



VAFI

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF FOREST INDUSTRIES

Tuesday, February 11 2009

TIMBER INDUSTRY LAUNCHES BUSHFIRE SUPPORT INITIATIVE

The Victorian Association of Forest Industries (VAFI) has today announced the creation of a new industry wide bushfire support initiative to assist in the rebuilding of communities and townships devastated by recent fires.

As part of the initiative, a Community Support Register will be launched by the industry and hosted on the VAFI website from 4pm today (www.vafi.org.au), allowing timber industry members to volunteer goods and services to be used by the fire affected communities, both in their continued fight against the ongoing fires and in the reconstruction efforts that will begin in the coming weeks.

"The recent bushfires have struck at the heart of the Victorian timber industry and our local communities, and that has led to an overwhelming desire to do whatever is possible to assist those in need," said the VAFI CEO, Philip Dalidakis.

"The timber industry is made up of hundreds of regional towns just like these, and like the rest of Victoria we want to pull together and offer something that can make the cleanup and rebuilding process that little bit easier."

"The timber industry has a vast network of people and resources that can be put to great use through either the provision of equipment, the volunteering of skilled labour or simply just a message of support."

This initiative has been made possible due to the generosity and support of all state and national forestry organisations, TCA, CFMEU, NAFI, A3P, AFG, FIAT, FPANSW, Timber Queensland, FIFWA, AFCA and VFHCC and through their desire to alleviate the pain and destruction.

"To see the industry rally in this way, to receive the offers of assistance and messages of support from all areas of Australia is to truly understand and appreciate the Australian spirit and what makes our country truly great," Mr Dalidakis said.

The VAFI will also donate \$25,000 towards a newly created industry relief fund to further assist timber workers and their local communities affected by the disaster, whilst other timber bodies and associations have also pledged to raise funds.

"Timber workers can do it tough at the best of times so we think it is important to offer financial assistance to those who have endured this disaster and to help re-establish strong and viable timber communities in the region again," Mr Dalidakis said.

The Community Support Register can be accessed from <http://www.vafi.org.au> from 4pm onwards.

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