

Tasmanian Wood Encouragement Policy 2024



Introduction

The Tasmanian Government (the Government) recognises the importance of the Tasmanian forest and wood products industry to regional employment and economic development and is committed to growing the forestry industry on a sustainable basis.

The Government also recognises the significant contribution that sustainable, renewable timber use can make towards climate change mitigation.

The Government's Tasmanian Wood Encouragement Policy was established to increase the use of sustainably sourced forest and wood products (wood) within Government particularly in the design, building and construction of new buildings and fit-outs, and the heating and energy requirements of building and construction projects. This policy has been refreshed in line with agency and industry feedback.

Cover photo: UTAS Burnie - Photo Alice Bennett.

This page: Lands Building - Photo Adam Gibson.

Application

The Tasmanian Wood Encouragement Policy applies to inner Budget agencies and other entities subject to the *Financial Management Act 2016*.

In addition, agencies should ensure private sector and local government building and construction projects apply this policy where the Tasmanian Government provides support or enters a lease for projects that receive support. This would include in-kind support.

Purpose

The Tasmanian Wood Encouragement Policy will:

- demonstrate local and national leadership, highlighting Tasmania's culture of wood;
- help stimulate sustainable economic development within the Tasmanian forest and wood products industry and encourage investment in wood processing innovations and technology;
- contribute to climate change mitigation by encouraging the use of wood, which reduces and stores atmospheric carbon in the construction and fabric of the building;
- encourage agencies to fully consider and demonstrate the use of wood particularly in construction, fit out, aesthetic and decorative components, as well as heating and energy;
- facilitate the sharing of information and encourage education regarding the benefits of using wood in construction and fit out of buildings and infrastructure; and
- complement the Buy Local Policy and associated Treasurer's Instructions, and particularly encourage the purchase of Tasmanian wood.



UTAS library - Photo Alice Bennett.

Benefits of wood

Responsibly sourced wood is sustainable, low carbon (in many cases it is a carbon sink), low energy, attractive, high performance, versatile, and economical. Additionally, the increased use of wood makes a positive social and economic impact on the Tasmanian community, supporting manufacturing and jobs, and recognising the historical and cultural importance of the timber industry to Tasmania and its regional areas.

Parliament Square - Photo Adam Gibson.

Faster construction times

The efficiency of building with mass produced prefabricated timber, such as Cross Laminated Timber (CLT), beams, panels, frames and trusses, has been demonstrated on projects worldwide and is increasingly being used in high rise multi-story buildings. Mass produced timber can significantly reduce on-site construction times and costs, making it an attractive alternative in comparison to other building materials.

Energy efficiency

Responsibly sourced wood has a low “embodied energy”, meaning that less energy and carbon emissions are associated with timber production and processing in comparison to most other building materials. The use of responsibly sourced wood as an alternative building material can significantly reduce the carbon footprint of building and construction projects.

Due to its cellular structure wood is a natural insulator and humidity regulator. Buildings produced using timber have improved thermal performance, resulting in lower energy requirements for heating and cooling. Research has shown as an insulator, wood is: 15 x more efficient than masonry, 400 x more efficient than steel, 1,770 x more efficient than aluminium.

Health and wellbeing

Numerous studies highlight a range of health and wellbeing benefits of wood. Wood offers a material connection to nature and can be akin to benefits associated with spending time in nature. Timber interiors can provide physiological and psychological benefits such as reduced stress,

lower blood pressure and lower heart rate, as well as fostering a sense of calm, improve cognitive function and improve organisational productivity. Interior wood products improve indoor air quality by moderating humidity, improving energy and comfort levels.

“The benefits of good building design on our health, happiness and productivity is firmly established. Indoor environment quality not only benefits the occupants but also enhances the value of the property.”

– Planet Ark, Wood Nature Inspired Design.

Mitigating climate change

Wood is unique in that it sequesters (stores) carbon; as trees grow they remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Approximately 50 per cent of the dry weight of wood is carbon. When trees are harvested the carbon is locked in the wood and remains there for the life of the products made with that timber. Forest growth ensures the whole system is sustainable and provides ongoing carbon sequestration.

“Given their ability to store carbon in standing trees and long-lasting wood products, sustainably harvested forests have the potential to surpass the carbon storage benefits provided by conserved forests over the long term.”

-- Forestry for a low-carbon future -- integrating forests and wood products in climate change strategies <http://www.fao.org>

More benefits of wood can be found at:
<https://makeitwood.org>

What Government agencies need to know



MyState Bank Arena - Photo Alice Bennett.

Procurement considerations

Although the focus of the Tasmanian Wood Encouragement Policy is building and construction, for general procurement, including goods & services, the use of wood can provide an opportunity to contribute to multiple government policy objectives such as buying locally, employment creation, industry development, climate change mitigation, and environmental policies. These are important considerations in achieving a good value for money outcome for the Tasmanian community and should be considered for all relevant procurement.

Buy local

The Tasmanian Government is committed to backing local businesses to create jobs and stimulate the economy to deliver growth. The Government's Buy Local Policy increases awareness of the requirements for, and benefits in, buying locally and improves access to Government contracts for small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

The Government's Buy Local Policy:

- enhances opportunities for local businesses to compete for Government business by requiring Government entities to take into account the wider community and social benefits of purchasing decisions;
- promotes within Government, the advantages of buying locally;
- reduces administrative burden on businesses providing services by simplifying procurement documentation;
- provides businesses (and Government entities) with key information, tips, tools and training to effectively increase their future competitiveness to win government business; and
- increases transparency in relation to Government procurement activities.

The Government requires its agencies to undertake procurement activity in accordance with the requirements and processes set out in the Buy Local Policy and associated Treasurer's Instructions. Agencies should ensure designers fully consider wood, particularly Tasmanian wood products, in their design.



UTAS Burnie - Photo Alice Bennett.

Building and construction

Agencies should ensure that the procurement planning and design for all building and construction projects fully considers the use of wood, particularly Tasmanian wood, so long as:

- it represents value for money (refer to [Better Practice Guidelines](#));
- it provides appropriate quality and functionality;
- it complies with the Buy Local Policy and associated Treasurer's Instructions;
- there are no technical or performance reasons for not considering wood; and
- it complies with relevant Australian Standards.

In implementing the Tasmanian Wood Encouragement Policy agencies should:

- encourage the sourcing of Tasmanian wood products and structural components, consistent with the objectives of the Buy Local Policy and associated Treasurer's Instructions;
- actively seek to develop demonstration projects that showcase the use of wood within Tasmania;
- ensure that, where possible, comparisons between the cost of building materials takes into account all long-term and life cycle considerations;
- ensure the use of responsibly sourced wood and wood products;
- seek those who can find practical, efficient, versatile and cost-effective building and design solutions using wood when sourcing design and architectural expertise; and
- incorporate the following standard clause in all design and architectural briefs for building and construction projects.

"Through its Tasmanian Wood Encouragement Policy, the Government encourages the use of wood and wood products as a preferred material in building and construction procurement solutions where:

- it represents value for money;
- it provides appropriate quality and functionality;
- it complies with the Buy Local Policy and associated Treasurer's Instructions;
- there are no technical or performance reasons for not considering wood; and
- it complies with relevant Australian Standards.

You should be familiar with the Tasmanian Wood Encouragement Policy and ensure you have fully considered the use of wood in your design to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the modern forest and wood products industry. Examples of areas where wood can be particularly encouraged in building and construction projects are:

- structural elements;
- visual/decorative products;
- wood fit out options;
- building envelope and included joinery;
- outdoor structures and landscape projects; and
- biomass heating and associated energy production."

The procurement manager should review the design to satisfy themselves that the designer has considered the use of wood and reported any impediments to wood use, to allow future analysis.

During construction tendering, alternative design proposals which reduce the amount of wood used should only be accepted if they represent proven value for money, or where they enhance the quality, functionality, technical aspects or building performance such as cost efficiency over the life of the building. Any changes should also be considered in the context of the Buy Local Policy and associated Treasurer's Instructions to maximise the use of Tasmanian Wood.



UTAS library - Photo Alice Bennett.

What architects, designers & suppliers need to know

The Government recognises that architects and designers have a long history of working with wood.

Architects and designers should ensure that they familiarise themselves with the Tasmanian Wood Encouragement Policy and meet its requirements in their design briefs. They should identify suitable wood products and options and ensure they specify appropriate and available wood products.

Where a detailed comparison of life cycle benefits is required, suppliers may consider a life cycle assessment (LCA) and/or the use of an Environmental Product Declaration (EPD) available through the Australasian EPD Program <http://www.epd-australasia.com/> (for products based on the same product category rules) or similar.

Project specifications should ensure that equal recognition is provided for forest certification schemes, such as Responsible Wood and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), to ensure that Tasmanian wood is fully considered. Suppliers should also advise agencies of any significant impediments to wood use, such as a lack of product availability or product information, to ensure they are captured in reporting and policy review.

Parliament Square - Photo Adam Gibson.

Technical resources

- Tasmanian Timber - <https://tasmaniantimber.com.au>
- CSAW - <https://www.utas.edu.au/research/institutes-and-centres/csw>
- Wood Solutions - <https://www.woodsolutions.com.au>
- Forest Policy - <https://stategrowth.tas.gov.au/forestry>

Further information

Government entities and suppliers should report through the Tasmanian Wood Encouragement Policy email, forests@stategrowth.tas.gov.au, any identified issues or impediments.

Refer to the following Treasury policies:

- **Buy Local Policy.**
- **Treasurer's Instruction PF-2 Policies impacting on procurement: all procurement.**
- **All other procurement Treasurer's Instructions.**
- **International Procurement Obligations.**
- **Procurement Better Practice Guidelines.**

To comply with the policy architects, designers and suppliers should:

- maximise the use of wood in the project;
- select Tasmanian wood where available;
- ensure any forest certification requirements allow all certified Tasmanian wood (e.g. Responsible Wood/PEFC or FSC); and
- ensure substitution of wooden design elements by tenderers is well justified.

Case Study -

MyState Bank Arena by Philp Lighton Architects.

The project created a distinctively Tasmanian, state of the art basketball stadium and multipurpose event space. Tasmanian Oak and Blackwood veneer were used extensively to create a warm and welcoming space with elements of luxury.

Architect Thomas Floyd (Philp Lighton Architects) said:

"Timber can age with the building. If it's contemporary architecture and contemporary use of timber, it will all age nicely and be a good quality piece of architecture for many years to come".

Project manager Mark Millhouse (VOS) said:

"Tasmanian timbers, like Tasmanian Oak and Blackwood, have a strength, hardness and resilience about them. They're excellent products that are easy to work with, have stability and consistency of quality that stands the test of time. On top of this they look fantastic".

Case study provided by tasmaniantimber.com.au



MyState Bank Arena - Photo Alice Bennett.

Department of State Growth
4 Salamanca Place
Hobart TAS 7000 Australia

Phone: 03 6166 4461

Email: forests@stategrowth.tas.gov.au

Web: www.stategrowth.tas.gov.au



Acknowledgements

The following organisations are acknowledged for their assistance and support in developing this Policy, and in the provision of materials contained in this Policy:

- Planet Ark – <https://makeitwood.org/wood-encouragement-policy>
- Forest & Wood Products Australia – www.fwpa.com.au
- Latrobe Council (Victoria) – <http://www.latrobe.vic.gov.au/Home>
- Wood Solutions – <http://www.woodsolutions.com.au/>
- Forestry Innovations Investment Ltd (British Columbia, Canada) – <http://www.bcfii.ca/> and www.naturallywood.com/
- Photography courtesy of Claire Bennett. Photographers Alice Bennett and Adam Gibson.

The contribution of the Latrobe Council (Victoria) in allowing the use of substantial elements of their Wood Encouragement Policy is particularly noted.