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Cypress Durabeam meets BAL 19 fire code standards

RICHARD GRANT, Manager of Grants Sawmill at Narrandera, and Bruce Bell, Managing Director of Laminated Timber Supplies, have welcomed the latest results on bushfire intensity testing on Southern Region White Cypress.

Following Independent density and moisture content testing by Breitinger Consulting Engineers in Victoria, NATA Accredited Testing Laboratory, the following evaluation of Australian White Southern Cypress from Grants Sawmill at Narrandera, their findings now confirm:

- + At a median reading of 12% moisture content the averaged kiln dried densities are in excess of 770 Kg/m³.
- + This is greater than the requirements of AS3959 for BAL19, which requires timbers to have a greater or equal to density of 750 Kg/m³.

Monitoring and weight testing has been ongoing for over 12 months and is measured on each load of dry semi feedstock leaving Grant's Cypress Sawmill at Narrandera and Richard is now confident that Southern Region White Cypress will meet the BAL 19 Code requirements.

The Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) relates to the classification of bushfire intensity levels that a home structure may experience in a bushfire area. Each BAL rating has specific construction requirements as outlined in the Australian Standard AS 3959-2009: Construction of Buildings in Bushfire Prone Areas.

Three BAL levels have been assigned to Council Requirements; BAL 12.5 (low risk), BAL 19 (moderate risk) BAL 29 (high risk). A house designed with these specific construction requirements is more likely to survive a bushfire, compared to those not built to specification. Grant's Cypress has been supplying high quality kiln dried timber to Laminated Timber Supplies in Melbourne for some 15 years and this specially graded machined timber goes into the manufacture of Durabeam/Durapost, a patented process for external structural use of glulam components.

Bruce believes the findings are somewhat conservative when finally applied to the waterproof glued finished product.

"LTS has been trialling for some 16 years the use of Cutek Wood Preservative to assist in the stabilisation and protection of Cypress Glulam components used in severe weathering applications around Australia and overseas and is proving to be a valuable asset in the ongoing protection of Cypress in external/internal applications," Bruce said.

"Durabeam products are sourced from PEFC/AFS Certificated forests and manufactured to the strict AUS/NZ GLTAA manufacturing standards. This is a uniquely Australian Native softwood, Durability 1 species, and is now used widely in the developing Commercial, Industrial, Residential and specialised market throughout Australia," he said.

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