



29 October 2016

Guy Barnett, Minister for Resources

New Opportunities for Private Foresters

A key plank of the Hodgman Government's plan for our native forest industry is to provide new opportunities for the private sector.

We have made clear that private companies will be offered the chance to harvest trees from our Future Potential Production Forests earlier to help meet the legislated wood supply requirements.

The State-owned forestry business – to be known as Sustainable Timber Tasmania – will not harvest on public land outside the Permanent Timber Production Zone.

We have also announced we will look to the private forest estate to support efforts to deliver 137,000 cubic metres of high quality sawlog each year.

Private forest managers, growers and harvesters – such as AKS Forest Solutions Pty Ltd – are supportive of the Government's plan not only because it provides more opportunities for growth, but also greater certainty.

The steps that I outlined in my Ministerial Statement on Wednesday are all about delivering security – resource security, financial security and job security.

In contrast to our approach, Labor continues to argue for ongoing public subsidies to underwrite Forestry Tasmania's broken business model.

The FT Board states in advice that I tabled in Parliament earlier this week that the "annual funding gap" from its operations is forecast to increase to \$24 million a year.

That's taxpayers' money that Bryan Green and Labor are happy to take from our hospitals, our schools and our most vulnerable people; public funds that could otherwise employ hundreds of nurses or teachers.

Meanwhile, the Greens continue to make clear that they want to see the demise of the entire native forest sector, which would cause the loss of thousands of jobs, directly and indirectly.

Only the Hodgman Government is committed to securing jobs in our forest industry, while ending the public subsidies.

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