

2 February 2020

Media Advisory

AFPA CEO Ross Hampton will be at the boxes in the Parliament House press gallery at 2.00pm today, Sunday 2 February 2020, and will be available for comment on this issue.

FOREST INDUSTRIES DEPLORE VICTORIAN KOALA DEATHS AND LAUNCH INVESTIGATION TO DETERMINE CULPRIT

Forest industries have reacted with universal anger and completely condemned the senseless koala deaths uncovered on a private property by a nature group.

Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Forest Products Ross Hampton said, "All those who work in our forest industries join with the community in appalled shocks at what appears to be a callous act of animal cruelty."

Koalas are prevalent in many of our plantation forests and providing feed for koala populations is one of the great benefits of having plantations whilst the trees are growing. When time comes to harvest the plantation trees, forestry operators scrupulously and meticulously follow koala preservation procedures overseen by the Department of Environment in Victoria. "

"Drones and human spotters are used to find all koalas. Trees where koalas are resting are left untouched enabling the animals to move to another part of the plantation when the activity moves away."

"I'm advised that the operators in this case were so careful that they even took an injured koala which they found during inspection to the vet. I'm advised harvest of this area ended in November and the land was handed back to the owner before Christmas. "

"It is unclear as yet who bulldozed the trees with the koalas apparently still in them, but it is absolutely certain that this was not a plantation or a forestry company. We support all those calling for the full force of the law to be applied to the perpetrator."

"AFPA will be launching its own investigation. Furthermore we will be ensuring that none of the timber which has been cleared is touched by any AFPA member."

ENDS

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