

Media Release

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Forest industries meet in Canberra ahead of next Federal Election

Australia's forest industries representatives will convene in Canberra this week for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic's worldwide impact on trade and commerce, Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) Chair, Mr Greg McCormack, said today.

"It's critical that representatives from across the full-value chain of Australia's forest industries meet again in person to discuss future directions as we emerge from the impacts of the pandemic which has caused major disruptions to sections of our industries," Mr McCormack said.

The Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) will this week host meetings in Canberra for member businesses and organisations across the sector, including a Members' dinner tonight at which Federal Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment Hon. Dan Tehan will give the keynote address.

"The pandemic has presented many challenges for our forest industries, but it has also highlighted the essential role we play in providing vital products and services to all Australians – from food and freight packaging, timber and building products, and year-round bushfire mitigation," Mr McCormack said.

"With another Federal Election approaching, we must speak with a united voice to show decision makers that when our forest industries thrive, it directly benefits the tens of thousands of Australians who rely on us for their livelihoods, ensures we continue to produce the products that Australians need, and supports a cleaner, greener future."

Mr McCormack highlighted China's trade ban on logs from Australia, the exclusion of fibre industries from the Modern Manufacturing Strategy, the remaining barriers for forestry plantations to fully participate in the Emissions Reduction Fund (ERF), and the ongoing uncertainty for native forestry operations as a result of lawfare from activist groups, as issues the Federal Government needs to work with industry to resolve.

"Australia's forest industries support 180,000 jobs nationally, contribute \$24 billion annually to Australia's economy and play an enormous role in lowering greenhouse gas emissions. We have an excellent working relationship with the Federal Government and Opposition and need that to continue so the economic and environmental benefits of our industries continue long into the future," Mr McCormack concluded.

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