



VAFI

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF FOREST INDUSTRIES

Wednesday, 4 February, 2009

GOVERNMENT STIMULUS AN OPPORTUNITY TO KNOCK ON WOOD

The Victorian Association of Forest Industries (VAFI) has welcomed the Federal Government's \$42 billion *Nation Building and Jobs Plan* as a critical step in safeguarding Australia's economy whilst providing a remarkable opportunity to build an environmentally sustainable future.

The new plan will see the construction of over 20,000 new social and defence force houses and an immense investment into community infrastructure, an opportunity the VAFI CEO, Philip Dalidakis, says is ideal for utilising the sustainable resources of the Victorian timber industry.

"The Prime Minister has shown a great commitment towards retaining jobs and stimulating the increasingly strained economy, it is imperative that he show this same commitment towards the Victorian forest industry by ensuring that the infrastructure is built using sustainable timber from the local Victorian timber industry," Mr Dalidakis said.

"This is a great opportunity to not only provide much needed housing and upgrades, but to also start building a national infrastructure that is both economically beneficial through its support of rural and regional Victorian jobs, and is environmentally sustainable through the use of carbon storing timber."

"Victoria has a world class forest industry that leads the way nationally and globally in sustainable practices. By engaging this leading industry through the extensive use of timber in construction and fit outs, the Federal Government will be securing thousands of jobs throughout Victoria."

"Timber really is the best building material available because it stores carbon as it grows and then 'locks' the carbon away, while being the only truly renewable resource. There is also very little energy used in the manufacturing of timber in comparison to other building products, and of course timber is biodegradable."

"Infrastructure built using sustainably harvested timber is a win-win for the Federal Government; it helps support local communities and jobs whilst simultaneously supporting the Governments' own commitment to the *Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme* where they acknowledged the timber industry is the only carbon positive industry."

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