

# THE SPLINTER

AKD EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER



AKD EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER  
EDITION 50  
MARCH - APRIL 2023



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# SMALL BITES

## AKD Otway Trail Run.

AKD were the proud major sponsor of The AKD Otway Trail Run which was raising funds for the local hospital foundation.

Runners got to enjoy some of the most scenic views the Otways has to offer along the Old Beechy Rail Trail through either a 16km Run or 7km Run/Walk.



L-R: Amanda Meade, Evie Meade, Sabian Ritchie, Sarah Evans, Carl Angus and Max Meade.

## Let's get Social!

'AKDSoftwoods'   

### Want to share your news, photos, ideas or feedback?

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## Operations quarterly meeting.

In late February we saw the Operations team come together at our Colac operations. Present were all four Site Managers, Rab Green (Tumut), Glen Davids (Yarram), Andrew Wilson (Caboolture) and John Browne (Colac), as well as Paul Hartung (GM of Operations) Tom O'Connor (Process Optimisation Analyst) and Neil Hunter (National Saw Shop Manager).

Over the two days we covered off on safety, people opportunities and development, environmental, production performance, process improvements, projects, and sales and market opportunities. The time was spent looking forward to the future rather than looking at where we have been, as well as all the site managers seeing first hand what each of the business units have been working on.

Each site will host a quarterly meetings for a chance for everyone to get out of their own sites and see what opportunities and developments are happening around AKD. Next quarter meeting will be held at Tumut.

The team managed to get an activity done offsite with clay target shooting organised by John where there was some personalities coming out on the range with Rab swearing at the targets he missed, Neil still thinking about whether to shoot or not and Paul's new nickname "Double Tap Hartung". Glen Davis from Yarram took out the honours on the day.



L-R: Rab Green, Paul Hartung, Neil Hunter, John Browne, Andrew Wilson, Tom O'Connor and Glen Davis.

# Embrace Equity and Gender Diversity in AKD

March 8th was International Women's Day (IWD), and this year's theme was "Embrace Equity." Embracing equity means valuing and promoting diversity, inclusion, and fairness for all women, regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, or any other characteristic.

AKD recognises the importance of embracing equity within our business. It's not just something we say. It's not just something we write about. It's something we need to think about, know, value and embrace. It's what we believe in, unconditionally. Equity means creating an inclusive world.

All sites were encouraged to take part in the IWD campaign this year by posting a photo of themselves embracing themselves. Almost 100 employees demonstrated their support for Embracing Equality which was displayed internally and through our social media accounts. Have you spotted yourself yet?

As part of International Women's Day, Colac, Tumut and Yarram employees participated in events which provided opportunities for individuals and organizations to come together to promote and celebrate the achievements of women in their communities.

Yarram held a breakfast at the local bakery for employees to call in for on the way to work and displayed IWD slides on their TVs in communal areas for the day.

Tumut employees attended a luncheon held by Business Snowy Valleys, proudly in their orange with both men and women representing, where there was around 40 in attendance.

Members of the National and Colac teams attended COPACC's (Colac Otway Performing Arts and Cultural Centre) inaugural International Women's Day dinner to support the Evie Grace Foundation, an Australian based not-for-profit working to eliminate child poverty in East Africa, where founder Maddi Kent was raised in the region.

Shoutout to all employees who participated in the campaign and took time to attend an event to show your support.

AKD's Gender Diversity Working Group have continued to support and contribute to improving AKD with the help of employees completing the AKD Gender Diversity Survey in December last year.

The results were pleasing with the majority of questions seeing a positive uplift in comparison to the last survey in July 2021. Many great outcomes were introduced or implemented as a result, including Paid Parental Leave Policy, Domestic Violence Leave Policy, the recent Respect@ Work Program and the Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

We have also seen the number of females employed at AKD during that time increase from 13% in June 2021 to 17% in February 2023.



*Tumut's Karren Williams, Nina Adams, Kim Self, Janice McDonald, Colin Hindmarsh, Brayden McPherson attended a local business luncheon.*



*COPACC attendees Charmaine Miciano, Marina Milic, Melissa Garner, Kavitha Ponneelan, Brooke McEwan, Meg Nelson, Lisa Howard and Shirley Ritchie.*

The following key recommendations have been identified and will form the AKD Gender Diversity Working Group action plan for 2023 and beyond:

- Uniform review
- Amenities auditing and upgrade proposals
- Flexible work arrangements options
- Paid Parental Leave Policy review including the 'Keep in Touch' program
- Coaching frontline leaders/supervisors on personal development conversations
- Continued reinforcement and development of AKD Respect @ Work Program
- Networking and development opportunities

In addition to the survey, AKD utilises the WGEA (Workplace Gender Equality Agency) Gender Equality diagnostic tool which focuses on 17 areas of gender equality which includes pay equity, support, flexible working, development and gender-based harassment.

When completed in early 2022 an overall score of 106.5 was achieved which helped AKD to identify areas that required focus. We have just run the diagnostic tool for 2023 with an impressive result of 152.5. This result provides AKD with further information to continue with the work being completed in this area and strive for even better results in the years to come.

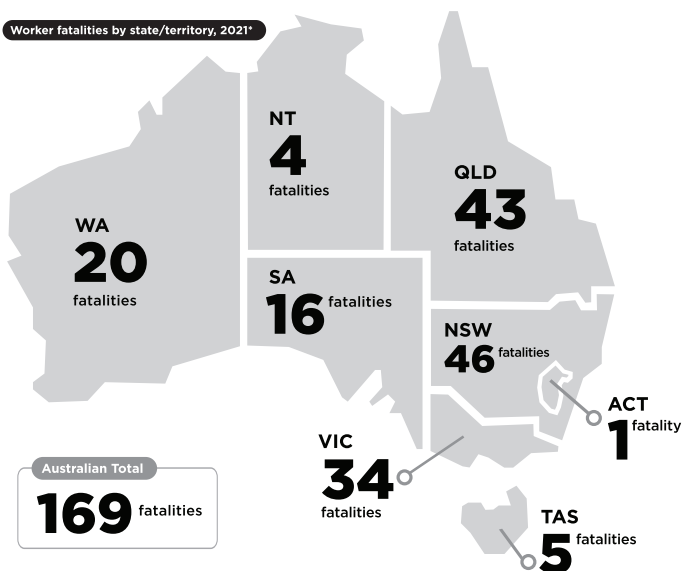
# Health & Safety

A bit of a somber start to this article, but I find this really concerning (and heartbreaking). In this day and age and with all the technology, systems and processes in place to protect employees – there were still **169 people killed in Australian workplaces in 2021** (latest figures available from SafeWork Australia).

169 people woke up in the morning, said goodbye to their families and left for work so they could earn money to support their lifestyle, and never returned home - THIS IS JUST NOT ACCEPTABLE.

No one ever wakes up and leaves for work thinking they won't get home at the end of the day.

Worker fatalities by state/territory, 2021\*



Our Critical Risk Program is designed specifically around risks we have in our business that have the potential to result in serious harm and fatality. These are the areas that should be front & center in every activity and every decision we make - everyday.



As you all would have seen, our stock levels are high at the moment – this does not mean we disregard our safe stacking practices.



Every machine operator at some point (at times, multiple times) during the day will need to isolate – even if you have to isolate multiple times, does not mean you don't do it correctly each and every time.



Even if our trucks are just driving 'down the road' – does not mean we don't apply the correct amount of straps on every load.



While you might work near and feel comfortable around mobile plant movement all day, does not mean that you disregard exclusion zones and communication requirements.

The control measures we have in place are there for a reason – **to protect YOU**.

As a business, we have a legal duty to protect you, but this is more than a legal duty – we do it because we genuinely care. You also have a legal responsibility – and that is to adhere to the processes and practices that are in place, not just for the business – but for you, your family, your friends.

A lot of our sites are in small communities, we see each other at the supermarket, we see each other at the footy, our kids go to the same school. No-one wants to see a workmate, a teammate, a community member, any person be seriously injured or killed at work.

## We are a team; we need to work together to identify issues and improvements.

We treat contractors the same, whilst they are not technically an AKD employee they are still expected to work safely and adhere to the site procedures and as a business, we also have the same legal and moral duty to protect them. Contractors also have family that they want to get home to each day.

The Critical Risk focus for March and April has been around **Contractor Management**. Contractors can work on many sites and have to follow different rules at different sites. Unlike our workforce that are familiar with isolation, hot work requirements etc – contractors need to be made aware of AKD expectations and it is up to all of us to provide them with the required information (via induction for example), guide them with task specific instructions and constantly monitor how and what they are doing.

Each site has been working on updating our Contractor database to ensure information is up to date, inductions are complete and contractors that are currently onsite working are doing all activities safely and aligned to AKD requirements.

It was really pleasing to read some of the other site articles:

- Cameron's article in Colac and how the team worked together with the contractors and had a safe and successful shut with the projects that were undertaken – great work Team Colac!
- Rodney's article in Tumut where the team worked together to find a safe and practical solution for the SawDoctors hand protection.
- Graham's article where the Yarram team are embracing change with some really positive improvements being made on site.
- Greg's article that talks about communication, team and not looking at what's already happened but what we can improve on moving forward

These are perfect examples of teams working together to make AKD an even safer place to work!



# TOP 10 CRITICAL RISKS



## CONTRACTOR MANAGEMENT

The Health and Safety of Contractors performing work for AKD is paramount. It is important that both AKD and the Contractor work together to ensure the work environment and activity is safe for the contractor and that the work being performed by the contractor does not place our workforce at risk.

An AKD Contractor Supervisor / Representative should be assigned to the contractor. This person is responsible to ensure work is conducted as expected and act as the contact person for the contractor.

All contractors shall undergo the relevant induction for the work they are performing.

Contractors must hold the required licence, certification etc for the work they are undertaking.

Contractors are expected to adhere to AKD site specific requirements.

Contractors are required to provide certain types of information as requested by AKD, which may include (but not limited to):

- Insurances (public liability, workers compensation etc)
- Training records (licences, certification of competencies)
  - Health and Safety Plans
- JSA's, SWMS's, SOP's and Permits specific to the work they are undertaking.

Contractors involved in an incident, may be requested to provide a copy of the investigation report and associated corrective action plan.

All members of the AKD workforce have the support from the business and are encouraged to report any H&S concerns involving contractors.

Contractors are encouraged and requested to report any unsafe behaviours or conditions.

Any breach to AKD Health and Safety requirements will be investigated, and work may cease.

# Caboolture

## Around the Grounds

Well, it's hard to believe that a third of 2023 is already behind us, feels like Christmas is a distant memory.

### PEOPLE

2023 has continued to see some great milestones being met and acknowledged around site. Greg Street, our friendly neighborhood stores person has achieved 35 years of service to the Caboolture site and team. Well done Greg and thanks for your service.

I also had the pleasure of acknowledging Darren Wilton's 35 years of service during March. It was great to hear the stories of the changes seen over that period and how far safety has come now from what it used to be back in the day: *"Here's where to stand and what to stack, good luck"*.



Darren Wilton and partner Katrina



Snippet from a video of Darren Wilton from 'the golden years'.

During March we also saw the departure of Andrew Wilson from the Site Managers role after almost 12 months. Andrew has left behind some significant positive changes around appearance, cleanliness and safety on site and his passion for supporting his employees' development. We all wish Andrew all the very best for the future.

### PROJECTS

I am happy to be able to announce that the long-awaited pellet plant went live during the last couple of months. Whilst we are still in the early stages of handing over to production, early indications are we are now able to produce pellets from our Drymill shavings to feed into our heat plants.

Well done to the project team and thanks for continuing to work through the final stages of trouble shooting.

The CDK is another long-awaited project and is getting closer to completion everyday. You will notice all the internals are now done and all external fittings also completed. We are now in the process of laying the rails through them all and then onto the last lot of foundations on the infeed and outfeed.

Can't wait to see them up and running and producing more output with lower temperature drying and improved distortion for the Drymill.



### SAFETY

The Caboolture team have continued to lift the standard regarding safety across all areas throughout the site. New line marking and perimeter fencing has been erected around site continuing to lift the standards regarding pedestrian and mobile plant separation. It looks awesome.

## Heath & Safety

with Greg Levinge

Caboolture Safety Manager



What is also great to see is the site hasn't had a LTI or MTI during 2023 which is standing by our commitment we all made to our Safety Pledge Board at Safe StartUp about working towards zero harm. The team have also been continuing the roll out of DoneSafe across the site. Keep up the focus on Safety Team Caboolture.



### PRODUCTION

Sawmill started off March very strong, but sadly fell over towards the end of the month with some big hitters in the PLC circuit.

Caboolture was on target for three months in a row above forecast which would have been a big turnaround for the site but let's start to roll on again. The rest of site has been performing well against forecast numbers.

As everyone on site will be seeing an increase in stock holdings, it is critical that we follow our production schedules religiously to meet the ever-changing market conditions.

It's been great to see the employees able to get an extended break after Easter to spend time with their families, especially during the school holidays.

The maintenance teams have been diligently working through this time getting our mill in the best possible condition for the months ahead and we thank them all for their efforts.



Paul Hartung  
GM Operations



'Having fun', 'people who care', 'great working conditions', are just some of the comments we get when we talk with our co-workers on why they started, come back, and stay with AKD. Word of mouth is spreading, and we are finding more new employees have a connection to someone onsite.

With the fast pace of life, it's easy to get overwhelmed, miss important things or just spend too long in a zone where you may not be happy, on edge or under tension.

I was recently on a training course about communication. It was interesting to see this group of 20 people tussle on each other's position on issues around mental health and leadership.

The takeaway was too often we focus on justifying our position as being the right one rather than inquiring more about why our co-workers have a different position. From here we may learn something and need to change our position or simply understand them better so we can adapt our communication.



Site Safety Pledge Board installed.

The site and the safety squad have continued to be involved in improving our working conditions through road repairs, line marking, protection of pedestrians against mobile plant, replacement of old assets and chipping away at isolation reviews.

This is why we love being part of teams that genuinely care for each other and the business, the willingness to get things done, with pride/passion and work across boundaries. I consider us all as AKD employees and not by the name of the position we hold.

Change is inevitable for our site and at times we second guess or question if we are doing the right thing, are we good enough? As an indigenous person I had an elder remind me that **"Every day the sun sets and the clock resets. Your wins don't matter. Your failures don't matter. Don't stress on what was, fight for what could be!"**

Keep the safety talk up as we achieve the production, maintenance, dispatch, and support of our businesses over the next few months. Stay healthy – THINK, WORK and BE SAFE

# Colac & Irrewarra

## Around the Grounds

### COLAC

So, it feels like Christmas was a short time ago but with Easter been and gone the year is flying!

As you are all fully aware it's been a slow start to the year on the sales front and this has put a lot of stress on storage room so I'd just like to say a huge thanks to everyone who have been working hard to ensure that we find room for product safely.

I'd like to take this opportunity to remind you all that we still need to ensure that we keep up our safe standards of storage, this means that, as tempting as it may be, we do not stack above our standard heights and if we are going to store anything in a new area we perform a Risk Assessment to ensure conditions are safe.

While we are on the Safety note, there has been some unfortunate incidents resulting in injuries that required medical attention. Fortunately, no injuries have occurred that have left anyone with any lasting effects but that's more by luck. So, once again I ask that you all think carefully about the tasks you are performing and have the courage to say no and take the time to consider another, safer method of achieving the desired outcome, no cubic meter of timber is worth an injury!

From a production perspective, while March was challenging, February was a record month so congratulations to both Colac and Irrewarra. The key to the great month was a reduction in down time which, in turn, means a reduction in interventions and, as we know, the less time we are intervening in the process, the less chance there is that someone will get hurt.



Concrete repair works in front of the Log Deck.

### EASTER

While it's disappointing that the market has temporarily quietened off, which is a normal part of the cycle we operate in, it has given us an excellent opportunity to take care of some projects that will both improve our efficiency as well as make some tasks safer.

These projects included the long awaited concrete repair works in front of the Log Deck, installation of a log deck crane to safely remove broken logs and straighten skewed logs without having to enter the area, and the Lug Loader and fence installation.

A huge thanks also to those Project and Maintenance Employees that worked through the Easter period to ensure that these projects were able to be completed during this time.

It was great to see so many orange people walking laps around the Colac Botanical Gardens for the Mixx FM Good Friday Appeal Walk-a-thon where each lap made was raising funds for the Royal Children's Hospital.

Finally, thanks and congratulations to all the AKD Family members who participated in the Easter colouring competition. I enjoyed walking into the office and seeing so much colour on display.

A special thanks also goes out to those who helped with the judging as I can assure you it was a very difficult job.

### John Browne

Colac Site Manager



Some of the Good Friday Appeal walkers.



## Health & Safety

with Cameron Grant

Colac & Irrewarra Safety Manager



### IRREWARRA

Irrewarra took the shutdown as an opportunity to update some machinery that deserved some love and attention. This included:

- *Stacker Infeed Chain Runners, Chain, Drive Shaft, and Idler Sprocket* replacement due to the chain being in poor condition, and chain runners worn out. The runners were replaced with UHMW glass embedded plastics as using this material reduces the chance of spot fires from running metal on metal and reduces the amperage on the drive motor to run the chains. The chains now run quieter and will have a longer life span.
- *Head Rig Carriage Sharp Chain Idler Sprockets* were replaced due to the discovery of the chain and sprockets being worn when a PM was recently conducted.



*Josh Van Brem working on the head rig.*

- The annual rotation of the EWD Profiler motor where the removed motor will be sent away for reconditioning and be used as the rotational spare.
- All EWD Profiler Anvil Plates have been changed out due to excessive wear, this will help with the chip size from the Profiler.
- Monkey Infeed Bed Chain were replaced. Due to it being out in the weather, these chains get a hard life and were due for replacement.
- The Edger Walkway Mesh has been replaced due to damage and wear.
- Replacement of the Edger Press Down Roller due wear in the pivot shaft.
- Head Rig flooring clean for preparation of painting with Anti Slip additive for safety.

Thank you to all employees who assisted to get these all completed in time.

**Mick Ritchie**

Irrewarra Site Manager



The year is just flying by and as I am writing this edition's article, we have just had the Easter weekend and are currently having an operational shut period with many of our employees taking the opportunity to have a well-deserved extra-long break.

With that said, it has still been an extremely busy period with our Log Yard and Kilns working through but especially for our Engineering Projects team, Electrical, Saw Doctor and Maintenance teams working right through the whole break.



*Colac Maintenance team working on the HSS on Good Friday*

We get to focus on our normal day to day operational safety which we have a lot of understanding of where our risks and hazards are likely to occur and can put controls in place to reduce that risk to everyone. But when we go into major projects there is an enormous amount of planning that occurs months in advance.

During my time walking through the project areas, it is amazing to see the processes that are in place and the high standard that everyone holds each other to. From the major isolations and electrical works, working at heights, crane movements and lifts, hot works and especially contractor management.

Each step of this planning there is an enormous focus on the health and safety risks that could occur and the controls that will be put in place to prevent an incident, injury or a near miss occurring during the projects.

Through these projects over the past 12 months, we have not had an injury, or an incident occur to one of our employees or contractors, which is a major credit to our teams and the project leaders.

There is not only a focus on the project health and safety but also for when the new equipment will become operational and that the team have done everything possible to ensure the health and safety of our employees once we are back in full operation.

Thank you to those employees for giving up your weekends, public holidays and time away from your families, for not only ensuring our projects run safely and to schedule but for making the work areas a safer place to work.

# Tumut & Gilmore

## Around the Grounds

### SAFETY

Tumut continues to look at line of fire and how we reduce hands in the process. Across the business we continue to have injuries from these interventions.

Coming into the change of session its easy to get a bit complacent with cold weather and reduced day light. Please take the time to stretch each shift, support each other and have the courage to intervene in areas that concern you.

Focus on the site going forward is to challenge the things we do daily that exposes us to risks that we just accept. Nothing is more important than ours and our colleges safety, so we really need to report, act and eliminate.

*There is nothing so important that it can't be done safely.*

### SNOWY VALLEYS CAREERS EXPO DAY

As an employer of choice in the wider Tumut region, AKD proudly participated in the Snowy Valleys Careers Expo and Try a Trade Day in late March.

This annual event is organised by the Snowy Valleys Council and operates on an annual rotation between Tumut and Tumbarumba.

Approximately 150 students from five schools attended the day. Electrical Apprentice Jack Stewart, and Gap year employee Ethan Watt led engagement with the attendees, discussing the benefits of the career paths available at AKD.

Currently in the first year of his apprenticeship Jack recalled that he had spoken to former Maintenance Manager Gordon Kelso at the event in 2022. An interaction that led to him joining AKD as part of the after school trade program and then being successful in obtaining his current position.

### PRODUCTION

The site continues to run well, great improvements in all areas with the site on plan year to date. Shout out to all the work that Dan Attwood, Brett McNally and all the Greenmill team on the improvements at the sorter. Piece counts have been excellent allowing most log to be processed on Dayshift, well done and thank you.

The continual focus for the site is to focus on the one percent issues and eliminate them so uptime continues to improve. Improved running reduces the risk of injury as employees are kept out of the process.

Again, another thank you to all employees for the effort and responsiveness to changes in production demands. We have seen the site ramp up and down depending on the market and Tumut continues to be flexible.

Gap year employee Ethan Watt and Electrical Apprentice Jack Stewart



## Heath & Safety

with Rodney Sutton

Tumut H&S Advisor



As modern technology and innovation continue to help improve safety on site, it is unfortunate that sometimes these improvements are made after one of our workmates are injured.

The technology out there now is amazing - we recently installed a Zone Scanner on the Gilmore stacker in an area where our operators enter the process with their hands. The scanners had previously been installed in the Drymill with the same intention; to stop deck chains when someone enters the pre-determined zone that's been set. This has been a great win for us, and we need to keep identifying areas where this type of technology can be installed.



As we know, things evolve and improve over time and I had the Sawdoctors trial some new gloves that offered a higher level of cut resistant than the ones they were using, along with improved grip in the wet slippery conditions.

The material they are made from has improved and although the glove feels like it may not offer the right level of cut protection, it actually does. So, thank you to the Sawdoctors for putting their hand up and saying there has to be a better alternative to what they are using now – they were honest with their feedback.

When a glove didn't meet their expectations and wasn't going to protect them as we wanted, we went back to the supplier and said, "we need the glove to also do this for us" and (without jinxing myself), I am comfortable we now have a higher level of hand and forearm protection in the Sawshop that we previously had. Working together as a team to come up with a safe and suitable solution is a really positive outcome.

I know I keep going on about hand and finger injuries, but it's one of our top injury types that we need to continually focus on. Hands and fingers are so important in being able to do those day-to-day basic tasks. We need to protect them.

Stay safe and remember, **'Change is inevitable, but growth is intentional'**.



### PROJECTS

Horizontal shape saw (HSS) project continues to progress. There have been delays in production due to freight and weather over the last few months.

Regular updates on ship movements are constantly coming in to allow the site to plan. Some of the equipment is expected to be delivered in the coming months with October being a key month to install some of the major equipment prior to Xmas commissioning at this stage. Hopefully no more delays but the current state across the globe with steel and obtaining consumables is a challenge.

These photos above are of the basement being poured, 300m3 of concrete and 22 tons of re-enforcing and the retaining walls for the HSS Machine Hall. Once completed the area will be backfilled with the soil that was removed.

Rab Green

Tumut Site Manager



# Yarram

## Around the Grounds

The March/April period saw more action in the project space as our Fire Ring Main began installation. Years in the making, this upgrade for the Yarram site will make a huge difference to the ability to protect the site from fire.

Our project team installed some fantastic lighting to the almost completed carpark. It had previously been identified, across a number of our sites, getting to and from vehicles for our staff at night-time was of concern. This lighting goes a long way to improving this with no more dark corners to be seen.

An upgrade to log storage is well underway with consolidation of some unused real estate. This upgrade will take a lot of pressure off the logyard with almost doubling its holding capacity of "bark-on" logs.



*Logyard Extension.*

During the month of March we had three technicians from Hewsaw look over our Hewsaw R250. This provided a great learning opportunity for both our operators and our maintenance team to hone in on the things that make the saw run well. Credit to our team, especially James Allen, with feedback received that our Hewsaw was one, if not the best, looked after machines that the technicians have seen.

April saw the delivery of the second L150H log loader to complete the final change over of older loaders. While we will hang on to one of the old machines as a backup, it will be great to have two fit-for-purpose machines running.

For our mill itself, we have seen steady performance with production and safety over the March/April periods and, although not immune to the slowdown in the market, Yarram continues to work closely with our sales team and the customer base to keep things moving along.

## HARDWOOD UPDATE

We have probably all heard bits and pieces about the Victorian Hardwood industry shutting down and Gippsland has seen significant impacts as part of this. Our major customer for chip supply is OPAL who produces paper products and they have been hit really hard losing almost 200 employees as they are forced to shut one of their lines.

While OPAL will continue to take as much chip from Yarram as we can produce, our thoughts go out to a fellow producer and workers affected.

Likewise in Eastern Gippsland numerous hardwood mills and foresters have been forced out of business with no more log to cut.

In April, myself and AKD's Recruitment Manager, Michael Swanson, participated in an industry transition forum held with these affected workers where we presented AKD and transition options for the workers.

## GOOD FRIDAY APPEAL

We held a Good Friday Appeal lunch for both the day and afternoon shift employees on Thursday 6th April, where we all came together over hot roast chicken rolls and salads whilst fundraising for the Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal.

We took this time to announce and award the Easter colouring competition winners and participants with their prizes to their proud parents and had a bit of fun with an Easter raffle.

Our fundraising efforts during the lunch was outstanding. The generosity of our employees was astounding with \$650 raised for The Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal, an incredible \$150 more than last year. A big thank you to all who participated.



*Wayne Brown with his Easter Hamper*

## Health & Safety

with **Graham Clarke**

Yarram H&S Advisor



Yarram has been busy making improvements recently including the new car park, solar powered lights in the car park, the start of a fire system and the change to moving to DoneSafe.

I remember when I was asked what I felt about these changes and the words that came out were - *'if we don't change, we become dinosaurs'*; but sometimes changing can be a bit daunting, even if you know it is for the better.

Looking at some figures, in the last 12 months we have had 32 minor first aids reported and from them, 50% involved hands and wrists. We can look at that and say, *'well, not surprised, we use our hands a lot in our work'* or we can look at others and say, *'you fix it'*. So, what is wrong with that approach??? Everything!! We are a team, and we can all contribute to change and improving, that's how a successful business operates. It's not up to one or two individuals to 'fix it', it is not something we just 'continue to accept' – there are a lot of great ideas and solutions out there, we just need to hear them!

We all need to be innovative – think outside the box. Instead of just saying *'that's the way we've always done it'*, let's ask ourselves, *'how can we do this better?'* This is where we show wisdom, no one is expecting you to come up with some ground-breaking discovery, but rather to think about what you are doing.

Start by discussing what you are going to do with a team, gaining understanding and sharing helps to make better changes to how we do things. 'Don't be a dinosaur'... evolve and think!



While changing is not easy, it can help you become open to new ideas, creative, flexible, and most importantly, it can stop you or someone else from being injured.

At Yarram, we are looking forward to some more changes. Next a road to access the dams and our 'growing' fire system. How will that help safety apart from the obvious? It will make a quantum change to our traffic plan; it will take a fair amount of vehicular traffic away from the production areas.

It will be a change to safety in that aspect - a change to look forward to.

Darcy-Lee as Easter Bunny.



### TARRA FESTIVAL

AKD were once again a proud sponsor to the Tarra Festival which is a great community event showcasing food trucks, motorbike performances, local entertainment, fireworks and loads of rides and fun for big and small. All money raised from this festival go back into the community through Hive, a local organisation that provides support and programs within the community.

Despite the awful weather, a number of AKD employees helped out on the day and especially well done to Darcy-Lee Lamb getting involved as the Easter Bunny this year.

**Glen Davis**

Yarram Site Manager



# Post & Poles

Nadia Cormio

## Portland Pine

The past two months at Portland Pine have been successful; there have been no significant accidents, and favourable hazard reports have been coming in during this time. Production was excellent during this period finishing above budget, sales are still well below budget for this period.

The site undertook a traffic management audit late in 2022 where a recommendation from the audit was to extend the concrete driveway off the weighbridge. Currently trucks drive through the production areas for unloading at the end of the site near peeler one. By extending the driveway and ramp this allowed better access for trucks when driving off the weighbridge and turning right also allowing road trains to turn much easier and stopping them from having to reverse in some cases.

Congratulations to apprentice Lindsay Whennen on completed his Certificate III in Engineering – Mechanical Trade. Well done Lindsay on your hard work and dedication. We look forward to seeing you develop further throughout your career.

Employee Matthew May tied the knot with fiancé Tori. You may remember, Matt and Tori got engaged in July last year and have been waiting, with great anticipation, for their special day to arrive. Congratulations again to the both of you!

On Thursday 6th April we combined day and afternoon shift for a morning tea where we took the opportunity to fundraise for the Good Friday Appeal. We sought out community involvement to raise awareness, hosting a colouring competition for the town. We had 23 entrants, across 3 age groups, which had the morning tea attendees voting for the winner, Ava Ryan. Toby Pumpa was the lucky employee to take out the raffle. We managed to raise \$616, showing yet again, what a fantastic bunch of people, we work with.

**Daryl Hann**  
PPP Site Manager



## Jelfor

It has not been a dissimilar start to the year compared to previous years at Jelfor, which most would agree is good.

On reflection on what we do and have done at Jelfor, I feel one thing we are pretty good at is capitalising on opportunities. Opportunities come in all forms, new business ideas, job rotation, different work areas, and while they may not seem like much, the smallest opportunity can turn into a great story. A great Jelfor opportunity story is one that began here in August 2020.

In August 2020, Daryl Hann and I were looking for staff and we were struggling to find the right candidates for Jelfor. After many interviews we were asked if we would like to

interview a female, who had shown interest in the role, to which we agreed to meet with her.

Enter Nadia Cormio, an enthusiastic but very shy female that wanted to work at Jelfor and learn some of the roles. All Nadia wanted was an opportunity, a foot in the door to show to us, and herself, she could perform the roles required.



Two weeks later Nadia commenced employment with Jelfor on the stacker. The role had not been changed for quite some time and it wasn't long before Nadia was asking questions as to why this was done that way. In short, after consultation with all operators, better ways were found to make the stacker role more efficient (automated banding as opposed to manual banding) which reduced time, making the line more productive.

Three months later another opportunity presented itself - the stacker JCB driver. While it was open to all workers, only Nadia showed interest and within a few weeks, she had moved into the role of the stacker JCB operator.

Nadia's list of roles has increased over time due to taking opportunities that have presented themselves. Six months after she started at Jelfor, Nadia was voted in by the workgroup to represent them as the site Health and Safety Representative. From there she moved into the Despatch JCB driver and was responsible for loading and unloading trucks and the layout of the despatch yard.

Last December, yet another opportunity presented itself where the Logistic Supervisor resigned and while we did interview four external applicants, seeing what Nadia had achieved given the opportunities, we offered the role to her.

Four months in as Jelfor's Logistics Supervisor, she has learnt a great deal about despatch and transport and has a rapport with customers that sees Jelfor capitalising on sales opportunities. A few weeks ago, Nadia despatched a truck with Jelfor produced posts, Portland Pine produced Supaslabs, Colac produced rails and Yarram produced sleepers on it. Congratulations Nadia on your progress from stacker operator to Logistics Supervisor.

Other notable opportunities that have been taken up within Jelfor have been Kerrie Gabb, from Administration/Finance into Production and Justin from peeler operator to Despatch JCB driver. Any opportunity you get in life, be it at work or in your personal life, I highly recommend you give it a go - because you never know where it will take you.

**Benjamin Bailey**  
Jelfor Site Manager



# New AKD innovative infrared technology

AKD's Wood Technologist, Marina Milic, has led a project that introduced innovative infrared technology that provides real time quality assurance for H2F treatment efficacy, using Fourier Transform Infrared Radiation (FTIR) spectroscopy, that will provide increased market confidence and is the first certification of its kind in Australia.

This new testing approach, using the FTIR unit, demonstrate equivalence of a non-standard method of timber chemical retention verification under the recently updated timber treatment standard (AS/NZS 1604). The innovative process has been third party certified by the Engineered Wood Products Association of Australasia (EWPPAA). AKD is the first producer in Australia to achieve this.

FTIR applies thermal radiation to the test sample which is invisible to the human eye and interacts with matter by triggering molecular vibrations. The unit measures the solution strength of the chemical used (bifenthrin) and produces an algorithm to predict chemical retention, improving quality performance during production. This means reduction in external lab testing of the timber, and better and quicker in-house QC control in production.

This innovation replaces the old method, which is common across the industry, involving treated timber products being quarantined on site and samples sent off for external laboratory testing before product treatment can be assured and the product released for sale. This new method is real-time, ensuring that AKD product supply is not delayed to the market.

As AKD project lead, Marina collaborated with industry partners such as EWPPAA, KPC and TimberED through processing of data collection, analysis and calibration of the unit which took place over several years, notwithstanding the pandemic slowing down the process.

This provided the comfort to commit to the technology by ordering the first instrument for the Oberon site and, following its successful commissioning, ordering another unit for AKD's Tumut site.

This first certification in Australia has occurred at the time of growing commercial demand for

third party building products' certification and with Marina's collaborative approach it will help ensure timber's ongoing market preference over non-timber alternatives in the Australian building industry.

Marina concludes "FTIR spectroscopy is a fast and easy analytical technique that provides answers within seconds. It is resource friendly, requiring only a small sample and little preparation. Achieving this new certification shows AKD is always looking for continual improvement. I'm proud of our collaboration both within the AKD business, across our tech team with special mention going to Kim Harris, AKD Building Regulation Manager, AKD Tumut's Kelvin Matchowitz, Mark Johns and Dan Lucas, and HPP's Holly Wright, and along with industry partners during this ground-breaking project."

AKD plans to roll out this new technology to our other sites around Australia.

*"EWPPAA is proud to have worked with AKD to achieve the first certification to our newly developed and JAS-ANZ accredited preservative treated certification scheme. The certification recognises AKD's innovative process of treating and verifying H2F structural timber to the recently updated AS/NZS1604 standard."*

Gavin Matthew  
CEO OF EWPPAA

Fourier Transform Infrared Radiation.



AKD's Marina Milic and Mark Johns with Troy from EWPPAA.

# Welcome Graduates

We welcome five graduates joining our National Graduate Program in 2023, Peter, Cameron, Jainil, Marcus and Mohammed, placed across our Tumut, Caboolture, and Colac sites. We are thrilled to welcome them to the program.

Last year, Jas, Charmaine, and Shah joined the program and are currently in their second year with the intention of looking at long term career opportunities at the end of 2023.

The two cohorts bring with them a diverse range of interests and specializations, such as process improvement, mechanical and electrical engineering, forestry, analytics, and optimization.

The program was designed to offer individuals a chance to gain well-rounded exposure to various AKD operations in their chosen discipline. The cohorts come together to share their learnings, innovate, and exchange ideas based on their experiences in each placement. This program will continue to help develop future leaders and technical capabilities.

Be sure to say hello, next time you see one of them onsite.

## 2022 COHORT



## JAINIL



Graduate Process Engineer  
Colac

Greetings! My name is Jainil Trivedi, a Chemical Engineering Graduate from Charles Darwin University. My professional background lies in the General Chemical production and Water & Wastewater treatment industry.

Besides having an interest in learning new concepts, I have a few hobbies such as cooking, inline skating, cricket, and gaming. I also love watching cricket and formula one races.

I came all the way from Perth and drove to Colac to start the graduate program. I am really happy with the support I've gotten so far from the team.

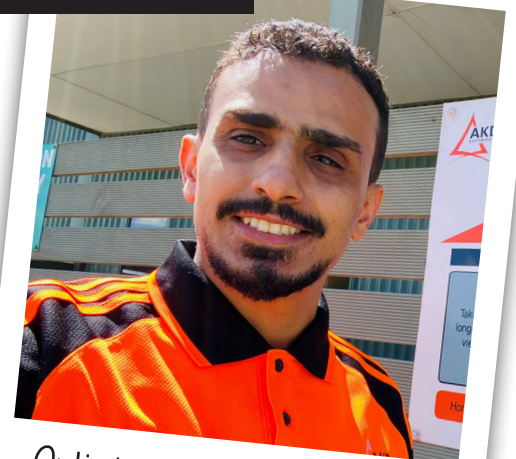


## MOHAMMED

Hi, I'm Mohammed. I have very supportive parents, a loving wife, six siblings, as well as beautiful nephews and nieces. I was born in Yemen, raised in Yemen and Saudi Arabia. I got a scholarship to attend university in Malaysia, and then in China. I have lived in five different countries and travelled to another seven countries until I decided to settle down and call Australia home.

Beside spending much of my free time with family and friends, I enjoy day trips, camping, traveling, swimming, and I would love to learn surfing and skate boarding.

I am a qualified electrical engineer, and I furthered my post graduate studies in instrumentation, modelling, optimization, and process control. I have been lucky to join such a welcoming environment and enthusiastic team. AKD is doing very well investing in people and I will take this graduate program to grow, learn, build a good network, and contribute to improving our production recovery numbers.



Optimisation Systems Analyst  
Graduate - Colac





## CAMERON

My name is Cameron and I have come down from Townsville in sunny north Queensland to join AKD as a graduate Electrical Engineer. I am new to the Australian sawmill industry and am very keen to absorb all the information everyone has to offer and to improve my skills as an Electrical Engineer. Outside of work I enjoy playing guitar, cooking, gaming, and exploring the great outdoors. Something I would like to learn while in south-east Queensland is surfing!

A fun fact about me is that when I was 4 years old, I was electrocuted by an unsafe power outlet and yet I still chose to become an Electrical Engineer!



Graduate Electrical Engineer  
Caboolture



## MARCUS



Graduate Mechanical Engineer  
Caboolture

Hi, my name is Marcus. I'm a mechanical engineering student in my 6th and final year of studies (after trying many different disciplines). Since my second year of studies, I have worked in engineering for multiple organisations, developing skills in fabrication, design, RCA, asset management and contract management. These experiences gave me the skills required to contribute to the extensive projects underway at AKD Caboolture.

I joined the projects team as an intern in June of 2022 where I have become captivated by the sawmilling process and developed with the help of some amazing mentors. I'm proud to officially be a part of AKD!

Somewhere in between work and studies, I keep myself busy with family, house renovations and car projects. I take every opportunity to go camping and/or rock climbing and have a lively social life between close friends and family.



## PETER

Hi, my name is Pete. I have joined AKD as a Graduate Mechatronics Engineer following my internship here at the end of 2022. I chose to leave my career in law and return to university for mechatronics engineering to follow my passion in electronics and automation. I am excited to continue learning how to apply this at AKD throughout the various major projects that are currently being undertaken.

I tend to keep myself busy at home with automotive projects as well as designing and manufacturing 3D printed components. In addition to this, I play as much football as I can, take the bike up the mountain with mates, and spend time with family.

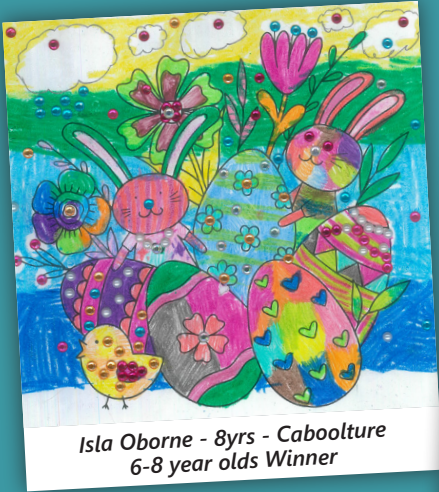


Graduate Mechatronics Engineer  
Caboolture

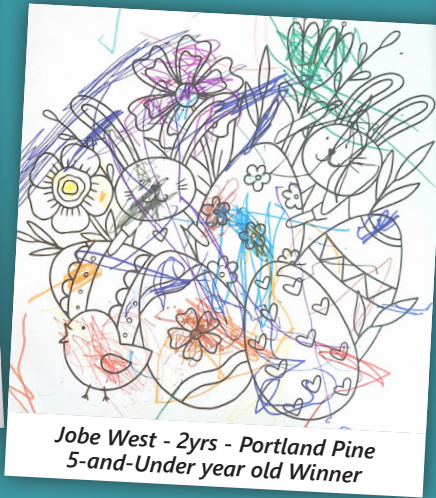
# Easter Colouring Competition



Wow! Don't we have some talented artists within the AKD family, providing us with some stunning pieces of art, even from the bigger kids. Congratulations to all our colouring competition winners.



Isla Osborne - 8yrs - Caboolture  
6-8 year olds Winner



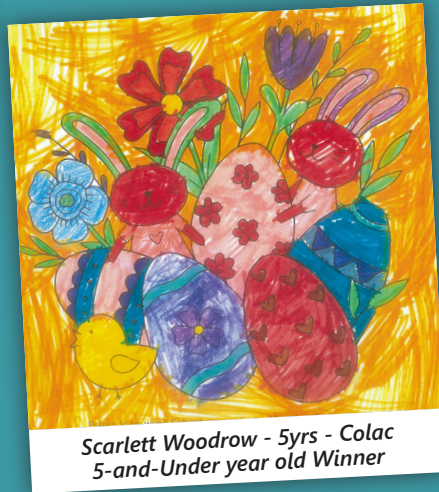
Jobe West - 2yrs - Portland Pine  
5-and-Under year old Winner



Delilah Gerran - 6yrs - Colac  
6-8 year olds Winner



Tatum Annetts - 10yrs - Tumut  
9 years-and-Up Winner



Scarlett Woodrow - 5yrs - Colac  
5-and-Under year old Winner



Beau Byrne- 5yrs - Jelfor  
Equal Winner



Eve Wagner - 12yrs - Yarram  
10 years-and-Up Winner



Violet Calder - 10yrs - Caboolture  
10 years-and-Up Winner



Levi Crampton - 4yrs - Tumut  
5-and-Under year old Winner

# Envio-YAK: Discussions about environmental risks and opportunities on site

## Water monitors to reduce flood risk

with Sean Maxwell  
Environmental Advisor



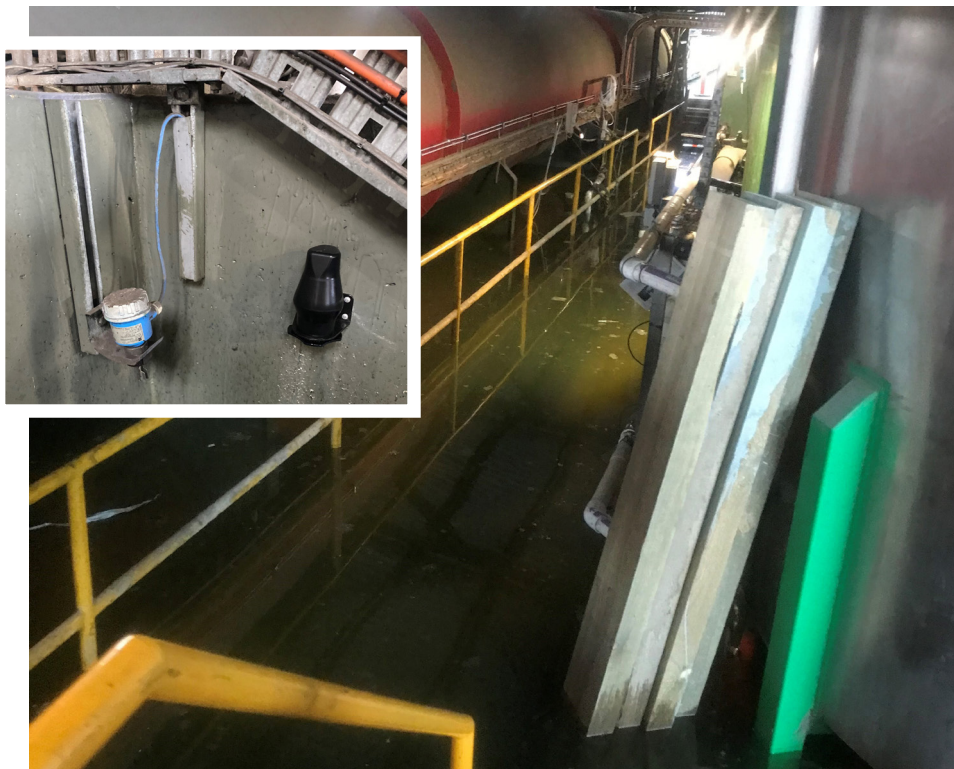
Treating timber products with preservation chemicals ensures they remain fit for purpose when exposed to the harsh Australian elements. Our Terminator, Endura, Ironwood and Fencing products are all examples of treated timber that is used in and around Australian homes to great effect.

With the advantages of treated timber products however comes some environmental risk, primarily if preservation chemicals spill out of controlled areas or containment vessels. Such chemicals can cause long-lasting damage to the environment if released into aquatic or riparian areas.

The financial cost of failing to effectively manage environmental risks associated with the delivery, storage and use of chemicals can be enormous. In early 2022, around 13,000 litres of chemical detergent spilled into a waterway south-west of Melbourne, which led to a large fish kill event. Clean-up works and an investigation into this incident is ongoing, with the company alleged to be responsible for the spill facing a maximum penalty of up to \$1.8 million in fines.

Bunded areas – concrete or plastic tubs that contain spills that can occur during the delivery, storage or use of chemicals – form a major defence against environmental risks in treatment plants. Moreover, liquid captured in bunded areas can usually be recirculated into treatment processes, which greatly reduces the amount of chemical waste sent to landfill.

When planned and maintained, bunded areas are an effective control for chemical spills. Yet they do not eliminate risk to the environment. It is possible for bunded areas to flood with water during heavy downpours or when water inlets burst or leak. This occurred at our Yarram site earlier in the year. A main inlet valve failed on a Friday night, filling the



A Waterwatch LS1-R monitor (black device pictured in insert) will replace a hard-wired flood monitor in the treatment plant bund at Colac. No longer will Neil from Portland Pine have to leave home in the middle of the night to check their treatment plant bund when big rains hit Heywood!

treatment plant bunded area with water over the weekend.

When the Yarram treatment plant operators arrived on site early the following Monday, water was nearing the top of the bunded area and had become contaminated with treatment chemical. Susanne, Julian and the team swung into action immediately and were able to fix the valve and safely reduce water levels without release of chemical to the environment – a testament to their preparedness and capability.

Several corrective actions have come from flooding incident at Yarram, including daily checks of inlet valves by the security team. We have also installed a new device above the bunded area that will enable the team to monitor water levels remotely. The device – called the Waterwatch LS1-R – will also send alerts via text and email if water levels reach a certain height, or rise rapidly in the bunded area.

Better visibility and notification of spills in bunded areas will reduce response times and hopefully eliminate the risk of releasing of contaminated water to the environment. The ability to check water levels on demand will also give operators some piece of mind during heavy rain events or when treatment plants are unattended. No longer will Neil from Portland Pine have to leave home in the middle of the night to check their treatment plant bund when big rains hit Heywood!

AKD has committed to installing Waterwatch LS1-R units in all our treatment plants. We are also exploring the strategic placement of these units in other areas of our mills that are impacted by water supply.

Better monitoring is a key way to reduce environmental risks across our business. The recent installation of Waterwatch LS1-R units will help control risks associated with producing treated timber products for Australian homes.

# Kokoda 2023

with Shane Black  
VIC Sales Manager



In 2019, AKD started the Kokoda Leadership and Development program bringing together students and teachers from Trinity College and Colac Secondary College and aspiring leaders within AKD to complete the Kokoda Track.

Travelling the Kokoda Track involves eight days walking through and camping in the rainforests of Papua New Guinea. The terrain is extremely challenging and requires focus and resilience.

Although the 2019 trip was physically and mentally challenging for all participants, it was also incredibly rewarding and AKD was committed to continue the program the following year.

The last time Kokoda was mentioned in the Splinter, we had just selected the candidates for the 2020 program, who were hard at work preparing for the trip. Then, the world was hit by the Covid pandemic, and everything was put on hold so those selected did not get to go. And we all know how the next two years unfolded!

So, now we are excited to be once again running the Kokoda Leadership and Development Program. We have again partnered with Peter Condon, from Kokoda Courage, to help the group prepare for the trek and to lead the tour.

This trek we have achieved one of our goals, as employees from all AKD sites were invited to apply for the program. We were overwhelmed by the response, and it was not an easy task for the school and AKD representatives to shortlist, interview then decide on the final 12 students and six AKD employees. The schools also put forward a teacher to participate in the trek.

The group started training in February with much enthusiasm and commitment. Utilising some of our local assets such as Botanic Gardens, Central Reserve and local football grounds, we have been running, climbing, stepping and lunging towards our goal of increasing our physical and mental fitness.

Being mindful that we can never be fully prepared for the unknowns



that we will face, every session has us working on communication, mateship and resilience. It is inspiring to see the maturity and toughness that the students have shown in getting up early and pushing through soreness.

On the first weekend in April, we had our first overnight camping trip all together at Peter's property in Wensleydale. It was described by some as brutal and gruelling with three hours of training in and out of the cold water at Pt Adiss, boxing and stair climbs to finish off.

On Sunday we finished with a walk from Lorne to Erskine falls, total about 13km with our hiking packs,

perfect preparation for what lies ahead.

I'm really proud of how well the students and staff have committed to the training schedule, with having had more than 15 at every session and pretty much a full group at the weekend sessions, this is including Gen from Brisbane, Brian from Tumut and Isabel from Yarram. Great effort everyone.

The trip will run from the 18th through to the 29th of June and I am sure I will have plenty of travel stories to share in a future Splinter. But for now, let me introduce the AKD trekkers for the 2023 Kokoda Trek.



**Who are you at AKD?** Simeon Oborn, Colac Site Production Planner.

**What are you looking forward to the most?** I'm looking forward to immersing myself in the culture and making memories along the trail.

**Any concerns?** The weather!



**Who are you at AKD?** Anthony Elliot, Colac Green Mill Quality Control.

**What are you looking forward to the most?** Meeting the locals and hearing stories about the Australian troops at different stages of the track and to be able to share the experience with the our group.



**Who are you at AKD?** Genevieve Ryan, Talent Development Manager.

**Why are you doing Kokoda?** I love travelling and experiencing new things. For me this is a growth opportunity as well.

**Any concerns?** It will be a test to not be able to call home everyday!



**Who are you at AKD?** Isabel Fyffe, Third Year Electrical Apprentice at Yarram.

**What are you looking forward to the most?** Crossing the finish line, knowing the hard work that I'd put in to get to that point.

**What are you hoping to gain from this experience?** Leadership experience in general, especially in extreme conditions. I think it will correspond well in my personal and work life.



**Who are you at AKD?** Shane Black, Victorian and SA Sales Manager.

**What are you looking forward to the most?** Paying my respects and learning more about the history of Kokoda. Working with others and helping them along the trek.

**Any concerns?** Being away from my family.



**Who are you at AKD?** Brian Clough, Tumut Finance Manager.

**Any concerns?** Just the best way to keep my feet dry and blister free.

**What are you hoping to gain from this experience?** I am very independent and used to working on my own, this is an opportunity accomplish something as a team.



# 2023 Apprentice Intake

Our 2023 intake resulted in another **25 new apprentices** employed across our sites. 10 of our existing apprentices completed their training and continued on with trade roles within the business (see inset). Overall, this brings our current number of apprentices in training **up to 75**, covering Fitting and Machining, Fabrication, Electrical, Saw Technicians and Wood Machinists.

In the past 2 years, our total apprentice numbers have increased by over 50%. This means that **1 in 15 AKD employees are trade apprentices**, reinforcing AKD's approach to train and develop its people, and to ensure trade-based skills are available for the longer term to support our sawmilling operations.

This year, 65% of the apprentices engaged were from internal appointments from people that were already employed by AKD. This is the highest number since the start of the program. This shows our desire to create internal pathway opportunities and offer development opportunities for all employees.

This year we also had two employees begin to undertake a second trade, what we call a 'Dual Trade'. This allows development opportunities for the individual, and also provides a more highly skilled and flexible workforce for AKD. We support both Yarram's Justin Barron, Fabricator learning Fitting and Colac's Hayden Thompson, Diesel Mechanic learning Fitting, on their ongoing development.

We wish all of our new apprentices all the best in their chosen career trade.

If you would like to register your interest in the AKD National Apprenticeship Program email [recruitment@akd.com.au](mailto:recruitment@akd.com.au).

**1 in 15** AKD employees  
are **apprentices**

*“Since starting my apprenticeship I have enjoyed learning all the new machines and how the whole sawmill works together from start to finish.”*

TYLER GERRIE – CABOOLTURE  
APPRENTICE ELECTRICIAN



Caboolture Apprentices: Cayden Ward (Fitter), Aiden Beattie (Fitter), Tyler Gerrie (Electrician) and Christian O'Doherty (Saw Tech). Absent: Craig Dorrian (Wood M/C).

**75 apprentices**  
across **AKD**

*“After working in EWP, I had the opportunity to work in Maintenance as a TA which got me interested in pursuing an apprenticeship in the trade.”*

HYUN GEE KIM – COLAC APPRENTICE FITTER



Colac Apprentices: Brody Bursle (Fitter), Lukas Wilson (Fitter), Hyun 'Lucas' Gee Kim (Fitter), Jordyn Bailey (Fitter), Nicole Veress (Fitter), Hayden Thompson (Fitter), Cameron Daniels (Fabrications) and Adam McCarney (Electrician).



## Benefits of an AKD Apprenticeship

- ✔ Complete a nationally recognised qualification
- ✔ Highest level of training from skilled and experienced tradespeople
- ✔ Establish a career with Australia's leading sawmill
- ✔ Working with cutting edge equipment and new technology
- ✔ Learn while you earn
- ✔ Opportunities to travel to other sites
- ✔ Obtain various licences and tickets
- ✔ Open to mature age entry



Tumut Apprentices: Ashton Baker (Fitter), Kiera Jones (Fitter) and Jack Stewart (Electrician).

*“My granddad was an electrician and after completing work placement at AKD I quickly knew that this is what I wanted to do for my career. AKD provides an opportunity to learn a larger range of skills compared to other local businesses.”*

JACK STEWART – TUMUT APPRENTICE ELECTRICIAN

## Congratulations to our recently completed Apprentices at AKD

### FITTERS:

Josh Van Bremen  
Angus Sheppard  
Raymond McDonald

### FABRICATORS:

Justin Barron  
Kieran Nicholls

### SAW TECHNICIAN:

Brayden Woodall

### ELECTRICIANS:

Luke O'Shannassy  
Will Booby

### WOOD MACHINIST:

Ben Bickerton



Colac Apprentices: Jaymin Bentley (Saw Tech), Liam Taylor (Saw Tech), Sabian Ritchie (Saw Tech) and John Beyer (Wood M/C).

*“Being an apprentice at AKD allows me to gain skills and knowledge to work effectively within my chosen field.”*

COREY VICINO – YARRAM APPRENTICE WOOD MACHINIST



Oberon Apprentices: Justin Hollis (Electrician), Jie Baird (Fitter) and Jason Drury (Electrician)



Yarram Apprentices: Justin Barron (Fitter) and Corey Vicino (Wood M/C).

30

# Warwick Hamer

## YEARS AT COLAC

written by Simon Gatt, Resource Manager

Warwick recently celebrated his 30 years with AKD and said, "That it doesn't feel like 30 years, I still have the same passion for the work and I have always treated my time with AKD as special, AKD has been very good to me". This passion soon becomes evident when you start talking to Warwick about his time with the company.

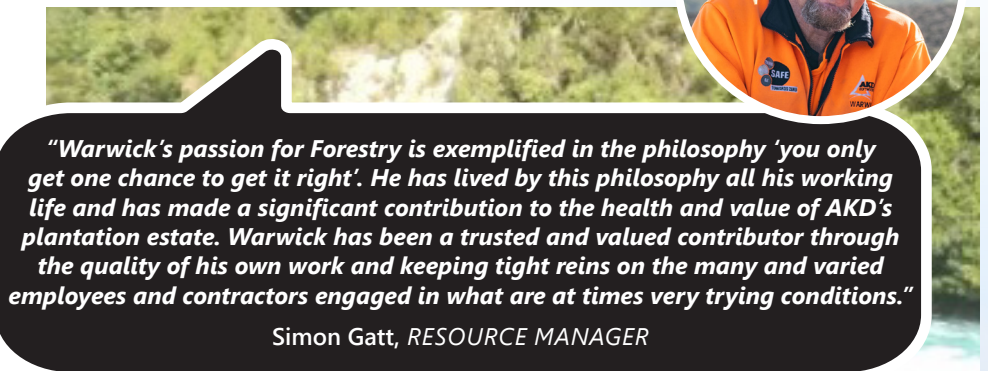
Warwick commenced his forestry career on 2nd February 1983, working for a company called Colac Pine, an offshoot of AKD, responsible for the establishment and management of the company's forest estate. This soon transitioned to working for AKD full time as a leading hand, still in the company's forests.

Warwick loves working in the field and has never had another role. He says "Why wouldn't you if the job you have is the best job in the world".

It goes without saying that Warwick has always enjoyed the outdoors, working on his feet and embracing the variety of projects he has been involved in to keep things interesting. It's not surprising to learn that Warwick enjoys fishing. The biggest fish he has landed in a 145kg Mako Shark at Apollo Bay. Equally challenging was landing a 13kg rainbow trout and a 30kg Yellow Kingfish both whilst in New Zealand.

Warwick is also an exceptional clay target shooter, having an AA grade and winning the Colac Field and Game club championship three times. He also has a passion for golfing and is proud of his nine-handicap.

For his 50th birthday Warwick's wife surprised him with a voucher to hit a round of 18 at the Cape Kidnappers golf course near Hawkes Bay, NZ. He has also played rounds at Jack's Point



**"Warwick's passion for Forestry is exemplified in the philosophy 'you only get one chance to get it right'. He has lived by this philosophy all his working life and has made a significant contribution to the health and value of AKD's plantation estate. Warwick has been a trusted and valued contributor through the quality of his own work and keeping tight reins on the many and varied employees and contractors engaged in what are at times very trying conditions."**

Simon Gatt, RESOURCE MANAGER



Warwick and wife Kathryn.

near Queenstown, and Fable Terrace Downs, Mt Hutt near Christchurch, NZ.

So, what's so special about New Zealand? For Warwick, it's more than the great fishing, hunting and golfing. Warwick's wife Kathryn, is from New Zealand, so you can see why Warwick has a soft spot for the place.

Warwick and Kathryn live in Colac with their pets; Willis a seven year old Chesapeake Bay Retriever, Alfie

a 14 year old Cavoodle and Quinn their 15 year old cat.

On AKD's impact on his life, Warwick lists job security, safety, friendships, experiences and personal development as the collection of attributes that he has endured in his 30 years with AKD. Warwick also adds, "its very satisfying to have planted his favourite plantation at Tomahawk Creek, Irrewillipe, in 1990 and see the outcome of this now that the plantation is mature 30 years down the track".





Warwick and Kathryn at the recent Colac Lumber Legend dinner.

*"Warwick has a wealth of experience and technical and operational knowledge gained by years of hard work and dedication to the job combined with a love of working outdoors in the forests. Warwick's passion and attention to detail enable him to make an extremely valuable contribution to all aspects of establishing and tending to AKD's plantation assets."*

Alan Rossouw  
ESTATE MANAGER



Chinook Salmon



13kg Rainbow Trout



145kg Mako Shark



# 30

# Mark Henriksen YEARS AT COLAC



**Tell us about your journey at AKD.** Most people know me as "Hendo". I started at Irrewarra in 1993 when it was owned by VicTree. I've had a number of roles across both Irrewarra and Colac mills including mill hand, team leader, Kiln operator, forklift driver, Union Rep and OHS Rep.

**What is your favourite part of your job?** Training and communicating with fellow workers.

**What has been the highlight of your time at AKD?** Being a team leader and being a kiln operator.

**What's your least favourite food?** Broccoli

**When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?** Panel Beater

**Describe your perfect day.** Sitting by the river fishing.

**What's something that recently made you smile?** My grandkids.

**If you could swap your life with someone else's, who would it be and why?** Someone from the 70's cause of the great music.

**What's something no-one would know about you?** Loves donuts

*"Congratulations on 30 years with AKD Hendo, what a fantastic achievement. Your knowledge of timber and the process is a great asset to the afternoon shift up in the GMC. Your passion for efficient and safe work shine through in the way you go about your task's."*

Justin Hickey  
GREENMILL PRODUCTION  
MANAGER



Hendo with wife Corina on the maiden trip with their new van.

## SMALL BITES



Aurora, potential future AKD Truckie

### AKD trucks on display.

A shout out to Mark "Cookie" Jones, one of our Gilmore truck drivers, for showcasing an AKD Truck in the Adelong Show on the 11th of March and in the Batlow Show on 23rd of March. We thank you very much for taking the initiative and spending your weekend personal time at both these events.



# 15 Robert Thamm YEARS AT CABOOLTURE

written by  
Darcy Osborne  
Drymill Supervisor

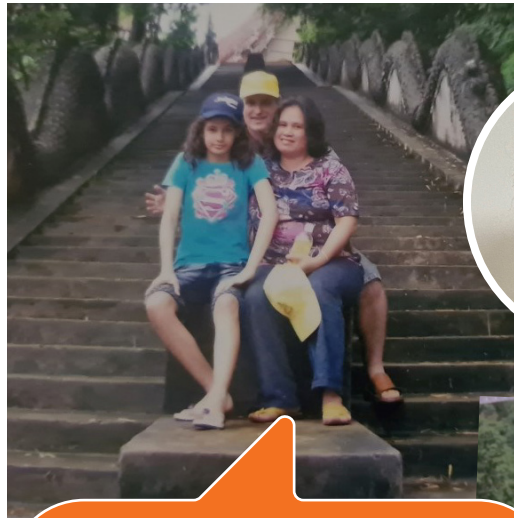
Rob joined AKD in 2008 where he started out working on the old 22-B pulling various size and lengths of timber off the chains and stacking them on trolleys, things were a lot more manual labour back then.

Rob then transitioned to work on the Pack Docker and H2F Treatment line. This is when he became one of the experts for the H2F Line and keeping it running. It was only two years ago when Rob decided to take on the role of the Drymill night cleaner but is still heavily involved in maintaining and keeping the H2F running.

Rob has been married to his beautiful wife Elsie for 33 years and they have one lovely daughter Jubilee, who is 29 years old.

When Rob is not keeping the Drymill spick and span he loves catching up with family and friends and also loves travelling with his wife to locations such as Vietnam, Philippines and Singapore just to name a few.

Rob is heavily involved in the Kingdom Culture Church and assists with any jobs they need which he is always happy to do.



*"Congratulation Rob on reaching 15 years' service. You are always more than willing to help your team out and provide guidance and knowledge and you continue to keep the Drymill looking clean and tidy. Appreciate your hard work over the years and look forward to continuing working with you."*

Darcy Osborne  
DRYMILL SUPERVISOR



AKD also supplied a flatbed truck to the Colac Truck & Ute Show on April 1st to be used as the stage for local entertainment.

## Rachell Holt

HR Manager,  
Caboolture



When I was offered the HR Manager at Caboolture with AKD the first feeling I felt was 'home'. The engagement with my team prior to my first day was so inclusive, I felt I knew my new colleagues, their personalities, and their quirks, and vice versa! My first day was more exciting than nervous as I had familiar faces to welcome me. I'm having an absolute ball in my new role and the people I'm meeting and understanding the sawmill has been excellent.

I've held HR manufacturing positions for about 10 years before I had a short break from the industry and found I couldn't wait to return. AKD provided me this opportunity and I'm so happy they did.

I am a Queenslander who happens to find myself in Melbourne for the last four years. I moved back to my home on the Sunshine Coast in September 2022 after a long, somewhat lonely stint in a city. I didn't really know any one and Covid not helping in that regard. I've returned to be close to my sister, friends, nieces, nephews, and of course our beautiful coastline and hinterland.

My main hobby is volunteering for animal welfare organisations. I spent a lot of time volunteering my time with RSPCA in Victoria and now I'm home, the Sunshine Coast Animal Rescue. I'm a dog person but currently have two cats, Izzy and Luna.

I'm an avid TV series watcher and cannot remember the last time I watched a commercial on TV if I am honest. I have a big imagination so can completely go into the TV series I'm watching which I also do with books.

I've traveled a lot of this Earth but my favourite place is Ireland, for the people, the country and of course the Guinness! Nowhere else has ever made me feel such connection to a place then Ireland has.



*Kissing The Blarney Stone Ireland*

I'll leave you with my favourite quote:

*'Be kinder than necessary  
because everyone you meet  
is fighting some kind of battle'*

## David Rosetta

Engineering Manager,  
Tumut



I have been in the timber industry for almost 40 years, starting as an Apprentice Electrician at ACI Timber Products in 1985, which is now AKD Gilmore. In the late 90's I moved into a newly created role at the Tumut Mill as a Condition Monitoring Technician and setup the original CM program at the Mill, which I'm proud to say is still running.

Since then, I have worked for numerous projects including the construction of the Visy Paper Mill at Tumut and setting up Condition Monitoring Services Australia Tumut branch which serviced throughout Australia and New Zealand. We specialised in Vibration Data Collection and analysis, Ultrasonics, Thermography, specialised Bearing Fitting and sales. We serviced multiple industries from Timber and Paper Mills to Wind Energy and Mining and everything in between. CMSA was sold to Schaeffler Group, the world's largest bearing manufacturer and I was promoted to Services Manager for Australia and Southeast Asia division.

In late 2008 I left Schaeffler and moved back into the Electrical Field commissioning the Goro Nickel mine in New Caledonia, which led to spending the next 14 years on construction projects throughout Australia and the world.

Throughout my working career Tumut has remained my home base and the place I return to whenever I can, so when the chance to take on the Engineering Managers position at AKD Tumut came up it was easy decision to make.

Outside of work I keep myself busy as the President of the Tumut Turf Club and as the Senior Deputy Captain of the Bombowlee RFS Brigade.

I am a very proud parent to my son Aaron and daughter Lauren as well as my granddaughter Alaia.



*David, Lauren, Kylie (Aaron's wife), Aaron and baby Alaia*



AKD welcomed these new employees in **March-April** and encourages everyone to make them feel welcome and work together to keep them safe.



**AARI WALLER**  
TREATMENT  
TUMUT



**ADAM LAMSHED**  
DRYMILL  
COLAC



**AIDAN CHRISTOPHER**  
ELECTRICIAN  
YARRAM



**BENJAMIN STEWART**  
DRYMILL  
CABOOLTURE



**BRODY BURSLE**  
MAINTENANCE  
COLAC



**CAMERON DANIELS**  
MAINTENANCE  
COLAC



**CHRIS ALLENDER**  
IT SUPPORT ANALYST  
????



**CRAIG PIPER**  
MAINTENANCE  
TUMUT



**DAYLE SOKOLL**  
DRYMILL  
CABOOLTURE



**DEAN CONNELL**  
DISPATCH  
COLAC



**DIMITRIOS KOSTOPOULOS**  
DRYMILL - COLAC



**DUANE SWIERS**  
DRYMILL  
YARRAM



**ERIC LEECH**  
SAWSHOP  
COLAC



**FAAFETAI UESESE**  
DRYMILL  
CABOOLTURE



**FIONA BRITTAIN**  
DRYMILL  
COLAC

CONTINUED...



**FLETCHER ROSEVEAR**  
DRYMILL  
COLAC



**GEORGIA THOMPSON**  
RECEPTIONIST  
COLAC



**JAINIL TRIVEDI**  
GRADUATE  
ENGINEERING



**JENNA KEAST**  
GREENMILL  
COLAC



**JESSE WILCOX**  
GREENMILL  
COLAC



**JOHNATHON HARRIS**  
GREENMILL  
CABOOLTURE



**JONATHON DARE**  
MAINTENANCE  
COLAC



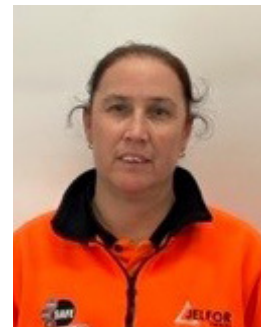
**JOSH SUGAR**  
MAINTENANCE  
COLAC



**JYE TILLACK**  
SENIOR ACCOUNTANT  
COLAC



**KARYN GILDING**  
FINANCE ADMIN  
CABOOLTURE



**KYLIE SCHULZE**  
PRODUCTION  
JELFOR



**LISA PERCY**  
RECEPTIONIST  
COLAC



**NALA CLISSOLD**  
DRYMILL  
COLAC



**SIMON WOODROW**  
MAINTENANCE  
COLAC



**SYNANTAY CRANE**  
GREENMILL  
TUMUT



**TRACY VAN NIEROP**  
DISPATCH ADMIN  
COLAC



**TRENT TAYLOR**  
PRODUCTION  
PORTLAND

# HAPPY ANNIVERSARY



**IAN BOZIER**  
GREENMILL  
YARRAM



**ISAAC JENKINS**  
DRYMILL  
COLAC



**JORDAN MCDONALD**  
GREENMILL  
YARRAM



**JORDYN BAILEY**  
MAINTENANCE  
COLAC



**LUKAS WILSON**  
MAINTENANCE  
COLAC



**MICHAEL EGAN**  
DRYMILL  
COLAC



**TYLER FERGUSON**  
GREENMILL  
CABOOLTURE

NAME	YRS	DEPT.	SITE
Gregory Street	35	MAINTENANCE	CAB
Mark Henriksen	30	GREENMILL	COL
Gregory Russell	25	TREATMENT	GIL
Martin Shylo	25	GREENMILL	TUM
Geoffrey Rapley	20	TREATMENT	GIL
Robert Thamm	15	DRYMILL	CAB
Adam Thomas	5	DRYMILL	TUM
Colin Bayley	5	MAINTENANCE	CAB
Ian Gibb	5	DISPATCH	COL
Jared Worldon	5	KILN	TUM
Matthew Jones	5	DRYMILL	CAB
Stuart Tozer	5	MAINTENANCE	TUM
Taj Merrett	5	DISPATCH	COL



Congratulations to Yarram's  
Gabor Vincze and partner Sarah  
on the arrival of baby

*Ezra Gabriel Vincze*

born 11th March 2023, weighing 4.32kg



# The Wrap-up



As you will be aware recently the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) announced another interest rate increase, which I believe is the 11th increase in the past 18 months as the RBA looks to bring inflation under control. At present inflation represented by the "Consumer Price Index" suggests we are experiencing an increase in costs of around 7%. The goal of the RBA is to see inflation run between 2-3%.

I am no economist, and no-one wants me to butcher an explanation of inflation and what it is but I do know why the RBA is trying to "curb" or reduce inflation. A famous economist Milton Friedman (1976 Nobel Memorial Prize for Economics) is known for his contribution to consumption analysis and to monetary history and theory, including the complexity of stabilisation or what causes and corrects inflation. It is one of his simplest quotes best explains it for us, "Inflation is taxation without legislation" it is a tongue in cheek reference, but inflation is like having to pay more tax, because your individual dollar is less effective or buys less.

The increase in interest rates is about the Reserve Bank simply trying to reduce the amount of "cash" in the system by making the population pay more for their debt (mortgages). Less cash in the system means less cash being spent on a wide range of goods and activities and this reduction in demand in theory will lead to cost reductions as supply and demand forces change behaviours.

A combination of inflation and rising interest rates is having a double impact on AKD, like it is for everyone. We are seeing a reduction in demand for our products as house construction activity has reduced, with the higher interest rates meaning less new houses are being ordered at the same time, due to both the higher interest rates and inflation, our costs are increasing.

We have had two years of strong demand and now it is reducing. AKD is not panicking, we have seen this before. We operate in a commodity type business where we see demand rise and fall through "cycles". Those who have been at AKD for a number of years have seen these cycles.

But as the cycle changes and we go from the hectic demand driven go, go, go environment, we are now in a different situation and it requires different behaviours. We have a lot more competition and pressure on our business and we need to adjust our operations accordingly.

In April, we took a one week shut at four of our mills as we look to reduce inventory, and in May and June we will reduce output at two mills as we continue to look to balance our inventory against expected sales demand.

At times like this, it is our teamwork and ability to work together that is really important as we need to be focussed on reducing waste and reducing costs at the same time ensuring that we continue to provide quality products to our customers.

Talking about reducing costs or reducing waste usually gets people's eyes rolling as it can make people think negative thoughts, but there are a lot of ways we can implement these cost savings every day. It is everyone's collective responsibility

and you can do your part, here are some small but ultimately significant examples:

*Keeping logs fresh by emptying the whole row and constant turnover*

*Being careful not to damage timber when stacking packs, loading trucks*

*Reducing or eliminating unnecessary waste of equipment (ie gloves, spare parts)*

*Ensuring scanners are clean and calibrated all the time so we accurately process timber and get our conversions or grade yields*

*Hitting our production targets or daily or hourly run rates*

*Getting our maintenance activities done so we have good run rates and uptime*

*Helping others with cleaning activities during downtime*

*Drying the timber right the first time.  
Accurate moisture content with low standard deviation.  
Getting the right moisture content to maximise yields and ensure we have good quality straight product.*

*Accuracy in the tasks we all have to do, every day.*

*Question waste that you see, wasted effort, wasted product*

Reducing costs is not about reducing maintenance, it is not about taking short cuts, it is about making sure we are maximising our productivity and production opportunities from the resources we have.

I personally think the market is going to be challenging for the next 12-18 months, and we think we will see it slow further. There is not a better time to see how resilient an individual or team is than during adversity. As a team we are ready for this challenge, we have our pillars that underpin who are our values and our behaviours. We need to remain focused on producing quality products for our customers with a service that is superior to our competitors. We need to walk together and work together as a team as we collectively face a difficult environment that has high inflation and rising interest costs impacting everyone.

No matter how hard the next few months get, no compromise on safety. Stick together.

**Shane Vicary**  
CEO

