

Media Release

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AFPA subcommittee awarded biosecurity commendation

At the recent Australian Biosecurity Awards the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) was recognised for excellence in biosecurity preparedness.

AFPA's *Forest Health and Biosecurity Subcommittee* (FHaB) was awarded a **Biosecurity Commendation Certificate**. Membership of the Subcommittee includes experts in forestry and science, who with their organisation's support, volunteer their time and expertise in service to the forest sector.

This is great recognition for the work of this group of talented individuals, who in recent years have established a national surveillance program for pests of forests, in collaboration with state and federal governments.

"The commendation acknowledges the fantastic work undertaken by the FHaB to improve the sector's biosecurity over a long period of time," AFPA CEO Joel Fitzgibbon said. "I'd like to congratulate and thank everyone that is part of the Subcommittee for their continuing contributions to protect the sector from pest and disease risks."

Forest Health and Biosecurity Subcommittee



For outstanding work in driving improvements to forest biosecurity and educating stakeholders on the risks posed by exotic pests.

FHaB Chair Dr Phil Lacy said, "The advice and advocacy provided by the FHaB has seen real improvements in the sector's awareness of biosecurity issues and contributed to the sector's decision to increase levy funds in support of research and biosecurity initiatives."

Paco Tovar, AFPA's Biosecurity Manager agreed and noted "Everyone at AFPA, and the sector more broadly, relies heavily on the expertise provided by the FHaB subcommittee on matters of forest health and biosecurity. The implementation of initiatives such as the *Plantation Forests Biosecurity Plan* or the *National Forest Pest Surveillance Program* would not be possible without the FHaB's expert contributions."

"With the forestry industry at the forefront of carbon sequestration in Australia, the FHaB's work is crucial to mitigating the risks from new pest outbreaks that could devastate our forestry industry and Australia's carbon sequestration ambitions," Joel Fitzgibbon concluded.

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