



EWPA Media Release

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Case Settlement Win for Strict Compliance of Plywood Standards

Litigation in the Federal Court about potentially unsafe building products has ended in a major win for strict testing and compliance regimes following an out-of-court settlement between the parties.

The Engineered Wood Products Association of Australasia commenced legal proceedings against Jag Ply Pty Ltd and its director Peter Wintour after laboratory tests showed that plywood certified for structural use by Jag Ply had a consistently high rate of failure when tested against the Australian standard.

Structural plywood is used in the building industry for uses such as flooring and moulding concrete. Australian Standard AS/NZ-2269 requires a strict testing regime at the point of manufacture to ensure that the product is safe.

EWPA general manager Simon Dorries said the testing methods used by Jag Ply had presented a serious risk of injury to members of the general public.

“Jag Ply was representing that plywood complied with AS/NZ-2269 when this was not so,” Mr Dorries said.

“The company’s testing methods did not comply with the Australian/New Zealand standard. That meant that plywood certified by Jag Ply could potentially fail when put under normal loads and cause serious injury.”

Mr Dorries said the terms of the settlement confirmed that Jag Ply and Mr Wintour had joined the overwhelming majority of the structural plywood industry in accepting that certification and labelling of structural plywood under the Australian standard must take place at the point of manufacture to ensure that the product was safe.

Under the terms of the settlement, Jag Ply and Mr Wintour have agreed to cease their certification process. They have also agreed to a product recall whereby Jag Ply will give refunds for unused sheets of plywood purchased from Jag Ply or its agents which Jag Ply certified as complying with AS/NZ-2269. Anyone with such unused sheets is entitled to the refund.

In the case, the EWPAA had filed 10 reports detailing serious failures in Jag Ply's testing regime. The reports considered 180 sheets of plywood purchased randomly on the open market over a period of 20 months. All 10 reports went unanswered by Jag Ply.

"Jag Ply's failure to refute the EWPAA's scientific tests underlines the risk their business posed to the general public and the importance of this victory," Mr Dorries said.

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