



Message from Mark

Connecting our wider industry is a core purpose of WPMA and with our National Conference on the 8 October fast approaching we hope that you can make it along. The Conference will bring together a dynamic range of industry experts, 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, trade, forestry supply chains, economic activity and education. The Conference will be followed by a Gala Dinner. The final Programme will be released shortly.

Further details and how to register can be found here [WPMA 2025 conference](#)



Mark

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Regulatory relief for wood processing and manufacturing

The announcement made this morning (30 July) on reviewing Workplace Exposure Standards for soft and hard wood dust, along with machine guarding rules is positive news for wood processors and manufacturers. WPMA has for many years advocated that the wood dust standard is impractical and not based on realistic risk assessments. We want a system that is both protective and practical, and these changes aim to provide that outcome. We thank Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety, Hon Brooke Van Velden, for

listening to WPMA as to our concerns. We look forward to working with officials and the Minister in getting the settings right, so that our members can continue to operate their businesses without unrealistic red tape. The full release can be found [here](#)

Overseas Building Products and Standards published

The first version of the Building Products Specifications (BPS) was published this week. This document lists international standards for products like plasterboard, cladding, windows, and external doors. The BPS includes timber and new overseas standards for timber treatment, and it is expected Acceptable Solutions and Verification Methods which incorporate timber and wood products will be updated later this year. WPMA has been actively engaging with officials and Select Committee on providing feedback into the proposals and on the development of the Building Product Specifications for timber/imported wood and related products to advocate that any overseas standards or specifications contained in the BPS are current, have been assessed in detail, are 'fit for purpose' and won't fall below the level of performance set by the NZ Building Code. We will continue to engage with officials as to providing advice to get the settings right. For more details on the BPS see [here](#):

Storm damage on Top of South – help available

Flooding across the Nelson, Tasman, Marlborough areas in mid-2025 caused extensive damage and our thoughts are with those affected by the storm damage. Support is available to help the primary sector and support rural communities with the clean-up and recovery. Details on government support can be found [here](#):

The Forest Owners Association will continue to coordinate with Wood Councils, agencies and officials to provide updates as more information becomes available. If you have urgent concerns or require assistance, please contact: admin@nzfoa.org.nz



Proposed Immigration levy opposed by WPMA

In our submission on the Immigration (Fiscal Sustainability and System Integrity) Amendment Bill, WPMA opposed the provisions within the Bill enabling levies to be charged to employers, education providers, and other persons. Employers currently pay fees for accreditation under the Accredited Employer Work Visa (AEWV) scheme, which were introduced to support cost recovery for immigration services. Beyond mandatory accreditation and application fees, the additional compliance obligations introduced under the AEWV regime represent a significant cost burden for businesses. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has found that immigration tends to improve fiscal balances by expanding the labour force, boosting productivity, and supporting the financing of public pensions and healthcare systems. In high income countries, these effects are particularly significant, as migrants often arrive during their working years and delay the onset of age-related public spending. The introduction of a levy would shift costs from the government to employers with no reasonable justification, hence the reason for our opposition. Our full submission can be found [here](#)

Local U.S. Industry Groups supportive of keeping imported timber and lumber products into the U.S. tariff free

At the time of print, timber and lumber products imported into the United States continue to remain tariff free, with the findings of the s. 232 report into the security risk these commodities have on domestic production due no later than the 26 November 2025. A key factor in the on-going exemption is the lobbying being carried out by U.S. industry groups, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. In their submission on the s. 232 investigation, the Chamber stated that they strongly oppose the establishment of tariffs or quantitative restrictions on imports of timber, lumber, and their derivative products such as paper, cardboard, and pulp. Imports of these goods do not represent a national security risk. Imposing tariffs on these goods would raise costs for U.S. businesses and home construction, undermine the export success enjoyed by the U.S. paper industry, and reduce incomes in many U.S. communities. WPMA continues to align with the local U.S. industry groups as to supporting their advocacy work, working in with media and providing support to our members.



U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Non-tariff trade barriers plurilateral arrangement supported

For wood product exporters non-tariff trade barriers (NTBs) are a significant impediment to growth. These NTBs include measures such as environmental, subsidy, and phytosanitary focussed trade barriers, which are not as directly visible and clearly targeted as tariff barriers. While MPI's work on biosecurity and customs assurance systems, and MFAT's work in negotiating free trade agreements, is acknowledged and appreciated,

exporters require more proactive involvement from government in strategic trade issues affecting the sector, including international and bilateral negotiations, for example, regarding phytosanitary measures, subsidies, building codes and product standards (to ensure that NZ radiata pine is included in new codes and standards), generic marketing of higher value NZ wood products as high quality products supported by excellent technical knowledge, and promoting awareness of the range of higher quality radiata pine products available from NZ suppliers. From a global perspective, free trade is the most desirable policy but removing tariff measures does not create free trade and NTBs remain a significant impediment to trade. Even when tariffs are low/non-existent the barriers to trade for wood products can be significant. Taking these points into consideration, WPMA submitted in support of MFAT's NTBs proposed plurilateral arrangement. See our submission [here](#)

Supporting chain of custody certification

It was great to spend time with Responsible Wood Sustainability Manager and Forestry Australia Director, Matt de Jongh, when he visited the ForestryWood HQ earlier this month. Discussions focussed on [Responsible Wood](#) and [PEFC International](#) certification, and the value and recognition of our forest and chain of custody certification in New Zealand. We look forward to on-going collaboration with Responsible Wood when it comes to ensuring our valued added wood products are produced sustainably and meet our international market requirements.



WPMA CEO, Mark Ross, and Responsible Wood Sustainability Manager, Matt de Jongh

European Union Deforestation Regulations (EUDR) update

The EUDR Working Group, which includes forest owners and wood processors, met earlier this month to refine a draft compliance toolkit. This toolkit is designed to help New Zealand companies understand the regulation and what they need to do to ensure EUDR compliance.

It will include templates and guidance to support suppliers and exporters through the new requirements. The Toolkit will be finalised in late August/ early September and will be available to all WPMA and FOA members at no charge. Later this month, New Zealand forestry and meat industry representatives will meet with officials from the European Commission's Directorate-General for Environment to discuss EUDR and advocate for practical outcomes.

Wood processing positioned under Manufacturing and Engineering ISB

The grouping of wood manufacturing under the Manufacturing and Engineering Industry Skills Board (ISB) has the support of WPMA. When looking at each of the eight newly created ISBs, there are cross functional trades/specialties that align with Wood Manufacturing, i.e. mechanical engineering, energy and chemical, welding and fabrication, which are technical specialties also needed in wood manufacturing. Also, with the introduction of automation and technology into manufacturing over recent years, our industry is requiring more staff with technical and technology interests, rather than historic manual labouring type roles. Although we are supporting the Manufacturing and Technology ISB, there was strong support to stay linked to the Food and Fibre (Forestry) ISB where possible from a longer-term strategic perspective as to operating in an integrated manner. The ISBs establishment board will initiate the change process, with nominations for the full Board closing on the 29 August.

Make a Difference in the Pacific – Join VSA!

Ever dreamed of using your skills to do something meaningful? With Volunteer Service Abroad Te Tūao Tāwāhi (VSA), that dream is closer than you think. VSA connects everyday Kiwis with communities across the Pacific and Timor-Leste. Whether you're a teacher, forester, engineer, nurse, IT expert, or just someone with a passion to help, you can use your knowledge to make real change.

Expect adventure, lifelong friendships, and experiences no holiday can offer. You'll work alongside local partners, exchange skills, support community-led projects, and come home with stories that stay with you forever. And the essentials? We've got you covered: flights, accommodation, insurance, and a weekly living allowance are all provided.

Start your journey at vsa.org.nz.

Your skills can go further than you think.



Recent and upcoming submissions

- NTBs plurilateral arrangements (MFAT)
- Climate Change Response (ETS – Forestry Conversion) Amendment Bill
- Immigration (Fiscal Sustainability and System Integrity) Amendment Bill
- Going for Housing Growth: Providing for urban development in the new resource management system (*due 17 August – Ministry of Housing and Urban Development*)

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](#):

WPMA In the News

NZ timber tariffs would hurt U.S. customers

“If tariffs are added to imported NZ wood products, this will have a direct impact on the US consumer through price increases and supply availability on articles like clear pine boards, moldings, solid wood sidings and primed product. As one customer in the US commented, “a lot of what we buy from NZ we can’t get elsewhere easily, so expect we may have to pay extra, resulting in higher prices for the consumer”. As an example, clear radiata pine boards are unable to be produced in the US as no domestic species come from a pruned forestry resource. There is a realisation that due, to our low trade barriers and the minimal effect we have on global imports into the US, NZ is not the target of any new tariffs.”

<https://www.farmersweekly.co.nz/opinion/nz-timber-tariffs-would-hurt-us-consumers/>

Hope for regrowth for India Timber Trade

Wood Processors and Manufacturers Association of NZ (WPMA) CEO Mark Ross said while logs are starting to rebuild, it is still a tough road for processors with finished wood products to sell in India. [Hope of regrowth for India timber trade](#)

New Chair for PEFC New Zealand

New Zealand's PEFC scheme has a new chair after the New Zealand Forest Certification Association (NZFCA) endorsed Mark Ross, the CEO of the Wood Processors and Manufacturers Association of NZ (WPMA) to replace Dr Julian Elder, CEO of Scion Research [Timberbiz Mark Ross to chair NZ's PEFC Forest Certification Scheme - Timberbiz](#)

NZ timber seeks its place in the sun

"For forest owners the best price for a commercial decision has been to export logs. We are, however, hoping this will start to turn in the coming years." He said with the sector's longer term goal of doubling exports over 10 years there is no chance it could be achieved under existing forested areas through logs alone"

<https://www.farmersweekly.co.nz/markets/nz-grown-timber-seeks-its-place-in-the-sun/>

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
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**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

 **WIDE** WOOD INDUSTRY
DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION
TRUST

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