



# VAFI

## VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF FOREST INDUSTRIES

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### Sustainable Timber Decision a Win for Local Industry

Victoria's peak independent forestry body, the Victorian Association of Forest Industries (VAFI), has welcomed the news that the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) plans to accept that all internationally recognised certification schemes operate as best practise.

The VAFI Chief Executive Philip Dalidakis said the announcement is a long overdue win for the local timber industry, and would go a long way towards securing crucial jobs and positive environmental outcomes for many years to come.

"The VAFI welcomes this initial announcement by the GBCA, and believes this decision will go some way towards securing the jobs of many local timber workers", Mr Dalidakis said.

The announcement means that both the Australian Forestry Standard (AFS) and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) for sustainable timber will now be accepted as part of their green-star rating system for new buildings when assessing potential environmental impacts.

"The GBCA's previous policy of only recognising timber certified through the FSC, led to the perverse outcomes of ignoring locally made and produced timber that was often to a higher environmental standard than the cheaper material sourced from overseas," Mr Dalidakis said.

This decision took nearly four years to achieve, with the VAFI joining other industry bodies, the CFMEU and the Victorian and Federal Forestry Ministers, the Hon. Joe Helper and the Hon. Tony Burke in campaigning for a more environmentally responsible certification scheme used by the GBCA.

"This important decision has been a long time coming, and will go a long way towards securing the jobs of many workers employed by locally based timber companies," Mr Dalidakis said.

"The leadership shown by Joe Helper and Tony Burke, the Victorian and Federal Ministers for Forestry, on this issue must be recognised along with the joint efforts of Michael O'Connor, National Secretary, Forestry & Furnishing Products Division, CFMEU, in driving this positive outcome for the industry and the environment," Mr Dalidakis said.

The VAFI has consistently called on the GBCA to adopt a rating policy that recognised international certification schemes as supporting the positive environmental benefits of using locally sourced timber.

"Whilst some anti-timber activists will attempt to discredit the Australian based certification schemes, the VAFI strongly believes that this ruling supports our long held belief that internationally accredited certification schemes represent world's best practice in sourcing environmentally friendly and sustainable timber," Mr Dalidakis said.

"We look forward to working closely with the GBCA to ensure that our environment is protected and supported, and that positive environmental and industry outcomes are achieved," Mr Dalidakis said.

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