

6 October 2015

Turnbull Government must reinstate recycled paper commitment

The Turnbull Government has announced, through an answer to a Senate Estimates question from Labor Senator Kim Carr, that it is not proceeding with the "ICT Sustainability Plan".

Under the "ICT Sustainability Plan" all office copy paper used by federal government Departments was to be mandated as produced from 100% recycled content from 1 July, 2015.

Australia has just one copy paper manufacturer, Australian Paper, which is the single largest employer in the Latrobe Valley in Victoria and supports 6,000 direct and indirect jobs in the state.

Australian Paper has just opened a new \$90 million de-inking and recycling paper plant - aided by \$9.5 million in federal government funding - which was positioned to supply the move by the Federal Government to mandate its Departments' purchase of the recycled copy paper product.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Forest Products Association, Mr Ross Hampton, said, "It is imperative that the Turnbull Government keep faith with the domestic paper industry and the workers in this manufacturing operation which is crucial to the sustainability of the Maryvale region."

'It is our understanding that 30 of the 50 largest Departments are currently choosing to buy imported paper rather than support sustainable Australian made recycled paper.

"It makes no sense for the Government to first assist this vital Australian company to establish a new recycling plant to reduce paper waste in Australia, only to remove a significant market just as it was beginning to ramp up operations."

AFPA is having urgent discussions with the Australian Government.

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

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