

MEMBERS' BULLETIN

January- February 2017**No 42****IN THIS ISSUE:**

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Welcome

This *Members' Bulletin* is intended to keep you up-to-date with current ATIF activities. This edition summarises recent ATIF submissions to the Federal Government on the regulation impact statement options for amending the Government's *Illegal Logging Prohibition Regulation 2012* and the ongoing review of timber product import conditions. Also note the intended visit to Queensland in March and the opportunity for Queensland ATIF members to discuss any matters of interest to your business operations.

Illegal logging RIS submission

At the invitation from the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources ATIF has made a submission on the regulatory impact *statement Reforming Australia's illegal logging regulations: consultation regulation impact statement* (RIS). The RIS seeks comments on options for amending the *Government's Illegal Logging Prohibition Regulation 2012* to improve the trade-off between the costs of complying with the Regulation's 'due diligence' requirements and the risk of illegally logged timber entering the Australian market.

The ATIF submission reaffirms the Federation's continuing support of the headline intention of the *Illegal Logging Prohibition Act 2012*, plus the need for a robust due diligence system and does not support any 'watering down' of existing requirements that would 'reward' timber products importers who had not sufficiently developed their due diligence systems.

ATIF does not support removing personal and/or non commercial imports from a requirement to comply with the Regulation. Further that such an exemption is likely to present significant challenges in determining how to define and audit such an exemption.

However, the ATIF submission does support actions directed at improving the efficiency of, and reducing the uncertainty and costs associated with the due diligence process prescribed by the Regulation. ATIF endorses suggestions about including some 'deemed to satisfy certification schemes' in a revised Regulation as a way of reducing uncertainty and making the due diligence requirements more efficient, less onerous and cost effective.



Timber products import conditions review

The timber import conditions review team within the Plant Import Operations section of the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources has now completed an preliminary draft import conditions for a specified range of timber products, and has established a new format BICON case scenario. ATIF has made an initial submission on the review process at the request of the review team.

ATIF is supportive of the review that seeks to streamline and simplify some existing processes; reflect the changing nature of some categories of timber product imports, and incorporate new biosecurity treatment methodologies.

In its submission ATIF has noted the likely continuing increasing volume of timber product imports into Australia, particularly increases in engineered wood products, including mass panel products, such as cross laminated timber (CLT), glulam products and prefabricated building components. ATIF also notes the likelihood of increasing quantities of green (not heat treated) hardwood timber imports, notably from PNG as domestic hardwood supplies further declines, and as PNG institutes a log export ban from 2020.

The ATIF submission also supports the conceptual diagram BICON user's scenario 'decision tree' approach. It also notes the ongoing uncertainty to importers from the continuing delays in implementing the Canadian Accredited Timber Scheme.

ATIF comments that the technical and relatively complex nature of the issues and encourages the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources to initiate briefings similar to those provided related to illegal logging legislation.

ATIF also supports the decision to categories timber and timber mouldings as unfinished timber, and supports the adoption of a 90-day rule to treat before relevant timber products are exported.

Any company that would like to participate in a briefing on this issue with the Plant Import Operations section of the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources in Canberra in Canberra should contact me.

Queensland consultation

Visits to Queensland-based timber product importers are scheduled for March. These visits are intended to update companies on existing due diligence requirements, prospective changes to illegal logging regulations, timber import conditions, and to discuss any other matters companies wish to raise.

Some companies are already on the list of visits, but please get in touch if you would like me to visit your premises in early March.