



VAFI

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF FOREST INDUSTRIES

Monday, March 9, 2009

SALVAGE HARVESTING GETS TIMBER INDUSTRY BACK ON TRACK

The Victorian Association of Forest Industries (VAFI) has commended the Brumby Government's commitment to commence salvage harvesting as a priority within bushfire affected areas.

The VAFI Deputy CEO, Lisa Marty, said fire salvage is critical to helping the industry and local communities recover from the bushfire disaster by getting employees back to work and businesses back in full operation.

"For the last three weeks the forest industry has been shut down to assist with the fire fighting effort so it is pleasing to see action being taken to get the timber industry back up and running within these communities," Ms Marty said.

"Local industry members have suffered heavily; many have lost family, friends, property and equipment. The priority is to assist these people to get back to work as soon as possible."

"The recent fires have taken a large toll on Victoria's forestry industry. They have destroyed large areas of forest designated for commercial management, a number of processing sites and timber storages."

"Salvage harvesting will recover some value from the burnt trees and provide ongoing supply for sawmills and processors."

The window of opportunity to undertake salvage harvesting is limited to about 12 months; after that severely burnt wood becomes too degraded to use.

"It's commonsense that salvage harvesting should be undertaken immediately," said Ms Marty.

"Salvage harvesting is conducted according to strict controls to protect worker safety and the environment."

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