



AUSTRALIAN FOREST CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION LTD.

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

Firstly this week, a big thanks to Theresa McIntyre who looked after “The Log” while I was away on holidays and to everyone who supplied information to her to be included.

It’s good to be back on deck and to have the opportunity to talk to everyone each week through this Newsletter.

It seems as though things have only got worse in Tasmania over the last few weeks. The following media release received from Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) shows the future of a stable arrangement existing in Tasmania is extremely doubtful.

“Tasmanian negotiations at low-point; industry participation in the balance”

Following the first meeting of stakeholders since the release of the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) for Tasmania’s forests, industry representatives AFPA and FIAT say they have lost faith in the process, but will monitor progress towards resolution of industry concerns.

AFPA Transitional CEO, Allan Hansard, said “It’s clear that the IGA released last week was a political decision by both governments based on flimsy advice that was taken out of context. Industry has invested a lot of time and effort in this process to date and doesn’t want to see it wasted. However, we cannot have any confidence about where the process currently sits.”

FIAT CEO Terry Edwards said: “We are not prepared to accept the current situation. We have had dialogue with government at the highest level with a view to address key concerns aimed at restoring industry confidence in the veracity and robustness of the process.”



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The industry's key concerns surround:

- * The legitimacy of the Report by the Government appointees, particularly given the weight it has carried in influencing government policy development;
- * The lack of legislated resource security for industry contained in the IGA;
- * The structure of the process to implement the IGA, including the makeup of the Independent Verification Group (IVG); its terms of reference and the providing of resource supply during the verification process.
- * No certainty for residue utilisation; and
- * The lack of potential for peace in the forest in order to address ongoing and unlawful protest actions, including by legislation if necessary.



“Industry is taking a step by step approach in this process and will make a decision on its ongoing involvement as each step is made, and the extent to which our concerns are actually addressed,” Mr Hansard said.



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AFCA will continue to follow the situation with interest, however it's really disappointing to see that all of the really good work that was put in by industry representatives during the creation of the Statement of Principles has been undone by the Federal Government through its pampering to the Green movement.

It's a pity that the prosperous future of our country does not rate more highly than remaining in power and in the retention of your seat in Federal Parliament in the minds of our political leaders. Good luck to those people who have traveled to Canberra this week to present their petition of no confidence in the Government. They deserve our support.

Our 'Commentator' on the Tasmanian situation Senator Richard Colbeck has left no doubt about how he sees the current situation. His media release issued on Sunday night really clarifies his opinions.

“It is time for Tasmania's forest communities to stand up to the Prime Minister, the Premier and the environment groups and reject the deceitful Tasmanian forest agreement” Federal Coalition Forestry Spokesman Senator Richard Colbeck said while speaking to hundreds of forest industry supporters who rallied on the lawns of Parliament House in Hobart on Sunday morning.



“Over the last 20 years every time there has been a negotiation over Tasmania's forests, the environment groups and the Greens have walked away and said they wanted more. “They walked out of the 1989 Salamanca talks, and they walked out during the 1996 Regional Forest Agreement talks. “Even during this year's talks the Wilderness Society walked out because they weren't getting what they wanted.

“At long last these environmental activists are being up front with their goal - they want it all. “They want to shut down Tasmania's forest industry. They want to close down our sawmills, our veneer mills, our fine furniture and design industry, our woodcraft sector and our wooden boat building businesses.

“It is now time for the forest industry to walk away. It is now our time to say to the Prime Minister, the Premier and the green groups “No deal!” “We don’t want your so-called independent assessor. We don’t want your mediator. We don’t want your deal.



“The Intergovernmental Agreement is not just a bad deal for forest workers and businesses. This is a bad deal for our farmers, for our mining industry and for our furniture makers, our woodcraft sector, our wood design specialists and our wooden boat builders. “This is a bad deal for Tasmania’s future and it is time to walk away,”

Speaking of AFPA, the decision by their Board of Directors to appoint Dr David Pollard as the new CEO can only be described as “interesting”. Dr Pollard is a former CEO of VicForests and Contractors who have had contracts with VicForests during the period of him leading that organisation will no doubt have strong opinions as to its administration and operations. However, despite all of that, we wish him well in this extremely important post.

Also, we should not let the occasion pass without expressing our appreciation of the work done on behalf of contractors by outgoing CEO Alan Hansard, especially during the recent upheaval in Tasmania.

The loss of Mr Hansard’s knowledge of and dedication to the industry is a great blow. Lets hope that he is not entirely lost and continues to have input somewhere within the industry.



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WorkCover New South Wales will be delivering presentations on the new Work Health and Safety Legislation (WHSL) to key industry stakeholders within the Tumut region next month. The session intends to bring attendees up to date information on the current model WHSL.

These sessions generally run for 2 and a quarter hours including question time. Topics include:-

- Background and why new model WHSL is being introduced
- When WHSL will be introduced
- Duty holders responsibilities (Persons Conducting Business Undertakings)
- Due Diligence
- Meaning of the term ‘Reasonably Practicable’
- Consultation
- Health and Safety Representatives
- Right of entry of WorkCover Officers

The workshop is to be held in the Forestry Classroom at the Tumut Campus of TAFE on Friday 9th September 2011 from 10:00am to approx 12.00pm (morning tea available from 9.45).



Contractors in this region, if you have not yet indicated that you will attend, please advise Megan Arragon (megan.arragon@tafensw.edu.au) by

Wednesday 7th September 2011. AFCA recommends that you attend if possible to keep up with the Laws and therefore know your responsibilities under the new legislation.

Just a reminder that the annual Forestworks Conference is fast approaching. The annual Industry Development Conference is less than four weeks away, and organisers have just announced the following keynote speakers for the conference, the Industry Liaison Dinner and other events in the series:



- **Senator Nick Xenophon**, Independent Senator for South Australia (who will open the conference)
- **Don Henry**, Executive Director, Australian Conservation Foundation
- **David Rhodes**, Chief Executive, NZ Forest Owners Association
- **Hon Dick Adams MP**, Chairman of the current House of Representatives' Forest Industry Inquiry.

The Conference is to be held on Wednesday 14 September 2011 at the Hyatt Hotel Canberra.

If you would like to attend and have not yet registered, go to the Forestworks web site, www.forestworks.com.au/conference, and lodge your registration. AFCA will be attending and including coverage of the event in future editions of this newsletter.



Well, that's all for this week. Thanks for taking the time to read this edition of "The Log". We hope you all have a safe and profitable week and we look forward to bringing you some more news from our industry again next week.

Regards to all
David Drane

