

## MEDIA RELEASE

15 July 2020

### AFCA welcomes Tasmanian forestry contractor business support

AFCA welcomes the announcement made today by the Tasmanian Liberal Government to extend the Forestry Contractor Resilience Program to January 2021 to support Tasmanian Forestry Contractors to access business coaching and improvements. AFCA participated in the Forestry Roundtable today with Minister for Resources, The Hon Guy Barnett MP, where the announcement was made.

It became apparent during roundtable discussions today that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is still yet to be fully felt by the industry. This follows news in recent days of uncertainty for forestry contracting businesses that are expected to face significantly reduced production quotas against contracted volumes over the coming months. The reduced quotas are likely to result in forestry contracting businesses facing serious financial implications, with high fixed costs and equipment finance commitments that will still need to be met. In addition, there is a serious concern around the possible loss of skilled employees that will be devastating for regional areas in the current climate.

AFCA is currently working with members and industry stakeholders to gain a better understanding of the situation and the direct impacts. We will be seeking to work with parties to support members during these difficult times and identify opportunities and assistance as appropriate. AFCA is also looking to further engage with both state and commonwealth governments as the situation unfolds.

The Forestry Contractor Resilience Program will assist in providing support to forestry contracting businesses and members during this difficult period along with other possible measures currently being considered by AFCA. Please see the Minister's media release below for more information.



## Media release from Guy Barnett, Minister for Resources

### **Protecting and building the vital forestry sector**

The Tasmanian Liberal Government is the strongest support of our forestry sector and we are committed to protecting and building this industry as the economy recovers.

COVID-19 has created significant challenges for many industries, including forestry, and today I met with industry representatives to discuss these issues in a Forestry Roundtable.

We are pleased to announce that the Forestry Contractor Resilience Program will be extended from 31 July 2020 to 29 January 2021 to further support Tasmanian forestry contractors.

Both the Australian and Tasmanian Governments have also announced stimulus packages, many of which can be accessed by forestry companies, and will work with them during this time.

Tasmania's forestry contractors can apply under the \$500,000 Forestry Contractor Resilience Program for funding to improve their business practices, which is being delivered through Rural Business Tasmania.

Under the program, Tasmanian forestry harvest and haulage contractors have the opportunity to work with specialists in business and financial management to identify future opportunities and build stability and resilience into their operations.

Eligible applicants will receive five hours of professional business coaching and may also be eligible for up to \$15,000 to deliver agreed business improvements.

The Program's guidelines and application form are available from Rural Business Tasmania at [www.ruralbusiness Tasmania.org.au](http://www.ruralbusiness Tasmania.org.au)

Rural Business Tasmania offers financial counselling, administration, book keeping and crisis relief services to rural and regional agricultural businesses via [their website](#) or by calling 1300 883 276.

