

Tuesday, September 7th 2010

Court finds VicForests has no case to answer

VicForests has been acquitted today in a WorkSafe case held in the Wodonga County Court.

Judge Morrish instructed the jury to acquit VicForests after finding the organisation had no case to answer in relation to an accident which occurred in 2006.

VicForests' CEO, David Pollard, said the court upheld a 'no case' submission put forward by VicForests.

"The judge accepted VicForests' submission to the court that no evidence had been presented by the prosecution which would enable the jury to reach a guilty verdict," Dr Pollard said.

"As a result of this, the judge instructed the jury to return a verdict of not guilty.

"This outcome confirms VicForests' belief that the systems and practices put in place were appropriate to provide a safe worksite for our staff and contractors," he said.

Dr Pollard said safety is one of VicForests' core values.

"VicForests aims to achieve an outcome of "zero harm" for all of our employees and those of our contractors," he said.

"The risks associated with timber harvesting operations are obvious. However, VicForests places significant importance on safety.

"Evidence presented during the hearing outlined the extensive steps taken by VicForests to ensure its contractors had a safe management system in place.

"We continually review our practices to ensure a safe environment is provided for our staff and the contractors carrying out these operations," Dr Pollard said.