

# Media Release

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## Workplace safety data needs to be interpreted with care

The Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) has cautioned against misconstruing data from Safe Work Australia in its recent report '*Work-related traumatic injury fatalities, Australia 2015*'.

AFPA Chief Executive Officer Mr Ross Hampton said while the report notes that fatalities across the agriculture, forestry and fishing industries remain troublingly high when compared to other sectors, it must be noted that Safe Work Australia brings a large rural workforce together in its data and the forestry industry makes up less than 10 per cent of the jobs involved.

"The forest products industry takes safety very seriously, and any fatality or serious incident is cause for concern and action in the form of improving guidelines and procedures," Mr Hampton said.

"The forest products industry has a deliberate focus on keeping our workers safe and healthy. While the latest 2015 statistics indicate a general downward trend from 2009, there is much more to do."

While the number of incidents in the agriculture, forestry and fishing group had remained relatively constant over the past decade, small fluctuations could appear more significant due to the small number of incidents recorded.

The Safe Work Australia report acknowledged, "Fatality rates are sensitive to the number of workers employed in each industry, and therefore are liable to show volatility in those industries which employ the fewest workers even when small variations in the number of fatalities are recorded."

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

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