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Forest industries welcome opening of \$40m Federal Forestry Recovery Development Fund

The Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) has welcomed today's announcement that fire-impacted forest industries can apply to the Federal Government's \$40 million Forestry Recovery Development Fund from tomorrow.

AFPA Chief Executive Officer Mr Ross Hampton said, "This support package will provide major relief to the forest product industries in NSW, Victoria and South Australia devastated by the Black Summer bushfires, and we're pleased the Federal Government listened and responded to the crisis facing our industry."

The Fund, announced in June by Prime Minister Scott Morrison, will support timber processors facing significant, long-term reductions in log supply so they can retool and upgrade their mills.

The bushfire recovery package also included a \$10 million Salvage Log Storage Fund to boost mills' capacity to process and store the short-term surplus in burnt logs, particularly in the NSW South West Slopes region where around 40 per cent of the softwood plantations were fire damaged.

"The opening of the program tomorrow means the industry can take the next step towards recovery to ensure they can survive into the future and support the regional economies and jobs which rely on our sustainably managed forest industries," Mr Hampton said.

"Our thanks especially to the Assistant Minister for Forestry and Fisheries Senator Jonno Duniam who worked closely with industry to understand its needs, and develop the guidelines."

"While the fire-affected mills still face significant challenges over the next 20-30 years, this Fund and the NSW Government's complementary recovery package announced earlier in the year will go a long way towards securing the long-term future of the industry and the tens of thousands of jobs it supports," Mr Hampton concluded.

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