



VAFI

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF FOREST INDUSTRIES

Thursday, June 25, 2009

VICTORIA WELCOMES SECURE FUTURE FOR FOREST INDUSTRY

The Victorian Association of Forest Industries (VAFI) has welcomed the Federal Government's pledge of support for Australia's forest industry, announced yesterday in a Ministerial Statement by The Hon. Tony Burke.

The statement, made by the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, reaffirmed the Rudd Government's commitment towards the forest industry and included a pledge to uphold Regional Forest Agreements which support industry, sustain jobs and ensure high conservation values.

"Victoria's forest industry welcomes Minister Burke's very supportive Ministerial Statement and the Federal Government's long term commitment towards ensuring a strong, robust and sustainable forest industry into the future," said the VAFI CEO, Philip Dalidakis.

"As Minister Burke correctly points out, Australia's forest industry supports 76,800 direct jobs, 32,000 of which are located in Victoria. It's an industry that wants to continue to make a positive environmental and economic contribution; therefore it is crucial that we are backed in by our nation's leaders."

"To encourage ongoing investment and sustainable development the industry needs stability and unwavering commitment, the Ministerial Statement is a welcome step towards achieving this and we look forward to further building on our already strong relationship with Minister Burke," Mr Dalidakis said.

Mr Dalidakis also welcomed the Federal Government's push towards recognising the forest industry's full climate change mitigation potential, saying the industry had much to contribute towards a carbon conscious future.

"We need to see the Federal Government continue to drive international recognition of the vast amounts carbon stored in harvested wood products and we look forward to continued support from Minister Burke on this issue," Mr Dalidakis said.

"At present we are only scratching the surface of the CPRS opportunities available for the forest industry. By properly recognising the positive carbon value of the industry and the role forestry can play in mitigating climate change we can work more productive towards emissions targets."

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