

BULLETIN

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Welcome

This *Members' Bulletin* is intended to keep you up-to-date with ATIF activities. So far this year has been busy one for ATIF, with a broad range of issues on the agenda. While the Federal Government's illegal logging policy and the *Illegal Logging Prohibition Bill 2011* have continued to occupy time and resources other critical matters for the timber importing sector have also required attention. Some of these issues are summarised below.

The continuing support of ATIF member companies in assisting the ongoing efforts of ATIF to foster the business interests of the timber importing sector is very much appreciated.

Illegal Logging Prohibition Bill 2011 update

As previously reported, the revised *Illegal Logging Prohibition Bill 2011* was introduced into the Parliament in the last week of the 2011 parliamentary year and referred back to the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee for further review. ATIF made a further submission to the committee and gave oral evidence to a one day hearing of the committee. The report of the Senate committee is available at:

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate_Committees?url=rrat_cte/logging_2011/report/index.htm

The Bill has now been referred from the House of Representatives to the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade. This committee is yet to consider how it will handle the referral, although it is reasonable to assume that the focus of the committee's deliberations is likely to be more about supplier country concerns, WTO compliance issues and bilateral trade considerations. Clearly this referral will mean that at best the Bill is not likely to be back in the Parliament until late this year.

ATIF members attended the public information sessions on the Bill held by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) around the country in March. ATIF also participated in a further meeting of the Bill-related working group convened by DAFF held in Sydney on 26 March.

Findings of Customs structural timber dumping allegations enquiry

ATIF welcomes the findings of the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (Customs) enquiry into dumping allegations directed at structural timber products and the decision to recommend to the Minister for Home Affairs that the investigation be terminated.



The Customs report is available at:

http://www.customs.gov.au/notices/dumping/sef_2012.asp

ATIF acknowledges the substantial effort made by timber importing companies and their suppliers in Europe, Canada and the United States in working with the Customs team and their advisors to assist in the investigation. ATIF also made a submission and other representations to Customs on the issue.

ATIF notes that in carrying out the enquiry Customs engaged cost accounting experts KPMG and timber industry experts to provide independent verification of the investigation methodology and findings.

In commenting publicly on the report John Halkett acknowledged that the Customs report documents the very real challenges confronting the domestic timber processing industry. "The report comments on the industry's diminishing sale volumes and market share and on the rising costs and declining profitability currently being experienced by the industry."

"ATIF is keen to point out that the wholesale turn-over of many of its member companies comprises a significant proportion of domestically-produced timber products. These companies want to see the domestic industry strengthen its competitive position for the overall good of the industry."

"Timber importers and the domestic timber processors have a collective interest in strengthening and growing the Australian market for timber products because of their many outstanding physical attributes and their great environmental credentials," he said.

Heat treatment time-frames extended for timber and timber moulding from Canada

DAFF Biosecurity has advised that import conditions for Timber and Timber Mouldings products imported from Canada have been changed from 21 December 2011. Heat treatment time-frames have been extended from 21 days to 90 days. This extension was recommended in the ATIF submission to AQIS on timber and timber moulding import requirements.

For a more details of the changes and information on treatment requirements for Canadian-sourced and other pre-shipment treatment options refer to [ICON](#) online; contact the Timber and Timber Products National Coordination Centre on 03 8318 6929, or email: timber.imports@daff.gov.au.

ATIF will be pursuing the possibility of further extensions to the 21 day rule with AQIS in due course.

Other news

- ▶ ATIF will be formally writing to the CEOs of Fremantle and Melbourne Ports concerning present container congestion, related operational and cost issues and the present significant difficulties being experienced by timber importers at these ports.
- ▶ ATIF held a Board meeting in Melbourne on 15 February in conjunction with the industry summit to review the future of Forest and Wood Products Australia (FWPA). ATIF had a delegation of Board members and others participating in the summit.
- ▶ ATIF Board member John Simon has been appointed to fill a casual vacancy on the FWPA Board. John's appointment is seen as a step in the right direction for ATIF and will improve the communication between ATIF and FWPA.

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