

23 February 2015

Industry welcomes critical road funding for Tumut timber industry precinct

The Chief Executive Officer of the peak body for the forest, wood and paper products industry, Mr Ross Hampton, has welcomed the announcement by the NSW Government that it will invest \$70 million in an upgrade of Gocup Road.

Announcing the new funding on the weekend, State Liberal Member for Wagga Wagga, Mr Daryl McGuire said, 'A fully upgraded Gocup Road, including extra climbing lanes and major widening works, will do wonders for regional transport and freight in south western NSW, notably between Tumut and Gundagai.'

Mr Hampton said, 'The Tumut region is at the centre of one of Australia's most vibrant plantation forestry regions, producing high quality logs, sawntimber, manufactured paper, waste paper and forest residues that are delivered, processed and exported along the region's roads each year. Horticulture, livestock, tourism and other industries also rely on modern transport links within and across the region.'

The forest products industry supports more than 5000 jobs in the south west slopes of NSW. World-class companies like Hyne Timber, Carter Holt Harvey, Visy and the Forestry Corporation of New South Wales, as well as many private forest owners, have established their operations in the region on the strength of its natural resources and its community support. Together, they provide thousands of sustainable jobs and flow-on economic benefits.

'The New South Wales Government is to be congratulated for taking a strategic approach to investment and jobs in the Tumut region and world-competitive industry development. Our particular thanks go to strong local advocates like the Member for Wagga Wagga, Mr Daryl Maguire, who has worked tirelessly to secure this project. The Tumut Council has also taken a strong leadership role in campaigning for road upgrades such as Gocup Road, and we recognise its ongoing work in supporting local industries', Mr Hampton said.

'This is a very pleasing and important step to continuous improvement in roading and infrastructure development in the timber industry precinct of the Tumut region. We look forward to working proactively with the NSW and federal Governments to further grow this important renewable industry and ensure an efficient and safe transport network in the Tumut region'.

AFPA represents forest growers, harvesters, and manufacturers of timber and paper products.

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