

Media Release

21 September 2021

Forest industries welcome move to save vitally needed Kangaroo Island timber

The Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) and South Australian Forest Products Association (SAFPA) have welcomed the \$15.1 million announcement by the Federal Government of further support to move additional bushfire affected construction timber to sawmills to help meet the strong timber demand, and especially the opening of the program to the timber currently economically stranded on Kangaroo island in South Australia.

Chief Executive officer of AFPA, Ross Hampton said, “We thank the Federal Government for this announcement. Without this sensible investment up to 10,000 house frames of timber would have had to be bulldozed and burnt after the South Australian Government ruled out the building of a seaport on Kangaroo Island. At a time when our builders and home owners are desperate for timber this would have been an extremely poor outcome. It is a great thing that that timber will be put to good use, however it can’t go unsaid that the Kangaroo island trees will not be replanted which means we are losing another 18,000 hectares from our national plantation estate which continues to shrink – especially in South Australia. We desperately need to commence expanding the estate if we are to meet the housing needs of our children. Industry stands ready but we need the federal and state policies to be aligned to make it happen.”

Chief Executive Officer of the SAFPA Nathan Paine said, “Today’s announcement builds on the SA State Government’s recent \$3 million package of measures designed to ease some of the timber supply problems in our state. SAFPA has worked closely with the Marshall Government and especially Primary Industries Minister David Basham who has shown he understands the vital need to ensure this valuable Kangaroo Island resource is not lost.”

“This is one critical barrier removed and SAFPA will continue to work with the State Government to remove other blockages mainly around the short, medium and long-term transport options to ensure the volume of log can be moved to the mainland with the least disruption to the community and in the shortest time possible,” Mr Paine concluded.

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Media Contact:

Joe Prevedello - AFPA Communications Director
(m) 0491 205 633 (e) joe.prevedello@ausfpa.com.au