

Tigercat harvester to debut

COVER STORY P10



NZ NEEDS MORE TREES
TIMBER MID-RISE PHENOMENON
GOTTSTEIN SECRETARIAT AT IFA

Alles gute, Australia! We're part of global mid-rise phenomenon

Austrians upbeat at Sydney timber building seminar



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A SLICK, upbeat timber construction seminar staged earlier this month in Sydney by the Austrian Trade Commission coincided with the DesignBuild Exhibition.

It was standing room only at the event hosted by the Austrian Consul General and Trade Commissioner Karl Hartleb, as guests listened to polished presentations on aspects of the mid-rise wooden building phenomenon

Austria is the powerhouse of timber product manufacturing in Europe, especially massive panel and other engineered timber products. Timber product exports from Austria to Australia rose by 35% in 2016.

The birthplace of CLT,



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production in Austria reached 500,000 cub m last year. In addition, Austria continues to lead global work in engineering and technology innovation related to massive timber panel product and related tall wooden building design and construction.

Global company Stora Enso, a leading participant in the Austrian seminar, has well and truly established a firm foothold in Australia, with

1/ The front line of the tall wooden buildings revolution ... John Halkett, general manager, ATIF (second from left), the Austrian trade commissioner Karl Hartleb (fourth from left), and Stora Enso's Australian supply chain manager Erkki Valikangas (sixth from left), with the Austrian delegation in Sydney.

2/ Talking up mid-rise wooden buildings ... Austrian Consul General and Trade Commissioner Karl Hartleb and Stora Enso's engineered wood products Australian supply chain manager Erkki Valikangas.

distribution hubs in five states and strong technical and sales expertise across the full suite of timber products, notably, in the context of the mid-rise building seminar, CLT and related products and services.

Engineered wood products Australian supply chain manager Erkki Valikangas, described Stora Enso as a renewable material company.

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“Everything that’s made with fossil fuel-based materials today can be made from a tree tomorrow.”

He said the CLT revolution essentially had enabled the timber industry to move beyond its former ‘cottage’ industry status, building

“EVERYTHING MADE FROM FOSSIL FUEL CAN BE MADE FROM A TREE TOMORROW

detached homes, to be a central player in modern commercial construction.

“This trend will continue to gather momentum as lightweight, rapid and clean building systems are increasingly applied to city infill projects in Australia



Mid-rise on the rise ... CLT construction at a Melbourne building site.
Photo: @ Stora Enso Australia

and around the world,” Mr Valikangas said.

He added that Stora Enso had worked hard to develop technical material related to CLT design and engineering.

“This includes a building systems manual that we are continuing to update and expand.”

He warned that the momentum behind the CLT-based building industry

innovation and development needed to be maintained. He emphasised the need to pay close attention to aspects such as increasing manufacturing automation and 3D printing and what these and other initiatives would mean for construction and material suppliers.

Mr Valikangas also noted that, in contrast to Europe, 99% of houses constructed in Australia were based

on lightweight timber construction systems that lent themselves to ‘closed’ panel building solutions.

“So emerging massive panel building solutions offer great improvements in building quality, affordability and construction time.”

While acknowledging the extremely positive benefits afforded by the changes to the National Construction Code that provide a ‘deemed-to-satisfy’ provision for wooden buildings to 25 m, there were no height restrictions beyond the 25 m limit in the code.

“This adds to the need to progress research and engineering work in relation to fire regulations and other compliance matters. These challenges aside, I anticipate that the momentum for tall wooden building construction will accelerate significantly over the next 20 years,” Mr Valikangas said.