



# VAFI

## VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF FOREST INDUSTRIES

Wednesday, April 8, 2009

### TIS' A GOOD OUTCOME FOR THE TIMBER INDUSTRY

The Victorian Association of Forest Industries (VAFI) has welcomed the release of the Victorian Government's draft Timber Industry Strategy as a key step in ensuring a secure future for the timber industry.

Released today at the Timber Merchants Association of Victoria (TMA) showroom, the draft strategy gives Victoria's timber industry increased certainty through a number of improvements including the extension of VicForests customer contracts for up to 20 years.

"We welcome the draft strategy's release as a clear indication by the State Government that the Victorian timber industry has a strong future and we believe this document can deliver on that vision," said the VAFI CEO, Philip Dalidakis.

"It's been a trying and difficult time for the timber industry throughout the recent bushfire disaster and economic downturn – the timing of this draft strategy is important for the industry as it reinforces our long term future throughout Victoria and its rural and regional communities."

"Victoria's forest industry is a world leader in environmental practices and high-value product development. For our industry to grow and encourage investment there needs to be a high degree of certainty and security – the draft strategy is a substantial step in the right direction."

The VAFI also appreciates the Victorian Government's decision to extend the consultation period given there are some significant submission dates coming up, notably the Bushfire Royal Commission and VCEC's draft environmental regulation report.

"Extending the consultation period will enable the industry to consult widely on the draft document as it stands, while ensuring we continue to meet other significant submission dates."

The draft timber industry strategy also provides scope for improvements and increased Government support across a range of industry aspects including innovation, plantation timber and utilisation of bio-mass and residue for renewable energy production.

"Whilst Victoria's timber industry is operating in a challenging environment, with Government's support in implementing this strategy the industry can have an exciting future." Mr Dalidakis said.

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