



MEDIA RELEASE

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VicForests Gets 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, West Gippsland, Mr Nathan Trushell acknowledged the important role of the syndicates and said that Central Gippsland Syndicated Logging 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.

"It's likely that people in the community will not notice any major differences in relation to timber harvesting in the district," Mr Trushell 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.

"This is an important change for harvest and haulage contractors and VicForests is buoyed by their positive response to date," Mr Trushell said.

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

"Harvest and haulage contractors have been willing to collaborate with VicForests and on the whole, they see this as opportunity as having good potential for their industry.

"VicForests is equally satisfied with the enthusiastic way that our own staff have responded to the changed way of working," he said.

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