

Ted's News

September 2021

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[Last month, I introduced my shelter design service with my first three impressive designs.](#) Here are another three, the lead image here is a specially designed skateboard park shelter.. When operating Outdoor Structures Australia, my previous business, I developed a range of very impressive public structure such as park and bus stop shelters as well as toilets. When designs were prepared, almost all had a materials list and full cutting details. My philosophy was that the plans had to be "bullet proof" so I could point a contractor to a pile of material and ask him to

prefabricate it and erect it without them having to ask a question. You can now have access to these plans, not just as PDF's but also in CAD format that can be modified for your own needs. They incorporate all of my superior detailing that set our product apart from our competitors.

[Here is the link to my website with more information including purchasing options and prices.](#)
[Even more designs will be added over coming months.](#)

[How Not to Lose Trust in Timber](#)



Thanks go to one of my readers for sending the images above. What word comes to mind when you see these images of timber handrails? Hint: **disgraceful** is a good start. Here we have low-grade, non-structural timber protecting the public from a substantial fall. And that is without discussing the gaps! ([My guide to commercial barrier does all that](#)) The rails should be replaced immediately but with what? Since the last newsletter I have seen two tenders from NSW, one for a deck and the other for a boardwalk and not a piece of timber anywhere to be seen. It can only reflect those council's past experience. Yet, if we were to knock on these council's doors and offer consultancy services so they could deliver timber infrastructure that has a long life and ages gracefully they simply would not believe us and tell us not to waste their time. It is all very sad. Last week I visited a job I supplied in 1994 and the handrails were in great condition, (time to replace the deck though but it had never been oiled in its life.)

It really isn't hard. And you start with an appropriate timber specification, one that describes what the timber looks like to ensure it is still performing 30 years later despite being in the weather, not a theoretical measurement of strength on the day it was milled and nothing more. You need to be very specific about the species permitted. Someone needs to inspect it too.

If you have been having trouble with timber, let us help you. We can supply CPD courses, timber specifications suitable for the application, inspection services, design checklists and drawing reviews. Outside of Queensland where I have long standing existing relationships, all my work is done through the Australia wide durability specialists [BCRC](#) Ph [02 9131 8018](#). See below for information on my one-day courses.

[There was a useful discussion on timber handrails in July's newsletter.](#)

[Beware F17 KD Specification](#)



A few weeks ago, I inspected a deck in Queensland where they were having trouble. I pushed my 8 mm spike into the joist and it went full depth of the 190 mm joist with ease. When I went under the deck which was about 10 metres off the ground. I remember that I had seen the drawings and written a letter to someone that an F17 KD joist would not work. It would be in Victorian ash or similar which was durability 3 in ground. The screws would split the joist as they had to be in a straight line and let moisture straight into low durability timber. But what would I know? My warning was ignored and the deck built. Now 13 years later the joists and decking have to be replaced. The material cost for just one third of the area is, I believe, \$60,000.

None of this was secret men's business! F17 is a very useful specification for roof trusses and enclosed framing but it says absolutely nothing about the durability. Once the application is weather exposed everything changes and detailing to achieve durability become paramount. You achieve this by a 75 mm joist (which cannot be kiln dried) with screws in a staggered alignment, fully predrilling and using one of the most durable species. Only 13 years ago all parties thought they were saving money but it was a very expensive exercise and would have been even more so if the deck had collapsed. Fortunately, this time everyone is listening and it is going together according to our standard details. Everything you need to know is in my guides. My [Deck and Boardwalk Design Guide](#) is a must but especially you will find the timber specifications in the [Deck and Boardwalk Design Essentials](#). Designing a deck? Talk to me on 0414 770 261.



The decking had been re-screwed into rotten joists, a pointless exercise.

Full Day Courses



The Footbridge Purchasing and Inspection Course run by Edgar (Ted) Stubbersfield is intended for those responsible for the specification, purchasing and ongoing maintenance of footbridges. The course will enable participants to:

- Prepare an appropriate specification
- Assess suitable product to purchase
- Recognise where corners are cut
- Ensure value in purchasing
- Know quickly where to inspect
- Recognise suitable timber for bridges

I can offer valuable assistance to your organisation by empowering your people to recognise an appropriate low maintenance footbridge from one that requires expensive rectification over a shorter life span.

On retiring from Outdoor Structures Australia, a company I founded in 1997, I have been concentrating on publishing guides on external timber and steel use and educating professionals in that field. You can now take advantage of my experience gained building low maintenance steel and timber bridges.

I have extensive expertise in exposed timber applications. This knowledge was developed initially through a number of formal research projects followed by years of observation. I acquired a deep of understanding of the issues relating to designing, supplying and constructing fully weather exposed timber and timber and steel structures including bridges.

With over 40 years experience of supplying timber and timber and steel products, I have supplied some outstanding low maintenance footbridges. Conversely I have also witnessed many structures that simply should never have been purchased.

This course is centred on a checklist that can be used as a specification and also a confirmation that common shortcuts that affect longevity have been addressed. Through hundreds of images the importance of each line of the check list is explained. Participants will recognise what good practice is and how important it is to ensure it is used.

Contact Details
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Footbridge Course



The Coastal Deck Design Course run by Edgar (Ted) Stubbersfield is intended for those responsible for the specification, purchasing and ongoing maintenance of boardwalks and decks with emphasis given to the more difficult coastal environment. The course will enable participants to:

- Prepare an appropriate specification
- Assess suitable product to purchase
- Recognise where corners are cut
- Ensure value in purchasing
- Know quickly where to inspect
- Recognise suitable timber for decks

I can offer valuable assistance to your organisation by empowering your people to recognise an appropriate low maintenance deck or boardwalk from one that requires expensive rectification over a shorter life span.

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Coastal Deck Course

I have been collecting images and case studies of good and bad practice for over 20 years and learning from those images. I now have an unmatched library of do's and don'ts of external timber use. This vast collection of images allows me to clearly explain design issues in my two full day courses, one deals with footbridges and the other with coastal decks. These are incredible resources going into the close attention to detail that is required for a weather exposed timber bridge or deck to succeed.

These are serious courses that are unmatched in the value you will extract from them by delivering expensive infrastructure that ages gracefully and with little maintenance. They both start by going through a design checklist and explaining, line by line, why you must attend to that point. They then look at a number of case studies, showing good and bad practice.

[Click here for footbridge course brochure](#)

[Click here for coastal decks brochure](#)

Call me to discuss your training needs. These courses, which are eligible for CPD points, will give you an incredible understanding of good timber use. Call 0414 770 261 or [email me](#).

Need a Timber Consultant or Expert Witness?

I have over 40 years' experience in the industry and can assist you with many of your timber needs.

Inspection – I can assess timber products on their performance, fitness for purpose or cause of failure. I also examine whether best practice was used in design and

construction. I have recently completed inspections on boardwalks, bollards, support beams and external timber furniture.

Grading - Quite literally, I have written the book on the subject. Recent experience has shown that up to 30% of timber supplied may not be to grade.

Design - I can provide detailed technical drawings and advice. I can also review already prepared drawings.

Reports - I have authored many books on timber and can prepare a report providing recommendations and practical instructions on how to rectify issues.

Please note as I am now employed a Senior Timber Consultant with the firm BCRC all large and complex consultancies and requirements for an expert witness will be handled in conjunction with them. Existing consulting arrangements remain unchanged and I am also available to assist on small projects. For more information see www.bcrc.com.au

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