



Message from the Chief Executive

Welcome to the September 2026 WPMA Newsletter. This month we overview WPMA's participation at MumbaiWood, provide details on the new RMA planning bill, highlight some interesting industry developments, spotlight the WIDE Trust, plus reinforce WPMA priorities heading into the Election.

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Indian Market for NZ Value-Added Wood Products – It's Open



Images from MumbaiWood

As a first time visitor to India with the NZTE led MumbaiWood industry and government delegation, it was encouraging to see the level of interest in New Zealand pine. Throughout the three day trade show, the New Zealand stand attracted a constant flow of genuine enquiries from Indian traders, importers, designers, and architects keen to learn more about New Zealand timber products. While many visitors were primarily interested in industrial-grade pine and logs for applications such as packaging, pallets, and cable drums, it was particularly encouraging to see strong interest from a select group focused on higher-value products. This interest was driven largely by architects, younger professionals, and specialist importers seeking New Zealand pine for interior applications, premium residential projects, second homes, and bespoke construction projects.

Despite the opportunities, several challenges were identified. The main ones being the price sensitive market conditions, strong international competition, regulatory and

operational complexity, plus credit risk management which make it a difficult market to currently generate a worthwhile profit margin. However, it is hoped that the removal of the 5 to 11 percent tariffs on NZ timber, lumber and their derivatives (pulp, paperboard) as part of the India-NZ FTA will lead to more competitive and profitable margins.

Although it is still early days, the opportunities emerging from MumbaiWood appear promising. Challenges aside, there is clear potential for New Zealand exporters to develop meaningful commercial relationships in this growing market. You can read more about my observations and the opportunities within the Indian market here [MumbaiWood-2026-India-market-overview-29-Sept-2026-WPMA.pdf](#)

How the India-NZ FTA opens the door for NZ Pine

Staying on the Indian market, New Zealand had the lead article in the latest edition of India's Wood News. You can read it on pages 16-19 [WoodNews Jul - Aug 2026](#)

New Zealand's New Planning System – 1 year consents for sector

The Government's Planning Bill and Natural Environment Bill have now passed their Third Reading in Parliament, marking an important milestone in establishing New Zealand's new planning system. The new system will be introduced in stages over several years. Some changes will begin from 2026, with implementation occurring progressively and the full system expected to be operational by 2030. What is of interest to the wood processing sector in Section 118 is the new requirement that the time period within which a consent authority must process and decide an application for a planning consent for a specified energy activity or wood-processing activity (the time period) is 1 year after the date that the application is lodged. You can read more detail on the new planning system is this presentation [NZ's new planning system overview ppt](#)

WPMA Priorities Heading into Election 2026

With the Election only 42 days away, WPMA reminds the political parties of our priorities as outlined here [WPMA Election Manifesto 2026](#)

The key ones being:

- Including NZ wood (like wool) as an option in government procurement decision-making.
- Establishing a system to check imported timber products to ensure that they meet New Zealand performance and legality requirements.
- Providing pathways to enable migrant workers employed within the industry to stay in New Zealand.
- Provide on-going support to projects that aim to increase the value of on shore wood processing and manufacturing.
- Ensuring the long-term supply of affordable energy and fuel.
- Development of long-term vocational training and apprenticeships in wood processing.



WIDE Trust Continues to Invest in the Future of New Zealand's Wood Industry

The Wood Industry Development and Education Trust (WIDE Trust) is encouraging businesses, employees, and students across New Zealand's forestry and wood processing sectors to take advantage of funding opportunities that support innovation, skills development, and industry advancement. Funding is available to assist apprenticeship programmes, in-house training initiatives, assessor training, attendance at industry events, international study tours, and timber design and wood processing awards. The Trust also supports students undertaking industry-related studies and projects that build future capability for the sector. Businesses and individuals with ideas, projects, or development opportunities that can benefit the wider industry are encouraged to explore the funding options available through the WIDE Trust. For more information or to apply, visit www.widetrust.org.nz

Do you need funds to progress an initiative, project or programme in your business?

Do your employees need funds to progress wood processing studies, projects or qualifications?



Apply to the WIDE Trust for support ...

**\$8.8 MILLION
AWARDED IN
GRANTS TO DATE!**

Apply online
www.widetrust.org.nz

The Wood Industry Development and Education Trust (WIDE Trust) is a charitable trust established in 2018. The Trust supports businesses undertaking research, development and other initiatives to advance the wood or forestry industry sectors in New Zealand and students undertaking career-related studies or projects in these industry sectors.

Initiatives supported by the Trust include:

- apprenticeship programmes
- in-house training programmes
- international study tour to seek out industry innovations and best practice
- attendance at industry events
- assessor training
- timber design and wood processing awards

 **WOOD INDUSTRY
DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION
TRUST**

Mid-Rise Wood Construction resources now available through Timber Unlimited

The Mid-Rise Wood Construction (MRWC) programme has concluded, but its practical resources are now available through Timber Unlimited. Over nearly eight years, MRWC brought together industry partners to share experience, support real projects and develop tools that help make timber a more informed choice for commercial, industrial, public and multi-storey buildings. Timber Unlimited is proud to help keep this valuable

knowledge accessible and useful to the industry. [Mid-Rise Wood Construction | Resource Hub](#)

Manufacturing remains firmly in expansion

New Zealand's manufacturing sector continued to expand in August, with the BNZ–BusinessNZ Performance of Manufacturing Index (PMI) recording 53.1. While down from 54.3 in July, the result remained above the long-term average of 52.5. New Orders and Finished Stocks remained solidly in expansion, pointing to underlying demand, while Employment eased to the 50-point breakeven mark. Manufacturers continue to highlight cost-of-living pressures and the Middle East conflict, although many reported steady or improving order books - see [PMI - BusinessNZ](#)

The latest (big) Exhibition at NZ Timber Museum is now open

The "Enhancing Nature Exhibition" is housed in a renovated house on site. Its six galleries hold exhibits displaying NZ Native Forests, NZ Plantation Forests, The (huge) NZ Log Export Industry, NZ Wood Processing, The Benefits of NZ Forests and Wood Processing to the NZ Economy, Community and Environment; and a display of more than 50 samples of wood products made in NZ. A feature of the exhibition Galleries are wall panels of several species of Native Timbers, Radiata pine, Macrocarpa, Redwood, and the Thermally Modified Timber brand "Abodo". This educational and entertaining Exhibition is the most comprehensive of its type in New Zealand and is a "core" of what the NZ Timber Museum represents.



UK Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) on the way

The CBAM represents a significant development in the UK's climate and trade policy framework as a means of addressing carbon leakage by ensuring imported goods face a carbon price comparable to that paid by UK producers under the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (UK ETS). It is scheduled to come into effect on 1 January 2027, introducing a carbon-based charge on specified imports in the aluminium, cement, fertiliser, hydrogen, and iron and steel sectors. The UK says The UK has now finalised the design of the scheme, including a £50,000 import threshold below which businesses will not be required to comply. Agricultural and food products remain outside the scope of the initial phase of the CBAM. The products currently covered by the CBAM account for a small proportion of New Zealand's exports to the UK and do not currently include key export sectors such as dairy, meat, wine, horticulture or seafood.

New tool to help understand SMC wage thresholds

Immigration NZ has launched a new Wage Threshold Tool to help you and your migrant workers understand the updated wage threshold rules introduced as part of the Skilled Migrant Category (SMC) changes on 24 August 2026. The tool helps SMC applicants identify which wage threshold applies to them and whether their employment and skilled work experience meets the required rate. The tool does not assess whether they meet all SMC requirements, including if they have enough skilled work experience. For employers, this can make it easier to support migrant workers, understand SMC pathways, and plan your workforce with greater certainty. [Wage Threshold Tool - SMC](#)

Stay connected with WPMA on LinkedIn

If you are a LinkedIn member, we encourage you to follow our new LinkedIn Business Page. We will be sharing regular updates, including member achievements, industry news, upcoming events, and other information of interest to our community. You can access our page and follow us here [LinkedIn WPMA Business Site](#)

WPMA Membership

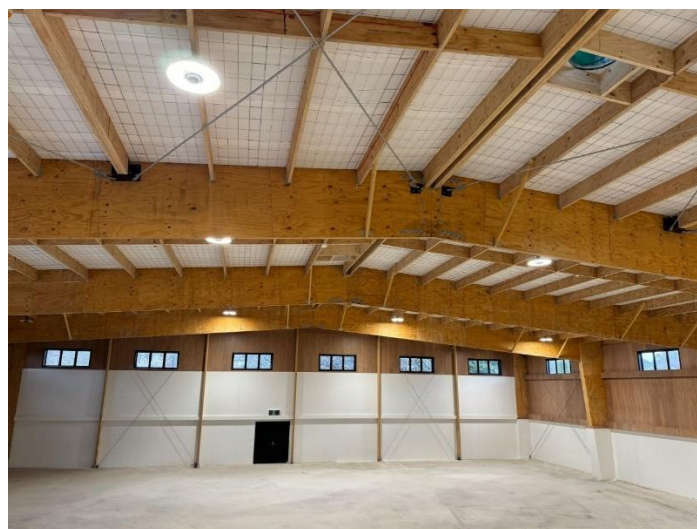
If you are interested to know more on WPMA membership, please contact mark@wpma.org.nz

UPCOMING EVENTS

WoodWorks Conference, Hastings, 28-29 October 2026

WoodWorks will continue to showcase the practical experiences of a range of building professionals and focus on completed New Zealand and Australian projects. Each year, we also showcase inspirational wood experts from leading tall timber exemplar building projects overseas.

For more information click here [WoodWorks 2026 Conference](#)



INDUSTRY NEWS

New Zealand Forest Owners' Association Political Panel

You can view the recording of the NZFOA Election 2026 political panel here [NZFOA Election Year Forestry Panel - 21 Sept 2026 - Recording](#)

Simon Dorries leaves Responsible Wood for Australian Timber Importers Federation

Bartlett called him "*much more than simply the CEO of Responsible Wood*" a leader who believes "*in certification, in the principles behind PEFC, and in the role responsible forest management can play in supporting our forests, our industry and the communities that depend upon them,*" and the board will thank him formally before he goes. [Responsible Wood CEO Simon Dorries Quits After 11 Years | Wood Central](#)

More Government hand outs for Canadian wood industry

BC announced a CA\$90 million package aimed at helping businesses affected by tariffs expand production, reach new markets, and protect and create jobs.

[BC Announces CA\\$90 Million to Support Tariff-Affected Businesses - Forest Economic Advisors, LLC](#)

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