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VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF FOREST INDUSTRIES

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Workshop aims at attracting women to industry

An industry run workshop designed to build networks between women working in the forest and wood products industry was held in Yering, Victoria on Friday 25 November.

Establishing a Women in Timber Network Project Manager, Jillian Roscoe, said 40 people attended the workshop to hear Victorian Parliamentary Secretary for Forestry and Fisheries, Gary Blackwood MP, discuss the important role played by women in dynamic timber communities.

“This new network is designed to raise the profile of and connect with women working in the Australian forest and wood products industry,” Mrs Roscoe said.

“Currently a smaller percentage of women work in the forest and wood products industry than the average across the Australian workforce.

“The low participation of women in the industry means we are not successfully accessing a large part of the labour force.

“As our industry changes and new technologies, products and practices are embraced, we will need to recruit people with a range of backgrounds and skills.

“Through the new Women in Forest and Timber Network we are developing, we have the potential to build on past projects and bring together women across different parts of the industry and country, encouraging them to develop their careers.”

The Victorian workshop was the third in a series designed to engage with women in the industry about how to shape the network, to be hosted by ForestWorks.

Mrs Roscoe said the new network could help connect women and support the sharing of experiences, engagement and skills development.

“Connecting women through a network across the industry is important for the development of leadership skills, increasing the recognition and the voice of women in the industry, and helping to make the forest and timber sectors strive to be employers of choice,” she said.

In addition to Mr Blackwood, attendees listened to rural community and leadership consultant, Catherine McGowan, who led a session on leadership skills and mentoring; and VAFI CEO Lisa Marty, who spoke on the current opportunities available to women in the industry.



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The Establishing a Women in Forests and Timber Network project is supported by VAFI, ForestWorks and funding from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's Australia's Farming Future grant program to build leadership and representative capacity of women in primary industries. The Victorian workshop was sponsored by Healthcare Insurance.

Workshops are also scheduled for other States. A workshop will be held in Brisbane on Friday 24 February and in Mt Gambier on Friday 30 March 2012. Further details will soon be available for a NSW event, scheduled to be held during the week beginning 5 March 2012.

For further information or to register your interest in attending upcoming workshops, please contact Jillian Roscoe on info@wftn.org.au or 03 9611 9002 or visit the website www.forestworks.com.au/womensnetwork.

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