

Future Timber Hub workshop responds to research needs in mass timber sector

United face-to-face gathering of industry leaders as Covid restrictions lifted

PROJECT leaders, industry and institutional partners and academics came together as a united group at a collaborative workshop in Brisbane last Thursday organised by the Centre for Future Timber Structures / Future Timber Hub.

The workshop brought academics and Industry together to define the research needs in Australia and the Pacific region. Fifty percent of the 90-plus attendees were from Industry which highlights the want (and need) for further research in the use of timber in the construction sector.

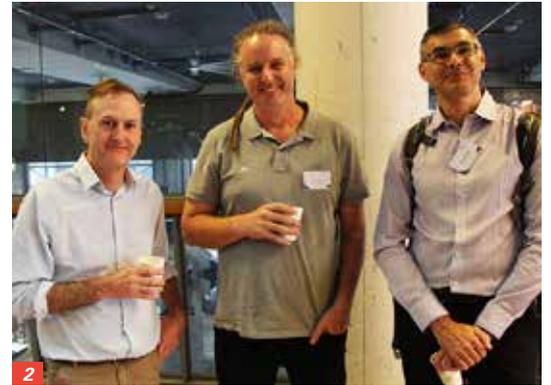
The workshop was held at The University of Queensland which enabled participants to join from across Australia and the world, virtually, via Zoom technology.

Around 45 participants attended in person, which was timely as Queensland had eased its Covid-19 restrictions at 6 am on the day.

The attendees were welcomed by the University of Queensland's



1/ Brought together at last... workshop participants take a break in proceedings.



2/ Mick Stephens, Timber Queensland, Dave Gover, AKD, and Associate Professor in Structural Engineering Benoit Gilbert, Griffith University.

School of Civil Engineering head of school Professor Carlo Prato and Centre for Future Timber Structures board member Professor Keith Crews.

The workshop started with timber associations presenting their vision for the use of timber in the construction sector and included Gavin Matthew, EWPA, Damien Crough, prefabAUS, Simon Dorries, Responsible Wood, Mick Stephens, Timber Queensland and Chris Lafferty, FWPA followed by input from the CFTS board – DAF, Lendlease,

Hyne Timber/ XLam, Arup.

This set the scene ... an in-depth overview of the current ARC Future Timber Hub research projects, where each project leader presented on what has worked, what should be continued or expanded and what are considered ongoing research priorities. This was followed by focused sessions on the

future landscape.

For many, the future landscape session was the highlight of the day where participants broke into research groups for a more in-depth discussion of research needs in the following areas: timber circular economy; technical compliance and performance – fire; technical compliance and performance - structure, acoustics; durability, weather and hygrothermal protection; pre-fabrication and design for manufacture and assembly

“VISIONS FOR USE OF TIMBER IN CONSTRUCTION SECTOR”



1/ Dr Lisa Ottenhaus, lecturer at UQ teaching design of timber structures, Dr Luis Yerman, Research Fellow in Timber Durability at UQ, and Kelly Rischmiller, manager, ARC Future Timber Hub and Centre for Future Timber Structures.



2/ Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) forest product innovations team... Dr Chandan Kumar, Dr Tim Smith, Tony Dakin, Dr Maryam Shirmohammadi, Adam Faircloth, Bill Leggate, and Dr Rob McGavin.

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+ advanced technologies (automation in construction) and digital tools for construction; alternate applications for timber products.

Outcomes of the workshop are now being developed into a 'workshop summary' which will include key research priorities and how these can align with and contribute to the R&D strategies of FWPA and other industry associations.

This will assist in funding further research proposals for the CFTS/FTH in 2021, including an application for an ARC Industrial Transformation Research Hub.

The CFTS/FTH aims to serve as an enabler for

“A FANTASTIC GATEWAY TO DIRECT CHANGE



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1/ **Kim Baber, UQ Fellow in Civil Engineering and Architecture, Professor Jeff Morrell, director, National Centre for Timber Durability and Design Life, Professor Keith Crews, UQ Honorary Professor and Stephen Dayus, Wesbeam and CFTS board member.**
 2/ **Matthew Smith, Multinail, Dr Felix Wiesner, UQ lecturer in Timber Engineering, and David van Drimmelen, UQ School of Civil Engineering research scholar.**
 3/ **Dr Paola Leardini, master program director at UQ School of Architecture, with Dr Cristyn Meath, UQ research program leader and sustainability and research fellow.**

timber to become a primary construction material for complex infrastructure in Australia by maximising its performance and environmental credentials.

One thing is for certain... the CFTS/FTH has formed an excellent collaboration to further the advocacy of

timber and removal of barriers to its use.

Participant Danielle Pacella from Jackson Clements Burrows Architects summed it up perfectly: "It was thoroughly interesting, informative and a fantastic gateway to directing change and research in the (mass)

timber industry."

For further information please visit www.futuretimberhub.org (More reports next issue).

• *Timber&Forestry enews thanks Kelly Rischmiller, manager, ARC Future Timber Hub and Centre for Future Timber Structures, for her assistance in presenting this excellent report.*

More visibility needed in global timber trade

THE Timber and Technology Conference in Stockholm this week saw industry leaders sharing strategies for visibility, automation, and collaboration in the face of increased volatility that has forced the wood industry to innovate at an unprecedented pace.

Deputy CEO at global timber importer and distributor Robelbois said the conference helped merge how the industry is performing overall and how it can be improved through supply chain technologies.

The conference was also an opportunity for companies to take stock of 2020, compare notes, and process the lasting

impact of the pandemic on the timber industry.

Conference delegates focused on democratising information across the industry, including timber producers, sawmills, importers and forwarders.

Yang Junyi from the China Timber and Wood Products Distribution Association said transportation bottlenecks across the shipping and railway networks increased competition for inventory from other countries, driving up



prices. She noted that US monetary policy has made timber both more expensive and more complicated to come by.

Timber industry stakeholders in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) markets

reported similar trends but with a regional resurgence thanks to improving security and economic outlook.

Blockchain based trade document platform CargoX also shared important news about Egypt's new regulations on electronic documents and customs declarations, which will affect all imports starting July 1. The Egyptian Ministry of Finance will soon require a unique customs registration number for each incoming shipment imported to be included on all shipping documents. The ACI system is based on making the shipment data available to customs before shipping from the country of export.