

# BULLETIN

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## IN THIS ISSUE:

- ▶ **Welcome**
- ▶ *Illegal Logging Prohibition Bill 2011*
- ▶ **Forest and Wood Products Council meeting**
- ▶ **Timber and timber moulding import conditions AQIS review**
- ▶ **Structural softwood dumping enquiry**
- ▶ **Other news**

### **Welcome**

This *Members' Bulletin* is intended to keep you up-to-date with ATIF activities. The year has been an extremely busy one for ATIF, with a major focus on the Federal Government's illegal logging policy and the *Illegal Logging Prohibition Bill 2011*. However, a considerable range of other tasks have also been undertaken.

The ongoing 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*

As previously reported, the revised *Illegal Logging Prohibition Bill 2011* was introduced into the Parliament in the last week of the 2011 parliamentary year. The Bill was referred back to the Senate Rural 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 on 14 December.

At this stage, it is anticipated that the Bill will pass through the remaining parliamentary processes in the first parliamentary session of 2012.

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) has formed a regulatory working group to assist in drafting the regulations the will underpin the Bill. ATIF is represented on the working group that will have its next meeting in February 2012.

### **Forest and Wood Products Council meeting**

The second meeting of the Forest and Wood Products Council (FWPC) for the year was held in Melbourne on 13 December. DAFF forestry staff updated FWPC members on progress and future actions related to the *Illegal Logging Prohibition Bill 2011*.



In addition the FWPC meeting also considered the Tasmanian Forests Intergovernmental agreement; the recommendations of the House of Representatives inquiry into the Australian Forestry industry; the current campaign against Australian furniture manufacturers and retailer including Harvey Norman, and a proposal to prepare a comprehensive strategic plan for Australia's forest industry.

### **Timber and timber moulding import conditions AQIS review**

ATIF has been involved in the AQIS review of import conditions for timber and timber moulding products. At the invitation of AQIS, ATIF prepared a submission on the issue that included a number of suggestions aimed at removing administrative processes that added time and cost to imported timber products. These recommendations included an expansion of the 21 day limit between heat treatment and container packing. It is considered that 90 days would be a substantial advance although 42 days would be a significant step towards making the shipping of heat treated timber more practical and cost effective.

### **Structural softwood dumping enquiry**

Relevant ATIF member companies have been involved in a dumping enquiry initiated by three domestic wood processing companies. Advice received from the International Trade Remedies Branch of Australian Customs and Border Protection Service, confirmed the initial aspect of the enquiry involving the receipt of submissions and on-the-ground investigations both with Australian importing companies and suppliers in North America and Europe has been completed. However, the statutory deadline of 28 December to provide an initial report is likely to be extended subject to the approval of the relevant minister.

### **Other news**

- ▶ At the invitation of ProChile, ATIF participated in and gave a key note address at the forest industry tour and conference centred on Concepción, in southern Chile from 28 November to 1 December. The event was attended by 400 delegates, many of whom were from timber products importing countries.
- ▶ ATIF continues to serve on the ABARES Forest and Wood Products Steering Committee that is overseeing a comprehensive review of all forest industry related statistics and their reporting. The steering committee met again in Canberra on 16 December.
- ▶ The next meeting of the ATIF Board has been scheduled to be held in conjunction with the industry summit to review the future of Forest and Wood Products on 15 and 16 February next year. ATIF will have a delegation of Board members and others participating in the summit.