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Information seminars and apprenticeship help

Information exchange and training assistance both feature in this issue. WADIC general manager Bronwyn Foord highlighted the recent timber supply chain seminar that was co hosted by WADIC, the Timber Trade Industrial Association (TTIA) seminar series and apprenticeship training support.

She said members had the opportunity to participate in the Victorian timber industry supply chain seminar: Connecting the pieces for business success held recently in Melbourne in partnership with the Australian Timber Importers Federation and the Timber Merchants Association. "It was most heartening to see WADIC members present."

Mrs Foord also referred to recent seminars in Victoria, NSW and South Australia held by the TTIA and attended by WADIC members. "The seminars provided valuable advice in relation to the new Fair Work Act and the new National Employment Standards that come into force on 1 January 2010."

Queensland WADIC members were able to participate in a breakfast seminar arranged by the Timber and Buildings Materials Association.

Mrs Foord said members who attended the TTIA seminar series were very appreciative, although she would have liked to have seen more members taking advantage of the opportunity to learn about new employment regimes initiated by the Federal Government. "Feedback from those who attended was very positive. I would suggest that the members participating would have got a significant amount of information that perhaps they would not be aware of otherwise."

Val Sweetman from MF Gordon & Co in Wingfield, South Australia said the TTIA seminar she attended was really informative and very helpful, but not long enough to cover all of the award details.

Further information about industrial relations matters can be found on the WADIC website in the section titled: TTIA – Did You Know.

In relation to apprenticeships, Mrs Foord said members could use WADIC as the first point of contact for apprentice and other training enquiries (see article on reverse).



Bronwyn Foord, WADIC General Manager ... 2010 — it's going to be a busy year and we look forward to having you along for the ride.

The Window and Door Industry Council Inc. (WADIC) is a service organisation representing the timber windows and door manufacturing sector. WADIC provides assistance to members to aid compliance with Australian standards and building codes. WADIC promotes the environmental and performance benefits of members' products and provides members with information about energy rating systems. WADIC also acts on behalf of members in representations to governments and regulatory authorities to ensure that members' rights and access to markets are safeguarded.

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Blackbutt woes and cedar advances

The ongoing supply of suitable timber to window and door manufacturers was raised as an issue of concern at the recent Connecting the pieces for business success timber industry seminar held in Melbourne.

WADIC general manager Bronwyn Foord told delegates that difficulties were continuing



Graeme Ferrow, Managing Director, Timbeck Cedar – factory pre coating an exciting advance for timber window and door manufacturing.

to be experienced in relation to Australian hardwood supplies, notably sourcing blackbutt of the quality and in the dimensions required for window manufacturing. "So increasingly merbau is having to be utilised for window components."

"I believe that this situation is unlikely to improve any time soon and will need to be factored into business planning for the wooden windows and doors manufacturing sector."

The seminar that was co hosted by WADIC heard that the situation was better in relation to ongoing supplies of Western red cedar (WRC). Canadian timber expert Wendell MacLoud told delegates that future supplies of WRC from sustainably managed forests were assured.

He added that WRC was renowned for its high decay resistance and had the highest durability class rating of all softwoods, with built in natural preservatives that provided resistance to borers, termites, rot and fungus growth. "This ensures that windows and doors will have a lengthy service life."

"Also cedar is among the easiest timber to work because of its straight grain and uniform texture. Its low density makes it lightweight and ideally

sued for applications such as windows, doors, blinds and shutters. Cedar also glues well with a wide range of adhesives and gluing conditions."

"Not only is cedar a beautiful timber with a remarkably fine and stable grain structure, it will not warp or twist, ensuring years of reliable operation from windows and doors," he said.

However, improving the finish and reducing the long term maintenance needs of external windows and doors, plus other timber products has been exercising the mind of WADIC member Timbeck Cedar for many years reported managing director Graeme Ferrow.

He said research shows that 65 per cent of architects prefer factory controlled finishing. "Equally the majority of builders and merchants

now have a strong preference for prefinished products."

Mr Ferrow's company has just commenced a new venture, Timbeck Coated Products producing factory coated WRC and other timber for both internal and exterior applications.

He said roller and vacuum coating equipment, an automated spray line and a positive ventilation spray booth can coat flat and shaped timber sections with conventional spray applications, as well as UV-cured coatings.

"Because we coat in a factory environment, we believe we can apply a full four coat system as cheaply as a builder can apply two coats. Plus we can completely control the operating environment."

"With the factory product, we can also coat the back of the timber. A lot of timber failure occurs because moisture gets in from the cavity. We seal the back with a system that also seals the tongues and grooves and puts a coat on the face, as many times as the customer wants," said Mr Ferrow.

He advised that pre coating in a factory environment will address a lot of long standing quality issues. "There is no doubt factory coating will greatly assist in improving the quality of windows and doors and also reduce issues related to ongoing maintenance. We see it as an exciting advance for timber window and door manufacturing."

Employing apprentices made easy

There has been a quiet revolution in apprenticeship recruitment and training in recent years. So today, with the assistance of WADIC, member companies can get valuable help to find, train and manage apprentices. Training providers may even come to the work place, rather than employers losing great slabs of time because apprentices have to travel to and attend TAFE.

In its role of assisting the business performance of members general manager Bronwyn Foord said WADIC is the first point of contact for a no hassle way of getting apprentices into your business.

She said that working in collaboration with the Timber and Building Materials Association (TABMA) indentured apprentices can be selected and placed with suitable WADIC member company 'host employers'.

"Host employers need to be able to provide the on-the-job training and other working requirements for apprentices."

The apprentice placement service provided by the collaborative arrangement between WADIC and TABMA takes on the responsibility of advertising, interviewing, pre-selecting apprentices. TABMA acts as the registered

employer, covering the apprentice's wages and other award requirements, including annual leave, leave loading, superannuation and workers' compensation insurance on behalf of host employers. These costs are subsequently recovered from host employers.

"This mechanism relieves host employers of the ongoing employment administration requirements and necessary government paper-work. It also means that the progress of apprentices at work and during training is monitored. In addition, if a host employer experiences business difficulties or unresolved issues with an apprentice, alternative work placement arrangements can be made," said Mrs Foord.

She indicated that the benefits this process provides to host employers include the fact that the apprentice's employment does not impact on the company's workers compensation premium; company's do not have an apprentice indenture commitment; the screening and selection process is handled outside the company, although the host employer retains the final choice of candidate.

"In addition, host employers have no payroll tax obligation in relation to apprentices and accredited training is selected, provided and monitored."

In terms of apprentice training some training providers now have the capacity to offer selected training modules in the work place. This capability has a number of real benefits to employers providing much more flexibly compared to more conventional classroom training. For example, work place training means that lessons can be scheduled to fit in with factory floor work flow demands and staffing schedules.

Further, training can be based around those products manufactured by the employer and the machinery used day-to-day. It also means loss of productive time is much reduced compared with TAFE or other institutional training because travel time is eliminated.

Work place training also provides the opportunity for host employers to discuss training content and apprentice performance directly with the training provider in a work place setting.

WADIC members interested in being considered as host employers should contact Bronwyn Foord.



Fewings Joinery first year wood machining apprentices Tim Hogan and Matt Casson with Lidombe TAFE wood machining teacher Paul Kubisch ... valuable help available to find, train and manage apprentices, including training providers coming to the work place.

WADIC

Windows and Doors Industry Council

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