



Media Statement

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COMMUNITY FOREST AGREEMENT RINGBARKS SPECIALTY TIMBER USERS – NEW REPORT

Timber Workers for Forests (TWFF), a group representing the interests of approximately 650 specialty timber workers, released today an appraisal of the new Community Forest Agreement which was signed recently by John Howard and Paul Lennon. Amongst other things, TWFF are concerned that the Community Forest Agreement will lead to:

- a crisis in the supply of specialty timbers such as myrtle, celery-top pine and sassafrass
- and increase in clearfelling in areas designated for specialty timber production
- continued waste of specialty timbers
- incineration of specialty timbers to make electricity.

President of TWFF, Ian Johnston said, “prior to the Community Forest Agreement, clearfelling and burning were specifically excluded from areas of State Forest (known as STMUs or Specialty Timber Management Units) set aside for supply of Tasmania’s signature high quality timbers. STMUs which were to be managed through low impact selective systems only. The Community Forest Agreement has diluted previous Forestry Tasmania commitments in relation to logging methods in STMUs leaving the way open for clearfelling”, Mr Johnston said.

Mr Johnston said “the area available for supply of specialty timbers has been reduced under the Community Forest Agreement and Forestry Tasmania has failed to the detail the timber quantity, species, quality, accessibility and ecologically sustainable harvest yield in STMUs”.

While TWFF welcome a commitment to improve marketing, recovery and value-adding for special species timbers under the new forests package, Mr Johnston said “the best way of ensuring greater recover of special species timber is by never cutting down immature special species trees, a practice which is currently too widespread”.

Mr Johnston said, “funding allocated under the new forest package to help specialty timber sawmillers re-tool to produce more low grade eucalypt products is simply sending us down the road to a low quality timber industry. It is a short sighted approach that does not help customers who still require the special species resource for craft, furniture making and boatbuilding. The forest package provides no long-term resource security for the high value end of Tasmania’s timber industry” Mr Johnston said.

Timber Workers for Forests are: sawmillers, boat builders, bushmen, craftsmen, builders, cabinet makers, furniture makers and sculptors

The Community Forest Agreement advocates the use of harvest residue in wood-fired power stations, using the same arguments that initiated our now voracious woodchip industry. Wood fired power stations legitimise continued waste of forest resources and will create a continuing demand for fodder.

Mr Johnston said, “a simpler, morally justifiable and sensible solution is not to use silvicultural techniques that create large quantities of waste. It is difficult to foresee such power stations becoming anything other than the tails that wag the dogs of the future, leading to further destruction of forests, the need to produce ever greater quantities of *residue* and ultimately, purpose-planted plantations in order to feed the power stations and recover the substantial capital expenses required to build them”, Mr Johnston said.

A full appraisal of the Community Forest Agreement is provided in the report TWFF released today. It is posted to their web site **www.twff.com.au**

For further comments contact:

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