

## MEDIA RELEASE

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# Forest Industries welcome mill investment in Tasmania's north

The Forest Industries Association of Tasmania (FIAT) and the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) welcome the \$190 million investment in what will be Australia's largest plantation hardwood mill and timber product manufacturing facility, in Tasmania's north-west, CEO of FIAT, Terry Edwards and CEO of AFPA, Ross Hampton, said today.

"The Hermal Group's decision to build the Tasmanian Amalgamated Renewable Timbers (Start) Mill and Cross-Laminated Timber Panel (CLPT) facility in Burnie is terrific. It will mean a major boost for our sustainable forest industries, not just in the north-west, but for the whole of Tasmania," Mr Edwards said.

"We commend the Tasmanian Government for its commitment to provide \$13 million in grant and training support funding for the project. We understand it to have been critical in the final investment decision being made and I encourage political consensus on the funding in the interests of investment and jobs for Tasmania," Mr Hampton said.

Once complete, the facility will employ around 200 ongoing staff and will process more than 300,000 cubic metres of sustainable plantation hardwood logs each year. Initially they'll be used in the creation of building products, including cross laminated timber panels. The investment will also lead to the creation of a significant number of indirect jobs in the north-west and in Tasmania generally, which is a significant development in an area that has struggled for investment and employment creation projects.

"This investment is good news for FORICO which will supply the bulk of the timber for the mill, but it also presents opportunities for smaller private holdings of sustainable native timber plantations in Tasmania," Mr Hampton said.

"It is a welcome development that the project will provide for value-adding to the plantation resource within Tasmania, rather than exporting that resource to create wealth and jobs in other countries," Mr Edwards said.

"We look forward to working with the Hermal Group and the Tasmanian Government to ensure this investment materialises and the benefits are far reaching for forest industries and more broadly, the whole of Tasmania," Mr Edwards concluded.

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