

# M.B. NEWS

## November 2007 Edition

"Without prejudice"

### THE BUILDING INDUSTRY OUTLOOK

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We have started to see an increase in demand over the past few months. We understand that NSW is starting to also pick up and they have been in the doldrums for over 18 months now, this is good news for NSW, but it will only compound the problem of timber supply as you will read about later on in this newsletter.

Speaking to one manufacturer he stated that this is the first time in 5 or 6 years that he will have a Christmas rush. This is due to a number of reasons, one being that we haven't had a winter as we used to know it, in the past 6 or more years. We haven't lost any time due to not being able to get onto sites due to rain. This year there has been the odd week that this has occurred. We have also seen the market place itself pick up and we look forward to it continuing.

Last newsletter I stated that we would be hearing from Harley Dales at a FTMA Australia meeting on the future of the market. Although it wasn't all bells and whistles and positive, he stated that there would be a little more pain before we saw a gradual increase in demand, with a brighter outlook in the second half of next year. We are seeing at the moment a slight improvement and we hope that this will continue beyond Christmas (and not just a Christmas build up). So I suppose we have to remember that old song from Monty Python - "Always look on the bright side of life".

### SOMETHING NEW

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You may or may not be aware that the MBA has combined with a company called Advantage Card to bring you an Awards programme. This awards programme gives the cardholders a 1% discount on their purchases if their account is paid within a certain time period and you will also receive reward points, which can use with participating companies. For a builder it can add up to quite a few points when you think about the number of items used in a house. M.B. Pre-Fab has been taken on as one of the participants; this service was supposed to be available early in November but has been delayed. The discount only applies if the account is paid within the 30 day trading terms. M.B. Pre-Fab will not be responsible for any reason that this is not achievable by the cardholder and will be strictly adhered to.

### TIMBER

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In the last newsletter we stated the differences in the pricing of timber from one company to another. We have just been notified that in January 2008 we will see an increase from one major supplier that will bring their prices closer to the other company. We are told that the price of untreated standard pine framing, non structural, Termination H2 and H2F will increase by 8% and for web material, they will increase by 15%. The reason why web material is going up 15% is that in the past this material was available in short lengths. With the shortage of material the web material (shorts) has to be cut out of long lengths which are much dearer. This will still be slightly below another company's price, but more importantly we do not have the "groups" of different lengths carrying different price structures.

As I stated in the last news letter we have 3 or 4 groups of 90x35 and 90x45 pine, which have different price structures depending on the demands on those lengths. To this we have to add the problem of supply which has dogged us for the past 4 or more months. We are thankful we decided to build a relationship (partnership) with one of the major suppliers a fair while ago, which has really helped us. There were some manufacturers who shopped around for the cheapest price from month to month and there were some that jumped from one supplier to another for the sake of 2 or 3 cents per metre savings. Once they left a supplier, that supplier then allocated their timber that they used to purchase to another client, which meant that the old supplier had no allocation of timber for them if they were found short with their new supplier.

The timber shortages seem to stem from the source of the product that they are cutting. Early last year I wrote about the log sizes and the number of pieces they now get out of a log, compared to the number they used to get. This seems unchanged and I cannot see it changing in the foreseeable future.

Imported timber from Europe (mainly Baltic Pine) will probably increase as the price increase will now make it worthwhile importing more of it into Australia. This will obviously help fill in the gaps and take the pressure off the Australian suppliers and more importantly help meet the demand out in the market place.

Heart in studs have always been a problem in the building industry and now the main supplier of this product has withdrawn it from the market place. It consisted of anything up to 5000 cube a month and with this being withdrawn from the market, it meant that those using it had to source another product to replace it. In doing so it made it tight on the standard studs available. Then there is the withdrawal of the NZ pine from our markets. You would all be aware of the F7 grade treated timber from NZ that is not up to grade. Most timber yards would have sent out notices informing people of the problem and advising that it is probably closer to f5 grades. Some wholesalers will not take it unless it is accompanied by a certificate assuring them that it is f7 grade.

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## **INDUSTRY ON SITE CONCERNS**

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On the 18th of September M.B. Pre-Fab held an industry night in conjunction with Robert Peart from Building Permit Central and the Gordon TAFE. We had some one hundred builders, chippies, 3rd & 4th year apprentices and a lot of building inspectors turn up on the night. This was a fantastic response from the Geelong area. We had two speakers from the FTMA Australia and they showed pictures taken from sites around Victoria that had problems with erection of the trusses and the correct installation of them and the associated ancillary items. It was an extremely informative night and due to it we have been asked by one group to arrange a talk on the problems on site with deliveries, which we can look at organising down the track.

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## **FTMA AUSTRALIA**

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On Saturday 13th October the Inaugural FTMA Australia National Awards were held at Studio 3 in the Crown complex. We closed the attendance off at 300 to make sure that the attendees were comfortable and had plenty of room to move around. The entertainment was fantastic with an Elvis impersonator along with a "Blues Brother", who actually looked and sounded like one of them and a number of other singers and entertainers. The night had Ian Cover as the MC and ran like clock work; at one stage we were well in front of our schedule. Some 23 Awards were presented on the night. The night was a complete success and all that attended gave positive feedback throughout the following weeks including a number of companies looking to get involved through sponsorship next year. We are not 100% sure whether to hold these annually or bi-annually due to the actual time and man power taken to organise a night like this. There is also the question that now we are a national group, should they be held interstate or in Victoria? If you wish to see details of the night, just log onto [www.ftmaustralia.com.au](http://www.ftmaustralia.com.au)

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## **HIA GEELONG AND WESTERN DISTRICT BRANCH**

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What a night for the annual regional awards night. We had 136 people booked in with 130 there. Next year it will go to October rather than have the problems of contending with the AFL finals - the date has already been booked. The food was of extremely high quality and the entertainment (Dave Grant) was fantastic. He was very accommodating prior to his act and after, helping where he could and mixing with the attendees on the night. His act was extremely funny, without any of the bad language and on topical things that everyone could relate to. The MC, Caroline Lawry was excellent, especially for someone who is not accustomed to the role. The night was hindered by Geelong playing in the finals, but the fact that we had a TV in the foyer area for the last 20 to 30 minutes and that Geelong won eased the pain. A lot stayed after the official part of the function was over and showed their skills on the dance floor. We had one sponsor who had just come on board in the past two months, tell us that he goes to all of the HIA Regional Awards nights and this was one of the best nights he had ever attended. The atmosphere, the entertainment and the fact that it was broken up so we didn't get bored was fantastic. We hope everyone who attended enjoyed themselves and to those that won awards, congratulations. To those that participated in the actual awards, but didn't win one, we look forward to

you competing again next year. The list of winners can be found on the local branch web site [www.hiageelong.com](http://www.hiageelong.com)

## LIGHT HEARTED

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A blind man enters a Ladies Bar by mistake. He finds his way to a barstool and orders a drink. After sitting there for awhile, he yells to the bartender, "Hey, you wanna hear a blonde joke?" The bar immediately falls absolutely quiet.

In a very deep, husky voice, the woman next to him says, "Before you tell that joke, sir, I think it is just fair - given that you are blind - that you should know five things:

1. The bartender is a blonde girl.
2. The bouncer is a blonde girl.
3. I'm a 6 feet tall, 160 pound blonde woman with a black belt in karate.
4. The woman sitting next to me is blonde and is a professional weightlifter.
5. The lady to your right is a blonde and is a professional wrestler.

Now think about it seriously, Mister. Do you still wanna tell that joke?

The blind man thinks for a second, shakes his head, and declares, "Nah, not if I'm gonna have to explain it five times."

### Six reasons not to mess with children

- (1) A little girl was talking to her teacher about whales. The teacher said it was physically impossible for a whale to swallow a human because even though it was a very large mammal its throat was very small. The little girl stated that Jonah was swallowed by a whale. Irritated, the teacher reiterated that a whale could not swallow a human; it was physically impossible. The little girl said, "When I get to heaven I will ask Jonah". The teacher asked, "What if Jonah went to hell?" The little girl replied, "Then you ask him."
- (2) A Kindergarten teacher was observing her classroom of children while they were drawing. She would occasionally walk around to see each child's work. As she got to one little girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was. The girl replied, "I'm drawing God." The teacher paused and said, "But no one knows what God looks like." Without missing a beat, or looking up from her drawing, the girl replied, "They will in a minute."
- (3) A Sunday school teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her five and six year olds. After explaining the commandment to "honour" thy Father and thy Mother, she asked, "Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?" Without missing a beat one little boy (the oldest of a family) answered, "Thou shall not kill."
- (4) The children had all been photographed, and the teacher was trying to persuade them each to buy a copy of the group picture. "Just think how nice it will be to look at it when you are all grown up and say, 'There's Jennifer, she's a lawyer,' or 'That's Michael, he's a doctor'. A small voice at the back of the room rang out, "And there's the teacher, she's dead."
- (5) A teacher was giving a lesson on the circulation of the blood. Trying to make the matter clearer, she said, "Now, class, if I stood on my head, the blood, as you know, would run into it, and I would turn red in the face." "Yes," the class said. "Then why is it that while I am standing upright in the ordinary position, the blood doesn't run into my feet?" A little fellow shouted, "Cause your feet ain't empty."
- (6) The children were lined up in the cafeteria of a Catholic elementary school for lunch. At the head of the table was a large pile of apples. The nun made a note, and posted on the apple tray: "Take only ONE. God is watching." Moving further along the lunch line, at the other end of the table was a large pile of chocolate chip cookies. A child had written a note, "Take all you want. God is watching the apples".

## STAFF

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In the last newsletter we spoke about the introduction of two new trainees, Neil and Tim. Unfortunately or fortunately depending on which way you look at it, Tim did not make the grade, but Neil has come along in leaps and bounds and has got through his first three months unscathed. We look forward to this continuing and him developing into a very good Estimator. Our new CDO / Rep, Paul Christie is doing very well and is learning, as he is at the coal face and sees what happens on site.

## EDITORS NOTE

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Just to round off the year, we thank you for your support throughout the year. We hope you have been informed by our newsletter and it has given you some insight into what is happening in the industry. We hope the jokes have entertained you, not embarrassed you and we look forward to doing it all again next year.

*To you and your families we wish you all the best in the New Year and we hope that you receive all that you ask for at Christmas time. Have a safe and wonderful time.  
Regards from all at M.B.*

## DIRECT LINES

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If you need to know something or require any assistance please do not hesitate to use the contacts set out below.

Contact	Area	Phone Number
Doug Maxwell	Longreach Floor Trusses	5249 4411 Direct Fax 5223 1022
Clive Martella		5249 4412 Direct Fax 5223 1022
Darren Benn	General Manager / Logistics Manager	5249 4403
Tim	Customer Development Officer / Estimator	0407 232 884
Paul	Customer Development Officer / Estimator	0409 940 757 or 5249 4408
Davin	Truss Detailer	5249 4410
Matt	Truss Detailer / Estimator	5249 4409
Brad	Wall Detailer	5249 4414
Andrew	Wall Detailer	5249 4415
Steve	Supervisor / Estimator	5249 4405
David	Estimator	5249 4407
Anne	Deliveries / Orders / General Enquiries	5223 2888
Lauren	Accounts / General Enquiries / Orders	5223 2888

Remember if you need a set of plans picked up; give one of the C.D.O.'s a call or our office. We will arrange a time and place convenient to you.