

Ted's News

January 2023

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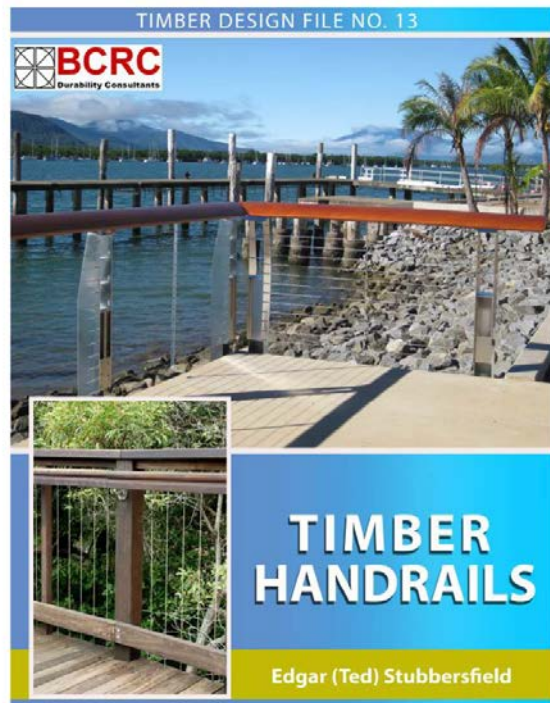
[Free Guide to Timber Handrails](#)

Last month I introduced my latest timber guide which distils my extensive experience with timber handrails. Unlike my other timber books, this one is free. There should not be a professional office in the country without this book. If you did not request it last month please do so this month. It can head off a lot of grief.

"Extraordinary, the amount of detail it contains. Good well-researched and knowledgable information," That is how my guide *Timber Handrails* has been described. This is the 22nd guide I have published and No. 13 in my *Timber Design File* series. It is written mainly to meet the needs of commercial handrails but has some important content relating to domestic rails, particularly LOSP treated pine. This guide will give you timber specifications that work and with 127 images you will understand best practices. The chapters are:

- Introduction
- Timber specification and explanation
- Best practice in design
- Standards
- Fixings
- Posts
- Wire ropes
- Case histories
- Design checklist

[Here is a link to the index](#)



To receive this book simply email [Fiona MacWilliam at BCRC](#) and she will send you a copy and also the design checklist as a word document. **Why do you need the design checklist as a word**

document? It allows you to put your corporate logo on the top and so serves as an official design brief and also your check that best practice has been adopted. Remember, a poor design brief will likely result in a less-than-satisfactory outcome. Don't think that a roof truss specification will work in this specialised application.

I plan to add a chapter to the book on steps as there is so much common ground. Unfortunately, I am short of images, good or bad. Can anyone assist me with images and stories about steps?

If you want handrail sizes, you still need my [Commercial Barrier Guide](#) for \$22.

Recommended Species List

Species	Percentage of harvest from Old State forests	Percentage of harvest from NSW State forests	Fire resistance AS 3959:2009	Termite resistant AS 5604:2005	Lychus susceptible AS 5604:2005	In-ground Durability AS 5604:2005 or CTIQ	Above-ground Durability AS 5604:2005 or CTIQ	Playground use in-ground AS 4685 or CTIQ	Playground use above-ground AS 4685 or CTIQ	Interlocked grade	Dry weight kg/m ³	Shrinks tangential to 12% MC	Greasy to touch	Royal species	Notes
Ash silvertop <i>E. sieberi</i>	NSW/Vic Tas	0.12	Y	N	N	3	2	N	Y	O	820	10.6	N	N	1
Ash-Victorian <i>E. delegatensis</i> <i>E. regnans</i>	Vic		N	N	Y	4	3	N	N	N	680	8-13	N	N	
Blackbutt <i>E. pilularis</i>		4.58	15.84	Y	Y	N	2	1	Y	Y	N	930	7.3	N	1
Box Grey <i>E. moluccana</i>		1.57	0.08	N	Y	Y	1	1	Y	Y	N	1105	7.5	N	
Brigalow <i>Acacia harpophylla</i>			N	Y	Y	1	1	Y	Y	N	1025	3	N	N	
Cumana/Tonka <i>Dipterocarpus odorata</i>	Imported		N	N	Y	(1)	(1)	Y	Y	?	900-1300	7.7	N		
Cypress-white <i>Callitris glauca</i>			N	Y	N	2	1	Y	Y	N	675	3	N	N	
Ironbark broadleaved red <i>E. fibrosa</i>		7.02		N	Y	N	1	1	Y	Y	O	1120	6.5	N	
Ironbark narrowleaved red <i>E. crebra</i>		4.60	2.01	N	Y	N	1	1	Y	Y	Y	1090	5	N	
Ironbark red <i>E. sideroxylon</i>	Not listed			Y	Y	Y	1	1	Y	Y	Y	1190	7	N	

[Here is a link to the two-page species recommendations](#) from my guide. *Timber in Playgrounds*. It is supplied as a Word document so you can format it as you need. It is drawn from a number of Australian Standards, *Construction Timbers in Queensland*, *Boottles*, *Wood in Australia*, and years of experience. It covers both sawn and round timber. It is applicable to anything to do with weather-exposed timber, e.g., fences and bollards. It assumes the timber will be H3 treated.

When Ralph Bailey and I wrote *Timber in Playgrounds* we provided a resource that explained current best practices in the specification, design, and construction in that field. We entertained a naive hope that councils would outlay \$55 so they knew what they were dealing with before spending considerable funds on potential short-lived and even dangerous money pits. Likewise, we hoped that designers would work through the checklist so they could be assured that potential issues had been addressed. There should not be a council or landscape architect without this book but very few have it. The contents cover just about everything to do with any weather-exposed timber item, whether it be a fence or a bollard. If you have not ordered this book, you really do need it.

Here is a [link to purchase a PDF](#)

Here is a link to [purchase a hard copy from Amazon](#)

Basic Error With Shelter Shed Post Supports



Additional bracing was needed for blade-type post supports.

A few days ago, I went to see a very good friend who had used my [LifePlus decking](#) on a deck beside a pool he was building. I saw that he had paid someone to design a one-off shelter for him. It looked good but he was not a happy camper. He gave it a shake and it shook uncomfortably. I knew the problem straight away without looking - standard off-the-shelf blade-type post supports and of course, it was. It had to shake, especially as all were aligned in the same direction. Rotate half of them 90 degrees and it would have been better. they would also have been fine if this was not a free-standing shelter. I told him how to fix it and then reminded him that I would have given him one of my standard designs that did not shake, along with full cutting instructions, for free.

When the shelter is free-standing, the support needs to be able to resist movement in both directions. We achieved this by using C section steel instead of a blade. Countersunk screws meant that there was no movement. (It should have had a tar epoxy style paint as well.)





But why automatically think post support when you can achieve a 35-year design life if you just use an ironbark [Pioneer Post](#) installed in the ground correctly? [Contact Stuart Madill for prices](#) (0403 385 707)

If you need a shelter shed, why not look at my standard designs? [Check out my website for styles and prices](#). Avoid copies, [this twelve year old newsletter](#) shows why and explains how I knew what the problem was immediately.

[Signup for One of my Ten CPD Courses](#)



Learn from my four decades of experience with these CPD training sessions, some of which are available in eClassroom.

Topic 1	Timber Preservation	
Topic 2	Hardwood Grading	
Topic 3	Timber Decks - Designing for Durability	
Topic 4	Utilising Small Diameter Hardwood	
Topic 5	The Seven Deadly Sins of Timber Design	eClassroom link
Topic 6	Timber Joints	
Topic 7	Architectural Timber Battens	eClassroom link
Topic 8	Timber 101	eClassroom link
Topic 9	Boardwalk Design (recommend delivered with Timber 101)	
Topic 10	Timber Handrail Design	

[Click here to learn more about these courses](#)

Are you aware that [Wilson Timbers/Outdoor Structures](#), who I am affiliated with and are suppliers of quality timber, will have me come to your office (in person or remotely) and deliver one or two

of my CPD sessions for free? The only condition for in-person presentations is that, with travel, we can do it in a day from Brisbane in Queensland. [Contact Stuart Madill by email to arrange a time](#) or call his mobile 0403 385 707.

Need a Timber Consultant or Expert Witness?

I have over 45 years of 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.

Trainer and Presenter – I can provide tailored training to meet your CPD needs and also have experience at lecturing to universities and presenting at conferences.

Please note as I am now employed as 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 or [download their capability brochure here](#).

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