

Media Release

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Industry giant hangs up the saw after creating an enduring legacy

The Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) and South Australian Forest Products Association (SAFPA) congratulate Mount Gambier's McDonnell family as their softwood timber processing business is sold to AAM Investment Group (AAM).

"Ian McDonnell has been a stalwart of the industry and has driven not just the growth of his business but also the broader industry through his role as Chair of the Green Triangle Forest Industry Hub and on the inaugural Governing Council of the South Australian Forest Products Association," AFPA CEO Ross Hampton said.

"The sale of N.F. McDonnell & Sons Mount Gambier business to AAM marks the end of an era for the McDonnell family and heralds a new start for the operation under AAM Investment Group.

"N.F. McDonnell & Sons is a Mount Gambier institution and an important cog in the chain of Australia's forest industries, milling much needed softwood timber to build Australia's new homes.

"Personally, I have always valued Ian McDonnell's input and efforts to policy making and representation of Australia's broader forest industries to governments."

The company was established in 1944 by Newman McDonnell and his two sons Don and Les and has been in the family for four generations – currently employing more than 100 people and processing 400,000 tonnes of softwood log annually.

SAFPA CEO Nathan Paine recognised the indelible legacy that Ian McDonnell has left on the industry.

"Ian's contribution has been broad and deep, and the industry has very much benefited from his passion and his dedication. Moving forward, SAFPA is looking forward to continuing to work with NF McDonnell operations under AAM and will partner with them to ensure this business continues to thrive, providing critical building products and employment in south-east South Australia.

AAM is a leading Australian provider of strategic investment, asset management and operational management services specialising in Australia's primary industries. N.F. McDonnell & Sons was identified as meeting AAM's driving philosophy of investing in assets that are spread across diverse supply chains and geographic locations, and is

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reflective of the business' firm belief in the strength of the Australian softwood processing industry and the Mount Gambier region.

With more than 530 people already employed across 31 other sites in five states, and with assets in the livestock, grain and poultry industries, AAM's new timber processing acquisitions should be seen as a strong sign timber has a big future in Australia.

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