



# AUSTRALIAN FOREST CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION LTD.

ACN 102 865 430

## Manager

David Drane

PO Box 242, Morwell Vic, 3840

[david.d@vic.australis.com.au](mailto:david.d@vic.australis.com.au)

Ph : 0413 997 257

## Chairperson

Colin McCulloch

[bvllogging@commander360.com](mailto:bvllogging@commander360.com)

Ph: 0418 135 336

## Viability Consultant

Col Shipard

[colshipardafca@bigpond.com](mailto:colshipardafca@bigpond.com)

Ph: 0428 215 882

## “The Log” 13 December 2011



Hello and welcome to the final weekly edition for 2011 of “The Log”, the Australian Forest Contractors Association Ltd’s own internal electronic Newsletter for all of our Members and Corporate Partner Sponsors.

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Firstly this week, summer is once again upon us and we are already seeing devastating bush fires raging in the South West of Western Australia, to go along with the horrible memories that still prevail across Victoria following the loss of 183 lives on Black Saturday in 2009. So with a lot of us living and working in potential bush fire areas it’s timely to assess whether or not we are prepared if, all of a sudden, we were involved in a fire situation.

As it so happens, a terrific publication put out this week by the Victorian based Herald and Weekly Times Newspaper Group called “Fire Ready” has come across my desk. It’s full of advice and handy hints of how to be prepared, and what people need to know about the bushfire season. If you are reading this in Victoria, we urge you to get hold of a copy and read it thoroughly.

For members in other States, no doubt the tips to be followed are the same no matter where you live. And the most important message for everyone who lives and works in a potential fire area is to have a PLAN of what to do when getting prepared.

The following are the most important things to consider when you are preparing your survival plan:

1. Understand the risk to your home and property.
2. Know your trigger of when to leave, and where you will go. Leaving early is the safest option.
3. Plan your relocation options. Where will you stay?, how will you get there?
4. Put together a relocation kit for your family including protective clothing food and water, blankets, medications, a fully charged mobile phone and your charger, a list of all of your local emergency numbers, pet food and bedding if needed and a battery powered radio.
5. Plan a safe area where you can relocate livestock if necessary,
6. Keep all of your important documents (wills, property titles etc) in a safe place

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7. Practise packing your car with your relocation kit
8. Notify your family and neighbors of your plan
9. Make sure you know how you will prepare your property before you leave
10. Find out if your community has a Township Protection Plan
11. Make sure you have a back up plan in case your first one fails
12. Ensure that your employer (and employees) all have a survival plan
13. If you are traveling into potential fire areas during the holiday season check your local fire Authority website for any warnings etc before you set off
14. If you are a rural landholder in a potential fire area, consider the safety of any family or friends who may be coming to visit during the holiday season.
15. Ensure you have adequate home and property insurance.

All good sound advice, but the message clearly is “BE PREPARED.



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We have received an invitation from our Forest Industry Contractors Association friends over the ditch in New Zealand for AFCA members to take part in a logging & forestry study tour of Germany, Canada and the USA throughout the month of June next year.

The proposed itinerary is attached, and John Stulen who is the organizer of the tour would very much like to have some AFCA members take part. So if you would like to see “how it’s done” overseas, why not consider taking part in this once in a lifetime opportunity.

If you would more information we suggest that you contact John at [john.stulen@fica.org.nz](mailto:john.stulen@fica.org.nz),

We hope that a number of AFCA members will accept the invitation and be part of this terrific trip.

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Here’s something that’s a bit interesting and is a sign of the times and of the world we live in:



**FOREST CENTRE**  
 SUPPLIERS OF FOREST EQUIPMENT & ATTACHMENTS

More than a quarter of Australian employers in small and medium businesses head to Facebook, and Twitter to screen potential candidates when hiring, a new study reveals. Of those employers, more than 40 per cent have made a decision not to hire a person based on something they’ve seen posted by the candidate online.

The Telstra survey of more than 1250 people gives an interesting insight into the type of online behavior employers frown upon when deciding who to hire. Forty-four per cent said they would rule out a person who had posted negative comments about their workplace, 37 per cent looked poorly upon discriminatory comments and 32 per

cent said they wouldn't hire someone because of inappropriate photos or comments that contained confidential information.

Conversely, positive use of social media was often looked upon favorably by employers – more than a third of respondents had made a positive hiring decision based on an attribute they detected from a candidate's Facebook, or Twitter page. These included:

- \*demonstration of the skills needed for the job
- \* good candidate references
- \* openness toward potential employers
- \* lists of awards and achievements.



Facebook profiles were most commonly checked by employers (41 per cent), 14 per cent reviewed Twitter profiles and seven per cent checked out MySpace and YouTube.

What sort of checking of your potentially new employees do you do?

Thanks to the Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the above statistics.

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And here's some news that might be of interest to our South Australian members.

We note that a new Advisory Committee will look into how the future of the South Australian timber and paper product industry can be sustained.

The committee, led by ForestWorks, with support from the State Government, will look at the skills base for the future. ForestWorks CEO Michael Hartman says the industry is currently going through a tough time but a focus is needed on making it viable in the future. He says part of the SA Forest Industry Strategy outlines the need for education and skills to be improved.

"We think this committee can carry out that part of the strategy, when it comes to look at the people, the training and the capacity of the industry and that's quite separate obviously from the economic side of the industry, from the investment side, from the trees, we're looking at the people the industry employs," he said.



AFCA believes that it is important that our sector be represented in this group to make sure that our training and skills requirements are recognized and addressed. We have made overtures to Forestworks in relation to making sure our voice is heard.



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And finally, some food for thought for our haulage members with thanks to the Australian Trucking Association.

Business conditions for trucking businesses outside the resource sector will remain weak, the forecasts in the Australian Government's Mid-year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO) that was released this week shows.



MYEFO forecasts the Australian economy will grow 3 ¼ per cent in 2011-12, compared to 2.1 per cent last financial year. The economy is forecast to maintain this growth rate in 2012-13. These forecasts are lower than Treasury's predictions in the May 2011 budget, reflecting the worsening economic and financial conditions around the world.

Australia's economic growth in 2011-12 and 2012-13 is expected to be underpinned by investment in the resource sector and resource exports like coal, iron ore and LNG.

"The prediction of low growth is particularly pronounced in the 'goods' part of the economy – manufacturing, retail and wholesale trade, and road transport. There is also weakness in construction outside of the resources sector," MYEFO says. "These divergent trends are set to continue through at least the next two years, and probably longer."

Trucking businesses that transport freight for the building and construction sector will see little demand growth before 2013, the forecasts show. However, the strong demand for Australia's resource exports is expected to drive record investment in the mining sector.



New engineering construction is expected to grow 29 ½ per cent in 2011-12 and 23 per cent in 2012-13, driven by LNG, iron ore and coal projects. The resource sector is also expected to drive a 14 per cent increase in new machinery and equipment investment in 2011-12, increasing to 14 ½ per cent in 2012-13. As a result, trucking businesses that transport equipment for the mining sector can expect substantial growth prospects.

Could any of these predictions impact on your business? How will you address them?



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Well, that's all for this week and for 2011. Thanks for taking the time to read "The Log" throughout the year. We hope that you and all the members of your family and in your circle of friends have a wonderful and above all safe and enjoyable Christmas and New Year, and we look forward to bringing you all of the news from our industry again next year. The next edition of "The Log" will be published on Tuesday 17 January 2012.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year everyone  
David Drane  
Manager, AFCA

