

Media Release

15 November 2017

VicForests operations compliant

An environmental group has issued legal proceedings regarding VicForests operations under the Central Highlands Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs).

The Central Highlands RFA is a 20 year agreement between the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments to provide effective environmental conservation and timber industry certainty.

Nathan Trushell, VicForests CEO, said VicForests believes its operations are in accordance with the Central Highlands RFA.

"The RFAs ensure that Victoria maintains a world class reserve system while providing certainty for environmental conservation, jobs and essential timber supply to Victorians.

"Almost half the forest in the Central Highlands region is in Parks and Reserves. We harvest around 0.3% of the available forest in this region each year and regrow all areas with the same species of trees present on the site prior to operations," he said.

Mr Trushell said that the native timber industry in the Central Highlands contributes more than \$570 Million in economic activity each year and employs more than two thousand people.

"We are keen to see the legal matter resolved as quickly as possible to minimise disruption of timber supply to local mills and to important regional jobs," he said

VicForests is a highly regulated organisation and undergoes regular audits in all areas of its operations. VicForests is certified by the Australian Forestry Standard which is endorsed by the world's largest forest certification scheme, PEFC.

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Background - www.vicforests.com.au/about-vicforests/economic-report

http://www.agriculture.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/rfa/regions/vic-central-highlands/info-kits/The_RFA_at_a_glance.pdf