hours.

"If I ring them up and say I've got a tricky one for a client, what can you do? I have a

solution within a couple of hours.

"Jacob often brings in suggestions, offering new advice and thoughts we wouldn't necessarily have thought of. They are actively thinking about what we do, ways to improve and how to innovate. With them coming to us with ideas and trends," Ridgway continued.

With further expansion for SDS Australia in the pipeline including into other states, Ridgway says the ongoing partnership with Timbeck is playing a vital role in their business success and its ability to grow.

FUTURE

It's this strong customer-relationship-based ethos that has built the foundations of a strong past for Timbeck and paves the way forward.

With their eyes set firmly on continuing in manufacturing to their strengths, Timbeck continues to be a leader in providing top-quality timber products to the Australian construction, building, and renovation markets.

"We are looking to expand our site in the future, when the time is right," Farrow said.

"However right now it's about continuing our working relationships to ensure they are successful and grow." **T**

For more information visit www.timbeck.com.au



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Adding value

Providing value to customers, looking for new opportunities, and building solid relationships.

By George Dolezal, Principal Engineer, Meyer Timber Pty Ltd

When the market is in a boom we don't have to try very hard to sell our products. People tend to come to us if their normal supplier cannot meet timelines. The orders arrive easily. But in a housing slowdown it is exactly the opposite. Builders want their jobs to be cheaper and have time to shop around. The reduced amount of work puts strain on your business as well. So how do you add value to the builder but also to your bottom line. It's a bit like the old saying "Do you want fries with that?"

There are many ways to achieve a higher sale price for the work you are getting, and I will focus on three aspects, these being to add, replace or change.

Adding products is the easiest way to get more value from your customers. The more products that you can sell to them the higher the sales, but you should be giving them materials that they need at the same time.

It's no point trying to sell roof battens when you deliver the ground floor frames, but it's a great idea when delivering roof trusses. Another thing to think about are materials that don't take up a lot of space. The truck is going to site anyway so why not fill it up or try to include as many products as possible. This might involve a bit of lateral thinking but here are some ideas for you to consider:

- **Flooring.** By including this in your supply you can manage what is supplied and also promote alternatives like meyFC lightweight fibre cement flooring. You can do this yourselves or let your EWP supplier look after it as a job lot package with the structural floor members.
- **Wall frame tie-downs.** Concrete screws and screw bolts take up very little space and are integral in the installation of wall frames. This can be integrated into a complete wall frame tie-down solution

(with certification) which includes frame screws as well.

- **Dampcourse for under sliding doors etc.** Again, a small item that is a pain for the builder to source. If delivered with wall frames it won't sit on site for long until the doors and windows arrive.
- **Temp beams and posts.** Some builders get the carpenters back to finish off once the brickwork goes up. Why not supply some temporary beams and posts to allow the whole frame to be done in one go?
- **Party walls.** A larger item which are often delivered direct to site by the supplier. By taking the headache away from the builder you get the margin for organising the party walls which are needed at frame stage.
- **Steel Beams.** Some fabricators have branched off into this space, or have built a relationship with a supplier. The benefit here is the integration of steel to timber is managed by a single person (you), meaning there are less issues on site.



Wall frame tie-downs are an easy value add.

Replacing products can help the builder whilst increasing your share of the total wallet for the construction materials. A perfect example of this is steel. Steel beams are necessary in a lot of instances to break up spans whilst still fitting into the floor depth, or to support first floor brickwork. But as we all know, structural engineers quite often revert to what they know – a steel beam. I don't think any fabricator out there hasn't had builders come to them and say "Can you see what steel you can take out of this job please?". I have recently been working on a home where we have replaced an engineered steel portal system across one complete elevation over two storeys with a number of timber meyBRACE portals. Doing this has saved the owner more than \$30,000 in the process and helps build a good relationship with the builder meaning they will keep on coming back. Another example of replacement are steel truss braces such as Netbrace or Powertruss. Being expensive and difficult to install, they can often be replaced by timber portals such as meyBRACE and this allows for a full timber solution, delivered by a single supplier, and added sales for the fabricator.

When talking about replacing, it does not ➤

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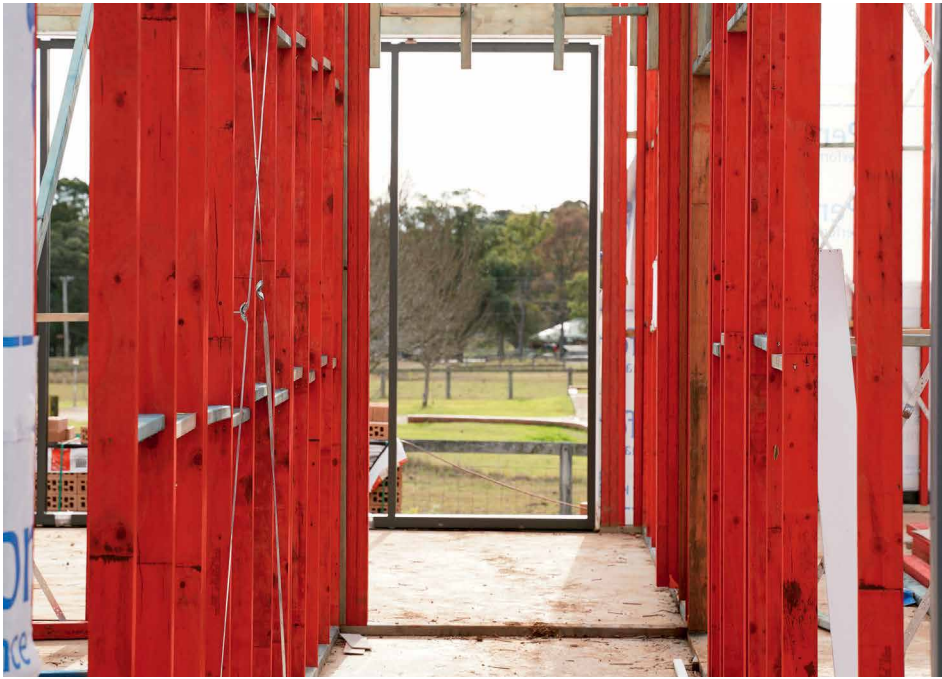


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Above: LVL wall framing adds value.

need to be other materials for timber. There are also timber to timber replacements which should be considered and can become an important upsell. LVL framing is fast gaining popularity as it is stronger and more dimensionally stable than solid timber. This comes at an upfront price, although it will be offset by time savings in frame straightening and reduced materials being used. In talking to the fabricators that have taken on well respected products such as meyWALL and meyFRAME, once a builder uses it they instantly see the benefits and want to continue. Of course, the fabricator benefits as the sale price has increased for selling the same wall frame made out of a different material.

PANELISATION ADDS VALUE

Another replacement idea is based around panelisation. Using floor, wall and/or roof cassettes speeds up the construction, especially on townhouse developments. The cost of assembly is transferred from the site crew to the offsite manufacturing crew, so by making the cassettes in the factory not only do you get a higher price – it will also keep your staff busy during lean periods. I do admit that it is a tough sales pitch, especially in a downturn. If you can identify the right builder and approach them at the right time, you might be surprised.

You never know the answer unless you ask the question.

BECOME MORE IMPORTANT TO YOUR CUSTOMERS

The last of the aspects we will look at in this article is change. Changing the way you interact with builders and what your offering is, can make a big difference. Design advice and assistance is a perfect example of this. When a quote comes through, rather than just following what has been asked for, get

your staff to really look at the plans and see what other options are available. Provide the quote but at the same time make them aware of what steel beams they can remove and what small changes can be made to save money. This shows interest in your customer and will make them want to come back. By embedding builders into your business they won't want to leave, and even though they may be paying a higher price they would not get the same level of service anywhere else. You may even be able to get them to send you new house types in the draft stages for structural review. Moving a wall or making a window a different size could have a reasonable impact on the price. By optimising the plan at the beginning (both architecturally and structurally) they will save money every time they build one.

Hopefully the above has provided something to consider on how to manage, or maybe even flourish, through the lean times. In reality, these things are what you should be doing always in business. Providing value to customers, looking for new opportunities, and building solid relationships are all keys to being a successful company and growing. We just tend to think about them more when times are tough. But by doing the work at this point it will more than pay off as the boom cycle comes. An increased share of wallet will only get better as the market grows. Some food for thought, and on that note, "Would you like to make that a meal deal in a large size?". **T**



Above: meyBRACE, party walls, floor and roof cassettes all in one job supplier by the fabricator.



For more information on this topic, contact George Dolezal via email at GeorgeD@meyertimber.com.au



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Rhiana Archie (Wood Solutions), Sarah Downey (FWPA), Kersten Gentle (FTMA) and Dean Ashton (Multinail).

Construct conference sparks vital dialogue on affordable housing

Addressing the housing shortfall at the timber construct 2024 conference. **By kersten gentle**

The recent Timber Construct Conference, held at Rydges Melbourne on August 12 and 13, was a resounding success, thanks in large part to the exceptional efforts of Andrew Dunn in curating an engaging and informative event. Gathering industry leaders and innovators, the conference served as a platform for discussing the pressing issue of housing shortages and how the timber industry can play a crucial role in addressing this challenge.

I was honoured to chair the 2nd session on Day 1, titled **Timber Takes on Housing Shortfall** which featured insightful presentations from key figures in the industry, including Jeroen Weimer, Deputy Secretary of Victoria's Housing Statement Implementation, who laid out the government's targets for housing in the region. He was followed by Peter Ward from Drouin West Timber and Truss, who highlighted the significance of timber frames and trusses, advocating for an elemental approach to MMC as a viable

solution to the housing crisis while maintaining affordability and efficiency.

The panel continued with Tim Newman of Timber Building Systems, Jeremy Church of NeXTimber by Timberlink, Tim McDonald

from XLam, and Nathan Benbow from Australian Sustainable Hardwoods, all of whom presented compelling arguments on the potential of mass timber and panelisation

Timber 2024
 Construct

Panel

Peter Ward
 Managing Director
 Drouin West
 Timber & Truss

Tim Newman
 General Manager
 Timber Building Systems

Jeremy Church
 General Manager of
 Sales and Technical
 NeXTimber

Tim McDonald
 Business Development
 Manager
 XLam Australia

Nathan Benbow
 Engineering Design
 Manager
 Australian Sustainable
 Hardwoods (ASH)

PHOTOS: TTN

Contributing, learning and networking

to contribute to Australia's housing needs. These discussions emphasised the necessity for innovative building methods and materials, especially in a landscape where the demand for social and affordable housing continues to outstrip supply.

In my introduction, I pointed out the critical areas where government can make impactful changes to enhance the housing sector. To achieve faster, more affordable housing, we urged governments to streamline their policies and reconsider taxes imposed on the industry. Central to this was the acknowledgement of the failures seen in various volumetric Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) globally, including the three significant failures already experienced in Australia. We advocated for an elemental approach, which can enable a more stable and effective response to the ongoing housing demands.

Statistics reveal the extent of timber's role in housing, with a remarkable 91.1% of houses framed in timber in Victoria, and approximately 85% of Australian houses constructed using offsite prefabricated frames and trusses. In my opinion, there are three essential considerations for the government moving forward: safeguarding Australian jobs tied to the construction industry, ensuring future housing contributes to emissions reduction by utilising timber, and supporting established businesses that have heavily invested in this sector.

Moreover, the panel discussion illuminated the persistent issues of red tape and bureaucratic delays, such as the wait for water approvals, which can set projects back significantly. We raised a pertinent question about the recurring theme of affordability and why the burden of price reductions is often placed on fabricators and suppliers, and called for government action to streamline processes and eliminate unnecessary taxes if they are truly committed to addressing the housing shortfall.

The Timber Construct Conference not only showcased remarkable advancements within the timber industry but also sparked vital conversations about how to tackle the housing crisis in Australia.



Above: Kersten Gentle (FTMA) and Chris Parker (TTN).

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FTMA Australia is pleased to announce the addition of Weinig Australia as a Supporting Partner. As a recognised leader in solid wood and panel processing technology, Weinig brings valuable expertise and innovative manufacturing solutions that can benefit our members. Their extensive range of equipment, from entry-level workshops to large-scale production lines, aligns with our commitment to enhancing the capabilities of the timber industry. We look forward to collaborating with Weinig to explore opportunities that enhance operational efficiencies and support our sector's growth.

In light of our ongoing partnerships, the FTMA Board has made the decision to cap the number of Strategic and Supporting Partners. This approach is aimed at ensuring that we can genuinely deliver benefits and resources back to our partners who are actively involved in supporting the industry. Currently, we have 3 Principal Sponsors reserved for our nail plate companies, alongside 9 Strategic Partners and now 18 Supporting Partners. This decision reflects our commitment to maintaining meaningful relationships with our partners, and we encourage potential suppliers to join our waiting list for future opportunities.

Kersten Gentle
FTMA CEO



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



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Deck design

It is essential to get the structure of a deck right. **By Paul Davis**

If there is a structure in a house that is going to kill someone, odds on it's a timber framed deck. I have attended one job where someone died and that is when a P-plater launched his car through the roof of the house. But I have also been to several failed timber framed decks including two, when people broke limbs. None of us want to go there with our own designs, so what are the reasons decks are vulnerable and how can we avoid such problems ourselves?

First up, what load should we be designing for? For houses, the Australian standard requires a design for 200 kg/m² for decks more than a meter above ground. That is a good reason for this seemingly high load. Two of the deck collapses I've investigated were 21st parties with a large number of 'big boofy' young adults partying-on. The combined weight of close, sweaty and dancing bodies can easily get to 200 kg/m². So, this is a real load while a typical house or maybe office floor rarely gets anywhere near it's mandatory design load. So, we have real loads – and real decks fail under real loads!

As well as live loads, there is the weight of the structure. Of course, some decks are lightweight with strip timber boards or another lightweight flooring. But a fair proportion of decks have a tiled floor and the weight of these can be significant. We have:

- The weight of floor tiles, or even worse pavers.
- Mortar bed to create falls to shed water. A decent sized deck can easily have a couple of tons of mortar upon it. At the low in the mortar bed might only be say 10 mm thick but at the upper end it could well be in excess of 50mm – so the mortar itself weighs about 100kg per square meter.
- The flooring which might be fibre cement or some other composite type board
- On the underside we have whatever lining might be present.

All up the design dead load on a deck with tiles can be well north of 150 kg/m² Once again this is a real load. It's there when the deck is built, it's there when the deck ages,

and it's still there when that aged deck is subject to the aforementioned 21st birthday party! So, if there is some problem with the design of the deck then there was a good chance it will be found out. In a bad way.

From a purely structural design perspective, the other weak link in a deck is connections. There are any number of different ways that a deck can be supported. Perhaps the lowest risk is where one element always bears on the other: with floor joists sitting on deck beams, deck beams sitting on posts, and post sitting on footings. But in many decks, there's going to have to be some sort of connection that transfers load to the face of a supporting member. If the connection fails, the deck fails! We are pretty good at getting timber joist loads into timber beams, but an area of risk is getting deck joists connected to the side of steel beams. This falls at the difficult intersections of designers' responsibility and trades' responsibilities. The as-constructed end result is often poorly designed and executed.

If you don't own the design of the steel beam, then you yourself should at least be clear about who is responsible for the design of the connection and make sure that everyone else is on the same page. If you do own design of the steel beam, then get that connection right!

A major impact on deck safety is long-term deterioration, primarily due to the effects of exposure to water. Decks made of durable timber that can dry in between rain events will generally last a long time. However, if construction out of a timber that is inappropriate for the situation, then rotting can occur and collapses happen.



An important factor to note is that H3 treated timber is durable for occasional wetting only. Also, many hardwood species are not durable. So, if the structure is getting wet on a regular basis or if there's a chance of water being trapped in the structure then H3 timber and some hardwoods are just not up to the task.

I'd strongly recommend that if you have a tile deck with a waterproof surface that you consider what would happen if the waterproofing fails. Water trapped inside such a deck can basically stew the timber. I've seen a deck that failed five years after it was built when water entered through the balustrade post fixings that penetrated the waterproofing membrane.

One noticeable interaction of structural behaviour and this durability problem is that deck joists deflect under all these loads. With the joist curvature the joist ends rotate slightly. This rotation can be enough to tear a waterproofing membrane and that can lead to the sorts of problems as described above. I've just had a customer who had a leak in their deck that they could not resolve. I suspect it was where two deep, simply supported deck joists met over a steel bearer in the middle of the deck. As the joist deflected their two ends rotated and the top edges of the joists moved away from each other and tore the waterproofing membrane. The problem may well have been made worse by thermal movements of the steel. So not only do you need to get the strength design right, but you need to get the deflection performance right.

So, the design of decks is really quite tricky and really needs a heightened level of attention to avoid problems and, potentially, failures. To steal the running joke from a very funny mock Kiwi deck oil advertisement, don't deck about with deck design!

Refer to the decking special booklet available on the Timber Trader News Website: www.timbertradernews.com/Magazine and download it. It's free! (Scan the QR code for easy access). **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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Advanced Truss Systems (ATS), a family-owned business in Morningside, Brisbane, has been a leader in timber trusses, wall frames, floor systems, and timber products across SE Queensland since 1988. ATS invested in Multinail's Automated Roller Plant System to overcome the challenges of skilled labour shortages, optimise factory space, and ensure unparalleled product quality.

Since the system's implementation in June 2023, ATS has seen a dramatic improvement in production efficiency, safety, and quality. The system has enabled faster setup times, enhanced product quality, and reduced manual handling, leading to a safer work environment and a more energised workforce.

The financial return on investment has been swift, with ATS on track to recoup the cost in just three and a half years. The system's ability to handle larger, more complex commercial jobs has given ATS a competitive edge, positioning them as a leader in the prefabrication industry.

"The support from Multinail was excellent as always. We've been dealing with these guys for over 30 years."

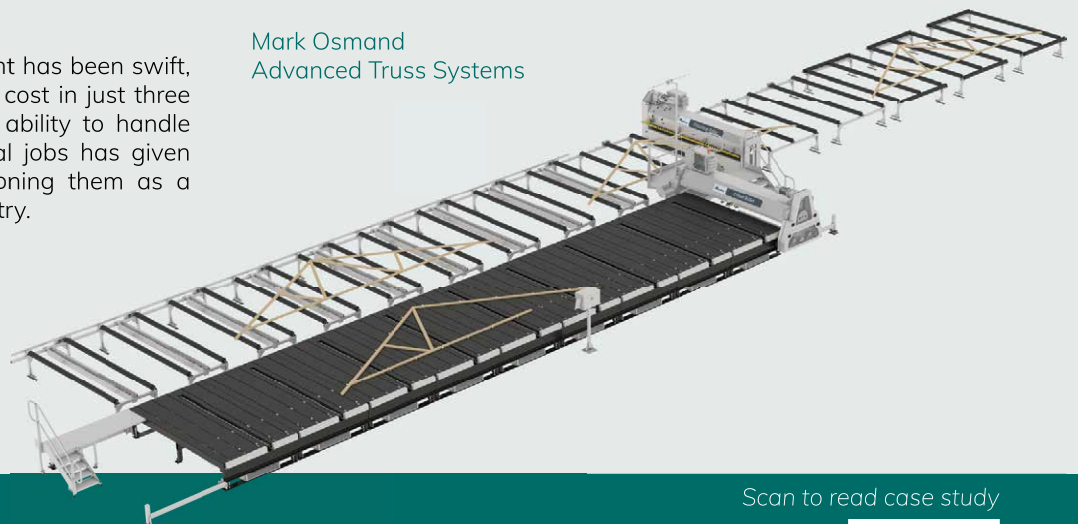
"The setup time has been slashed from 20 minutes to as little as 10 to 20 seconds. Our workflow has never been smoother."

"Even on the first day, I noticed how well the trusses went together. The joints are tighter, the finish is better, and customers have provided positive feedback on the enhanced quality."

"Our guys are much fresher at the end of the day, and workplace safety has improved significantly."

"We used to dread doing commercial jobs...but this machinery just eats it up. We look forward to commercial jobs now!"

Mark Osmand
Advanced Truss Systems



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