

## e-bulletin

July 2007

**Welcome** to the mid-year addition of the e-bulletin. In this issue we have provided an feature on LIGNA 2007, activities in COST E49, an update of Formaldehyde activities and

I hope you find the information useful.

Cheers Glenn

## LIGNA 2007

We were lucky enough to have the opportunity to be able to attend the LIGNA and Interzum trade fairs in May in Germany. The opportunity allowed us to view and discuss the latest technology as well as catch up with international colleagues.

This year there was a particular focus on the use of wood as an alternative energy source. Whilst this provides increased revenue streams for the forestry sector the increased demand for resources provides increased raw material prices to the composite sector. The use of wood has devolved down to the domestic sector with a large number of companies displaying small scale boilers operating on wood pallets for the home situation. It will be interesting to see where this type of technology leads given that in Tasmania for example the Government has over the past few years subsidised the replacement of wood heaters to reduce air pollution.

We also had a chance to review the press modelling software, Virtual Hot Press (VHP) with Dr Heiko Theomen. This product provides modelling of the pressing process for MDF, providing the user with output of the temperature and gas pressure and panel density profile. VHP acts as a valuable tool for training and development purposes. I was impressed with the ease of use and the possibilities that it offers for problem solving if the modelling is well tuned to the specific process. Non the less it is also a valuable training tool.

GreCon presented their latest in mat scanning technology. The product is called *Dieffensor* and provides a system for scanning mats and recognising foreign bodies. The process is based on X-Ray technology and provides a way of protecting metal belts by automatically rejecting mats when a contaminant is detected. The software package provides graphically visualisation of density across the mat as well as trending. The package also offers data on

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spreading which provides an overall advantage in quality improvement.

A number of companies such as Pallmann were also offering systems for manufacturing wood/plastic pellets which can be extruded at a later time. I am sure this is just the start of a trend in Wood Plastic Composites. This year there were companies feature exterior siding WPC products that were not seen at the fair 4 years ago. ....[Top](#)

## INTERZUM 2007

As mentioned earlier a short visit was made to Interzum in Cologne.

There were some powder coated products featured but the development of this finish on MDF has slowed a little due to early problems with edge splitting and surface quality. We believe these issues have been resolved by the more competent producers and the market will continue to grow. We see many advantages in the environmental area with no solvent use and reduced VOC emissions from the finished product. One ongoing challenge is the production of high gloss products. There are a number of companies who are now producing this finish using secondary processes not unlike those used in wet coating.

A number of companies were also displaying light weight panels. These were basically sandwich type hollow core constructed products similar to doors but for use in the furniture industry. These products didn't appear unusual but were generating a reasonable level of interest at both fairs. ....[Top](#)

## COST Action E49

Cost Action E 49 is currently active. Their web-site provides information on current activities.

In November they will hold a conference VOC emissions in Braunschweig, Germany on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of November 2007. For details go to their web-site at:

<http://www1.uni-hamburg.de/cost/e49/public/index.htm>

They are also calling for papers for his conference. Details are available at the same address. ....[Top](#)

## Formaldehyde Update

Formaldehyde continues to remain on the agenda in Australia.

The Department of Environment and Water Resources (DEW) is finalising the report for a project that they have undertaken to investigate the level of formaldehyde in the indoor domestic environment. The report should be available in the next few months.

The Australian Safety and Compensation Commission (ASCC) are currently establishing a database on Formaldehyde and Wood Dust exposure in industry. The purpose is to enable risk assessments to be more easily done in the future. The project is also a trial to evaluate the methodology being employed to collect the data which is primarily an industry survey. Some concerns exist about the lack of transparency and the lack of consultation in this process.

Internationally FormaCare will hold a science conference on Formaldehyde in Spain in September this year. The purpose of this conference is to hear and discuss the new scientific data available on the toxicology of Formaldehyde. More information on the conference can be found on the FormaCare web-site at:

[http://www.formaldehyde-europe.org/pages/International\\_Formaldehyde\\_Sci.135.0.html](http://www.formaldehyde-europe.org/pages/International_Formaldehyde_Sci.135.0.html)  
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## **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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