

# MEMBERS' BULLETIN

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### Welcome

This *Members' Bulletin* is intended to keep you up-to-date with current ATIF activities. This edition highlights the ATIF 2017 AGM and Board meeting both held on Thursday, 7 December. A quick update in illegal logging regulation amendments and the planning ATIF/TABMA workshop series to be held in the first half of next year are also included.

### 2017 AGM and December Board meeting

The AGM received resignations from the Board from Matthew Wood, Stora Enso Timber Australia and Greg Blenkiron, Tilling Group. Their service to the Board was acknowledged with appreciation.

Dee Atkinson was appointed to the Board. Dee is the first woman to be appointed to the Board. Dee is the state manager for the Tilling Group at Mt Druitt in Sydney's west. Dee will also represent ATIF on the Board of the Timber Development Association.

Dee is regarded as a rising star in the timber industry and her Tilling Group timber wholesale operation was awarded Wholesaler of the Year at the recent TABMA annual awards function.

Speaking at the AGM Chairman Nils Koren stressed the importance of the relationship ATIF had developed with the forestry minister, Senator Anne Ruston.

"This access to the minister and her willingness to listen and take seriously the views expressed by ATIF on behalf of the sector is extremely valuable and is a critical current and ongoing role for ATIF." He noted the ongoing value of this relationship as the illegal logging legislation 'soft start' is removed and other issues of significance to wholesalers and importers emerge. "The value of this relationship cannot be underestimated."

Summarising the past year ATIF general manager John Halkett said the year had been a busy one for wholesalers and importers.



“This had included continuing to have regular contact with relevant Federal Government officials and with Senator Anne Ruston in relation to the proposed changes to the illegal logging regulation.”

He noted that discussions that also taken place with Joel Fitzgibbon, Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry on the proposed amendments to the illegal logging regulation.

Mr Halkett advised that ATIF has continued to interact with the Plant Import Operations section of the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources in their review of plant import conditions. “In relation to imported timber products this review is helping to ensure that timber product import conditions meet required quarantine conditions, but at the same time utilise current technology and are efficient and cost effective.”

He said ATIF had been pleased to organise and host a familiarisation ‘tour’ for officials from Plant Import Operations as part of this review. The tour took place in Melbourne and visited ATIF member companies Tilling, Bayswood Timber and Meyer Timber.

ATIF also continues to be represented on relevant standards and FWPA committees. Regular contact with FWPA is maintained reflecting ATIFs position as one of the four national associations representing levy payers,” said Mr Halkett.

ATIF continues to be the first point of contact for many timber product supplier companies, trade organisations and government representatives, including involvement with supplier countries related to illegal logging regulation and participation in various working groups.

“Over the past year this has involved discussions and meetings with representatives from New Zealand, Chile, Canada, China, PNG, Malaysia, Indonesia, Peru, Austria and Europe generally.”

### **Illegal logging amendments**

Illegal logging legislation-related activity has continued to be a major task for ATIF, including a recent meeting with Senator Ruston, and relevant Federal Government officials and

As previously advised, in association with the intended amendments to the regulation the Government will be ending the 'soft-start' compliance period. From 1 January 2018, businesses and individuals who import regulated timber products into Australia, or who process domestically grown raw logs, may face prosecution and significant financial penalties for breaches of their due diligence obligations under the *Illegal Logging Prohibition Regulation 2012*.

### **ATIF/TABMA 2018 workshop series**

Planning is progressing on a national workshop series to be run in the first half of next year as a joint undertaking between ATIF and TABMA. The Australian Forestry Standard will also be participating. The workshops will include illegal logging due diligence practice, certification issues, stock inventory management, IT developments, and occupational safety issues, notably related to mobile equipment. Further advice will be provided early next year.

### **Christmas greetings**

The ATIF Board and staff wish all members, colleagues, families and friends a restful, happy and safe Christmas break. We look forward to seeing you bigger and brighter in 2018!!

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