

# MEMBERS

# BULLETIN

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### Welcome

This *Members' Bulletin* is intended to keep you up-to-date with ATIF activities. Again, this edition draws attention to concerns about illegal logging compliance, the substantial number of infringement notices issued, and errors in interpreting the legislation by Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) officials. Also comments on matters related to possible non-compliance with the structural requirements of building codes and standards. Some key upcoming events are also highlighted.

### Illegal Logging Regulation compliance and infringement issues

As previously reported, since the change of Federal government the DAFF has been much more aggressive on illegal logging compliance, and the issuing of infringement notices for alleged non-compliance with the illegal logging legislation.

The ATIF joins with the Australian Furniture Association (AFA) to express serious concerns about DAFF's recent actions related to illegal logging regulations and infringement notices. Senior industry representatives have expressed concerns that DAFF's actions have been aggressive and disproportionate, causing dissatisfaction in the industry. Industry representatives have strongly advocated remedial actions suggested in the paper presented to DAFF to address the concerns raised.

ATIF and AFA are of the view that some of the infringement notices appear to be for trivial reasons and outside the scope of the "reasonably practical" test in the illegal logging legislation, with related fines in the region of \$13,000. ATIF has identified errors on the part of DAFF in applying the illegal logging regulation. For example, the regulation states that an importer must, before importing a regulated timber product, obtain as much of the information about the product mentioned in Section 10. 2 as it is reasonably practicable for the importer to obtain. However, in their written advice (Illegal Logging Bulletin No 37), DAFF prescribed that all the information listed is the "minimum" required.



Whilst it is correct that importers should seek this information, it is not required that they obtain all of it. The regulation does not prescribe a 'minimum' level of information to be obtained. The information to be obtained is what the importer can obtain and what is reasonably practicable to be used as a basis for conducting a risk assessment.

ATIF will continue to raise this matter with officials and the Minister of Agriculture.

### **Compliance with building codes and standards**

Compliance with building codes and standards has again been topical. Previous statements by the ATIF Board have included that concerns have been expressed that some imported structural softwood products may not always comply with the requirements of building codes. Furthermore, it was affirmed that complaints received about possible non-compliance were taken very seriously by ATIF to protect the overall reputation and credentials of the timber supply chain.

Ongoing challenges around the sourcing of additional timber products are continuing to be exacerbated by a shortage of containers, shipping space availability, and port congestion. This has resulted in climbing costs and charges that have contributed to ongoing difficulties across the supply chain and for building and construction industries.

The Engineered Wood Products Association of Australasia (EWPA) has recently prepared an MGP conformance technical guide. This can be viewed at: [https://ewp.asn.au/technical\\_resource/machine-graded-timber-conformance-in-australia/](https://ewp.asn.au/technical_resource/machine-graded-timber-conformance-in-australia/) and is included with this bulletin

### **Upcoming events**

Your attention is drawn to the following significant upcoming events:

1. Malaysian Wood Expo (MWE 2023), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia 18-20 June 2023

The Malaysian Timber Council (MTC) and partners will be bringing together industry shapers, technology experts and key decision makers representing the timber trade and industry with exhibition space spanning 12,000 square metres. ATIF is assisting with the coordination of Australian attendance so companies and/or individuals planning to attend may if they wish notify ATIF. For more information see: <https://www.malaysianwoodexpo.com.my/>

2. Australian Timber Supply Summit, Melbourne, 29-30 August 2023

A *Timber & Forestry enews* collaboration invites you to the 2023 Australian Timber Supply Summit (TFE2023). Australian Federal and State governments, industry associations and the industry have long been debating the future Australian wood supply needed to provide for a growing population, and for building and construction demand.

The 2023 Australian Timber Supply Summit will engage the collective minds of the industry to seek a resolution to the timber supply issues. Summit speakers will include leading international and domestic speakers. For more information see: <https://web.cvent.com/event/766c3498-2748-451b-afdd-7265e7ee67d4/summary>

### **Timber Trader news**

Your attention is drawn to the bi-monthly expanded *Timber Trader News* magazine. For further information and to subscribe see: <https://www.timbertradernews.com/>

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