

2025 APPITA INDUSTRY FORUM

PULP | PAPER | PACKAGING | BIOPRODUCTS

3rd April, 2025 Hyatt Place, Essendon Field, Victoria

Proudly sponsored by



PROGRAM

7:45 AM – 8:30 AM: Registration and Morning Tea

Location: Atrium, Hyatt Place, Essendon Fields

Participants register, receive their event badges, and enjoy a morning tea with exhibitors.

8:30 AM – 8:40 AM: Welcome

David Platt, Event MC and Cofounder, Resilient Futures

8:40 AM – 8:45 AM: Opening Address

Neil Louwrens, President, Appita

8:45 AM – 9:15 AM: Opening Keynote

“Organisational Resilience - The Potential of Strategic Asset Management ”

Travis Soutter, Managing Director, Concordia Asset Management

9:15 AM – 10:10 AM: Leadership Panel - Shaping the Future of Industry

Hosted by: Tim Woods, Director, IndustryEdge

A candid discussion on real-world leadership challenges, decision-making in uncertain environments, and the skills needed to lead through change. Industry executives will share personal insights into critical leadership moments and how they navigate shifting market conditions.

Panel:

John Bartleman, Chief Operating Officer, Pulp & Paper, Oji Fibre Solutions (Virtual)

Jacob Chretien, Chief Technology and Innovation Officer, Opal

Patrick Dooley, Managing Director, Norske Skog, Boyer (Virtual)

David Tyack, Managing Director ANZ - International Family Care & Professional (IFP), Kimberly-Clark

10:10 AM – 10:30 AM: Morning Tea

10:30 AM – 10:35 AM: ASSET MANAGEMENT SESSION OPENING

Proudly sponsored by Wood Beca

Hosted by: Giancarlo Bigaran, General Manager: Engineering, Process and Projects, Visy Pulp & Paper

Effective asset management is the cornerstone of operational resilience in the pulp, paper, and packaging industries. This session delves into how coordinated activities, informed by enterprise risk management principles and innovative approaches, can unlock significant value from assets while mitigating risks.

10:35 AM – 11:05 AM: Sponsors Keynote

“Can’t See The Wood For The Trees? – Using Risk Based Principals To Make The Best Spend Decisions”

Shane Gowan, General Manager, Wood Beca

11:05 AM – 11:45 AM: XCHANGE PANEL - ASSET MANAGEMENT

This panel explores the real-world challenges of asset management, from decision-making bias and risk to workforce knowledge and technology. Gain practical insights into aligning leadership, managing risk, and future-proofing assets in a rapidly evolving operating environment.

Panel:

Shane Gowan, General Manager, Wood Beca

Rudy Haraga, Director of Technical Services, Fornax Services

Travis Soutter, Managing Director, Concordia, Asset Management

Kelly Thompsell, APAC & ANZ Asset Care Leader, Kimberly-Clark

11:45 AM – 11:50 AM: ENERGY FUTURE SESSION OPENING

Hosted by: Howard Burvill, Appita Magazine, Features Editor

This session brings together energy and sustainability leaders to examine the critical challenges and opportunities facing the industry as it navigates the energy transition.

11:50 AM – 12:20 PM: Guest Keynote

“Emerging Technology To Decarbonise Pulp And Paper Operations.”

Jarrold Leak, CEO, Australian Alliance for Energy Productivity, A2EP

12:20 PM - 1:10 PM: Lunch

1:10 PM – 1:50 PM: XCHANGE PANEL - ENERGY FUTURE

Panelists will explore strategies for decarbonisation, energy efficiency, and renewable integration, drawing on global insights and local innovations. The session will also highlight policy gaps, the role of collective action, and how businesses can future-proof operations in an environment of energy volatility and increasing regulatory demands.

Panel:

George Christodoulides, General Manager - Visy Recycled Paper Mills & Energy

David Jettner, General Manager - Environment and Sustainability, Opal Group

Jarrold Leak, CEO, Australian Alliance for Energy Productivity

Gabriel Vinha, Sales Manager, Products & Services ANZ, Voith

1:50 PM – 2:00 PM: NEW SPEAKER COMPETITION

Proudly sponsored by Asten Johnson, Aurelia Group, Azelis, Kemira, Scandinavian Electronics, Solenis, Solvay, Valmet, Varden, Voith BTG, Wood Beca

Hosted by: Appita Young Professional Networks, Liam Methven, Fibre Research Manager, Varden

This session brings together energy and sustainability leaders to examine the critical challenges and opportunities facing the industry as it navigates the energy transition.

2:00 PM – 2:30 PM: New Speaker New Zealand

“Rating Lifting Equipment & When Is It PECPR”

Sharik Burgess Stride, Graduate Mechanical Engineer, Index Engineering Ltd, New Zealand

2:30 PM – 3:00 PM: New Speaker Australia

“Paper Mills In Society”

Samuel Jackson, Production Supervisor, Visy

3:00 PM – 3:20 PM: Afternoon Tea

3:20 PM – 3:25 PM: TECHNOLOGY & AUTOMATION SESSION OPENING

Proudly sponsored by ABB

Hosted by: David Vercoe, General Manager Technical, Opal Australian Paper

This session explores how technological innovation and smart systems are helping mills optimise performance, reduce emissions, and modernise legacy operations.

3:25 PM – 3:55 PM: Guest Keynote

“Digital Innovation For Tomorrow – Navigating Challenges And Future Opportunities For Pulp And Paper”

Sachin Vaidya, Regional General Manager (Asia | Middle East | Africa) Digital Solutions & Services, ABB

3:55 PM – 4:35 PM: XCHANGE PANEL - TECHNOLOGY & AUTOMATION

This panel explores how mills are applying automation, digital upgrades, and smart chemistry to modernise legacy systems, optimise processes, and improve sustainability. Hear real-world insights on workforce enablement, integration challenges, and the next wave of technology-driven innovation

Panel:

Russell Allan, Managing Director, Aurelia Group

Bryalee Pearless, ANZ Sales Manager, Solenis

Peter Tomazic, Business Development Manager, Strategic Accounts, Rockwell Automation

Sachin Vaidya, Regional General Manager (Asia | Middle East | Africa) Digital Solutions & Services, ABB

4:35 PM – 4:50 PM: CAPTURING INSIGHTS

Facilitated by: David Platt, Event MC and Co-founder, Resilient Futures

An interactive roundtable session designed to capture key insights, reflections, and opportunities arising from the day's discussions. A chance to connect, share perspectives, and shape future actions across the industry.

4:50 PM – 5:00 PM: Announcement of New Speaker Winner and Recognition of Appita Membership Milestones

Presented by Neil Louwrens, President, Appita

Join us as we close the day by celebrating the future and the foundation of our industry. Appita President Neil Louwrens will announce the winner of the New Speaker Award, recognising outstanding emerging talent. We'll also take a moment to honour long-standing members whose commitment and contributions have helped shape our community over the years.

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM: NETWORKING FUNCTION - Proudly sponsored by Solenis

Location: Stateroom, Hyatt Place, Essendon Fields



Wrap up the day by connecting with colleagues, speakers, and industry peers in a relaxed and social setting. Proudly sponsored by Solenis, this networking function is a great opportunity to continue conversations, share insights, and build valuable relationships within the pulp, paper, packaging, and bioproducts community. Drinks and light refreshments will be served.