



Newsletter

August



Message from Mark

Making headways into the current domestic and export markets challenging. Many in the wood processing industry have passed on feedback that markets are the toughest they have seen, with only a few glimmers of light coming across the horizon. In times like this it is important that we support each other and look at ways of being clever as to increasing productivity and re-generating the industry. Recent announcements of new joint industry initiatives, supportive regulatory amendments, and future opportunities for export growth provide some hope. However, roadblocks, such as the potential loss of hard-working migrant workers, tariff uncertainty, and a loss of major government backed infrastructure projects mean it will take some time before we see productivity increases and, what we all want, industry wide wood processing and manufacturing growth.



Mark

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National Conference – 8 October - register Now!

Our biennial National Conference will be held at Te Papa, Wellington on the 8 October. With an enlightening line up of insightful speakers, we encourage you to register now. More details and how to Register can be found here [WPMA 2025 conference](#) I hope to see you there.



Investigation outcome for wood products exported to the U.S. remains unknown

Tariffs on wood products exported to the United States remain at zero percent as the section 232 Investigation aimed at determining the global effects imports of timber, lumber and their derivative products (e.g. paperboard, pulp) pose to the U.S. supply chain continues. Although the zero percent tariff rate is a welcome relief for wood product exporters, the uncertainty of what may eventuate from the section 232 Investigation is causing nervousness across New Zealand wood processors and manufacturers who export over NZD\$370 million of value-added wood product to the United States. Developments over last weekend included President Trump announcing on a Truth Social post that a major new tariff investigation on wooden furniture coming into the United States as part of the section 232 Investigation will be completed within 50 days at a tariff rate to be determined. These announcements create further uncertainty, with a survey of New Zealand's main U.S. exporters of wood products to the U.S. highlighting that a tariff rate over 5 percent or over will have a significant hit on their profitability in the longer-term.

The U.S. is a growing market for our value-added wood products and with a drop off in NZ domestic demand, profitable export markets are critical to growing our industry. The key is

to present a united face across industry and government to the U.S. decision makers as to the value of our wood products to the U.S. and that our products are not a threat to their domestic timber manufacturing or supply chain. While the section 232 Investigation continues WPMA will do what we can to advocate to keep New Zealand imported timber, lumber and their derivatives into the United States tariff free. But, at the end of the day the U.S. President will be the final tariff rate decision maker, and we know from experience we need to be ready to expect the unexpected.



Migrant worker Visa terminations within the wood processing industry will hit NZ economic productivity – especially in the regions

At a time when the sector is under extreme financial stress any disruption to the labour force in our industry is an unwelcome challenge. With this mind WPMA has written to key Ministers, including Minister for Immigration, Erica Stanford, requesting that the Government considers an extension of two years for an estimated 150 migrant workers employed within the wood processing and manufacturing sector whose work Visas are due to terminate over the coming 2 to 24 months. These migrant workers are critical to the continued operation of the mills where they are employed. Without them, economic productivity in regional New Zealand will be impacted, with some mills forced to reduce production. The migrant staff are highly trained into roles such as Kiln Operators, Finger Jointers and Timber Machinists - we are dealing with real people, real families who have successfully integrated into our businesses and communities. We highlighted in our letter that mills are still hiring NZ workers, but due to the regional locations there are not enough skilled, willing, or available New Zealanders to fill critical roles. We indicated to Ministers that we are wanting to retain current workers and not bring in additional staff from overseas. We now eagerly await a response.

UAE-NZ trade deal - Opportunities opened for NZ wood product exporters

Tariff elimination across all New Zealand wood products entering the UAE through official signing today of the New Zealand-United Arab Emirates Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) is welcomed by the Wood Processors and Manufacturers Association. Our hope is that the successful conclusion of the NZ/UAE Closer Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) will lead to an increase in NZ wood products entering the UAE. The UAE is in a transition period where they are favouring timber-based construction

over concrete and steel, signalling a regional shift towards sustainability. Despite a limited number of timber buildings erected to date, UAE has experienced a threefold increase in imports of plywood and other timber products in the past year. From a New Zealand basis we currently export around \$9.4 million in wood products to the UAE, with the main categories being sawn timber, sleepers, pulp and paper. Other wood products exported include wood for flooring, furniture and joinery.



Wood processing consenting set at one year maximum – WIN for industry

Resource Management legislation that will reduce the time within which a consent authority must process and decide an application for a resource consent for a specified wood processing activity to 1 year after the date the application is lodged as outlined within the new Resource Consenting (RMA) Act was passed in Parliament earlier this month. The new Act amends the RMA to open up a consenting pathway for all wood processing and related activities, which is intended to reduce costs and time frames, plus encourage much-needed investment opportunities for the industry. The full replacement for the RMA will be introduced to Parliament this year, be passed into law next year, and be in effect by 2027, but in the meantime, through this Amendment Bill, we should see a quicker and simpler process to consent wood processing activities, thus assisting in future growth within our industry.

Energy Savings Finance initiative – invitation to business

EECA is coordinating a new Energy Savings Contingent Finance initiative, designed to help businesses install energy-efficient upgrades or purchase new equipment without the upfront cost. These types of finance products generally work by covering the upfront cost of upgrades, with repayments made from the energy savings generated over time. EECA is now inviting businesses to complete their Request for Information response form. There is no cost, obligation, or future commitment by indicating your interest. To find out more and complete the response form, visit EECA [here](#) The RFI closes 19 October 2025.

Value of low emission building's overall theme of the Green Property Summit

Low-emission buildings are strategic assets that deliver value across environmental, economic, and social dimensions, was one of the key messages delivered at the recently held Green Property Summit. Direct benefits of 'Green Buildings' include enhanced energy efficiency and associated cost savings, higher resale values, and alignment with our climate change goals. Though steel and concrete have their role to play, the benefits of wood products and mass timber in construction are proven winners when it comes to sustainable choice, reduced construction time, lower carbon footprint and most importantly supporting New Zealand's wood manufacturing and forestry industry, which employs over 28,000 people throughout regional New Zealand. A new energy report released at the summit reveals a major opportunity to tackle New Zealand's energy crisis while delivering significant benefits for households, businesses, and the wider economy. More details on the report, which is supported by WPMA, can be found [here](#)



Tim Kleir, Concrete NZ; Mark Ross, Wood Processing & Manufacturing Association; and Jeremy Sole, Sustainable Steel Council, spent time debating the merits of building materials at the Summit

EUDR implementation date fast approaching – we are ready

With the European Union Deforestation Regulations (EUDR) due for implementation on the 30 December 2025, WPMA is close to completion of our EUDR Toolkit that will assist in guiding exporters and foresters in what they need to do to comply with the Regulations. The Toolkit will be available at no cost for members as an added benefit to belonging to the WPMA. A recent guidance document released by the EU introduces some procedural flexibilities and defines 'Negligible Risk', it also reinforces stringent due diligence requirements. Under the regulation, wood product exporters to the EU will be required to implement robust traceability processes to demonstrate that their products do not contribute to deforestation. Within the document negligible risk may sound good, but in reality, from a regulatory view point the EUDR requirements still apply. If you would like more details on the EUDR contact mark@wpma.org.nz

Replacing Petroleum Based Plastics in Food Packaging – new initiative announced

In a move set to disrupt the global packaging industry, New Zealand's NZ Bio Forestry and Taiwan based PanCycle and Inspira Applied Bio Solutions have signed a strategic Agreement to develop a network of biorefineries producing sustainable, biodegradable biochemicals from New Zealand Pinus radiata. These next-generation materials will replace petroleum-based plastics in food and beverage packaging, targeting global markets hungry for sustainable alternatives. The partnership's initial focus is on producing biodegradable and recyclable biochemicals for beverage cups, food packaging, and utensils. It will start with the Australasian market, where demand for beverage cups alone exceeds 4 billion units annually. The first New Zealand-based biorefinery will produce 25,000 tonnes of a key biochemical, with plans for up to five biorefineries capable of delivering more than 100,000 tonnes per year. New Zealand offers an abundant, renewable and sustainably managed forestry feedstock for producing high-value biochemicals such as PLA, PHA, and lignin-based materials. As Bio Forestry CEO, Wayne Mulligan, comments - 'It is important the sector works as a whole as some of our international clients are super excited about New Zealand being a leader in this shift', which WPMA heartily supports. For more information contact: Wayne Mulligan, CEO NZ Bio Forestry Email: wayne@nzbioforestry.co.nz Mob: +64 274725838

Malaysia approves first import of timber treated with EDN®

INTRESO Group, in collaboration with a local fumigation partner, has successfully completed the first commercial application of Ethanedinitrile (EDN®) for timber exports from New Zealand to Malaysia. This marks a significant advancement in the global transition toward environmentally sustainable phytosanitary treatment solutions. The milestone follows Malaysia's recent approval of EDN® as an authorised fumigant for imported wood, opening the door to sustainable end-to-end treatment between nations that have registered the solution, including New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, Turkey, and Uruguay. The successful export shipment demonstrates that EDN® is not only a scientifically validated and approved alternative to traditional fumigants like methyl bromide, but that it is now operationally deployed in commercial supply chains. The application was made possible through close coordination between INTRESO Group, the New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI), the Malaysian National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO), and key stakeholders in the log export sector.

Upcoming Events

WPMA National Conference – 8 October, Wellington **Registrations Open**

The WPMA Conference will bring together a dynamic range of business leaders and influential stakeholders from across a wide variety of sectors. Speakers will cover topics ranging from government policy, to innovation, NZ mass timber building developments, science, forestry supply chains, economic activity and exports. The final Programme will be released shortly. ***Further details and how to Register can be found [here](#)***

Forest Bioeconomy Innovations Conference 20 – 21 October 2025

The 2025 Forest Bioeconomy Innovations Conference will be held in Rotorua from the 20-21 October. More details can be found [here](#):

In the News

Resource consenting changes valued by NZ wood processors

"The new Act amends the RMA to open up a consenting pathway for all wood processing and related activities, which is intended to reduce costs and time frames, plus open up much-needed investment opportunities for the industry. In adopting this change, the Government has listened to WPMA and our members."

[Timberbiz NZ wood processors value Resource Management consenting changes - Timberbiz](#)

Tariff uncertainty continues

"Exporters are already feeling pressure from U.S. customers to reduce prices, and Ross warned that passing on any new tariff costs would be difficult. While the Section 232 Investigation continues, WPMA will do what we can to advocate to keep New Zealand imported timber, lumber and their derivatives into the United States tariff-free,"

<https://woodcentral.com.au/trumps-tariffs-cast-dark-shadow-over-nzs-370m-timber-exports/>

Collaboration unlocks value for the wood processing industry

"This partnership is a great example of how collaboration can unlock value for the entire industry," he said. "We get to focus on what we do best – manufacturing high-quality PLT panels whilst Techlam takes care of the customer relationships, design and project management."

[Timberbiz Techlam confirms acquisition of Woodspan - Timberbiz](#)

Sawmill closure will impact Nelson economy and community

"If the closure went ahead, King said it would have a huge effect on the neighbouring towns of Brightwater, Wakefield and Richmond, with employees looking for work and wages no longer supporting other businesses. He understood that around 250,000 tonnes of timber were processed at the site each year, with most trucked directly from adjacent forestry, which would now have to be sent elsewhere. The associated business and industries that support this site, the forestry industry as a whole, this has been a key market for logs from the large forestry estate that surrounds the Tasman region."

<https://www.1news.co.nz/2025/08/21/plan-to-close-tasman-sawmill-affecting-142-jobs-mayor-says/>

Kinleith mill economic lifeblood of Tokoroa

"He says they have consistently emphasised high energy costs and market uncertainties as significant factors influencing their decision, but these are not the only variables. The company has energy hedges, but we have seen both the spot market price and the price of hedges rise dramatically in recent years due to serious problems with New Zealand's energy supply."

<https://thespinoff.co.nz/politics/25-08-2025/grist-for-the-mill-the-slow-death-of-new-zealands-industry-towns>

Air New Zealand's record-breaking hanger is ready to take full flight

Air New Zealand's Hangar 4 has reached a major milestone following the installation of its 27-metre-high and 80-metre-wide hangar door. Engineered by Finnish manufacturer Champion DoorOy and installed by PENSA DOORS NZ, the door marks a final step as the carrier prepares to move into the world's largest single-span timber hangar. Designed by Studio Pacific Architecture, the hangar incorporates more than 1,200 cubic metres of laminated veneer lumber (LVL) and cross-laminated timber (CLT), all supplied by Xlam.

<https://woodcentral.com.au/air-nzs-record-breaking-timber-hangar-is-ready-to-take-full-flight/>

WIDE Trust

Apply for funding towards your wood processing apprenticeship programmes



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...

\$6 MILLION AWARDED IN GRANTS TO DATE!

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

Apply online
www.widetrust.org.nz



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