



MEDIA RELEASE

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VicForests Set to Work with Harvest and Haulage Industry

VicForests will take over the management of native timber harvest and haulage in the east of the state from 1 July 2006. These tasks were previously conducted by four separate syndicates of timber processors.

Rather than sell logs in the forest at the stump, logs will be sold harvested and delivered to the mill site under an arrangement known as Mill Door Sales.

Mill Door Sales allows VicForests to better adapt to changing and new markets for timber products that are expected to arise from the introduction of the new pricing system. It will also allow timber processors to concentrate less on production and focus more on processing and marketing of products.

VicForests will also seek to improve environmental, safety and regeneration outcomes through the direct management of contractors.

VicForests has been working with the syndicates to effect the transition on 1 July 2006.

Regional Manager, Northeast, Mr Shaun Lawlor acknowledged the important role of the timber syndicates and said that the GCH Harvesting has been engaged in discussions with VicForests to ensure that the transition occurred as smoothly as possible. He said that many people in the community are aware of the special role of timber syndicates through their support of local events and groups.

"Timber harvesting will proceed in the district as normal following the transition, so people in the community are unlikely to notice any major change," Mr Lawlor said.

Some syndicate staff have moved to VicForests and their skills and experience is regarded as an asset that will be a particularly important part of the transition stage.

"The response from contractors in relation to the shift to being managed by VicForests has to date been positive," Mr Lawlor said.

A Code of Behaviour between VicForests and contractors has been developed to help support the relationship between the two parties into the future.

"On the whole, harvest and haulage contractors have identified that the shift to Mill Door Sales affords an opportunity to collaborate directly with VicForests and have been active in taking this step."

"VicForests staff have also responded positively to the challenge that this new way of operating sets out," Mr Lawlor said.

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