March 2007 was an important month for the CRC. We announced (see press release below) the licensing of the revolutionary method for applying chemicals to wood to TimTech Chemicals International. I am confident that this is the first of a series of announcements that we will be able to make as we pursue the commercialisation of our technology packages.

Tom Spurling
Chief Executive Officer

PRESS RELEASE

A revolutionary method of treating wood

The Cooperative Research Centre Wood Innovations today announced that it has licensed its revolutionary method for applying chemicals to wood to TimTech Chemicals International.

The CRC technology allows the complete impregnation of wood by a preservative in less than a minute. This substantial saving of time means a substantial saving in the capital cost of the treatment plants and therefore much greater efficiency in the operation of sawmilling and treatment plants.

The technology is based on the scientific study of the microstructure of timber by the CRC through its research participant, the University of Melbourne.

Professor Peter Vinden, the leader of the team of scientists working on the project, said “this is great example of how fundamental science can quickly become of great commercial interest when the scientists work closely with an industrial partner”.

The Managing Director of TimTech Chemicals, Mr Ron Eddy, said that agreement was a great opportunity for his company; “The current license is for Australia and New Zealand, but we hope to introduce the technology to other regions as its advantages are demonstrated locally”.  

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TimTech Chemicals is an Australian and New Zealand company with operations in Brisbane and Wellington. It manufactures and supplies chemicals to the timber industry.

The CRC Wood Innovations commenced in 2001 to develop and commercialise revolutionary technologies as well as extend relevant research that establishes wood as a sustainable material of choice.

For more information, please contact:

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Mike Brown, Director, TimTech Chemicals Pty Ltd
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Letter from Peter Jonson, Chair, CRC Committee

Our 2005/06 Annual Report was assessed by the CRC Annual Report sub-committee and by DEST with regard to governance, financial probity and performance against milestones in the research, education and commercialisation programmes.

Dr Peter Jonson wrote to us on March 30th reporting that the sub-Committee and DEST had provided the following comments on the performance and achievements of our CRC:

- There has been significant progress across all activities in the research programme. In particular, the innovative approaches to new wood products and treatment technologies are very strong;
- the commercialisation and utilisation programme has also made progress with a number of successful packages ready to market via licensing and spin-off companies. The end-user involvement in the commercialisation packages exemplifies the strength of the CRC in the development of products; and
- the opening of the Australian Centre for Advanced Wood Processing at Creswick in October 2005 is a major achievement.

Thanks to all who have contributed both to the work and to the preparation of the Annual Report.
Visit to Creswick by the Victorian Minister for Agriculture, Mr Joe Helper, MP

The Minister for Agriculture in the Victorian Government, Mr Joe Helper, MP visited the ACAWP in Creswick on March 7th. Mr Helper is the Member for the neighbouring electorate of Ripon and has a keen interest in developing industries to add value to Victoria's agricultural and forestry products. He was shown the facilities at the ACAWP and briefed on our commercialisation progress.

Visit to CRC office by Tony Lupton MP

The CRC office is in the State electorate of Prahran and is represented in the Victorian Parliament by Mr Tony Lupton. After the 2006 election Mr Lupton was appointed Parliamentary Secretary- Industry and Innovation. He was therefore very interested to receive a briefing on the work of the CRC.

Wood Shapes Pty Ltd

Readers of this newsletter will be aware that on March 9th Black Forest Timbers Pty Ltd, one of our foundation participants, announced the closure of its sawmill operation.

Black Forest Timbers Pty Ltd is a 50% shareholder in Wood Shapes Pty Ltd. The Board and management of Wood Shapes is working closely with Black Forest Timbers and the Victorian Government to determine the future of the wood bending project.

Finally

As reported above our 2005/06 Annual Report was well received by the CRC Committee and DEST. We are about to start the preparation of the 2006/07 Annual Report and hope to do an even better job this year.

Established and supported under the Australian Government’s Cooperative Research Centres Program.

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