



## Metal Panels Stir Up Interest.

Last month we introduced the new range of Chemetal products. The interest in these fantastic metal laminates has been extremely positive. We have our sample boards up and brochures available so if you would like some info please let me know.

## Sawmill Visit Was Revealing!

From time to time I manage to sneak away and visit some of our suppliers. It is important to see what the mills are up to and keep abreast of the latest technology. Well Australian Solar Timbers are known as market leaders when it comes to producing high quality flooring and decking products and last month I saw their latest bunch of toys. Flooring is produced under Australian Standard 2796 which determines grade and tolerances in machining, amongst other things. AST have commissioned a number of new machines on their moulding line which will ensure a more consistent product. Firstly, straight after the moulder they have a scanner that measures bow and twist in the boards. Directly after this is a machine much like a hospital cat scan machine which “sees” all the features in a board such as knots, gum veins and bug holes. The standards allow for certain amounts of feature in each grade and the other mills use the visual method of determining which grade a board falls in to. This means having a number of trained operators selecting boards as they pass by on a conveyer belt and they then make up the packs. While this method is tried and true it relies very much on the human factor so there can be a bit of variation from pack to pack and between operators. AST’s new scanner ensures that every pack is consistent because each and every board is graded very precisely. As a back up the guys making the packs are also trained timber graders so if they feel the scanner has made a mistake they can re grade the board. I am told that hasn’t happened as yet! No one has lost their job because of the new scanner, the consistency has simply been improved. In conjunction with the new scanner is a new optimising

docking saw to cut the boards to length. Straight after the docker is another brilliant new machine, and that’s a new end matcher. For those who aren’t familiar with the term, this machine puts a tongue and groove on the ends of the boards allowing them to locate nicely as they are laid. One problem with end matching is that sometimes the ends aren’t quite square. AST’s new end matcher is the most accurate available and really does a great job. These upgrades, costing 3.5 million, was done to improve both output and quality. We know that AST has always produced an excellent product but it just got better.

## Get Roasted!

There’s a new flooring product on the market that employs the latest in drying techniques. It is produced by Hurfords Hardwoods and it’s called “Roasted”. The flooring is dried to 0% moisture content before rehydrating to normal moisture levels. Part of the process involves cranking up the kiln temperature to around 220 degrees. This is the roasting part and it achieves several outcomes. The cell structure actually changes. The cell walls become very rigid so the timber is not greatly affected by moisture change. The timber is harder and it takes on a dark Walnut colour which goes right through the board. Hurfords have a small kiln operating at the moment so available stocks are limited but a new larger kiln will be operating in the new year. The Roasted product is available in a few sizes but importantly you can have it in the signature 128 x 14 size. We can supply a number of other wide board overlay flooring options from Hurfords including the Roasted range so drop in and check it out.

## New Stock.

I haven’t left much room so I’ll quickly mention we have seen new Rock Maple in 25mm and 50mm, more Blue Gum and Ironbark in 200 x 25 and some 150 x 38 Blue Gum. Call us if you need anything.  
Until next month *Shaun*

Questions or comments? E-mail us at [shaun@monarotimber.com.au](mailto:shaun@monarotimber.com.au)  
or call 02 6280 6467

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8.00—4.30 weekdays.  
8.00—12 noon Saturdays