

## /// IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TASMANIAN FORESTS AGREEMENT

The Tasmanian Forests Agreement (TFA) is a response from the State and Commonwealth Governments to changes in the Tasmanian forest industry and creates the opportunity for a historic forest peace agreement. The TFA delivers a \$276 million support package for forest industry workers affected by the restructuring of the forest industry, the consequent industry and economy downturns and an expansion of Tasmania's reserve system.

The TFA targets four main outcomes:

1. Tasmania further strengthens its position as a conservation leader with the highest levels of forest conservation in the world;
2. Guaranteed resource security for industry;
3. Revitalised regional communities through unprecedented long-term financial support that will drive exciting new regional development opportunities; and
4. Support for Tasmanian workers affected by the forest industry restructure.

There have been a number of key outcomes that have flowed out of the TFA under the three main streams of activity:

## /// RESPONDING TO CHANGE

### **Accelerated Employment Assistance:**

- A large number of workers are registered for support for employment assistance provided through the TFA, with over 220 displaced workers having found new job placements through the assistance program to date.
- Seven workers have accessed relocation assistance funding.

### **Forest Worker Transition Support Payments:**

- Under the TFA the State Government provided \$15 million of transition support funds to ForestWorks to distribute to forest workers who have been made redundant as a result of industry restructuring.
- More than 300 former forest workers have received assistance under this innovative support fund which has supported the transition of the Tasmanian forest industry and provided a financial stimulus in regional areas.\*\*

### **Rural Alive and Well:**

- Rural Alive and Well have been funded through the TFA to provide mental health counselling and community support for those affected by the forest industry downturn.
- With this funding, Rural Alive and Well have employed three additional councillors to support forest workers, their families and affected communities.
- The TFA commits continued funding for these important services until the end of the next financial year.

### **Forest Contractor Exit Program:**

- The Australian Government has allocated \$45 million for the Tasmanian Forest Contractors Voluntary Exit Program.
- 61 of the harvest, haulage and silvicultural contractors applying to the program were eligible for support under the guidelines and all were offered a grant to exit the industry. 58 accepted and final payments are being made.

\*\*No further applications to the fund are being accepted as funds have now been fully allocated on the basis of applications received so far

## /// RESPONDING TO CHANGE con't

### Sawmillers Exit Package:

- In accordance with the requirements of the TFA, at least \$15 million is being made available under a voluntary sawlog contract buyback program.

## /// FOREST SUSTAINABILITY

### Independent Verification Group Report:

- The Independent Verification Group have completed an extremely complex 2 500 page report to inform ongoing Reference Group of Signatories negotiations.
- The Reference Group of Signatories are due to present the outcomes of negotiations to Government on the 23 July 2012.

### Tasmanian Forests Agreement Bill 2012:

- The Tasmanian Forests Agreement Bill 2012 (the Bill) was introduced into the Tasmanian Parliament on Thursday the 21 June 2012. The Bill has fulfilled the commitment of the Tasmanian Government to introduce legislation under clause 30 of the TFA.
- The Bill is comprehensive framework legislation that allows the accommodation of a range of possible outcomes from the Reference Group of Signatories negotiation process.
- The Bill has been designed to:
  - implement TFA wood supply guarantees for the Tasmanian forest industry;
  - establish a process for making formal reserves for the purposes of the TFA; and
  - clarify whether reserves are eligible for assessment under the Carbon Farming Initiative Scheme.

## /// TASMANIA: THE NEXT LEVEL

- The TFA provides significant funding to leverage major private investment in Tasmania's regional communities to offset the impact of the forestry downturn on the Tasmanian economy.
- The Premier and the Commonwealth Minister for Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government have announced over \$15.5 million in funding for specific projects.
- The Ministerial Advisory Council on Regional Australia is helping to identify and develop diversification opportunities in Tasmania. The work of the Council is being informed by Regional Development Australia Tasmania and the State Government's regional reference groups.
- Project funding of \$8.3 million from the Tasmanian Innovation and Investment Fund has also been announced that will create new jobs in regional communities where they are vitally needed.



Be part of the solution

For more information email [tfa.news@dier.tas.gov.au](mailto:tfa.news@dier.tas.gov.au) or visit [www.forestsagreement.tas.gov.au](http://www.forestsagreement.tas.gov.au)