

COPING WITH TIMBER SHORTAGES

The Australian timber industry is currently coping with a severe short supply of structural timber. While local producers are making every effort to bridge the supply chain, there is a major influx of natural sawn and other engineered timber products arriving from overseas. Many of these products are coming pre-certified with tests run overseas and, more importantly certified to other equivalent overseas standards.

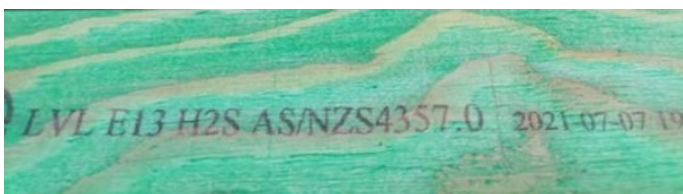
While some of those products may be appropriate for use in Australia, a few bridges need to be crossed to ensure compliance to Australian Standards.

The following are some of the standards applicable to sawn timber and LVL in Australia.



- AS 1748** Solid timber stress grading for structural purposes
- AS 4490** Solid timber stress grading for structural purposes
- AS 4357** Structural Laminated Veneer Lumber [LVL] Specification

In addition there are other branding and identification requirements similar to as shown below to established verifiable 'Chain of Custody'.



- While adopting any timber products from overseas; ensure the strength properties of product are locally certified or verified by a suitable institution.
- LVL and GL are Engineered Wood Products [EWP], usually designed to deliver a specific application. Some materials are only for wall frame application, others purely for bending applications as in beams and lintels. There are others which can be used in truss chords but perhaps are less productive in webs. There are still other products which are only for scaffolding or shoring. Ensure you choose 'fit-for-purpose' materials only.
- Engineered or natural sawn timber from overseas may not be readily used in truss and frame design. There may be a need to determine the screw, nail or nail-plate capacity to enable its use. Same specie of timber growing in different climate conditions renders varying strength properties to timber. This equally affects sawn timber as well as EWP.
- Do not substitute EWP unless there is adequate scientific data from reputable sources to prove such substitution is structurally appropriate. Consult local timber design engineers or manufactures in case of doubt. Many times, products have similar trade names, and our understanding of their behavior may be skewed by the trade name.

'Due Diligence' and 'Duty of Care' should not be undermined for any degree to uncertainty.

While the urgency of the situation is understandable, there are many resources available to assist wherever possible. It is imperative to abide by applicable Standards and Regulations to service our community and achieve safe outcomes through our products.