

Media Release



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TAS forestry activists may kill someone with malicious ‘spiking’ of trees

Frightening reports that anti-forestry activists in Tasmania are booby-trapping trees scheduled for harvest by driving large metal spikes and bolts into them must be investigated and the perpetrators face the full force of the law, according to Australian Forest Products Association Chief Executive Ross Hampton.

“Two different sawmills have received logs from the Wentworth Hills area in Tasmania which have contained bolts. When cut with the high speed saw the blade has shattered sending deadly shrapnel whirling through the work area. It is a blessing that at this stage no one has been maimed or killed but, if the environmental eco-warriors continue with this tactic, it is only a matter of time.”

Mr Hampton said the incidents were the latest example of illegal and dangerous tactics used by activists against the timber industry. Protestors have also been routinely invading timber harvesting sites in Tasmania, Victoria and New South Wales, in breach of COVID-19 restrictions and trespassing laws.

“While the rest of the country heeds the COVID-19 advice and stays home – at enormous social and economic cost to themselves and their community – activists are flouting the law by trespassing in forestry worksites, and threatening to undo the efforts of millions of Australians and endangering the lives of workers and themselves. We all should be outraged by this selfish conduct. “

“The reckless actions of these protestors to shut down a sustainable, valued industry is particularly disappointing given the recent recognition by the National Cabinet that the forestry value chain is an essential service because of the vital services and products they provide, and allowing the industry to continue to operate amid the COVID-19 economic shutdown.”

“Our native estates and plantation forest industries supply everything from toilet tissue and cardboard for food packaging, to the pallets vital for moving groceries into our supermarkets, to the pine framing and appearance grade hardwood without which home construction would grind to a halt.”

Mr Hampton also took aim at commentators and some academics who are also campaigning for the end of native forestry in Australia.

“Activist academics who are loudly, and wrongly, arguing that native forestry in Australia is not sustainably managed, despite it being certified as world best practice, should consider if they are providing incentive to the more radical activists prepared to use guerrilla tactics which may potentially lead to death or serious injury,” Mr Hampton concluded.

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