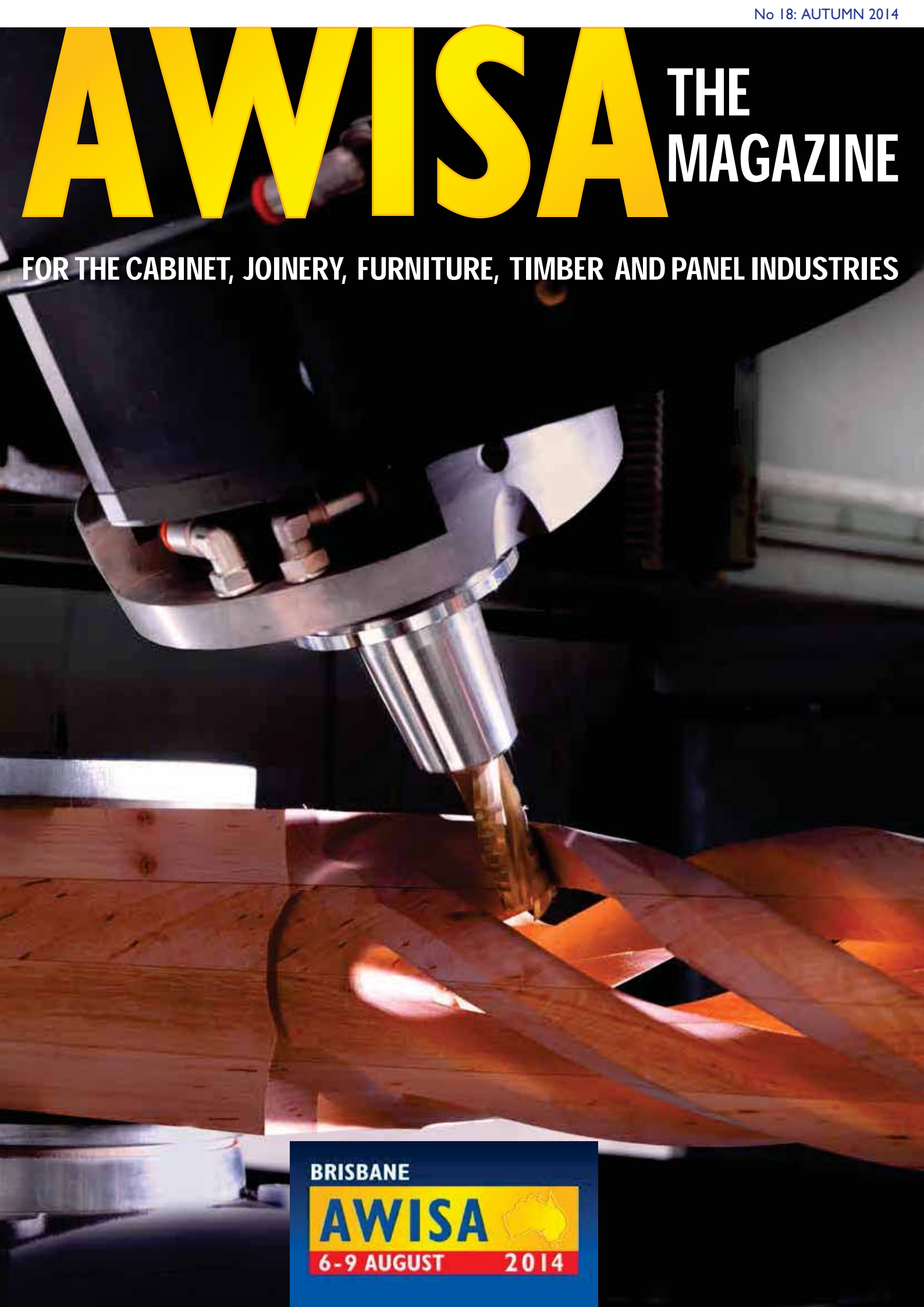


# AWISA THE MAGAZINE

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# AWISA THE MAGAZINE

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### FRONT COVER:

Five axis electro-spindle carving a twisted column out of a solid block of wood. Image courtesy of Biesse Group Australia.

### DEAR READER,

2014 is the year that AWISA invites the woodworking industries of Australia and New Zealand to visit the AWISA 2014 trade show, this time in Brisbane. And we are well and truly ready for you. If you are reading this in your office or factory in south-east Queensland you will probably already know that the facilities at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre are as good as, if not better, than any other exhibition centre in an Australian capital city. AWISA wouldn't be there if that was not the case.

If you are flying in to Brisbane getting to the exhibition is as seamless as it gets. Both the domestic and international terminals have train stations, and the Airtrain service takes only 20 minutes to the South Brisbane station that's right next to the exhibition halls. Details of AWISA's discounted train fare is elsewhere in the magazine and on our website.

As always we have made block bookings for AWISA attendees at a number of hotels and apartments near the venue, and for those of you who may like to stay on for a mid winter break in Queensland, we're even offering some hotel suggestions on the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast.

And when you enter the halls you will see a show that presents all the major machinery and hardware companies in just as impressive a way as they have always displayed. We look forward to seeing you there, and the next two editions of this magazine will contain lots more detail about the show and the products on display.

#### Geoff Holland

General manager

Australian Woodworking Industry  
Suppliers Association Limited

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## South Bank excitement for AWISA visitors



**YES, IT IS NOW** overwhelmingly obvious that AWISA 2014 will be in Brisbane this August. Exhibitors have certainly embraced the location and venue at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre on the city's South Bank and are all looking forward to what will certainly be an exciting show. The next two editions of AWISA - The Magazine will feature many of the products on display. In this edition we will be telling readers about the other attractions of Brisbane and Queensland.

So, in addition to the show what can visitors not familiar with Brisbane expect from Queensland's capital city?

Replete with sunshine, even in the normally cooler month of August for southern state dwellers, Brisbane has a climate of which most cities dream. While only a short distance from the show venue to the attractions of the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast, for those who want to stay close to the action and AWISA's busy schedule, there is plenty to see and do at the home of the AWISA - Brisbane's South Bank precinct.

The South Bank is a place for everyone and an exciting voyage of discovery for visitors to AWISA and their partners. Millions of visitors pass through South Bank each year with its eclectic mix of cafes, restaurants, boutiques and cultural experiences. Visitors can even take a refreshing dip at Streets Beach - Australia's only artificial inner city beach - or explore the many other varied South Bank attractions that include the Queensland Art Gallery, Gallery of Modern Art,

Queensland Museum and Science Centre and Queensland Conservatorium.

Brisbane's South Bank concept was conceived in the wake of Australia's Expo 88 and has since grown into one of the most loved precincts in Queensland. There AWISA attendees can explore the parklands, with their lush foliage, lagoons and picnic areas or Little Stanley's cosmopolitan strip of restaurants, bars and boutiques. There is also the bustling Grey Street, where some of Brisbane's defining art and culture destinations reside, while River Quay is home to some of Brisbane's finest chefs.

Plus, if a visitor has plans to take a bit of a 'breather' from AWISA they can quickly duck into Brisbane's CBD and downtown shops. The South Bank has public transport options in abundance.

Take a ride down the Brisbane River on the CityCat, plus ferries depart at regular intervals for city locations. South Bank has two conveniently located train stations and buses connect to Brisbane's Busway network to shopping and tourist destinations. There's lots more information about things to see and do in and around Brisbane at: [www.visitbrisbane.com.au](http://www.visitbrisbane.com.au)

So of course there will be plenty to keep the industry occupied at the AWISA show, but do attempt to find some time to explore South Bank attractions or to venture further afield. ■





# AWISA accommodation made easy

**YES BRISBANE** is the venue for the 2014 AWISA show and organisers are going all out to help exhibitors and visitors not completely familiar with Brisbane to find suitable and well-priced accommodation for the duration of the show.

Special accommodation deals negotiated for AWISA exhibitors, visitors and their partners are on the AWISA website: [www.awisa.com](http://www.awisa.com)

AWISA organisers have made every effort to ensure that the preferential hotel and apartment accommodation on the website is value-for-money and conveniently located in relation to the home of the show - Brisbane's South Bank precinct. The hotels include Stamford Plaza, Mantra Southbank, Rydges South Bank, The Sebel Suites, Mantra on Queen, Oaks Casino Towers, Oaks Festive Towers, Rendezvous Studio Hotel Brisbane On George and Riverside Hotel Southbank.

Details about all accommodation alternatives, such as locations, prices and amenities are available on the AWISA website. ■



# Mixing business with pleasure



**ALL YOU SOUTHERN** state dwellers – need a break in August? Well, make doubly sure you visit the AWISA 2014 exhibition at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre at the city's exciting South Bank precinct and have a Queensland holiday while you are about it.

AWISA organisers have pulled out all the stops to make sure your visit is enjoyable and rewarding, including arranging some outstanding before and after show short break destinations – all within a comfortable distance of Brisbane city.

Yes AWISA organisers are promoting several pre and post show accommodation and relaxation deals on the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast. Certainly a great time of the year to add a short holiday break to your business trip to AWISA. So no excuses about suffering the mid-winter blues, we are making a few days relaxation in Queensland's sunshine and laid-back lifestyle easy for you.

The destinations selected for AWISA exhibitors, visitors and their partners to consider are on the AWISA website: [www.awisa.com](http://www.awisa.com). To give you a 'taste' selected destinations include the five star Jupiters Hotel and Casino, located on the Gold Coast in Broadbeach next to shopping centres and beaches. Facilities include fifteen restaurants and bars, pool, spa, gymnasium, massage and beauty salon, 24-hour casino and spectacular stage shows.

Or what about heading for Noosa to the Sheraton Noosa Resort and Spa? This destination is Noosa's only five star deluxe hotel. You will be able to stroll along the stunning tree-lined boulevards in town, indulge in a spot of retail therapy or take time out for a leisurely meal and a drink. You will also be able to take in pristine beaches, wander through adjacent national parks and cruise Noosa's beautiful waterways.

Surfers Paradise's Marriott Resort and Spa is the Gold Coast's stylish playground for all generations. This breathtaking Gold Coast hotel is also an AWISA pick and is within easy reach of famous beaches, fashionable shopping complexes and picturesque hinterland valley. The hotel is set amidst lush tropical gardens and feature cascading waterfalls, rock grottos, spas and the area's only private salt water lagoon where guests can swim and snorkel with tropical fish.

To see other options have a look at the AWISA website or for more information about holidays in Queensland visit [www.queenslandholidays.com.au](http://www.queenslandholidays.com.au)

So, you can make attending AWISA 2014 more than just a business trip by staying a few nights before or after the show at one of the carefully selected holiday destinations detailed on the AWISA website – or for that matter elsewhere in Queensland – over to you! ■





## Getting from the airport

AWISA 2014 visitors arriving at the airport will find it easy to get to the show. Brisbane Airport is serviced by Airtrain. The Airtrain stations are part of both the domestic and international terminals, and the service takes only 20 minutes to the city. Passengers should get off the train at the South Brisbane station that is on the same city block as the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre.

The normal return fair from the airport to South Brisbane is \$31.00. AWISA has negotiated a special fare of \$20.00 for show visitors. This will only be available to show visitors who print off the offer letter from Airtrain that will be available at [www.awisa.com](http://www.awisa.com) closer to the show. Visitors must be carrying the letter to get the discount.

Luggage can be stored during the day in the luggage room in the venue foyer. Items are stored at owners risk.

AWISA 2014 is a trade only exhibition and all visitors are asked to register. Visitors can register on arrival at the exhibition, but it is preferred that they pre-register through the AWISA website [www.awisa.com](http://www.awisa.com)



byGeoff Bills

# Outlook

## Outlook for Housing

### RECENT TRENDS

Work done on new housing in Australia declined throughout 2011/12 but has since been increasing very gradually. Measured in constant 2011/12 prices, the value of work done increased from a seasonally-adjusted annual rate of \$39.2 billion in the June quarter of 2012 to a rate of \$42.4 billion in the September quarter of 2013. The September quarter result – the latest available – was up only 1 per cent on the previous quarter but was 5 per cent higher than a year earlier.

Over the year to September, as Chart 1 shows, activity increased very strongly in Western Australia (24%), quite strongly in New South Wales (10%) and South Australia (8%), and by a more modest 3 per cent in Queensland. In Victoria, where earlier activity had been relatively high, there was a fall of 2 per cent.

One of the features of the Australian housing market in recent times has been the strong growth in multi-unit construction. Over the year to September, work on flats, units, terraces and apartments increased by 19 per cent while work on detached houses fell by 2 per cent.

Between the September quarters of 2011 and 2013, multi-units' share of all work done on new housing rose from 33 per cent to 40 per cent. In New

South Wales their share increased from 42 to 52 per cent, in Victoria from 33 to 46 per cent, and in Queensland from 31 to 35 per cent.

Chart 2 shows that in the December quarter dwelling approvals moved higher in all of the larger states and sharply higher in many. In Tasmania and in both territories, approvals fell in the quarter but were still well ahead of their levels a year earlier.

Nationally, the trend in approvals increased by 8 per cent in the December quarter and was 24 per cent higher than a year ago. That suggests further increases in building activity in the months ahead.

Recent approvals also indicate a continuing trend towards multi-units. Nationally, approvals of multi-units increased by 13 per cent in the December quarter to be 37 per cent up on a year ago. Approvals of houses rose by only 3 per cent and were 14 per cent higher than a year earlier.

### POPULATION GROWTH

A look at one of the main drivers of new housing activity, population growth, does much to explain the upturn in approvals.

In the year to June 2013, Australia's population increased by 407,000: 6 per cent more than the increase in 2011/12 and 32 per cent more than

the increase in 2010/11. Natural increase of 162,700 was 2 per cent greater than in 2011/12 and net overseas immigration of 244,400 was 9 per cent greater.

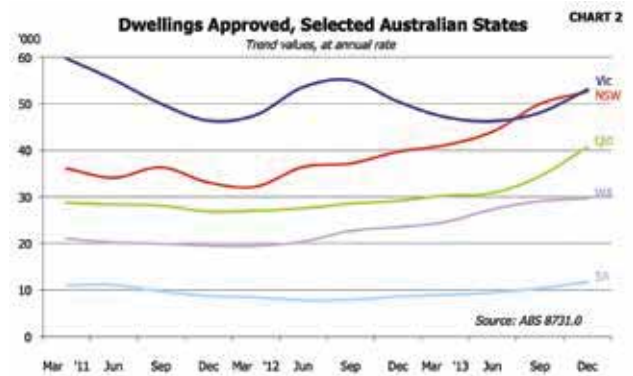
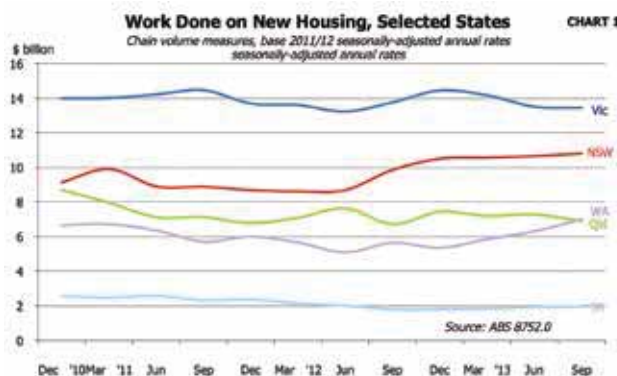
Growth accelerated strongly in New South Wales and Victoria but eased slightly in Queensland and Western Australia.

In the year to June, the increase in Australia's population was 26 per cent greater than the average annual increase over the previous decade; and it was enough to lift the underlying requirement for new housing in 2013/14 to around 193,000.

Only 161,980 dwellings were started in 2012/13, and we estimate that at June 2013 there was a modest shortage of housing of some 23,500 dwellings: equal to about two months supply.

Most of the shortage was in New South Wales and Western Australia, where there were shortages of around four months supply in each state. In most other states and territories there were minor shortages, but supply and potential demand were fairly evenly balanced. The exception was South Australia, where there was an over-supply of some 2,600 homes or nearly four months supply.

Recent increases in dwelling approvals, a faster-growing population, and the







### Geoff Bills

Geoff Bills is an independent economist with long experience analysing and forecasting economic activity in Australia.

existence of some pent-up demand all augur well for future housing activity.

Housing that is too expensive, however, may depress demand; and so may lack of confidence among potential buyers.

#### AFFORDABILITY OF HOUSING

Over the past year, house prices have risen in most states. According to RP Data-Rismark, at the end of December prices in the main capitals were 9.9 per cent higher than a year earlier. They were up 15.2 per cent in Sydney, 8.5 per cent in Melbourne, 5.3 per cent in Brisbane, 3 per cent in Adelaide and 10.2 per cent in Perth.

But with interest rates falling and incomes rising, the affordability of housing has still been improving. Over the year to September, affordability increased by 12 per cent nationally: by around 10 per cent in New South Wales and Western Australia, 11 per cent in Victoria, 14 per cent in South Australia and 15 per cent in Queensland.

As Chart 4 shows, in the September quarter of 2013, in all of the main states affordability was greater than at any time over the previous three years.

#### CONFIDENCE

Consumer confidence increased sharply after the election but has since lost those gains and sunk to below its

long-term average. In January, the index fell by 1.7 per cent as confidence about the economic outlook and about job prospects waned.

The 'time to buy a dwelling' index also fell but was still 5 per cent above its long-term average.

A recent survey by the Property Council of Australia and the ANZ Bank of some 2,600 respondents in property and construction, nevertheless found that confidence within the industry rose by 6 per cent in the March quarter of 2014 to be 31 per cent higher than a year earlier. The biggest increases on a year ago were in Queensland (46%) and Victoria (36%).

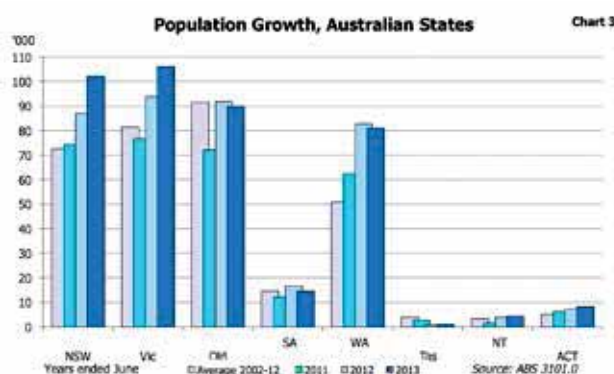
A further cut in interest rates could boost consumer confidence, but that seems unlikely to come soon. In announcing its decision to leave the cash rate unchanged, on 4 February, the Reserve Bank concluded that: 'On present indications, the most prudent course is likely to be a period of stability in interest rates.'

With the coming decline in mining investment and subdued prospects for non-mining business investment, economic growth is likely to remain slow in the months ahead and unemployment to rise; so another cut in rates seems likely later this year. Until then, no sustained lift in confidence can be expected. ■

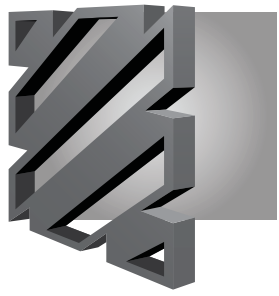
**FORECAST**

Dwelling starts are likely to have been about 166,000 in calendar 2013: up 9 per cent on starts of 151,900 in 2012.

With approvals rising from and annual rate of 163,000 in the first half of 2013 to an annual rate of 191,000 in the second half, my forecast sees starts increasing by 10 per cent to 183,000 in 2014.



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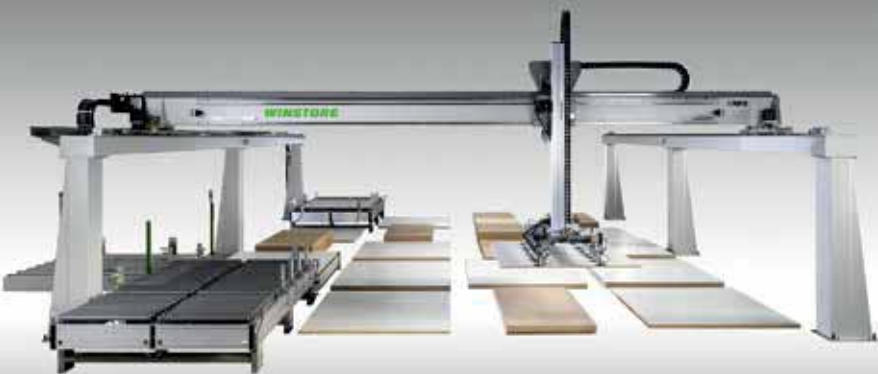
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by John Halkett

# Wooden building revolution

Concept illustration courtesy: Hayball



**THE DOCKLANDS LIBRARY** and Community Centre will be the centrepiece of a new civic heart in Victoria Harbour, Melbourne, housing a next generation library and community centre. The project, the first public Cross Laminated Timber (CLT) building to be constructed in Australia is a partnership between Lend Lease, Places Victoria and the City of Melbourne.

Not just another building or piece of architecture, the complex is an important piece of urban infrastructure that will deliver a number of life-style benefits, and also create one of Melbourne's most remarkable civic landmarks.

The Docklands complex is part of a not-so-quiet global revolution in high-rise wooden building construction that has now touched down in Melbourne. The first 'massive timber' construction in Victoria Harbour was the Forté residential tower. This ten storey 32.2 metres building is currently the tallest wooden apartment tower in the world. It is a revolution in the sense that both buildings, plus others on the drawing board, are being constructed from prefabricated CLT panels – no pre-cast concrete on site. These CLT panels consist of bonded, cross laminated single timber layers. The cross structure of CLT panels guarantees precise engineering performance and stability characteristics.

Sustainability and reduced environmental footprint qualities are drivers behind the widening use of CLT prefabricated technology, as are its similar levels of structural performance credentials to concrete, known thermal and acoustic attributes and about a two thirds of the weight of comparable

concrete buildings. The construction process is also cleaner, simpler and faster.

The Docklands complex was designed by a combined architectural team of Clare Design and Hayball. Kerry Clare said she and partner Lindsay had been engaged by the City of Melbourne to scope out library design concepts around for the city. "So even before the Docklands project got the green light we had developed a good understanding of what the city was looking for by way of modern library amenities."

Given their experience elsewhere in Victoria Harbour, Lend Lease advocated the virtues of lightweight CLT construction to the other project partners for the complex on an existing wharf site.

Kerry said that the reality was that if a more traditional concrete pre-cast slab construction system had been used, the additional costs of having to strengthening the wharf would; "have added significantly to the construction budget and program."

"However, using CLT panels as the structural element meant we had to be really meticulous to accommodate the spans and other design aspects to suit the space requirements of library shelving and general layout."

Kerry pointed out that the building design also incorporated other environmentally-friendly features, such as natural ventilation on the lower level and top floor, energy use minimisation technology and timber recycling.



## the most significant form of innovation in construction technology



Positioning CLT panels

“Of course the use of CLT construction means environmentally the building is terrific and really in a class all-of-its-own. It will set a bench mark for public buildings with its reduced carbon foot-print construction.”

Certainly progressive architects now see environmental, as well as more traditional performance attributes, as big pluses in today’s residential and commercial building markets. With plans to erect further wooden buildings in Sydney and Melbourne on the drawing-board CLT is now a serious alternative to pre-cast concrete and steel construction.

Lend Lease’s head of Timber Solutions Andrew Nieland said the Docklands civic complex would help to, “unlock a new era for sustainable development by offering a viable alternative to traditional carbon intensive construction systems.”

“CLT prefabrication is the most significant form of innovation in construction technology that Australia has seen in many years.”

The CLT panel structural component of the building has been produced by Stora Enso’s manufacturing facility in Austria. The estimated CLT panel erection time is six to eight weeks.

Stora Enso Timber Australia’s deputy managing director Erkki Välikangas said the Docklands Library and Community Centre will be a great example of CLT construction. “It will also be a natural extension to our business. Stora Enso has now been operating in Australia for more than ten years through four distribution centres around the country.”



Lead architects Kerry and Lindsay Clare ... use of CLT construction means that environmentally the building is in a class all of its own and will set a bench mark for public buildings with reduced carbon foot print construction.

So be warned, with compelling economic, construction efficiencies, green star credentials and environmental advantages, expect to see more CLT-based high rise and commercial building projects across Australia in the future. ■

# Open-heart operation

If you want to keep the position of the most modern Swiss kitchen manufacturer, flexibility, high-quality products and the right touch for the proper innovation at the right time are required. And Piatti has perfectly caught the right moment. With the investment for two new plants from the Homag Group, the Swiss market leader follows the principle of an intelligent and innovative production. On this occasion, the integration into the existing production process presented a special challenge. Reduced delivery times, increased production quality and flexible reaction to current market trends were the results. A positive side effect is that the employees are proud of their plant. And whatever is more important today than employees putting their heart and soul into their work with their products.

## “Three weeks from the order to the first cake”

Short delivery times, high flexibility and a quality at an extraordinary level: These are the features which inspire Piatti customers most. And the variety of the feasible kitchen dreams are remarkable: With more than 2,000 colours, an impressive range of materials, shapes, handles and accessories Piatti manages to implement nearly every conception. With a production of 1,000 furniture elements per day and a throughput time (from the order up to the assembly at the customer) of 12 working days about 14,000 kitchens and 8,000 wall cupboards are built at Piatti per year.

Piatti could not always meet these delivery times, because up to the installation of the new plant from the Homag Group in 2012 considerably older machines had been producing in the halls. Some machines were already 22 years old – and therefore did not correspond to the current technological standard. The old plant jacked up the production prices requiring on the one hand more personnel and on the other hand spare parts. Moreover, a totally out-of-date control no longer meet the demands for automation and flexibility.

## Already thinking of tomorrow today

“It was obvious for us: We invest into a completely new plant,” said Anton Zochbauer, director of production. With this project, Piatti set several goals at the same time. These goals included the promotion of the automation, the reduction of the production costs, the optimization of processes, the improvement of quality standards and the production of all standard products on one assembly line. Another fact to be taken into account: “The customers’ demands become more and more individual and the percentage of special furniture continuously increases,” said Zochbauer. In order to respond to this trend, it was their utmost concern to represent customised kitchens in a standard process and to structure their production in such a way that the internal carpenter’s shop can considerably be relieved. “We needed an assembly line, which can also flexibly manufacture special applications under economic aspects in batch size 1,” Zochbauer explains. “It was important for us that the new plant provides as many applications as possible - today and also for the future.” In order to meet this variety of goals, flexible and demanding machine technology was required as well as qualified staff.

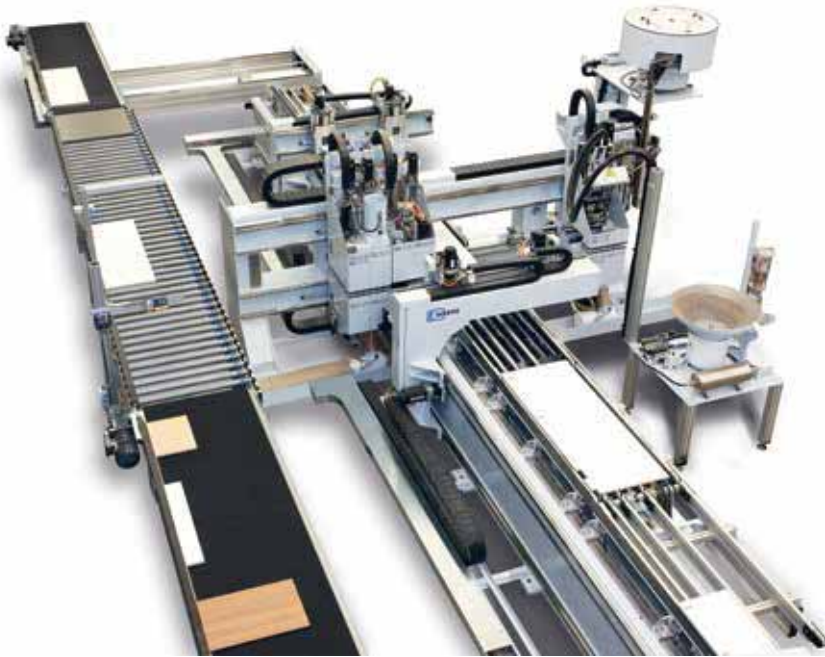
Against this background, Piatti looked for a professional partner – and they decided for the Homag Group. The know-how in drilling and fitting insertion from Weeke and Ligmatech competence in the assembly technology convinced the Piatti team. The integral concept and the customer-oriented service, the competitive costs for the operation of the plant and the reference visits at Gorenje in Slovenia and at Schmidt Cuisine in France, who already work very successfully with the plants from the Homag Group, were further decisive factors. In order to meet all requirements, they decided for a complex plant, consisting of several high-tech components from Weeke and Ligmatech:

Left: Piatti kitchen “Bianco Totale” with blank-looking fronts

The new assembly line “Rennerlinie”







### Flexible drilling and fitting insertion technology from Weeke:

- **Profi ABL – multi-purpose processing:** In order to cover such a diversified product range like the one from Piatti, a very flexible machine has to be used. Manifold carcass elements can be processed on highest level by the ABL 210 and ABL 220 from Weeke.
- **ABH 100 – one machine for all purposes:** With this throughfeed machine the floor boards are completely processed. The machine processes the top and bottom side as well as all four sides of the workpiece – and all that in one step and fully-automatically. Thus, Piatti can drill, route and equip the floor boards with base glides and mounting plates for fittings in one throughfeed. The ABH 100 automatically registers the correct processing program for the further processes by the barcode-based workpiece transport. Here Piatti mainly saves time. Moreover drilling for LED lights for the bottom boards of the wall cupboards is also effected fully automatically.
- **MPC 410 – simple handling by sophisticated design:** Piatti relies on the automatic Case Clamp MPC 410 from Ligmatech, with its high level of automation combined with simple handling. With the MPC 410 two sides can be fed into the press and aligned at the same time. This is a considerable ease of work for the operator. The boards are also fed automatically. The operator must only insert light and small workpieces such as traverses or rear panels manually. The carcass is fed out simultaneously with the infeed of the sides. Thus Piatti manages to press two carcasses per minute. For the final assembly the carcass is transferred to the assembly press MDE 160.
- **MDE 160 – No nails off target anymore:** This throughfeed press works extremely efficiently. The integrated nail robot automatically fixes the rear panels and wrong nailing is thus minimized. As a result, the products provide a high quality.

### “Open-heart operation”

The Homag Group supplied the first part of the plant in December 2011 with a transport line for packing and dispatch and the so-called “running line”. For this assembly line, the capacity is decisive. Wall and lower cupboards (standard) are produced here in high quantity – approx. 750 furniture elements per day. Beginning of 2013 the production of the third step followed: The “Flex line”. On this assembly line mainly tall cupboards, equipment cupboards and special furniture with quite different dimensions (smallest batch sizes, batch size 1) are produced – in fact approx. 250 furniture elements per day.

During the installation they had to cope with various challenges. A particular solution, for example, was the gap for the elevator into the 2nd storey. Reason: The carcasses are packed in the 2nd storey and the dispatch takes place in the 1st storey. The transport line with elevator directly in the production hall – a masterstroke of all project participants with regard to the planning.



Top: Ligmatech carcass assembly: The combination for higher capacity

Below: Transport line with elevator



Top left: MDE 160 -  
No nails off target

Below: A motivated  
team

### More time for creativity and innovation

Since 1948 Piatti has been standing for perfection and precision with the seal of quality "Made in Switzerland". The continuous improvement of the product quality has always been focused at. The new plant cannot only further increase the dimensional accuracy but also the safety in all Piatti's processes.

By means of the new plant Piatti restructured the complete production process and made it more efficient. The output has been considerably increased by automation, even with shorter working time per day. An order-bases production process is used for the orders now. Thus, Piatti has become more flexible – kitchens can be manufactured on a customized basis and the cost-intensive storage of individual components is no longer required. And the market for the kitchenware with continuously new and creative designs also presents a challenge for the kitchen manufacturers. The new assembly line, however, provides the suitable solutions for these challenges.

### New drive with motivated staff

"Our employees are simply proud of their plant," said Zoechbauer. He answered the question, how they achieved that, as follows. "Right from the beginning we integrated our employees into the project. Moreover, we allayed their "fears" regarding the new technology in time by intensive training. In an own project corner, all employees are informed about the state of the project, news and the building development. In addition, the employees are satisfied by the new and demanding tasks and the enormous physical relief by ergonomic workplaces. Another plus: The new Saturday off."

Altogether, the high motivation, the pride of the employees, the modern production plant and, of course, the new drive of the high-quality products make Piatti the kitchen manufacturer No. 1 in Switzerland. Zoechbauer proudly explained the reason for the company's success: "We offer the customer an adventure from the sale of the kitchen up to baking the first cake."

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### The Piatti company

As an ambitious young man, Bruno Piatti lays the foundation for his today's success in 1948 at its present location in Dietlikon in the barn of his parents' house. He hardly knew that his company would revolutionize years later the Swiss kitchen making.

As a pioneer in the kitchen industry, the company inaugurated one of the most modern kitchen productions in 2001. Piatti managed to produce high-quality kitchens at suitable prices thanks to a high level of automation. And the success still proves them right. In addition, the customers benefit from short delivery times apart from a high flexibility.

As certified specialized Minergie partner Piatti also bears responsibility and sets the benchmark for sustainable and environmentally friendly kitchen solutions.

At present, the kitchen manufacturer No. 1 in Switzerland produces more than 14,000 kitchens per year with 300 employees. More than 80 specialized dealers and 14 kitchen competence centres in Switzerland and Germany are the basis for a professional and solution-oriented customer consulting.

Since January 2012 the brands Piatti, Forster and Warendorf have offered the largest range of kitchens in Switzerland under the name "AFG Küchen AG". The advantage: three kitchen philosophies – from simple to exclusive, every required price range and a comprehensive sales network.



Photos courtesy: PIATTI and LIGMATECH





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## FCJA's profile on the rise in Canberra

**IN THE LAST** issue of AWISA - The Magazine, it was noted that the FCJA was continuing to push the 'level playing field' arguments with the new government once the federal election was done and dusted. The value of all this effort was clearly evidenced in an article in The Australian of 12 February that highlighted that the Coalition Government is now moving to toughen its stance on anti-dumping matters. This a position that the FCJA has been strongly advocating on behalf of the Furniture Cabinets and Joinery sector, both before the election and since, to help protect the industry's businesses and jobs.

FCJA representatives again met in Canberra with ministers and advisory staff, as well as key officials in the Department of Industry last December, and it is evident that the FCJA has been recognised as the 'peak body' representing the furniture, cabinet and joinery industries in Australia, when it comes to government relationships and programs.

Indeed, the government has agreed to conduct a series of joint Industry Leader Forums with the FCJA which will provide a strong and ongoing conduit between the industry and government. The FCJA has been liaising closely with the Industry Department over the last month to finalise the nature of these Forums, the first of which will be held in Sydney on 9 April 2014.

The intention is that these will be open meetings, which will give endorsement to the key issues that need to be addressed, but specific action items will be assigned at the end of each meeting.

The second Forum will be held in conjunction with the AWISA 2014 in Brisbane in August, to be followed by another Forum before the end of the year and then the next around March 2015 (one will be in Perth and the other in Melbourne). The series of Forums will culminate in Canberra in June/July 2015, in Parliament House, with the intention that the Industry Minister will chair it and that firm policy/strategy recommendations will be agreed.

This is a major achievement and recognition of the positive effort made by the FCJA. It also highlights the need for a peak body and AWISA has been an integral driver in creating such a vehicle that enables stronger engagement for the industry with government.

However, the FCJA is not just focussing on the Industry portfolio. It is pursuing all other avenues to ensure there is a widespread understanding of the key issues confronting the FCJ sector. The FCJA also developed and lodged a submission with the Parliamentary Finance and Public Administration References Committee Inquiry into Commonwealth Procurement Procedures.

The submission highlights that the Australian furniture, cabinet and joinery industry has major costs imposed through the need to abide by high Australian regulations and standards but government favours cheaper imports that are not subjected to these same costs and do not meet local standards. The submission calls for more equitable treatment for local industry and an end to this reverse

discrimination against Australian made FCJ products.

And the FCJA's concerns were also highlighted in documents lodged with the Australian Government Economic Review of South Australia and Victoria, highlighting the significant contribution that the FCJ industries make to the Australian economy. The submission stressed that Government manufacturing policy appears to be geared towards big corporates who will move offshore without a moment's hesitation, whereas the real strength and the bulk of employment is embodied in the small and medium sized businesses which government seems to ignore. ■

The Furniture Cabinet Joinery Alliance is an alliance of the main trade associations representing the FCJ sector in Australia. The board is made up of representatives from the Australian Furniture Association, Australian Shop and Office Fitting Industry Association, Australian Window Association, Cabinet Makers and Designers Association, Furnishing Industry Association of Australia, and AWISA. Any reader who wants to contribute to the efforts of the FCJA should contact the trade association that best represents their part of the industry, and if not already a member, should join and become active in its affairs.



# Blum delivers functionality for dream kitchen in SA

One of the first  
kitchens in  
Australia to take  
full advantage  
of the new  
Tandembox  
Antaro

Peta and Gavin Oster are no strangers to planning a new home. Their beautiful home in Myponga, South Australia is the third residence the couple have built and for this project, they were determined to make their new kitchen truly practical as well as beautiful for their family of four.

“Our last kitchen was almost all cupboards with 4 cramped drawers and reaching to get to things at the back was a real pain”, Peta recalled. “We knew we wanted more drawers for better use of space, no wasted corners and a layout that made the kitchen function better with everything easy to reach.”

Peta and Gavin also planned for this to be their last new home project so they wanted quality fittings that would last the distance.

Through a family friend, Peta and Gavin were introduced to Adelaide based Goolwa Kitchens & Wardrobes (GKW) and owners, Ben Fatchen and Mike Schirmer. GKW is an award winning kitchen design and manufacturing company that specialises in high quality kitchens with Blum cabinet solutions.

Using Blum’s proven Dynamic Space principles, GKW helped them with a design that not only satisfied their wishlist but also included Blum innovative lift systems and inner dividing

solutions which they didn’t know were possible.

Their kitchen is designed around the Tandembox Antaro drawer system. It incorporates Blumotion soft-close technology on most cabinets with selected drawers and the overhead cabinets featuring Servo-Drive electrical motion support for enhanced comfort and access.

The kitchen is a symmetrical design with a long preparation and sink island bench opposite a matching length cooking and preparation area. A separate walk-in pantry caters for non-consumable and refrigerated storage, leaving the clean lines of the opposing benchtops uninterrupted.

Cabinet drawer fronts are arctic white polyurethane and the blood-red glass splashback provides a dramatic contrast to the anthracite stone benchtops.

This kitchen is one of the first in Australia to take advantage of the benefits of the modular Tandembox Antaro drawer system. The system uses a clear-cut, rectangular design that can be combined with a gallery or with design elements to create a closed pull out that provides up to 55% more storage space.

The Myponga kitchen features silk white metal drawer sides with higher drawer fronts concealing inner drawers that provide the maximum use of





space in specific locations. Full extension runners give complete access to drawer contents and increase storage space by up to 30%.

The Tandem concealed runner technology provides unsurpassed running motion with separate vertical and horizontal force absorption – independent of the loading. High dynamic carrying capacity of 65kg with optimised stabilisation provides versatility for heavy pots and plates.

The kitchen includes Blum Orga-Line - a high quality dividing system with a sophisticated rectangular design consistent with the minimalistic silk white drawer sides. The adjustable Orga-Line system is put to good use in the Myponga kitchen to maximise the use of drawer space for cutlery, plates, pots, lids, storage containers, condiments and other utensils. Items are held securely for safe storage and the Orga-Line elements are easily removed for easy, dishwasher- safe cleaning.

The kitchen also features Aventos HF, Blum's award-winning fittings system for bi-fold overhead cabinets, including high, mid-wall or large cabinets. Doors open quietly and effortlessly and stop at every desired position to ensure handles always remain within reach.

The handle-less design of the Myponga kitchen

overheads is made possible with Servo-Drive electrical motion support which opens with a gentle touch. Closing is triggered by pressing an ergonomically positioned button.

In addition, the under-bench waste bin pull-out is fitted with Servo-Drive Uno and can be opened by pressing on the door front with a knee, hip or foot when hands are full.

"I find this really makes food preparation and cleaning up faster and easier because I don't need to put things down to open the bin by hand," said Peta.

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### Top designers insist on Blum

Many of Australia's top designers have embraced Blum's Dynamic Space principles as a framework for the development of beautiful, practical kitchens. Lynn Malone is a Sydney-based interior designer who specialises in industry-leading kitchen designs that are inspirational as well as functional. Her design work has featured in over 70 design and lifestyle magazines in Australia and internationally.

Lynn believes that the Myponga kitchen is a good example of how Blum can help designers achieve great outcomes.

"It was clear from Peta's initial objectives that practicality was a major focus for them. It's one thing to design a beautiful kitchen but without function, form is superfluous."

"Blum's Dynamic Space is a wonderful way for homeowners and designers to talk on the same level about kitchen

workflow, space and motion – the three key focus areas that influence the practicality and functionality in any kitchen."

"For anyone starting to prepare a brief for a kitchen designer or manufacturer, I'd recommend they visit the Blum website and find out about Dynamic Space before they do anything else."

---

Lynn Malone



by Dean Brakell

General manager

Furnishing Industry Association of Australia

# Government procurement - it's a no-brainer

one way of developing manufacturing of all persuasions in Australia is through government procurement



**FIAA NOTES** with interest that state and federal governments are looking at current policy and policy framework when it comes to government procurement.

In NSW for example, the current contract 1006, Lot 8a-8d Furniture is under review. In the federal government space, there is a Senate enquiry of 'Current ratio of Australian goods and services verses imported goods and services utilised by the Commonwealth through procurement procedures.'

FIAA supports the Furniture Cabinets Joinery Alliance (FCJA) submission to the Senate enquiry made on behalf of the industry.

In the media of late, there has been much said about government handouts to industries such as the car industry, the removal of tariffs and the closure of manufacturing plants throughout Australia. While the potential loss of jobs will be devastating, one way of developing manufacturing of all persuasions in Australia is through government procurement.

## Value for the tax payer

To quote directly from the NSW Manufacturing Industry Action Plan, September 2012, "Procurement officers need to consider, 'Value for money', look beyond 'least cost' and should consider a cost-benefit approach that considers such multiplier benefits and whole life costs, including in relation to maintenance, servicing, quality and ongoing supplier relationships."

Procurement, when used correctly, can stimulate jobs, raise tax revenue and go in some way of addressing skill shortages throughout Australia. This isn't about going back to the bad old days of tariffs and 'protectionism'. On the contrary, "Procurement processes should ensure local suppliers have full and fair access to supply opportunities under direct government contracts and with prime contractors for major projects involving government funding. This includes consistency in relation to conformity with standards and no preferential treatment, deliberate or otherwise, for offshore suppliers."

## Level playing field

If imported goods and products are fit for purpose, have been independently tested and certified as meeting Australian Standards and in the case of timber or timber related products, have been manufactured from wood and wood products that are independently certified as meeting global forest management standards, then let it compete on the Australian market place with Australian manufacturers.

FIAA recommends that commercial and government specifiers, buyers or suppliers of timber furniture, joinery products and wood panels, for whatever use, need to be certain these products:

- Meet the applicable Australian Standards (for example meet safe levels of formaldehyde such as with E0 and E1 board products).
- Have been tested in an accredited laboratory and are independently certified.
- Contain no illegally logged material.
- Hold independent third-party certification.

## Best practice

New Zealand, for example, has gone a long way to ensuring its procurement policy framework is fair and equitable and doesn't impact on its international treaty obligation through free trade agreements. For example, Rule 65, Timber and wood products states:

"Agencies must apply the New Zealand Timber and Wood Products Procurement Policy when procuring timber and wood products." The key features of that policy are:-

- Agencies are required to seek legally-sourced timber and wood that can be verified by recognised third-party certification.
- Agencies are encouraged to buy timber and wood products from sustainably-managed sources that can be verified by recognised third-party certification.
- Agencies are required to document, for audit purposes, the verification of the legality of timber and wood purchased.



Dean Brakell

It is obvious that New Zealand has got this policy right. It doesn't discriminate against imported goods or services or favour local manufacturers; it just has the policy and rules in place to provide open and fair competition that supports innovation and helps create a competitive, productive supply base-that supports economic growth and development.

The local New Zealand manufacturers compete on a level playing field.

**Conclusion**

The Australian government and its state and territory partners, through their combined buying power, can play a leading role in ensuring manufacturing has a major role to play now and

into the future. Governments should adopt a procurement approach rather than a purchasing approach. When it is all said and done, it is taxpayer dollars and it should be spent to maximise full value for money.

To pinch a quote favoured by my predecessor Martin Lewis (words of Mahatma Gandhi):

"I must not serve my distant neighbours at the expense of my nearest."

Mahatma got it right but we need a new mantra - we must serve our citizens first.

Comments can be made directly to Dean Brakell, General manager FIAA Ltd [dbrakell@fiaa.com.au](mailto:dbrakell@fiaa.com.au)



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# ArciTech – a revolution in drawer systems

revolution

In keeping with the company's tradition of intensive research and development Hettich has gone back to scratch to fashion its new kitchen drawer system ArciTech. Representing a major investment in research and innovation ArciTech is the culmination of a substantial development effort that, for example, involved the testing of 36 runner profile options.

Chief executive officer Dr Andreas Hettich described the development of ArciTech as: "playing the whole piano." He said the fundamentals were to develop a drawer system that had a broad platform concept with maximum flexibility, and with a wealth of options for front, back and side panels.

"ArciTech is an innovative drawer system with ultra smooth running action and unrivalled stability with up to 80 kg load capacity combined with soft closure."

Dr Hettich pointed out that Hettich drawer systems are installed in more than one and a half million homes in more than a hundred countries every year.

The revolutionary ArciTech drawer system is distinguished by its incredibly smooth running action and exceptional stability. The Hettich Actro runner's prism principle gives it impressively smooth, even performance catering to loading categories of 40, 60 and 80 kg.

The ArciTech product line-up based on a single platform provides two side profile heights in white as well as six rear-panel heights. For the high-end segment, the range comes with the option of a 126 mm side profile height with Design Side in glass or TopSide and rear-panel height of 250 mm.

While mainly used in kitchens and bathrooms applications, the ArciTech drawer system is sparking considerable interest among living-room and bedroom furniture manufacturers.

Dr Hettich concluded that with consumer wishes being varied, manufacturers are keen to give their furniture – as well as cabinets – marks of distinction. "We believe that Hettich now has the right drawer system for every taste, every consumer wish and every quality segment."

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by John Halkett

# Inside today's modern Sydney kitchen



**HOUSE PRICES** are going through-the-roof with a possible 30 percent increase predicted over the next twelve months by some pundits. After years in the doldrums residential building starts are on the move in the right direction, and expenditure on additions and alterations has climbed. Amongst all this euphoria, what is happening in the heart of the house – in the kitchen?

On the one hand there is an aging population, either shifting into more 'compact', but up-market housing where quality and convenience are keys. On the other hand 'integrated' kitchens for contemporary family living are also a modern trend. Either way, efficient use of space, easy access, minimal bending, kitchen utility, energy efficiency and 'intelligent' appliances are all important issues.

## It is all happening in Sydney do I hear you say?

Kitchens exercise the minds of everyone in home building and renovation businesses. From an instinctive feel for what works, to sophisticated computer-based modelling, kitchens remain at the centre of house appeal.

With the evidence suggesting that home purchasing decisions are substantially influenced by kitchen design and functionality, Sydney's architects, builders and cabinet-makers have a keen interest in the changing trends, fads, lifestyle choices and budgets that sit behind kitchen design.

So kitchen design that enhances the overall appeal of houses is critical. Smart cupboards, clever use of space, efficient storage systems and modern appliances are all noticeable Sydney kitchen fashionable trends.

Open-plan living and more relaxed lifestyles mean that the modern Sydney kitchen is a multi-functional space, juggling roles according to the time of day and who is using it. Yes - things have certainly changed in the busiest room in the house. Once purely a work area, these days the kitchen is the multi-tasking hub of the home, serving as a living and dining room, home office, family space and entertainment area all combined.

So what are some of the overarching considerations that now impact on kitchen design decisions, hardware products, building materials, appliances and manufacturing processes that go into modern kitchen design?

In today's modern Sydney kitchen gone are hyper detailed and overwrought fussy looking cabinets, replaced by full overlay slab panel door and drawer fronts. Decorative pulls are on the way out with finger pulls becoming the more popular choice. These can be pulls that are cut into the lip of the panel or small finger grabs that lay on top of the door. Either way, the goal is less visual clutter.

Aesthetic considerations have also seen greater use of glass, aluminium, minimalist finishes and also a greater emphasis on task, accent and utility lighting. Also finishes have become a more demanding element of modern kitchen design, with high gloss and bold colours and veneer finishes.

The ultimate Sydney kitchen is a convergence of sleek function, beautiful elements and meticulous attention to detail. Today kitchen design is more than just a focus on function, it is a reflection of modern city lifestyles.

The Housing Industry Association (HIA) highlights the amount of money Australians spend each year on kitchen and bathroom renovations. In value terms, the kitchen industry was worth in excess of \$6 billion a year.

"Despite evidence to suggest that detached houses in Australia may be gradually declining in size, there has been a clear trend towards larger kitchens for some time now," says HIA chief economist Dr Harley Dale.

"There is growth in popularity in the use of storage solutions with soft closing draws, lift-up door operating systems and touch opening door and drawer systems."

In terms of kitchen appliances, the greatest increase was for wine cooler-fridges, integrated televisions, and European



Modern kitchen design sees a decline in usage of stainless steel, concrete, and timber bench tops. The use of glass and engineered stone splash backs are on the rise.



freestanding stoves and dishwasher drawers. Name brands are certainly in vogue. They are high quality, function extremely well and add long-term value.

Attention to design aspects that accommodate entertainment and internet capacity and that have a focus on water conservation and energy efficiency are seen as progressive aspects of modern kitchens.

Another emerging trend seen in both traditional family homes and city apartment living is for much more 'seamless' indoor-outdoor living styles. Outdoor living enviably means outdoor eating and therefore cooking. So kitchens need to be positioned and designed to support this popular aspect of contemporary lifestyles.

There are renovation opportunities for home owners to consider creating versatile indoor - outdoor living/dining areas, according to Archicentre, the building inspection and design service of the Australian Institute of Architects.

Edward Lukac from Archicentre said one of the most cost effective ways of boosting the value of a home is to extend out into the garden by opening up the home and creating an indoor-outdoor link to create a 'wow' factor for the property and increase its livability.

"Many home owners facing higher cost of living pressures and low interest rates on savings may see a well designed renovation as a way of both improving lifestyle and the value of the family home rather than moving house."

So, developing relationships with designers and understanding design trends is an important part of



intelligence gathering related to demographic, lifestyle, family function, social and cultural factors, plus the economic trends behind today's kitchen industry.

A final word of caution to kitchen industry suppliers, kitchen manufacture and fit-out remain fiercely cost competitive. So modern CNC machinery that can deliver precision manufacturing that does not compromise quality is essential. Equally, surface and hardware that express quality and functionality but remain cost competitive, is another central doctrine of the business. Good luck! ■

Today 'smart' kitchen design that makes family chores easier is a winner. Also high gloss and bold colours are popular.

by Simon Hodgson

# Manufacturing trends in the woodworking industry

**EARLY IN 2010**, in this column, I wrote about manufacturing within the kitchen and bathroom industry. Both the manufacturers featured in that article continue to support the retail sector and a variety of businesses across the country and like many others don't see a change in the trend towards a more European operating style, one where wholesaling and retailing rarely take place in the same building.

There's no question that manufacturing has suffered in this country over the last five to ten years. It's a fact that, despite falling figures in both manufacturing output and manufacturers themselves, the federal government has ignored pleas from industry groups and continued to be a thorn in the side of the manufacturing sector. The continual decline in manufacturing has been highlighted extensively in the last six months with the three major car manufacturers announcing, in relatively quick succession, the decision to cease manufacturing in Australia.

Amidst the blame game surrounding the non continuation of Ford and Holden, Toyota's Japan-based management, with a detached coldness, simply decided to wind up its Australian

operations, citing global conditions and market realities that make Australia's bit of the show uneconomic. Like all closures its implications extend well beyond just Toyota, marking the sad end of an extensive sophisticated industry that for all its critics, had substantially shaped the Australian economic achievement, moulding the cultural, architectural, and technological character of post-war Australia. But markets do not run on emotion alone, and industries cannot survive on past sales and nostalgia.

And so is the case for the kitchen manufacturing sector.

The biggest threat doesn't emanate out of Europe – it stems from Asia. Whilst European manufacturing appears to be on the improve, Asian imports, with all the associated inherent issues over board quality, cheap labour etc, continue to flood the market either via flat pack hardware store sales or through mass home builders and multi unit developers dealing direct with Asian manufacturers.

In 2008, Australia moved from being a low cost environment to a high cost environment and is now ranked the third most expensive country in which to conduct business – a significant issue affecting manufacturing competitiveness. Professor Goran Roos, appointed as South Australia's 20th "Thinker of Residence" and acclaimed author of "Manufacturing into the Future" says because the shift to a high cost environment has occurred relatively quickly, many businesses and systems which support the manufacturing industry have not been able to make the change required to compete successfully.

Compounding this, over the past decade, Australia has experienced a flattening trend in productivity. Although the Australian economy has experienced average annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rates ahead of many other developed economies, ours dropped over the past decade and is only now showing signs of relative improvement. Sometime around 2002, Australian productivity went from growing substantially faster to growing substantially slower than the OECD average. We were still ahead in percentage terms, but growing slower. Added to this, Australia's innovation performance over the past eight years slipped from 5th to 15th according to the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Index.

But the key factor lies within manufacturing as a percentage of GDP. Manufacturing in Australia was 25% of GDP in the 60's – now it's less than 10%.

Recent experience with the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) highlighted the importance of maintaining the full spectrum of manufacturing capability in the broad economy. Evidence from Germany, Switzerland and other high value-add manufacturing countries in Europe, demonstrates that business culture and economic policy settings have kept





## focus your skills on where you are most productive and profitable

manufacturing a strong contributor to production, productivity and employment. This enabled Germany to survive the GFC much better than other leading developed economies.

The ability of manufacturing firms to provide solutions, rather than simple items of production and the growing role of manufacturing services and support is of increasing importance. Such behaviour is evidence of Australian firms transforming themselves from just a manufacturer or service provider to a total package problem-solver for their customers.

It is a smart move to add services to products because it is less risky to develop new services than new products. Services have ever-expanding boundaries and are not constrained by what the product can be first seen to do. A firm that provides services does not have to retool or invest in expensive and untried technologies.

The move made by Australian firms to 'selling solutions' is a competitive response so that they can succeed in an increasingly volatile and globalised business environment.

One such manufacturer in this sector is Cabinets Online, based in Queensland. Starting in 2003, Cabinets Online has provided Brisbane's boutique custom cabinetmakers and retail kitchen showrooms with the ability to have their whole manufacturing process outsourced. They operate a unique, completely digital system that allows customers to migrate electronic cabinetry designs from "CAD" software to the company's online B2B portal. This portal also allows them to obtain quotes for full custom manufactured cabinets and electronically track the progress of jobs as part of their "Design, Sell, Order and Project Manage" online facility.

I recently conducted an interview with Cabinets Online managing director Cameron Cox, about the industry and manufacturing and started by asking why their business has succeeded, where others have failed. "What we developed was a business that offered both retail kitchen showrooms and cabinetmakers the ability to outsource their manufacturing needs by ordering fully assembled cabinets, custom cut to the millimetre, complete with hardware, ready to be installed on site. We also embraced the digital world and set about developing our business to be completely digital. Everything from our customer communication to our supplier ordering is online. It provides our customers with the ability to import designs from certain software directly into our system, to quickly create pricing proposals and then track the progress of their project from quoting right through production to delivery. This meant that not only could we help our business partners absorb the impact of the fluctuating market, we could also streamline their processes with our online system while simultaneously eliminating humans errors involved in phone ordering."

According to figures released by the Housing Industry Association, Queensland kitchen renovations in 2009 totaled just over 95,000, yet in 2012 (with a suggested decline of the number of manufacturers in the same period of 8%) there were over 105,000 kitchens renovated! It's certainly one factor in the growth of Cabinets Online, but where does Cameron attribute the remainder?

"Your article in 2010 was very accurate and timely, but from my perspective what is happening is simply a Darwinian process. Stronger, smarter, evolving businesses are what survive and thrive and will continue to do so. The major kicker is that the manufacturing and marketing technology change is happening too fast for the average business to keep up with. Reinvestment and retraining to stay competitive is almost impossible for any player within this cottage industry to cope with unless your business is lean, creative, and always ready to learn and more importantly evolve. These are the core strengths and foundations of Cabinets Online, basically what keeps us growing in a diminishing manufacturing marketplace."

"The principles your article point out time and time again are very simple, focus your skills on what you (as a business owner) are most productive and profitable at - if that's manufacturing, build. If that's selling, design. Try and do both and you are just a T-Rex running from the asteroid!"

So four years on, it's still the same message - are you listening? ■





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# Can a nesting machine be paid off in 12 months?

For 55-year-old Alf Cleverdon the decision to go the technology route, biting the bullet to buy both an edge bander and a CNC was not all about the bottom line, but about regaining control over the quality and craftsmanship that he sees as the linchpin of his Carrum Downs business.

Son and partner, Paul Cleverdon, recalls that the pair deliberated long and hard over the decision. Not only was it a big call for a two man business to take on a debt after 12 months of tough times, but it was a tougher call for a pair that hadn't physically operated the high tech equipment. Paul was quietly confident that the investment was the way to go and the figures stacked up. Having arrived at a consensus, they were faced with one other problem – finding equipment that could be accommodated in their constrained workshop.

Responding to a timely e-mail from Gabbett Machinery that offered an edge bander/CNC package ultimately provided the answer when Matt Gabbett visited and suggested very compact solutions – a K260 Evo edgebander and Pratrix S CNC flatbed router to replace an old edge bander, panel saw and boring machine. Paul said that the decision then was simply a 'no brainer.' "The machines were very compact. Other routers we had looked at needed safety mats, safety cages and a lot of other things whereas with the Pratrix all of the safety features are built in so you don't need to have a big area," he said. The pair's hesitancy about being able to drive the technology was quickly allayed. "The installation and set-up was completed in just over a week and we both had a full grasp of it within that time."

"The Gabbett people taught us how to use the software and how the machine worked and were very comprehensive. We turned out the first full job within a fortnight of the installation – cutting, edging, assembling and putting it out the door. And we are both now using it. Our cost per square metre to outsource work was 50% more than our current cost for materials to do the same job, so even when our labour is added we are better off. Month to month, job to job we are in front and the equipment has only been in place for three months. It has saved us the cost of employing someone full time to stand at the panel saw all day just cutting."

By comparison, this equipment does everything. "I can easily see it paying for itself in 12 months and once we own it outright it's there for us seven days a week, 24 hours a day without taking holidays or sick days." Paul admits that backup was an initial concern, but he quickly realised that Gabbett too is a family run company like his own, albeit much larger. "Matt Gabbett put us at ease, detailing the size of their national service network and parts operation. When we have had a teething problem we have discovered that their telephone support is great and that they are quick to actually send someone out to our workshop if necessary. Their after sales service is faultless." With the Melbourne housing market picking up and work starting to flow in from their long-time customers, word of mouth referrals and their core of builder customers, Paul and Alf are starting to seriously consider employing an apprentice.

In the meantime, Alf is happy that he has more control over the quality of the products he is producing. "We have 100% control over what we are doing and as a company that only uses all Australian or European made quality materials that is very important. Our quality commitment brought us repeat business and word of mouth referrals to keep us going during the tough times and now with quality, well supported technology we are more confident than ever of being able to profit from the good times in an improving market," Paul said.

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## Gabbett gets social

Want to keep up to date with the latest aluminium and woodworking machine specials? 'Like' Gabbett Machinery's facebook page and be the first to know.

Gabbett facebook is aimed squarely at Australian and New Zealand machinists. Gabbett will share new product releases and news, so keep up to date with what's happening locally, and all the industry trends from this part of the world.

Find the links at [www.gabbett.com](http://www.gabbett.com)



# Fully automatic recuts in one cycle

## Holzma HKL 300 angular saw with CombiTec option

Holzma offers a special recut option specifically for industrial batch size 1 manufacturing: CombiTec. It is available for the HKL 300 ProfiLine angular saw. This innovation carries out the better part of all recuts in a fully-automated process, saving considerable time and money.

Fully automated processing of recuts has been possible on the HKL 300 CombiLine angular system for some time – thanks to a trimming unit integrated in the rip saw. What's new is that recuts can now be dealt with in one cycle without a trimming unit. This reduces not only investment costs but also operational and tool costs. "In comparison to other solutions, we are far cheaper with this system. And we can reduce waste rates still further by using a thin saw blade," confirms Volker Kussmaul, head of sales systems and production lines at Holzma.

## Already proving a success in practice

The process works simply and reliably: the rip saw no longer deals just with rip cuts, but also, as needed, with recuts – using one and the same saw blade. This is achieved in the following way. Where recuts are required, the panel is not cut along the entire length, but only to up to a defined point. The downstream cross-cut saw completes the cross cuts in the usual way, making two cross cuts where the recut was before effected. As far as possible, the software positions waste parts exactly in these positions in the cutting pattern. This additionally saves time and money. "This new system is already working very successfully for our first customers,"

states Volker Kussmaul and continues: "Practice has impressively confirmed the potential of this solution."

The new recut feature CombiTec is available for the HKL 300 ProfiLine. This angular saw offers a saw blade projection of up to 95 mm, allowing it to cut with ease both batch size 1 and small series, in multi-shift operation if desired.

## The technology

The new CombiTec system necessitated further development of a number of machine components and also of the software, namely the Holzma machine control CADmatic and the optimization software Cut Rite.

In order to achieve fully automatic recuts using the saw blade, Holzma has, for example, equipped the angular saw with special measuring and positioning systems. The reasons for this are that, for recuts, the panel must be positioned with great precision, especially at the rip saw, and furthermore that the

saw carriage must allow the saw blade to be raised or lowered at precisely the correct position. The integrated technology ensures that this is the case, thus providing the accuracy typical of Holzma machines.

## More features for still higher performance

In addition to the "recuts" option, Holzma recommends the saw be equipped with other proven features such as the Holzma Power Concept, which increases the output of the cross-cut saw, and the Speed package, which allows greater speed throughout the entire process. Equipping the saw with an automatic waste removal system is particularly recommended, because this then allows trim and waste parts to fall directly, via flaps, onto a removal belt that transports them to a waste chopper or grinder.

## Efficient and fast

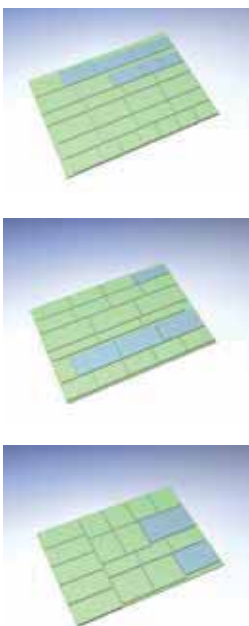
Holzma is primarily targeting the new HKL 300 CombiTec at industrial enterprises that produce small batches or even in batch size 1. However, centres providing cutting services also benefit from the new system. It offers flexibility in production and helps reduce storage area and stocks. It also offers speed and efficiency – Holzma is confident that the system offers one of the most powerful units in the batch-size-1 sector. On the one hand, because manual recuts are usually no longer necessary, which saves a lot of time and extra work steps, and on the other, because the Power Concept offers a huge reduction in cycle times.

## One saw – many benefits

The HKL 300 ProfiLine with CombiTec option produces small batches, or batches of just 1 piece, on demand and with virtually no restrictions on the choice of cutting patterns. Even complex patterns are possible because the saw deals with nearly all the recuts automatically during the regular cutting process. This speeds up production and additionally reduces the number of manual work steps. This results in shorter production times and a clear downward trend in the costs per part.

## Focus on the core competency of Holzma

The new CombiTec solution allows Holzma to focus on its core competency – sawing. The advantage: customers are able to benefit from mature, sophisticated technology and maximum reliability in terms of performance, precision and efficiency.



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# Win trips to visit AWISA 2014

Wilson and Bradley is excited for AWISA 2014 and cannot wait for the show to get underway. After a very successful show in Sydney in 2012 the anticipation in seeing what Brisbane will bring is growing.

The Wilson and Bradley stand this year will feature a comprehensive array of products including a full range of Wesco and economy waste bins, a brand new Sige Infinity Plus range of wire ware, Blum Tandembox Antaro, Tandembox Intivo and Aventos as well as a new range of handles, AliFrost doors and alfresco solutions as well as a design concept which surpasses anything which has been seen at past AWISA shows.

Wilson and Bradley is so excited about this year's show that the company is going to pay for one lucky customer from every state to travel to the show.

Wilson and Bradley is offering customers an opportunity to visit the AWISA 2014 show in Brisbane on them. Every



order placed on the website between 1 March and 31 May 2014 that is \$1000.00 ext GST or over will go into the draw to win a trip to AWISA, as well as earn a \$50 eftpos card.

The prize includes 2 return flights from any Australian capital city to Brisbane as well as 2 night's twin share accommodation. To see the full details of the promotion as well as terms and conditions, please visit the Wilson and Bradley website at [www.wilbrad.com.au](http://www.wilbrad.com.au)

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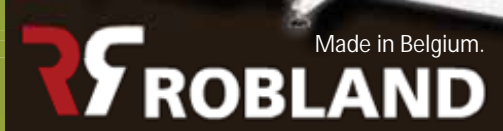
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## Versatility is the key to success

Doors aren't just doors; they can make or break the entire design of a kitchen. Those who agree with this statement will appreciate what's on offer at Alsert Doors.

Nowhere else in Australia is there the range of inserts that Alsert Doors has to offer: toughened glass, laminated glass, mirror glass, painted toughened glass, acrylics plus many more. Alsert also has the largest range of frame profile finishes in the country: clear anodised, brushed stainless, gloss steel and two new additions, gloss white aluminium and gloss black aluminium. Most of the range is exclusive including a new clear anodised handle that integrates neatly into the frame profile.

Alsert's doors are custom made in Queensland using furniture grade aluminium frames designed, extruded and anodised in Germany. The company's factory in Queensland produces quality doors for kitchens across Australia.

"Versatility is the name of the game and our products are adaptable to all available hardware applications. Australian kitchen professionals know quality design, superior materials and world-class craftsmanship. We respect this and have made it a focus on what we do." says Richard Banaszczyk, sales manager at Alsert Doors. "The fact that we offer a 10 year warranty on assembly pays testament to this."

As all good kitchen designers would know, design is all about detail, balance, sophisticated elegance and functionality. Alsert Doors hits all these nails on the head.

Alsert Doors supply aluminium cabinet doors to discerning kitchen designers Australia-wide. Richard says, "Our customers tell us that having a large range under one roof makes their lives easier and their clients happy."

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# Hettich 125 years – now more than cuckoo clocks



From humble beginnings in Germany's famous Black Forest in 1888, Hettich has a history defined by outstanding engineering precision, excellence and innovation.

Hettich's first engineering venture was the development of a purpose-built machine, the so-called bending machine. With this 'invention' Karl Hettich mechanised the production of components for cuckoo clocks. Subsequently, when August Hettich developed a production line for piano hinges in 1928 the company entered new technical terrain, setting the course for the group's present activities in the furniture, cabinet making and related industries. When his son developed a 16-metre long production line for piano hinges 40 years later, the course for the company's present activities in furniture, cabinet making and related industries was confirmed.

Showing what has become Hettich trade mark innovative flare, Paul, August and Franz Hettich set up a new company at Herford in 1930 in the heart of the German furniture industry. Over the decades since, products have expanded and today Hettich manufactures high quality, innovative and reliable technology and hardware for furniture, cabinet making and industrial applications.

Hettich is now one of the world's largest manufacturers of hardware fittings with over 6000 staff engaged in the challenge of developing intelligent technology and hardware for furniture, cabinet making and other applications.

The company, now based in Kirchlengern, remains wholly-owned by the Hettich family, with fourth generation Dr Andreas Hettich taking over as chief executive officer in 2007.

Visiting Australia to celebrate Hettich's 125th anniversary and to launch the new revolutionary drawer system ArciTech, Dr Hettich said part of the company's recipe for success was working meticulously on products that often are not visible – but that provide superior functionality in many places in the home and in commercial applications.

"Our hardware solutions provide ergonomic and smooth movement, safety and convenience – designed and made to last. Ingredients that are part of Hettich's success include an awareness of quality, inspirational innovation, and constant dialogue with our customers and reliability," said Dr Hettich.

To help celebrate its 125th anniversary in 2013 Hettich has donated €125,000 euro (A\$200,000) to welfare projects nominated and supported by Hettich staff members.

2013 marked another milestone for Hettich, with the Australian and New Zealand teams celebrating 25 years in the market. Hettich has built a brand that can be trusted through reliable and innovative products – with a lifetime warranty on all drawer and hinge systems.

With showrooms in every state, Hettich is one of Australia's leading furniture and cabinet making hardware suppliers. Hettich Australia continues the company's long-established tradition of excellence, innovation and customer service.

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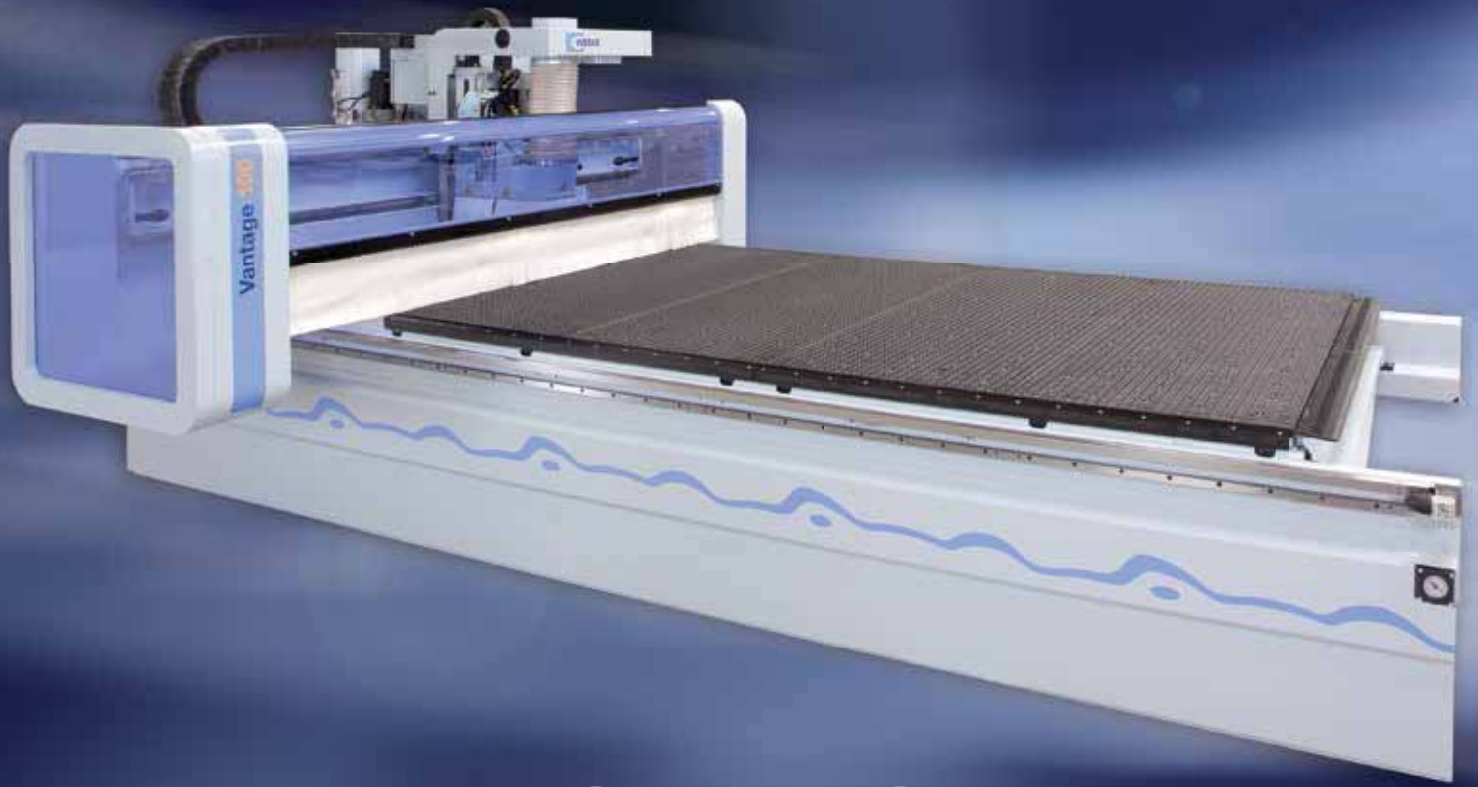


Top: Karl Hettich... Developed a purpose-built bending machine in 1888 that mechanised the production of components for cuckoo clocks.

Dr Andreas Hettich... Hettich's history defined by outstanding engineering achievements and bold enterprising decisions.

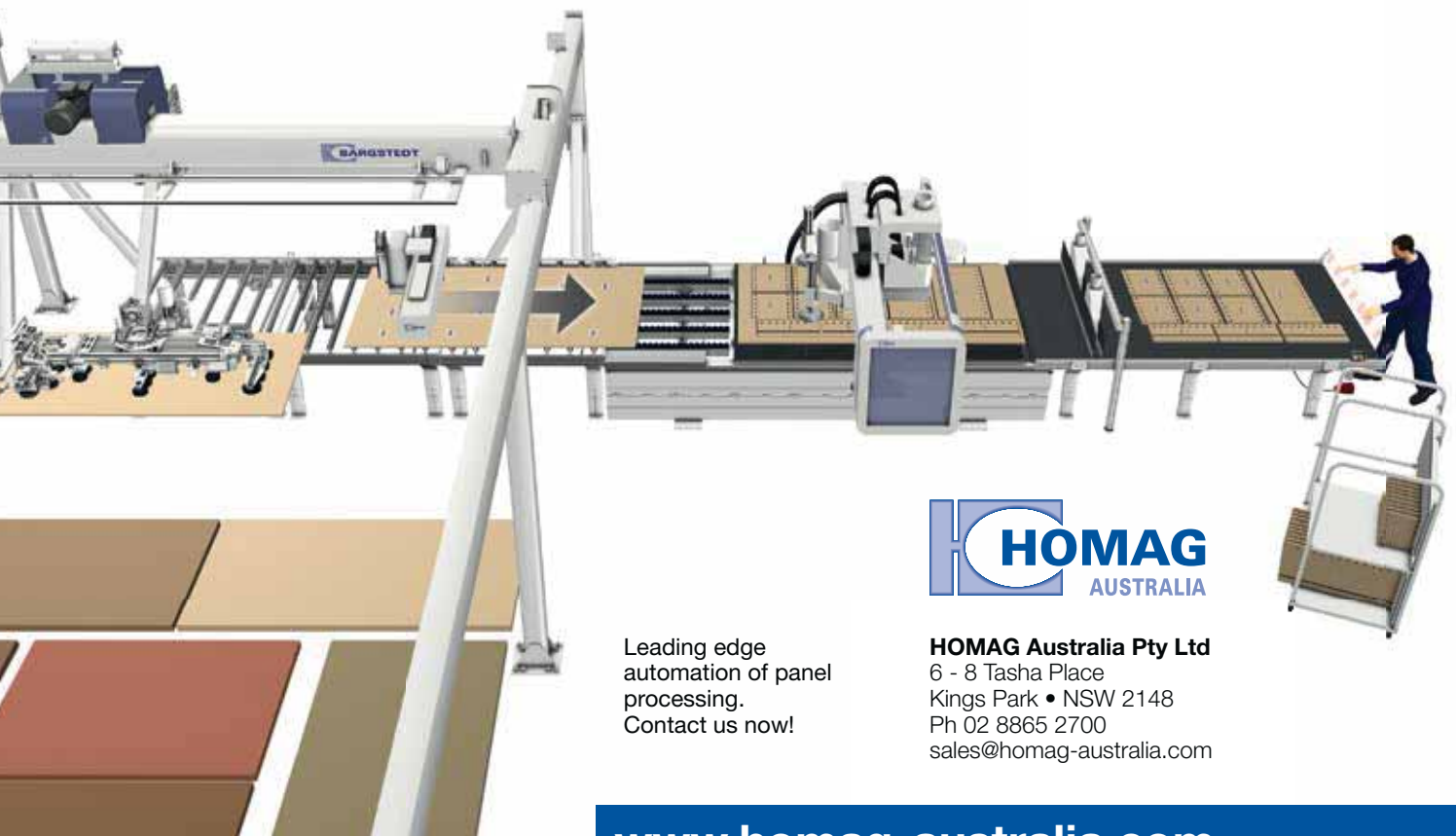
Below: Dr Andreas Hettich addressing guests at Hettich's 125th anniversary celebration and launch of the revolutionary new drawer system ArciTech in Sydney.





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by Richard Brooks

CEO Cabinet Makers and Designers Association Ltd

# A CMDA view of current industry issues



**CMDA IS PLEASED** to bring an update on a number of current industry issues, and in particular is inviting participation in the "CMDA Australian Cabinet Maker and Designer of the Year Awards".

## **Australian Cabinet Maker and Designer of the Year Awards**

CMDA and its predecessor the Cabinet Makers Association have been conducting an annual awards program for many years and are pleased to announce that in 2014 the program will be extended to include designers and non-member entries.

CMDA will be conducting its annual awards program in 2014 culminating with the presentation of awards on the evening of Friday the 9 May 2014.

There was an excellent article in the Summer 2013 issue of AWISA's magazine on the 'circles of marketing' – the CMDA awards are one program available to promote recognition of projects to both industry and the broader community.

## CMDA Australian Cabinet Maker and Designer Awards 2014 open to all

The 2014 awards will include two significant changes to those of prior years with the addition of the "CMDA Designer of the Year Award" and the opportunity for "non-member entries" in the awards program. CMDA frequently receives reports of the benefits gained by those businesses that have been finalists or winners in the annual awards and also the regular referrals received from the Association's website.

The addition of non-members in 2014 will broaden the competition and assures us of a very competitive program and will certainly provide a challenge for the independent judging panel.

Expressions of interest and entries are now being received for the CMDA Australian Cabinet Maker of the Year and Designer of the Year 2014. Expressions of interest forms are available on the CMDA website or by emailing the association – [admin@cmda.org.au](mailto:admin@cmda.org.au).

## **CMDA awards event**

The CMDA 2014 Awards Night will be held in the Olympic Room at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Friday 9 May 2014 with entertainment provided by 'Big City Beat'.

Arrangements are now well underway for this event including an option for guests to have a guided tour of the MCG prior to the commencement of the evening (including the oval, change rooms, members' area and the famous "Long Room").

Full details of the event and the options available are available on the CMDA website.

## **Industry initiatives – Furniture Cabinets Joinery Alliance (FCJA)**

The CMDA board has made a commitment to maintain its participation in the Furniture Cabinets and Joinery Alliance (FCJA) and confirmed its view of the importance of a truly national voice for the industry. There are a number of associations servicing the furniture cabinet and joinery sector however CMDA strongly believes that any benefit gained for the industry as a whole will be of benefit to all CMDA members - often these achievements cannot be made as a stand-alone association.

The CMDA CEO attended meetings with the co-chair of FCJA Ron Scott and Peter Kreitals, the policy director, in Canberra during December. A particular highlight of these meetings was the reception given by the Department of Industry and an agreement that the industry and Department should meet on a regular basis to discuss industry development issues for the sector.





It has recently been announced that the first meeting will be held in Sydney on 9 April 2014 followed by a subsequent meeting at the AWISA Exhibition. Likely topics to be discussed at the meetings include:

- Key challenges confronting the industry
- Regulatory framework
- Import competition (and lack of compliance with regulations and standards)
- Skills gaps and training needs
- Australian brand/signature

Further information will be available on the CMDA website.

#### Registration of building practitioners - Victoria

The Victorian Building Authority (VBA) has been formed to take over the functions of the Victorian Building Commission and later this year will become responsible for the administration and compliance of building practitioners and resolution of disputes in the industry.

CMDA recently met with representatives of the authority responsible for the assessment of cabinet makers applying for registration and resolved a number of outstanding issues with regard to the qualifications required and the application process.

CMDA believes that it is most important that cabinet makers comply with the registration requirements however it is understood that the application and assessment process has been intimidating to many potential applicants.

CMDA is pleased to advise that the association will be implementing a program to assist businesses to apply and provide modular training assistance only when considered absolutely necessary. Further information can be obtained from the association website or [admin@cmda.org.au](mailto:admin@cmda.org.au).

#### Industrial relations advice

CMDA staff has received advice from both members and non-members that when they have obtained advice from other associations or the Fair Work Ombudsman's Office in some cases the quality of the advice has been questionable.

It is concerning that one business received four sets of conflicting advice from a provider over a short period of time - this situation created a potential breach of the relevant award provisions (by way of underpayment) and in one case over payment of entitlements.

Emma Watt and Richard Brooks at CMDA have worked together providing advice to cabinet makers and similar businesses for over 15 years and they have in excess of 60 years combined experience in dealing with employment issues – they specialise in the industry and are committed to giving practical industry specific advice.

All members should note that the applicable award for businesses involved in the off site manufacture of furniture and cabinetry is the Timber Industry Award 2010 and not a manufacturing or construction award.

#### Review of the kitchen standard

The technical committee responsible for the review of the Australian Standard AS 4386.1 and 2 met in November to progress the review of what is currently known as the standard for manufacture and installation of kitchen units.

It is pleasing that the technical committee now has representation from a broad range of industry sectors who agree that the standard needs to be refined to reflect current practices and at the same time broadened to address the issue of cabinetry in all built environments. The standard should be available in the third quarter of 2014 at which time the CMDA will require its members to commit to the manufacture and installation of cabinetry in accordance with the standard.

As the standard is not called up in the National Construction Code or another regulator the standard purely provides recommended minimum standards that should be followed. CMDA will be promoting compliance with the standard to the public and specifiers alike in an attempt to ensure that something approaching a level playing field exists within the market place.

CMDA welcomes queries or feedback on any industry issue.




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# Perfect joining solution – a clever but simple system



Joinlox has launched the Striplox range – the ‘velcro/zipper’ of the mechanical assembly world. An innovative, fast, strong and concealed joining solution with multiple uses.

The Striplox product range that includes the Striplox Mini -120mm, Striplox Pro 55 and Striplox 90° - 98mm, is protected by international patents and is proudly designed, owned and manufactured in Australia. Made of high-spec thermo plastic using the international standard 32 system, Striplox joins are easily dismantled and reassembled, reducing on-site costs, wastage, emissions and transport costs.

The Striplox solutions can replace traditional joining and fastening, including brackets, screws, connectors, latches and mountings. Striplox products are strong and durable, using a series of interlocking teeth which spread joint loads along the length of the joins, providing strong and tight connections.

This ensures the entire range is perfect for numerous non-structural purposes and installations. Striplox are easy to use and eliminate the need for bags of loose fasteners and confusing instructions.

“The applications for Striplox literally run into the hundreds and are really only limited by your imagination. It’s the perfect joining solution

system,” said Joinlox sales and marketing manager Dean Urquhart.

Mark Willis, director of iCatchers Exhibitions & Displays said recently, “Striplox provided an efficient, durable product that could be flat packed for shipping, then easily assembled and dismantled in a tight build schedule for the Décor exhibition stand, featured at the International Home and Housewares Show in Chicago. As a company producing high quality exhibition displays, we believe in using only the best materials. We are extremely impressed with the outcome of Striplox products and look forward to incorporating them in future projects.”

Using Striplox not only has cost efficiencies with labour costs, it will reduce freight costs dramatically allowing for flat-pack form - ready for quick and easy assembly. Striplox can be used in fully automated assembly processes, such as in the production of high-volume furniture, cabinetry or by smaller operators producing items on a piece-by-piece basis.

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*“The perfect joining solution”*



## Efficient and effective production

Performance.one is the effective IMA solution for order batch production and small batch production. This highly flexible circulation production system for panel sizing, edge banding and edge finishing consists of a one-sided edge processing machine with proven IMA unit technology, customised to individual requirements, and a servo-infeed table for fully automatic rectangular workpiece feeding (optionally with stop system for accurate dimensional and angular machining).

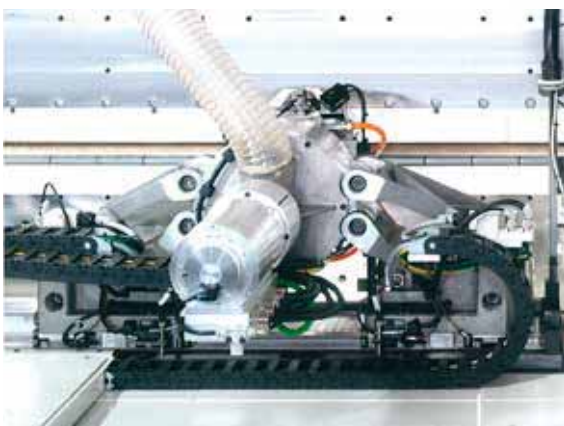
Other features include an automatic return mechanism with gentle and efficient workpiece return, 3 angular transfer units for high performance, production line technology by means of ICOS machine controller, workpiece identification via barcode and reader prior to infeed, and dynamic gap minimisation.

The system can optionally be equipped with IMA's laser edging mechanism. The units maximum feed rate is 30 metres per minute, depending on the difference in dimension of consecutive workpieces and the configuration of the entire system.

Small batch sizes and high quality requirements are a top priority in today's manufacture of furniture parts. Complete machining on one single machine considerably reduces setup and machining times. Depending on the application, process times are substantially decreased. More complex products and shorter process cycles necessitate frequent changeovers in the manufacture of even smaller batch sizes. Under these circumstances, the production process must be adapted accordingly in order to manufacture in an economical and competitive way. The advantages when using IMA's Performance.one system include the modular, future-proof machine concept of IMA's Novimat or Combina panel sizing and edge processing machines, modern, easy to operate production technology, and high quality production based on proven IMA unit technology.

---

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# HIA forecasts housing activity to edge ahead

The Housing Industry Association (HIA) has recently released the current edition of its quarterly National Outlook, which is Australia's most comprehensive housing report card. The latest report forecasts higher levels of new dwelling commencements over the coming years and a steady recovery in renovations investment, anticipated to be up from a ten year low.

Growth in housing starts during 2013/14 is expected to be concentrated in large states like NSW, Queensland and WA, according to HIA senior economist Shane Garrett. However, HIA is predicting that growth in renovations will be much more broad-based, with increases occurring across most states.

Mr Garrett said that looking further ahead, HIA sees dwelling commencements lifting above the 170,000 per year mark by 2016/17, matching the highs achieved during the post-GFC stimulus. Over this timeframe, renovations activity is also likely to increase, reaching \$30.3 billion per annum by 2017/18.

The HIA Economics Group – the team that produces the National Outlook - is a leader in the collection, analysis and presentation of facts, figures, forecasts and research relevant to Australia's housing and renovation sectors. The Group's suite of regular

publications, one-off reports, tailored client consultancy work and regular presentations, provide the building industry, the business community and media with the most comprehensive overview of industry conditions, emerging trends and future scenarios available anywhere in Australia.

Included in this selection of reports is the annual HIA Kitchens and Bathrooms report, which delivers a detailed overview of opportunities, attitudes, and forecasts for this sector of the residential construction industry.

With access to data from 40,000 HIA members nationwide - that account for 85 per cent of residential building activity – its research is a true barometer of industry activity. This has recently been backed up by a comprehensive analysis and benchmarking of new home building forecasts, with the most recent analysis finding that HIA's long term forecast for dwelling commencements for 2012/13 proved to be the most accurate in the market.

Throughout the past year HIA Economics pursued a diverse housing industry research agenda, continuing to expand and develop the scope and methodological frameworks of the team's publications and internal research agenda. Along with a range of free and subscription only reports, HIA can also tailor individual research to meet a particular client's needs and budget, regardless of their size, to help identify business opportunities and create a framework for sound decision making.

To view detailed forecasts and reports, or to find more information about the activities of HIA Economics Group, visit [economics.hia.com.au](http://economics.hia.com.au) or call Kirsten Lewis on 02 6245 1393.



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HOUSING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION  
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Simon Dorries .. it's good that STIC remains under industry control.



## EWPAA to run STIC program in NZ

**THE** Structural Timber Innovation Co (STIC) is now managed by the Engineered Wood Products Association of Australasia since funding of the NZ-based research consortium has ended. STIC guided a \$12 million program to develop and commercialise new technologies to allow structural timber to compete more effectively in the building and construction market.

The company continues with three shareholders, all producers of LVL: Wesbeam, Carter Holt Harvey, and Nelson Pine Ltd.

STIC developed a portfolio of new pre-fabricated LVL and glulam structural building systems that has enabled multi-storey commercial and long-span industrial portal framed buildings to be easily designed and

rapidly constructed using engineered timber products. These include design guidelines and span tables, analysis software, material properties, ratings for fire resistance, sound transmission and impact insulation, and embodied energy and sustainable building information. These are accessible by way of online registration at [www.stic.co.nz](http://www.stic.co.nz). Commercialisation of these new technologies is enabling timber to effectively compete with structural concrete and steel, the two present materials of choice in these market segments.

"EWPAA will manage STIC as an ongoing concern and provide technical support," EWPAA general manager Simon Dorries said.

"It's good that STIC remains under industry control," he said.

"If anyone calls looking for technical information, there will be someone on the other end of the line."

Mr Dorries said that Expan buildings can be constructed quickly, at an equivalent cost to steel or concrete, and with all the reassurance of lightweight construction. The unique post-tensioned technology combined with the flexibility of timber also enables superior seismic capabilities.

Already, there are seven Expan buildings in New Zealand and the number looks set to grow substantially, with more than 260 companies across Australasia signing up for the Expan design and installation and fabricators licences. ■



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# Oil lubricated rotary vane vacuum pump

The R 5 0305 D is part of the R 5 rotary vane vacuum pump series offered by Busch and has been specially developed for applications in the rough vacuum sector, being particularly suited for applications within the woodworking industry.

The vacuum pump guarantees oil-free exhaust under even the most difficult operating conditions, with the heavy-duty vanes guaranteeing long operating times. Oil lubricated rotary vane vacuum pumps are characterised by fast clamping and have been used in woodworking applications for many decades, with the R 5 being ideal for vacuum clamping on CNC machinery and veneer pressing.

The highly efficient vacuum pump provides energy-efficient drive units, that have been continuously developed and optimised by Busch, and can be reliably used both in continuous operation at ultimate pressure and also in rough vacuum ranges.

The R 5 vacuum pumps are distinguished by high suction capacity even in low pressure ranges and therefore quick pump-down times. The R 5 0305 D offers a nominal pumping speed of 300 m<sup>3</sup>/hr at 50 Hz and an ultimate end pressure of 0.1 mbar at 50 Hz. The consistently high vacuum level in continuous operation is guaranteed through



circulating oil lubrication, perfectly coordinated materials and state-of-the-art and precise manufacturing. Apart from the change of oil and filters at regular service intervals, no further maintenance is necessary. Accessories are also available including a gas ballast valve and various inlet filters.

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by Martin Lewis



# Soapbox

## "The Soapbox" – an opinion piece

Time for a royal commission into the cost of business in Australia perhaps?

**THERE** have been lots of front page headlines given to a number of issues confronting the Abbott federal government in recent times, the most prominent undoubtedly being the question of government support for manufacturing (and farming) in Australia, followed by the sensationalist announcements of a Royal Commission into Trade Unions.

Most recently, we have seen that the Abbott government has given nothing to the Coca Cola Amatil- owned SPC cannery operations in regional Victoria, notwithstanding its earlier gift of millions of dollars to the Cadbury chocolate factory in Tasmania (allegedly on the basis that it is also a tourist operation?).

Why the SPC cannery operations never received any Government support was perhaps in part due to the extremely poor coverage of the outrageous conditions and wages earned by the factory workers in Shepparton. It has been published by some journalists in newspapers alleging to be first rate and unbiased sources of information that the full-time workers received as much as almost \$20,000 less than the average Australian wage for a male, and, get this, that they were getting the outrageous allocation of up to 20 days annual leave, 10 days sick leave, and even public holidays.

The economic rationalists, who curiously hold very privileged positions in government and the media, would have us believe that Australian manufacturing is simply uncompetitive and food manufacturing such as at SPC should simply be abandoned and we should import all our canned food directly from China or other low cost countries.

Others however, would suggest that Australian manufacturing should be supported, on the basis that virtually every other country in the world supports its own manufacturing industries.

This stands to reason, because it supplies work, dignity and a myriad of benefits to Australian individuals and communities and is far less costly than having extra thousands of workers and their families drawing Centrelink benefits.

In the past much has been made of the ongoing government

financial assistance provided to the vehicle manufacturing industry – particularly through Ford, Holden and Toyota.

There is no doubt that this type of manufacturing has received substantial support from both Liberal and Labor Governments in the past, even though other manufacturing industries (especially timber manufacturing and furniture manufacturing) have received a rat's patootie, roughly equivalent to two thirds of diddly squat!

But the Abbott Government has now said no more!

The question is – Is that a responsible approach, ?

I'd now like to reproduce part of the text of an email that was doing the rounds recently:

*"What is happening in Australia is the failure to recognise the concept of adding value. Build something - make something - repair something - create something - move something - sell something useful - all add value and this is the only thing that creates a healthy economic structure. Add to that the essential services and you are still in business. Replace that lot with fancy accountants, counsellors, psychologists, dole bludgers, excessive bureaucrats, excessive government, teachers who only put in a fraction of the hours of real workers, and a myriad other similar other sinecure type jobs and you land right in the proverbial can, just like Oz".*

I hope that I still have your attention !

What I would like to point out is that the cost of doing business in Australia is high – but it is probably far higher than it needs to be – simply because the cost of government is far too high.

Here is Australia, some of our lazy policy makers continue to advocate taxing capital and other costs of production, simply because it is easier that taxing consumption.

We all know wages in China are much lower than Australia – current average Australian wage in AUD is \$74,613, whilst the average wage in China (Guangdong Province) is \$8236. But are wages the biggest cost in manufacturing – particularly if we are moving towards greater technology production?

Average electricity cost in Australia is \$0.29 per kilowatt hour, but in China it is \$0.08 – much much cheaper. Payroll tax in Australia is around 4.75 to 6% of salaries. It does not appear

The Soap Box has been written by Martin Lewis, former CEO of Furnishing Industry Association of Australia. The opinions expressed in this are just that – personal opinions and may not reflect the views of AWISA or of any persons or companies currently or formerly associated with Martin Lewis.

to exist in China. Corporate tax in Australia is 30% whilst in China it is 25%. The cost of the most important capital – land – is also far, far cheaper in China than it is in Australia.

Here in Australia, our government provides indifference when capital investment in technology is required. We provide totally inadequate tax deductibility over too long and inflexible a time frame.

Sadly, part of the answer is that if we were to strongly tax consumption, rather than production, we would have more production, that it more manufacturing, and that is more jobs.

This is where we need a royal commission ! ■



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## Tandembox Intivo for bathroom vanities

Tandembox Intivo provides a drawer solution for that customer with sophisticated design tastes looking to be able to create individuality and the next level of interior design throughout their kitchen and home.

Further supporting the use of Tandembox Intivo in bathroom vanity applications, shorter nominal lengths of 350mm and 400mm in silk white and terra black finishes will be introduced to the programme range. Options to customise and individualise vanity pull-outs with design elements and customised glass elements enable a wide range of design desires to be fulfilled.



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# It's not just about the software

Divine Kitchens has seen tremendous growth in two years, since its humble beginnings in a backyard shed in south-western Sydney. Established by brothers Josh and Joe Franzone, Divine Kitchens builds kitchens, vanities, wardrobes and other small cabinetry work.

After working as cabinetmakers in other businesses, the brothers decided to venture out on their own and establish their own business. Initially, they were lucky to get two jobs per week, so with great guidance from their father and with their own motivation to grow a successful business, they began to look at how they could start expanding.

## Growing the Business

Having seen Cabinet Vision where they previously worked, Josh and Joe knew they wanted to use this software. After downloading the 30-day Solid Essential Online trial, they attended one of Planit's Open Days. They were keen to start establishing their own system and began using Solid Essential Online to draw jobs for clients and produce 3D rendered drawings.

During the AWISA 2012 trade show, the boys discovered that the Biesse Skill was what they needed. After the machine was commissioned, they knew that the only way to gain real benefits for their investment was to upgrade their software. After talking it through with Planit, Solid Advanced with S2M Standard was the right fit. Everything that they had developed and learnt in Solid Essential Online was carried into the new level, which meant that the upgrade was made smoother.

## Implementing the Solution

Integrator Garry Thoroughgood was there to carry out all the integration work, including the in-house training to help set up their system and build their library before going onsite to connect to the machine and have everything running smoothly. Both Josh and Joe commend how Garry's approach has benefited their business ever since.

Joe explained, "Garry worked through the entire business with us, recommended changes to help make us more profitable, and even helped us create a business plan. Planit integrated the software into our business, showed us how to do it, which means we have the control. With Planit, it's not all about the software; it is about the whole business".

Josh commented, "It was scary how so many changes were happening but having someone like Garry there helped put everything into perspective. He really went above and beyond for us".

The Help Desk support available after Planit had been onsite also helped to ensure a smooth integration. Joe explained, "Anytime we had a problem, I'd give myself ten minutes to

work it out, and if I couldn't, I'd give the guys on Help Desk a ring and I knew that they'd be able to help me out. It's the best type of support you can have".

At Planit, the focus is on implementing a solution that improves businesses as a whole, rather than just selling software. Planit wants to have relationships with customers and provide services that support businesses that really want to get the most out of their software.

## Continued Growth

Since implementing both machine and software into their business, Josh and Joe can see their return on investment.

Joe commented that, "It was all money well spent and with the money we've saved, we have been able to put it back into other parts of the business and have been able to afford a new van, computer and forklift".

The business is still in strong growth stages, with the guys adding a Drafter additional key to help in their sales process and taking on an apprentice cabinet-maker. The brothers have the business mentality of investing in the business early.

Joe described it as "pump money into the business early", which is backed up by Josh's comments, "If you need it, don't second guess yourself".

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## The John Tiddy Memorial Award



**THE JOHN TIDDY MEMORIAL AWARD** will once again be conducted in the lead up to AWISA 2014, with the winners being announced during AWISA 2014.

AWISA established the award in 2008 to commemorate the late John Tiddy's contribution to the Australasian furniture and woodworking industries, and his contribution to AWISA.

The award is for six apprentices in the woodworking industry to receive all-expenses paid overnight trips to the AWISA 2014 exhibition, plus \$2000.00 towards their training course fees.

Awards will be made in each of the following areas of Australasia: NSW/ACT; Queensland; Victoria/Tasmania; South Australia/Northern Territory; Western Australia; and New Zealand. If the Queensland winner is from metropolitan Brisbane, this winner will also be invited to stay in the city overnight, but will also receive an airfare to attend AWISA 2016.

Full eligibility criteria will be published in the entry form that will be inserted in the next edition of AWISA – The Magazine, to be mailed early in May. The entry form will also be available online at [www.awisa.com](http://www.awisa.com) from early April. In summary, the applicants must be aged between 18 and 29 years of age as at 31 December 2013, and must have completed two years of training at a TAFE or similarly accredited training organisation as at 31 December 2013.

Any training organisations that wish to distribute copies of the entry form to their students should contact AWISA Ltd on 02 9918 3661 or [info@awisa.com](mailto:info@awisa.com) to be mailed bulk copies of the form.

## Homag and Licom: 850 AlphaCAM links to Homag CNC machines

Homag and Licom announced at Homag Treff 2013 that a total of 850 installations between WoodWOP and the CAD/CAM system AlphaCAM have been reached. Both parties trust the ongoing success: A new target of 1,000 installations has now been set for the Homag Treff in 2014.

The success is attributed to the perfect team-work between both software systems. The technical link enables Homag customers to extend the excellent wop-features of WoodWOP with the proven, extensive CAD/CAM functionality of AlphaCAM.

Programs generated in AlphaCAM are transferred directly to WoodWOP, through a user interface on the Weeke and Homag machines.

The link is developed by Licom Systems Germany and as it supports all WoodWOP formats it outputs the AlphaCAM NC code up to 5-axis simultaneous machining into various WoodWOP objects.

Even the Licom's 5-axes swivel saw cuts on inside corners with tilted edges are outputted as 3D saw cycles for WoodWOP. The benefit is that programs can be opened and displayed on the machine, just as if they had been written in WoodWOP.

The system allows for the generated programs to be easily adapted on the machine. By outputting the tool numbers and the cut- and down-feeds in easy-to-edit WoodWOP variables, adjustments to the generated program can be made instantly and stress-free.

The interface means users see WoodWOP and AlphaCAM as one display, because programs stored in AlphaCAM are automatically shown in WoodWOP. This means there is no



Picture 1: Congratulations by Homag, chief of product development CAD/CAM Jean-Marie Pattberg, to CEO and shareholder of Licom Systems, Stephan Schneider

difficult manual file transfer between the systems. Another advantage: the code for 5-axis simultaneous machining is generated as a universal macro, which is embedded as direct G-Code in the WoodWOP file.

Licom AlphaCAM's market leading functionality is specialized to maximize the potential of woodworking machines: Optimized 3D CNC toolpaths work very well with the features of the Homag controller and lead to perfect contours, i.e. while cutting in 5-axes with the tool side. Homag and Licom have set a joint target of 1,000 integrated links by the next Homag Treff, in 2014.

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# Lamello Zeta P2: The new power tool for the growing P System

Manufactured in Switzerland, Lamello continues to create innovative joining solutions and the Zeta P2 carries on the tradition.

At the core of the Lamello Zeta P2 is the compact vertical mechanical drive (VMD) which works as follows: The cutter dives into the preset depth, then follows a vertical movement up and down for the profile cut. This profile cutting function is user-friendly since it triggers automatically and is mechanically reliable.

The P System elements are designed to slide into the profile cut without the use of glues or screws. The elements clamp together to create a very strong joint and have the ability to be pulled apart for ease of transportation. The versatility of joining mitres from 30 degrees to 180 degrees opens up greater possibilities for woodworkers to manufacture creative work pieces.

The Lamello Zeta P2 can also be used with standard biscuits by changing the blade and turning the VMD "OFF". For high volume manufacturers of wood pieces, this versatile element can be used with a CNC machine to create knock down furniture.

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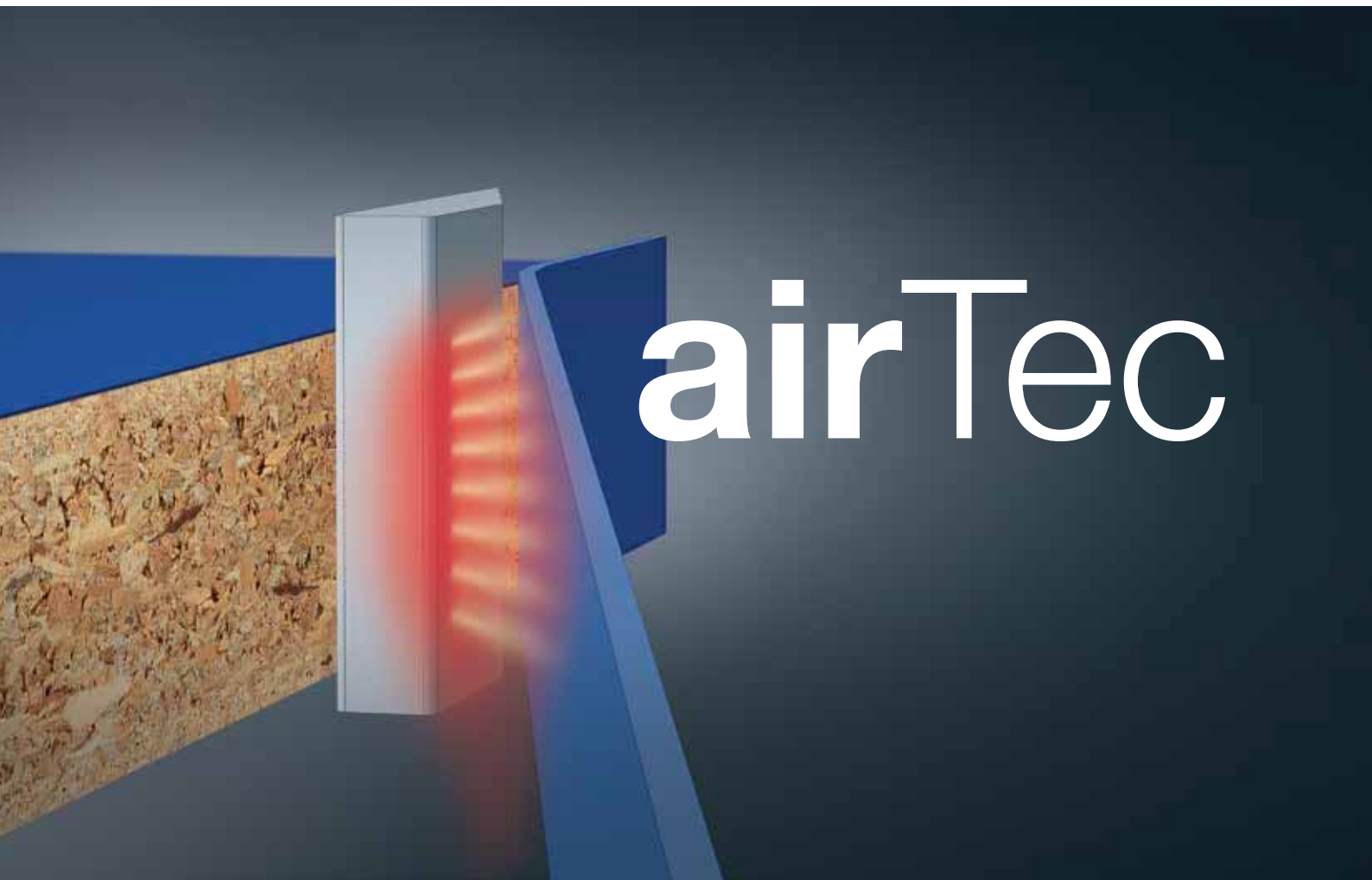
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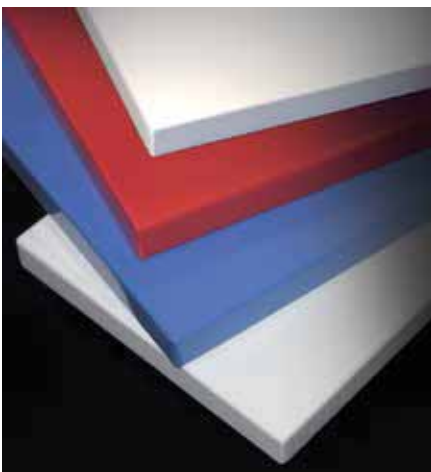
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Units include a quality steel framework that has been powder coated to ensure strength

and durability and to ensure that the units are easy to clean. All units come complete with light weight polypropylene bucket/s that have been specifically designed to fit with well known rubbish bag brands in the kitchen, or have been designed with contoured sides and air ventilation to be gentle on clothes in the laundry.

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# Endless possibilities with the Aventos range of overhead cabinet lift systems



The Blum Aventos lift systems, available through Lincoln Sentry, provide silent and effortless opening and closing of wall cabinets. Even wide fronts open easily and close silently thanks to Blumotion technology.

Aventos overhead cabinet solutions are available for various applications including bi-fold Lift (HF), up and over lift (HS), parallel lift up (HL), stay lift (HK) and small stay lift (HK-S). Aventos lift systems are all designed to maximise cabinet access to improve the users way of life.

Additional Aventos options include Servo-Drive, the electrical motion support system. With Servo-Drive, cabinets open with a light touch on the front and close with the simple push of a button. It's so easy.

New to the Aventos family is Tip-on, the mechanical opening support system, for Aventos HK-S. Perfect for small applications such as over the pantry or refrigerator, Tip-on for Aventos HK-S opens with a gentle push on the cabinet front and closes securely with the Tip-on magnetic latch.

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# Australian Woodworking Industry Suppliers Association Limited

## AWISA The Association



AWISA was formed in 1986 by the principal suppliers to the Australian woodworking industry. The main aims of the association are to present industry exhibitions, publish industry magazines, co-operate with other organisations, and to uphold the highest ethical standards and encourage members to do the same.

Membership applications are welcome from Australian based companies, and from overseas companies with Australian agents or distributors that are also members of AWISA. Membership of AWISA includes suppliers of woodworking machinery, cabinet and furniture hardware, panel products and surface materials, portable tools, computer software, materials handling equipment, dust extraction equipment, components, and general plant and safety equipment.

## AWISA The Exhibition



The exhibition has been held regularly since 1988, and attracts furniture manufacturers, cabinet makers, kitchen manufacturers, joiners, shop and office fitters, and other wood, timber and panel processing industries. Architects and interior designers also attend.

The next AWISA exhibition will take place in Brisbane from 6-9 August 2014 at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre. For more information visit [www.awisa.com](http://www.awisa.com) or phone Geoff Holland on 0412 361 580.

## AWISA The Magazine



AWISA's magazine is published quarterly and is distributed free to a database of over 14,000 end users in the industry. AWISA's editorial policy is to produce quality editorial about business and technical issues that affect the woodworking industry, and to provide members with a means of disseminating information about their products. The association welcomes input from both members and end users about subjects that should be written about in the magazine.

## AWISA The Board

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## DISTRIBUTION

AWISA – The Magazine is distributed free to a list made up of companies that attended the last three AWISA exhibitions, plus the client databases of some major AWISA members. To be added to the distribution list send an email to [info@awisa.com](mailto:info@awisa.com) or send a fax to 02 9918 7764. (AWISA Ltd may at some time in the future charge a subscription for personally addressed magazines)





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## **AWISA**

the show for wood and panel processing

AWISA 2014 is the international exhibition of machinery, materials, fittings and services for the Australian and New Zealand cabinet, joinery, furniture, timber and panel industries.

**6-9 August 2014**

Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre

**[www.awisa.com](http://www.awisa.com)**

ORGANISED BY THE AUSTRALIAN  
WOODWORKING INDUSTRY  
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