



MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

Friday 31 March 2006

Timber Auction is progressing well

VicForests says that the first on-line auction of native forest timber held in Victoria is progressing well.

Director, Sales and Marketing, Matt Crapp said that participation of industry was high and that the auction had achieved a good spread of interest both among large and small sawmillers.

“The level of registration and participation in this auction is very promising,” he commented.

“On this occasion, VicForests has offered around 172,000m³ of timber. This will increase as we shift away from an administered licence system, toward offering more timber at future auctions.

“This auction has provided an excellent opportunity to ensure that customers understand and can use the system and means that sawmillers can plan their strategies for the next auction.

“VicForests spent considerable time engaging with customers on the requirements for the online system and training sawmillers in its use. We are extremely satisfied sawmillers have coped well with the technology during the auction.

“Additionally, sawmillers provided input to the auction catalogue itself, that is, how the timber would be parcelled for sale.

“At this stage, it isn’t possible to comment on the results of the auction, though it is clear that customers are winning timber and that there has been interest in the majority of the timber lots. We know that one of the lots was passed in,” Mr Crapp said.

The auction system was developed by Melbourne-based company BOMweb, which has provided a telephone Help Desk to assist customers with the use of the system during the auction.

Active bidding in the auction continues. It is scheduled to close this afternoon.

VicForests will conduct a detailed analysis of the results of the auction and the functionality of the online system. A decision on the timing of the second online auction is expected following this analysis.

VicForests is a State-owned business enterprise, responsible for the sustainable harvest and sale of timber from Victoria’s State forests.

ENDS

Media enquiries: Teena Cardillo, Manager, Communications Tel. 9608 9531 or 0400 545 593.

Available for interview:

- ***Matt Crapp, VicForests Director Sales & Marketing***
- ***Anthony Dupreez, BomWeb software developer***