

Press Release: DANA Melbourne Conference – 22 May 2015



The upcoming 4th **DANA Australia Forestry and Forest Products Sector: Its situation in 2015 and trends going forward Conference** in Melbourne on August 13 & 14, is being held at a time where several segments of the Australian forest industry appear to be having a much needed boost in confidence.

New activity in the industry is occurring across the sector, from the consolidation and stabilisation of the plantation ownership industry (including new international entrants to the industry), increasing housing starts with its attendant activity in wood product demand, a rapidly emerging new set of timber and engineered wood product construction systems; and a surge in demand for Australian softwood logs, plantation hardwood logs and woodchips and increasingly plantation hardwood logs in overseas markets.

DANA Director, Dennis Neilson, says that more than 80% of the 21 scheduled speaker and panel presenters have been confirmed, with some exciting overseas speaker slots expecting to be filled.

Opening the proceedings will be high profile Australian industry icon, Rob de Fegely, who will introduce the sector and provide an overview as well as discussing ongoing work between the Federal Government and the Australian Forest Industry Advisory Council on preparing a comprehensive “Directions Paper”, which Rob is closely involved with. Rob has recently team up with a number of his earlier consulting compatriots to form a new company Margules Groome Consulting Pty Ltd – of which he is a founding Director.

Rounding out the opening session will be a presentation by Greg McCormack, Chairman of Midway and Chairman of the Australian Forest Products Association on “*Has the Australian Industry Turned the Corner?*” Greg will also provide delegates with his take on the recently signed Australia-China Free Trade Agreement and its implications for the wood industry trade.

This Free Trade Agreement was signed six months ago, but as with all Free Trade Agreements, “the devil is in the details”. These are likely to be made public for the first time only a few weeks before this DANA Conference, so Greg will be able to provide delegates with details of the implications “hot off the press”.

Several other speakers will present at this important two day Conference, and DANA will provide information on these and their topics in later releases.

The programme, speakers, venue, sponsorship packages and registration tabs are available on the website <http://danamelbourne2015.com/> - or contact Conference Organiser Mariela Ferrari at mferrari@danamelbourne2015.com