



# VAFI

## VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF FOREST INDUSTRIES

Wednesday, 14 May 2008

### VAFI WELCOMES FEDERAL FORESTRY FUNDING

The Victorian Association of Forest Industries (VAFI) has welcomed the Federal Government's new budget and its commitment of \$20.0 million towards the Australian forest industry over the next three years.

The VAFI Executive Director, Philip Dalidakis, said the new funding showed positive leadership by the Federal Government in assisting the industry to grow sustainably and create further employment opportunities.

"I am pleased the Federal Government has shown a commitment to the industry through the *Preparing Australia's Forest Industry for the Future Initiative* and I anticipate Victoria will receive its fair share to help further develop the industry," Mr Dalidakis said

"The Victorian forest industry contributes a gross value of \$6 billion towards the Victorian economy and over \$14 billion nationally, the industry employs 74,000 people nationally and 20,000 people in Victoria alone; it is a very significant contributor to our society."

Mr Dalidakis also commended the Federal Government's initiative in directly addressing a range of forest industry issues including climate change, illegal logging and the opportunity for investment in value adding services.

"The Federal Government's commitment towards a *Forest Industries Development Fund* is a great initiative, in recent years the Victorian Forest Industry has taken significant steps towards developing a sustainable industry with a focus towards high-end, value adding products," Mr Dalidakis said.

"Right now the Victorian industry is at a very important stage as it undergoes the current Timber Industry Strategy review process; I certainly look forward to working with the Hon. Tony Burke and the Australian Federal Government in helping to ensure the sustainable development of both the Victorian and Australian forest industries."

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