

Friday 15 May 2020

## **TASMANIA TO 'BUILD ITS WAY OUT OF RECESSION' – SHOWS THE WAY TO OTHER GOVERNMENTS**

The Tasmanian Premier Peter Gutwein's announcement this afternoon that his state will 'build its way out of recession' through an aggressive new construction stimulus package and bringing forward of building projects, demonstrates great leadership, according to the national forest industries peak body, the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA).

AFPA Chief Executive Officer Ross Hampton said, "The Federal Government has effectively saved hundreds, if not thousands of lives by its speedy, sure footed handling of the CoVid-19 pandemic impacts. However, now comes the equal challenge of saving Australian livelihoods and avoiding a probable recession so deep our children will struggle to find employment for years."

"The housing construction sector is the engine room for growth and jobs in Australia's economy employing more than one million Australians, and we are deeply concerned that all the signs are, that it will soon hit the wall."

Australia's renewable forest product industries are a key supplier into the sector in everything from sawn timber for new house frames through to native timbers used in appearance grade stair-treads, windows, and floors.

"Timber processing companies are already feeling the impact of the slowdown in construction," Mr Hampton said.

"The data coming in from our members suggests that sawn timber demand will plummet by more than 50 per cent by the end of the year. If this is the case for timber products it will be the same for bricks, windows, furnishings and the myriad other construction products. That's why AFPA, and a range of other industry bodies, are asking both Federal and State governments to urgently announce measures to soften this collapse."

"The Tasmanian Government has today led the nation by announcing significant stimulus measures for large construction projects as well as new house construction, including affordable and social housing. AFPA calls on the other States and the Federal government to follow its lead," Mr Hampton concluded.

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