

e-bulletin

December 2005

Welcome to the last bulletin for 2005. Once again thanks to all who supported the business throughout the year. We look forward to working with you in 2006.

In this months bulletin we provide an update on Formaldehyde, provide some details from the EU Cost 49 initiative and a finally a few comments on Wood Adhesives 2005.

Warm wishes to you all.

Cheers Glenn

Formaldehyde Update

Formaldehyde continues to be a topic for discussion in Australia as the NICNAS review process drew closer to a close at the end of November. The public comment phase was completed in October and stakeholder submitted a large number of requests for variations to the draft report. NICNAS completed its review of the variation requests and published its decisions on the 1st of November. Those decisions have still left many with concerns. At the time of writing it is believed that a number of appeals concerning the variation decisions have been lodged with the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. As a result the draft report will not be published until these matters have been resolved.

Of prime concern is the recommended TWA 0.3ppm and STEL 0.6ppm. Research by IRSST in Canada has shown that the threshold for sensory irritation from Formaldehyde occurs at 0.75ppm and as a result industry is of the opinion that a TWA of 0.5ppm is not unreasonable. The issue that we are faced with is that there have been a number of studies done in the area of sensory irritation but none of them satisfy the various authorities. It is believed that a study in Europe by the University of Hamburg and sponsored by FormaCare will provide adequate surety for regulators. Results are expected in the first Quarter of 2006.[top](#)

Cost Action E49

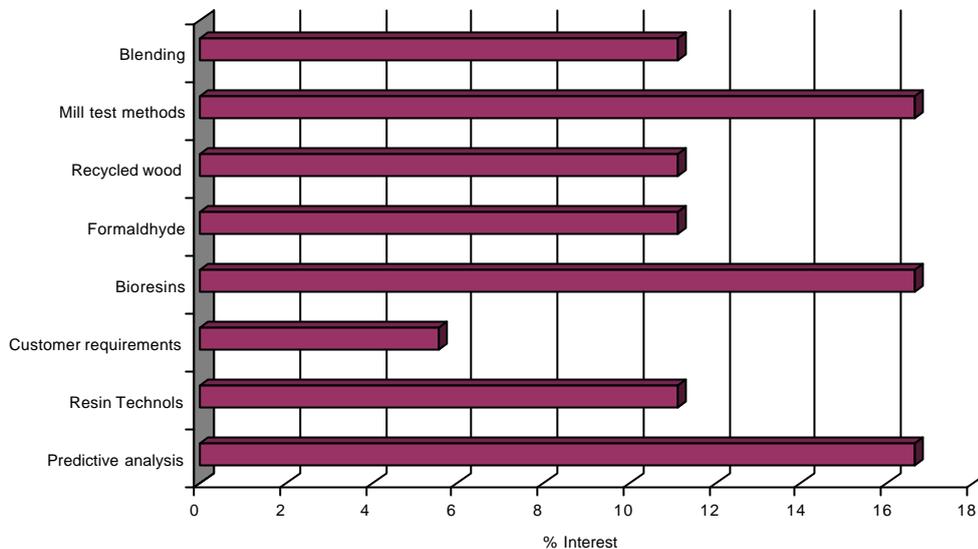
COST established its first meeting at the Bio-Composites Symposium at Llandudno on the 4th of October. As mentioned in my last bulletin the aim of COST Action E49 is to stimulate the scientific advance of the wood-based panel sector by improving technical, economic and environmental standards.

Key note addresses by Geoff Rhodes of Weyerhaeuser Europe highlighted the challenges faced by the industry in an increasingly competitive market place that faces global competition and Prof. Arno Fruehwald of the University of Hamburg gave a lively paper on how he would plan to spend €100M on wood-based panel research. These two talks provided an excellent platform for the day of discussions.

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The issues that the industry saw as important were summarised as follows:



All parts of the industry have been encouraged to attend the next meeting in Valencia, Spain on the 12-14th of June 2006. [.....top](#)

Wood Adhesives 2005

Wood Adhesives 2005 was held in San Diego, California in early November.

Sigvarsen and Dunkey reported the new complexity of Wood Adhesives for composites including the need for lower Formaldehyde emissions such as the Japanese F**** at the same processing parameters as current E1 systems. This situation has been a reality for at least 2 years in the export oriented Australian and New Zealand market. However it is fair to say that the emissions have successfully been achieved but processing is at times difficult.

Given the current economic state of the composite wood panel industry it is hard to see how formaldehyde based adhesives will not remain with us into the future but there will be increasing pressure from consumer groups to supply sustainable low emission products. The contribution that the adhesives make to this environmental equation was highlighted by the inclusion of a number of presentations and posters on alternative binder systems.



Amy Philbrook put forward a challenge to all by presenting her work that suggests that bonding between cellulose and UF resin is indeed possible.

There are many other enlightening presentations to be found on the Forest Products Society web site at:

<http://www.forestprod.org/adhesives05powerpoints.html>

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In Closing.....

Finally it is the end of the year so to cap it off I would just like to add this little story which perhaps help put some perspective on the season.

A woman was out Christmas shopping with her two children. After many hours of looking at row after row of toys and everything else imaginable, and hearing both her children asking for everything they saw on those many shelves, this woman finally made it out of the store and to the elevator with her two kids.

She was feeling what so many of us feel during the holiday season time of the year: Overwhelming pressure to go to every party, every housewarming, taste all the holiday food and treats, get that perfect gift for every single person on our shopping list, make sure we don't forget anyone on our card list, and the pressure of making sure we respond to everyone who sends us a card. Not to mention, getting the kids everything they ask for.

Finally the elevator doors opened--there was already a crowd in the car. This woman pushed her way into the car and dragged her two kids in with her, along with all her bags of stuff.

When the doors closed, she let out a big sigh and decided she couldn't take it anymore, saying out loud, to no one in particular,
"Whoever started this whole Christmas thing should be arrested and strung up!"

From the back of the elevator, a quiet calm voice responded,
"Don't worry ma'am, I believe they crucified Him." [.....top](#)

About Us.

Tech Partners Australia is an independent Technical Service provider to the composite wood panels industry
Glenn Ryan who has 25 years experience in industry runs the organization. His experience covers Quality Management
Technical Service and R&D Management.

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