



# Newsletter

## November 2024



### Message from Mark

Member networking opportunities are a core benefit of joining WPMA with our recent 2023-24 AGM allowing members to mix with invited guest speakers, industry representatives, and key decision-makers. Being able to share insights and make business contacts is something that those attending the AGM were able to acquire. Over coming months we will be holding more member-based events, both on a regional and national perceptive. Our National Conference and Gala dinner on the 8 October 2025 being a highlight. If you missed our AGM, you can now access our Annual Report here <https://wpma.org.nz/resources#e28> This highlights the 2023-24 financial year, with an emphasis on key WPMA activities.

Happy reading for this issue.



Mark

[mark@wpma.org.nz](mailto:mark@wpma.org.nz)

### Caution with the Building Amendment Bill emphasised by WPMA

The Building (Overseas Building Products, Standards, and Certification Schemes) Amendment Bill is targeted at reducing 'red tape', thus enabling the use of building materials from trusted overseas jurisdictions, without the need for new products to be

certified domestically. Last week WPMA presented to the Transport and Infrastructure Select Committee on the Bill with our key messages being:

- Citing of timber treatment standards from other countries would potentially undermine the robust process used in NZ and may expose NZ consumers to structural and other timber, which is less durable and ultimately does not meet the NZ Building Code requirements,
- MBIE has no mechanism to measure the market share of new overseas product Standards and limited ability to monitor any issues or systemic failure.
- It is unclear who will check that an overseas standard meets the NZBC, and that if an overseas product standard proves to be inadequate the cost of rectification will outweigh any cost saving to the homeowner.

Once feedback has been taken into consideration, the Bill will be reported back to the House for further debate and endorsement. WPMA will continue to work with government to ensure that this Bill does not have adverse effects on our future residential homes and commercial buildings, plus New Zealand's wood processing and manufacturing industry.



*Jane Cuming  
(Technical  
Manager) and  
Mark Ross  
(CEO)  
presenting to  
the Select  
Committee*

### **Proposed 'No Risk' category backed by NZ wood product exporters to the EU**

Adding a 'No Risk' country level category to the European Union Deforestation Regulations (EUDR) is supported by WPMA members. This category would face less stringent requirements when exporting wood products to the EU, including no need for geolocation harvest data. For the 'No Risk' country category to be adopted negotiations (so called Trilogues) have commenced within the European Parliament on the additional legislative changes, which includes the proposed 12-month delay. A formal decision is due mid-December and will be based on voting from EU member countries. Should the 'No-Risk' category be adopted, New Zealand will be in a good position to meet the key criteria through provision of a dossier to the EU that provides evidence our wood products are not linked to deforestation. However, if the 'No Risk' category is not supported this will mean that exporters to the EU will need to provide all documentation required under the EUDR from Dec 2025. Either way, WPMA will continue to work with our members, government

officials and the wider forestry industry to ensure that New Zealand's \$95 million dollar plus trade in wood products to the EU continues.

### **Manufacturing support boosted by the Minister for Manufacturing**

A Manufacturing Productivity Advisory Group (MPAG) has been established by Hon Andrew Bayly to set a pathway for the sector and to establish priorities for the government. At the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the MPAG last week, attended by WPMA Chief Executive Mark Ross, the Minister provided a report card highlighting his recent activities. This included a focus on five core priorities set by the MPAG - fostering talent, access to Capital, boosting digitalisation and innovation, simpler access to information, plus reducing the burden of compliance and cutting red tape. As a core industry group within the manufacturing sector, wood products and paper make up 9 per cent of New Zealand's total manufacturing output, clocking \$2.15 billion in income. WPMA thank the Minister for being invited to join the MPAG and we look forward to on-going government engagement that will lead to future sector investment and growth.



*Minister Bayly and MPAG Chair, Sarah Ramsey, engaging with the Ministerial Productivity Advisory Group*

### **USA Election and increased tariffs a concern for NZ wood product exporters**

During his election campaign President-Elect Donald Trump floated the idea of imposing a 10-20% tariff on all imports of goods into the USA, and 60% on imports from China. In principle the prospect of higher tariffs is worrying for New Zealand exporters as well as the USA's other trading partners. NZ exported \$344 million in wood products to the USA last year, with 50 percent being sawn timber, panels and sleepers. With the election still fresh it is too early to know which way the Trump administration will head on global tariffs, though recent announcements of intended tariffs on Canada, Mexico and China on all their exports to the US – until they reduce migration and the flow of drugs into the country could open up a bitter global trade war. Looking forward, WPMA will front on behalf of our members to

support government officials in their advocacy aimed at keeping our trade door with the USA open.

### **Future wood processing apprenticeship training under threat**

A proposal has been made to close Toi Ohomai (the Timber Industry Training Centre) in Rotorua. WPMA member feedback indicates that the closure of TITC would have a significant impact on the Timber Machinist and Saw Doctor training for wood processing, along with the forestry industry in general. Should the closure be agreed by the Minister, this will happen in June 2025. In response to the proposed closure various meetings have been held between different industry groups. To ensure one industry voice the Pan Sector Forestry and Wood Processing Group (PSG) has agreed to work together to gain the best outcome for the industry. Actions to date involve a joint letter signed by the 10 Associations to Minister Symmonds (Tertiary Education) and McLay (Forestry) highlighting our concerns and requesting an extension to the feedback response deadline. This is a first step to enable more time to develop a full response to the proposal, including assessing alternative options, working with the wider forestry industry to determine what future training/education is needed, plus determine what other detail is required. Should the TITC close, it is essential that other training options for wood processing are enacted by government and industry.

### **Forest Growers launch promotional campaign**

The Forest Growers Levy Trust has launched a promotional campaign aimed at raising the profile of forestry. You can view the 60s hero advert here <https://youtu.be/GoZSvcciHRw>

This pilot campaign will run until the end of January and will highlight how production forests benefit people, jobs and the environment while providing timber for construction and every day household items.

### **Agreement on Climate Change, Trade and Sustainability (ACCTS) positive for New Zealand wood product exporters**

Formal signing of the ACCTS by New Zealand, Costa Rica, Switzerland, and Iceland on 15 November is significant as it is the first trade agreement of its kind dedicated to trade and climate issues hence demonstrating a fresh approach to global trade negotiations. The agreement eliminates tariffs on 316 environmental goods, including 34 wood products such as sawn timber, pulp, and panels for construction. Being designed as an open plurilateral agreement means that other core trading partners from the WTO will be encouraged to join ACCTS over time thus growing our export markets for environmental and sustainable goods. We congratulate the New Zealand government in seeing the ACCTS to conclusion and look forward to the future benefits of this agreement for our wood processing industry. More detail on ACCTS can be found here

<https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/trade/free-trade-agreements/free-trade-agreements-concluded-but-not-in-force/agreement-on-climate-change-trade-and-sustainability-accts>

## WIDE Trust – apply for funding towards your wood processing apprentice 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!**

**Apply online**  
**[www.widetrust.org.nz](http://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



## Join the “Future Makers” Campaign – celebrating manufacturing

Want to tell your business success story? Advanced Manufacturing Aotearoa has initiated a campaign for “Future Makers”. They are after fun, maybe quirky – but inspiring tales of mind-blowing technology, fascinating people, and brave business journeys. What are the anecdotes you pull out at parties? What are the nuggets that catch people’s attention? Don’t feel pressure to write a novel - just some key points. **How to Submit:** Click [THIS LINK](#) to start sharing your story or nomination **by Monday, December 2nd.**

## Calling All Leaders: Are You Realising the Potential of Your Culture?

We invite you to participate in a groundbreaking research initiative conducted through Massey University and Leadership and Governance Collective, supported by over 30 organisations and business groups in Aotearoa. Its goal is to identify best practices among leaders across organisational types and sectors, providing actionable insights that your executive team can implement.

The survey is for CEOs or equivalent leaders, takes 15 minutes to complete, and is anonymous. Please note your affiliation to WPMA at the surveys end. Cutoff date is the 3 December. **Take the survey!**

## Recent WPMA Submissions

- Building (Overseas Building Products, Standards, and Certification Schemes) Amendment Bill

<https://wpma.org.nz/assets/Submissions/WPMA-submission-Building-Overseas-Building-Products-Standards-and-Certification-Schemes-Amendment-Bill-14-November-2024-FINAL.pdf>

## In the News

### RadioNZ Rural News - WPMA

*'It is becoming increasingly difficult for New Zealand mills to compete with intense global competition and high energy prices'*

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/ruralnews/audio/2018965344/midday-rural-news-for-22-november-2024>

### Trade Agreement with the Gulf is good for New Zealand wood

*"The adoption of mass timber and wood in construction aligns with the regions vision for sustainable development and green building practices, offering a future market growth opportunity for New Zealand wood product exporters."*

<https://timberbiz.us12.list-manage.com/track/click?u=ac41575cbca450f7966070392&id=aa160d03c7&e=5f2a1b8cd6>

### Terms of reference released for electricity market review

*"The terms of reference released today set out how a secure and affordable electricity supply requires markets that incentivise timely investment in infrastructure, achieve efficient outcomes, are effectively competitive, and have effective regulation that enables participants and consumers to plan, invest, and trade with confidence,"*

<https://insidegovernment.co.nz/terms-of-reference-released-for-electricity-market-review/>

Mark Ross  
Chief Executive  
[Mark@wpma.org.nz](mailto:Mark@wpma.org.nz)  
Mob: 027 442 9965