

## DOES WOODWORKERS MANUFACTURE JOINERY OFFSHORE?

Woodworkers operates four manufacturing plants in Australia and directly controls two factories offshore. It also uses a number of other facilities to manufacture specific items and undertake timber processing work in Indonesia, China and Malaysia. While most of this infrastructure is to supply Woodworkers' own needs, there is capacity to undertake certain types of custom manufacture offshore where sufficient lead time is available to allow for shipping. This generally requires 10 to 12 weeks (excluding holiday periods) from the time all designs are agreed and deposits paid.

## WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES?

The primary attraction is cost. Depending on the complexity of the work, savings of 25% to 30% can be achieved from Australian custom made pricing. However joinery is also usually professionally primed or sealed within this discounted pricing thereby further reducing site finishing costs. On larger projects in regional areas containerisation of product can reduce costs and damage. Counter balancing these advantages, the lead times required are longer; there is no ability to amend designs or sizes once fabrication has commenced; there are restrictions on what can be made and a higher deposit is required to initiate the work.

- The offshore manufacture option generally requires
  - An order in excess of AUD\$10,000
  - Lead time up to 12 weeks
  - Design restrictions within the capability of the factory
  - Size restrictions to permit containerisation of the product
  - Fabrication in surian red cedar

## WHAT IS THE QUALITY OF THE OFFSHORE PRODUCT?

Woodworkers makes custom joinery offshore identical to the product manufactured by its Australian parent. Full mortice and tenon construction is used and the product is made by expatriate trained staff to Australian specifications. The product is fully warranted by Woodworkers the same as locally manufactured product. Woodworkers has supplied interstate resellers with product from our offshore plants without any significant issues for many years and this option has recently been extended to individual clients.

## WHAT IS THE JOINERY MADE FROM?

Woodworkers procures legally sourced timber from South East Asia and processes it at plants in Java and Canton under expatriate supervision. The timber is identical to the surian cedar we predominately use in Australia; as are the adhesives, glass and hardware. Category 1 hardwood sills are used on all frames (normally Merbau or Kwila). Some product can be primed or sealed to an advanced level including hand sanding so that only top coats are required. The priming ensures the timber does not suffer severe moisture and climate changes during shipping and ensures stability. Oil based primers or sealants are used exclusively that are compatible with Australian enamels and transparent Sikkens Filter 7 top coats.

## HOW DO I ORDER OFFSHORE?

If you are interested in making the savings possible from offshore fabrication it is essential that you plan ahead. You need to discuss your preference with our sales staff so that your requirements can be assessed to ensure they are within the capability of our offshore plants and for us to identify which factory is most suitable. Your job will be priced for Australian manufacture and a discount applied according to its complexity and quantity. After pricing is agreed a preliminary deposit is usually paid to undertake the computer shop drawings needed to ensure every detail of your job is specified fully. Once the shop drawings are signed off by you your non-refundable deposit is required to be increased to at least 50% of the contract amount. This figure covers the additional logistic and shipping costs – insurance, import duties, port costs and GST payments involved in international trade. The deposit may be higher if your project requires unusual items. Your contract is generally not subject to currency or price fluctuations once signed and GST is paid on the goods before they are cleared from the port. The lead time for supply starts from the time shop drawings are approved and the full deposit paid. Importantly, once fabrication has commenced no changes are possible without additional expense. It is not possible to cancel your order or any part thereof without loss of your deposit & liability for any losses Woodworkers may incur. For this reason offshore manufacture is not recommended for difficult renovation projects or architectural work where flexibility may be important.

Once your joinery arrives Woodworkers will seek immediate payment of the remaining balance and will wish to deliver it promptly. You may need to arrange storage facilities if your project is running behind time or agree a storage charge with Woodworkers if we have short term capacity available. Woodworkers cannot store joinery for extended periods and cannot finance its cost at your convenience. Should this occur the pricing will revert to the original Australian manufacture cost without any discount.

Should you wish to inspect the joinery before shipment we will facilitate visas and connections but the travel cost is at your expense.



## CAN ANYTHING BE MADE OFFSHORE?

No. Most projects will entail a mixture of onshore and offshore fabrication. Your joinery for instance may be made overseas but the locking and hanging hardware, (including bi-fold hanging) insect or security screens and unusual components, such as louvre galleries or sashless windows may be made locally to complete your order. Large items that cannot fit in a container may also be locally made unless the design can be dissected or componentized. The discount offered will depend on such issues and also the size of the order. Small orders are generally not suitable for offshore manufacture due to the increased administration involved. Woodworkers has, however, been successfully awarded individual contracts in excess of AUD\$500,000 for offshore manufacture and has exported to the United States, Japan and Europe.

## WHAT IF THE JOINERY IS LATE OR MANUFACTURED INCORRECTLY?

Woodworkers makes no promises regarding offshore lead times and accepts no liability for compensation as international trade is subject to local stoppages, holidays, transshipment and port delays, customs and quarantine interventions and a myriad of other issues. The goods are covered during shipment by Woodworkers Marine insurance but it is common for condensation to occur during shipment that can cause harmless water marking and minor swelling. These issues are not deemed defects and nor are minor rubbing marks or transport damage that are inconsequential to the appearance of the joinery once installed and final coated. If a manufacturing error has occurred or significant transportation damage the item will be repaired or replaced by Woodworkers without charge. If the item is correct to the signed shop drawings but not suitable for your application, the cost of adaptation or replacement will be borne by you. All offshore manufactured items are made to Woodworkers standard profiles and details unless specifically amended on the shop drawings.

## AM I PUTTING AUSTRALIANS OUT OF WORK?

Woodworkers employs well over 100 people in Australia and its staff has increased since local production was augmented with offshore facilities in the late 1990s. Our offshore facilities were required to ensure that the quality and environmental credibility of our timber supplies was guaranteed. Offshore manufacture was originally aimed at recycling timber and meeting foreign government value adding obligations but grew to supply our Australian reseller network and export contracts when there were severe labour shortages in our specialised trades in Australia. It has been Woodworkers experience that offshore manufacture actually secures and increases our Australian staff levels while expanding our skills and procurement base to make our products more price competitive.

## DO OTHER COMPANIES OFFER OFFSHORE MANUFACTURE?

Yes but their service is not necessarily equivalent. In recent years there have been a number of importers or overseas suppliers that have sought to offer cheaper product in Australia. Much of this product is inferior in its construction which often results in shrinkage and splitting in the drier Australian climate. Woodworkers offshore operations are completely different to some of our competitors who make everything offshore in countries like Vietnam and retain only a small Australian staff onshore to retail the product. Importers come and go and their product is frequently sold through auctions or on the internet where their identity is concealed and they have no liability. For builders, who must accept legal responsibility for their product for 5 years, there is no value in dealing with importers who are unlikely to be of assistance if problems occur and who frequently make unrealistic claims about how quickly they can supply product that do not account for the shipping times involved.



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## WHAT OUR CLIENTS SAY

*"Woodworkers helped us achieve an amazing result with the building of our new home after we were confronted with the prospect of dramatically increased costs to conform with the revised bushfire code. The guidance and assistance we received from Woodworkers enabled us to transform difficult choices in design into a positive creative experience which we are now enjoying in our daily living. Woodworkers suggested we consider offshore fabrication to reduce expense and, while we were a little apprehensive at first, the result exceeded our expectations. The product was beautifully made, on time and was professionally fully primed and sanded ready for painting top coats.*

*Our experience of Woodworkers offshore fabrication was second to none and we would highly recommend it to anyone embarking on the journey of building or renovation."*

**Leanne and Scott Boyd**

Samford, Brisbane

*"We were building a traditional style house that required weight and pulley windows, Victorian heritage style joinery and large traditional mouldings in red cedar. We were provided with the option of offshore manufacture by Woodworkers which offered significant savings in the cost of manufacture, finishing and transportation. Our container was shipped directly to Melbourne and land transported to Warrnambool cost effectively. Woodworkers made all the transport arrangements and the process went very smoothly. We were entirely satisfied with the quality, price and service we received and are happy to recommend the service to anybody else building in regional areas."*

**Clayton Harrington**

Warrnambool, Victoria

*"We purchased our windows from Sydney Woodworkers Warehouse in Brookvale. The natural cedar timber windows for our very contemporary architecturally designed renovations at Seaforth were critical to the style we were trying to achieve but we were concerned about cost. The option during tender was offered to purchase the windows through Woodworkers' offshore facility as a cost saving. The windows have now been installed and we are very satisfied with the quality and support from Neil and his team at Sydney Woodworkers and would use them again."*

**Larry Normali**

Owner Builder, Sydney



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