

media release

16 November 2016

Introducing the National Centre for Timber Durability and Design Life

Putting Australia at the forefront of international best practice

Industry, academia and government have partnered to create the National Centre for Timber Durability and Design Life – a new group designed to put Australia at the forefront of international best practice.

A strategic initiative of industry group Forest & Wood Products Australia (FWPA), the Centre will ensure Australian design guides and standards remain world class in light of climate change, new engineered timbers and changes in building design.

Launched today by Federal Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, Senator Anne Ruston, the Centre will be based at the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC), and partners include the University of Queensland (UQ) and the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF). The State and Federal Government will contribute funding along with the FWPA and universities.

Queensland-based centre to develop world-leading predictive model

The Managing Director of Forest and Wood Products Australia, Ric Sinclair, said the Centre would create a world-leading predictive model to enable architects and building specifiers to more easily choose the right timber for the right task.

“It will be an automated evidence-based tool to accurately predict the structural performance and design life of timber depending where and how it is being used. It’s an exciting prospect and it’s one that will be a world first,” he said, putting a five-year timeframe on the project.

USC Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) Professor Roland De Marco said the establishment of this tripartite research partnership was an exciting development.

Professor De Marco said by connecting national and international leaders in forestry research through USC, UQ and Queensland DAF, the centre would represent the pressing research needs of industry, as managed by FWPA, in the field of timber durability and design life.

“Through the appointment of a world-class, industry-engaged professor – together with the appointment of a significant number of supporting research associates and students – this centre will establish a critical mass of world-class expertise,” he said.

Senator Ruston said: “This, in turn, will enable the Australian industry to position itself at the leading edge of Innovation and research are essential to the future of the Australian timber industry.

About Forest and Wood Products Australia

FWPA aims to improve the competitiveness and sustainability of the Australian forest and wood products industry through innovation by investing in effective and relevant R&D and promotion of the industry’s products, services and values. FWPA undertakes industry-level activities where a collective approach delivers more effective and valuable commercial outcomes than individual action. We deliver services that support the industry’s capacity as a major exporter and mainstay of regional communities in many parts of Australia.

“It is even more essential now with timber’s resurgence as a renewable, carbon-positive and increasingly versatile construction material.

“The Australian Government is very pleased to support the launch of the Centre through Forest and Wood Products Australia (FWPA).

“FWPA received \$3.8 million in Commonwealth matched funding in 2015-16, and the Government has further committed up to \$4.6 million to match voluntary contributions made by industry to FWPA for eligible research and development.”

Ric said Queensland was the ideal location for the Centre, boasting people – both government and academic – with relevant high-level expertise and a willingness to innovate and collaborate, as well as diverse and often challenging climactic conditions perfect for putting timber to the test.

Launch invitation details

When? 11.15am – 1.15pm (including lunch), Wednesday 16 November 2016

Where? Ground Floor, Building H2, University of the Sunshine Coast, 90 Sippy Downs Drive, Sippy Downs, Qld, 4556 (Parking is regulated on campus. Media are advised to park at Car Park 11.)

Images

A photographer will attend the launch – and we will send you a link to the images on the afternoon of the event.

Media inquiries

Victoria Button [e] victoria.button@peselandcarr.com.au [m] 0415 201 361

Amanda Cirillo [e] Amanda.cirillo@peselandcarr.com.au [p] (03) 9036 6900

ENDS

About Forest and Wood Products Australia

FWPA aims to improve the competitiveness and sustainability of the Australian forest and wood products industry through innovation by investing in effective and relevant R&D and promotion of the industry’s products, services and values. FWPA undertakes industry-level activities where a collective approach delivers more effective and valuable commercial outcomes than individual action. We deliver services that support the industry’s capacity as a major exporter and mainstay of regional communities in many parts of Australia.