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## Tony Pasin MP to attend regional forest industries meeting

The Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) is hosting a regional forest industry roundtable meeting in Mt Gambier today with Tony Pasin MP, the Federal Member for Barker, South Australia.

Australian Bluegum Plantations, Carter Holt Harvey, Forestry SA, Green Triangle Forest Products, Hancock Victorian Plantations, McDonnell Industries, OneFortyOne Plantations, PF Olsen Australia, and Timberlink Australia are some of the regional forestry and forest product companies that will be represented at the meeting. Local government representatives will also attend.

Representatives will each have the opportunity to contribute to an open discussion on key impediments and opportunities for the region with Tony Pasin MP, who represents the South East of South Australia in Federal Parliament.

“The forestry and forest products industry is of critical importance to the electorate of Barker. This is why, in partnership with the Australian Forest Products Association, I’m delighted to be able to facilitate a round table discussion on the long term, strategic policy needs of the industry. As co-chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Forestry group, I’m looking forward to a dynamic discussion on the issues and opportunities facing the industry,” said Mr Pasin.

AFPA Chief Executive Officer Mr Ross Hampton said, “The forestry and forest products industry employs around 4 200 direct jobs, and a further 6 700 flow-on jobs, in the electorate of Barker. We congratulate Mr Pasin on recognising the importance of the forestry and forest products industry to the local region. Mr Pasin is also co-chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Forestry and Forest Products group in the Australian Parliament. By participating in this roundtable, he will gain further knowledge of the industry’s specific issues in his region and be able to take that back to Federal Parliament to ensure all sides of politics know the value of the industry to our regional communities, and the work needed to ensure their continued prosperity.”

One of the main themes to be explored is a strengthened regional approach to forest policy development through better recognition of ‘strategic plantation hubs’. A plantation hub approach would build on the opportunities from existing plantations and processing centres by addressing key priorities within these regions. Key priorities include investment drivers for new plantations, expanded farm forestry, infrastructure and road funding, and training and skills development to lift productivity and manufacturing competitiveness. The roundtable discussions will allow participants to promote industry priorities specific to the region and will begin the process for establishing plantation hubs in areas such as the Green Triangle.

“With the forest products value chain supporting around 120,000 direct jobs around the nation, regional communities are at the heart of the Aussie forest products industries,” said Mr Hampton.

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

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