

Timber Development Association

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24th May, 2007

The Secretary
Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Re: Forestry Marketing and Research and Development Services Bill 2007

Dear Secretary

Thank you for the opportunity to express our views on issues arising from the above mentioned bill.

In principle the TDA supports the transfer of the Forest and Wood Product Research and Development Corporation into a non-profit organisation.

We particularly support the ability to use industry levy dollars for promotion of timber and wood products.

TDA has over the years managed a number of promotional campaigns for the timber industry, some of these being; Houses of the Future, EcoSelect (NSW), Australian Hardwood Network, Plantation Pine Framing Alliance, Blue Framing and Domestic Timber Floors. All have been considered important and necessary but in the end have failed due to the inevitable depletion of funds. Most promotion and marketing requires continuous exposure to be successful, this normally does not occur in the timber industry as there is always a new crisis to draw the funds away from the particular project.

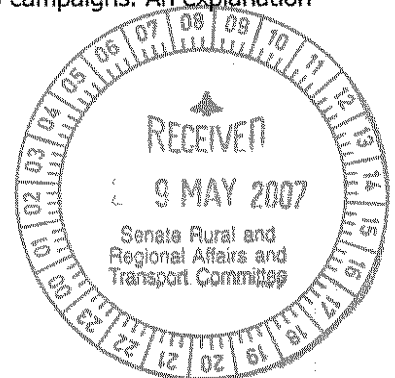
Therefore this change of entity with a known and consistent budget will give the timber industry an opportunity to develop messaging and have it supported long enough to be taken up by the intended audience.

We also express the timing to be excellent as the timber industry has never seen an opportunity as at present to promote its credentials. The looming or present "Climate Change" debate will focus on forestry as one of the solutions to climate change.

The one issue of concern we have is, as expressed in the bill, the ability of the minister or their appointed officer to direct the spending to that which is of "Australia's national interest". Clarification is required as to what is signified by the "national interest". The industry may be concerned that the minister might direct its funds away from this program and therefore be reluctant to contribute more to campaigns. An explanation of the meaning of "national interest" may alleviate some concerns.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Dunn
Chief Executive



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