

18 July 2016

## Assistant Minister for Forestry can unlock jobs and growth

The Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) has welcomed the re-appointment of Senator the Hon Anne Ruston as the Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources with responsibility for forestry.

Chief Executive Officer of AFPA Mr Ross Hampton said, "AFPA has a longstanding position that the Government should reinstate forestry to a full, rather than Assistant, Ministry and reinstate the name of the Federal Department as *Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry*. It is disappointing that Prime Minister Turnbull has not taken the chance to do this. However, forest industries will be very pleased that the Prime Minister has decided that the energetic South Australian Senator Anne Ruston, will continue in the role. Senator Ruston worked hard and delivered strong policy commitments during the election campaign and is the ideal person to drive them to completion. AFPA will also work closely with Senator Fiona Nash (Regional Development), Josh Frydenberg MP (Environment & Energy) and Greg Hunt MP (Industry & Innovation). The Coalition has promised to deliver a National Forest and Fibre Plan, in response to the Forest Industry Advisory Council's work (which has bipartisan support), as well as \$4 million in new funding for two hubs of the *National Institute for Forest Products Innovation* in Mt Gambier and Launceston. The forest industries of this nation already provide some 120,000 jobs across the full value chain and underpin dozens of regional communities. As the world's 'greenest' industry – being renewable and recyclable and carbon storing – with the right policy settings our industries have enormous potential to grow," said Mr Hampton.

During the election, AFPA sought answers from the major Parties on nine key policy issues that would set our forest industries up for the future and published the commitments in this scorecard:

### Election 2016

Political Party*	National Forest & Fibre Plan	Plantation Expansion	National Institute for Forest Products Innovation	Thermal Energy RECs	Anti-Dumping	Native Forest Waste RECs	Farm Forestry	RFAs	Biomass Removal to Reduce Bushfires
 LIBERAL	✓	?	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	?
 iNATIONALS for Regional Australia	✓	?	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	?
 Labor	✓	?	?	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	?
 THE GREENS	✓	✗	?	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	?

The scorecard and explanatory comments can be found on AFPA's Build the Vote website [here](#).

"AFPA looks forward to working cooperatively with the Government, Opposition and crossbenchers in both the House and Senate to progress these issues and grow the forest industries over the next term of government," Mr Hampton said.

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